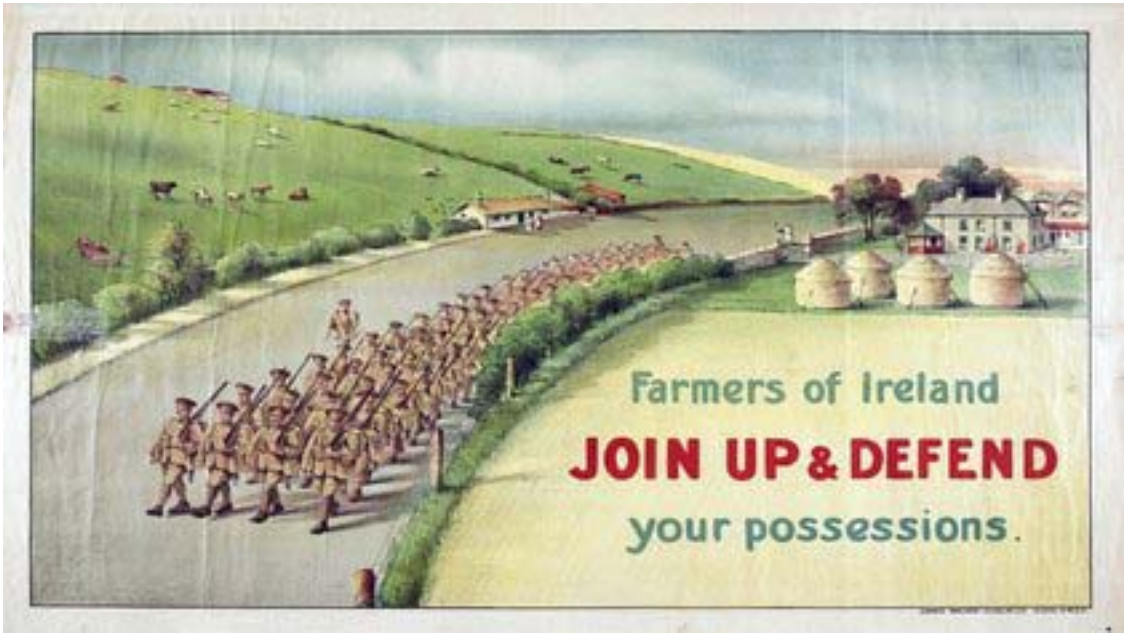
Church & State

An Irish History Magazine

And Cultural Review Of Ireland And The World



Redmondite *Soirée Transcript*

Two Thousand Years Of Augustus!

The Spanish Colonial Debate

Paisley

Bernard Shaw Defended

No. 118 **Fourth Quarter, 2014**

Augustus And The Imperial Over-Achievers

The world has begun many times in the course of its recorded existence. One of those beginnings—the one that concerns us—was two thousand years ago.

This is the bi-millenial anniversary of the death of Augustus, founder of the Roman Empire, which lasted for a very, very long time, in one way and another.

Amongst the things that happened in the Roman Empire was Christianity.

What Christianity might have been without the Roman Empire is altogether unknowable. It sprouted in a province of the Empire and wove itself around the Empire from its earliest stage. When it set out to conquer the world, the world it set out to conquer was the Roman world, the world created by Augustus.

Paul, who carried Christianity from the margin of the Empire, where he found it, to the city of Rome, emphasised the fact that he was a Roman citizen, not a Jewish drop-out. And he adapted Christianity to Roman requirements by freeing it from the Temple and from circumcision.

The Jews had become a force in the Empire, but Judaism had locked itself into a cult status, keeping itself distinct, by insisting on circumcision.

Judaism was a nationalist religion. It might say there was only one God, but that one God was only for the Jews. Christianity, freed from Judaism by Paul, proclaimed that God was for everyone, and therefore made itself possible religion for the Empire when the particular Gods of Rome became inadequate for the Empire created by Augustus.

Three centuries after Augustus created the Empire, and about two and a half centuries after Paul and Peter were martyred in Rome, the Emperor Constantine blended Christianity with some of the symbols of Mithraism to be the religion of the Empire. Before Constantine, Christianity was a formless welter of things. After Constantine, it had definite structure, and a high degree of regularity in the beliefs by which the world was apprehended.

It was as the religion of the Empire, Roman Catholicism, that Christianity made an impact on the affairs of the world.

A millennium and a half later England aspired to create an Empire greater than that of Rome. It created a new religion for this new Empire. It broke with the Roman religion in the act of declaring itself an Empire. A kind of State Protestantism that was neither consistently Lutheran nor Calvinist, which was put together piecemeal for reasons of State, never acquired the substantial status of a national religion, but was however made the official religion of political power and was for many generations the filter through which individuals ambitious for political power had to pass their minds.

Rome established a military Empire sovereign over immense tracts of land—a connected Empire to which it gave a common mode of government administration, law and citizenship. England established a Naval Empire, an Empire of bits and pieces here and there around the world, which it plundered.

The British Empire lasted about 250 years. When the Roman Empire had lasted about that long, it renewed itself by adopting Christianity as the Imperial religion, altering it a little, and stabilising it in the course of adopting it.

Christianised Rome—or Romanised Christianity—carried on for another thousand years—or fifteen hundred, or to date—reaching parts that pagan Rome had failed to reach.

Augustus failed in Germany. Charlemagne succeeded.

When he British Empire declared war on Germany, on the 1900th anniversary of the death of Augustus, its war propaganda zoomed in on the defeat of the Roman Legions by Hermann the German in the Teutoburg Forest in 9 AD. That Roman failure—which was not represented as a German success—was, it said, the basic reason why the Germans had remained barbarians, making it necessary to undertake a civilising mission against them.

That was one of the many reasons given why Britain was under moral obligation to launch the Great War.

The defeat of Rome in the Teutoburg Forest had other consequences. It was followed by the "Augustan" era of Roman culture—the period of studied and mannered classical literature. Expansion of the Empire north of the Alps was stopped, and internal development followed.

Virgil, pagan to the bone, wrote the great epic poem of the Augustan Empire: the *Aeneid*—the fabulous story of how a group of the civilised people of Troy escaped the destruction of the city by the barbarian Greeks and journeyed, by way of North Africa, to Italy, where they founded the city of Rome and set out on the civilising conquest of the world.

Britain had its Augustan period about 1700 years later. Since Rome had had one, then of course Britain had to have one too. A centrepiece of the British Augustan period was Dryden's translation of the *Aeneid*:

> "Arms and the man I sing, who forced by fate
> And haughty Juno's unrelenting hate
> Expelled and exiled left the Trojan shore;
> Long labours, both by sea and land, he bore;
> And in the doubtful war, before he won
> The Latin realm, and built the destined town;
> He banished gods restored to rites divine,
> And settled sure succession in his line'
> From when the race of Alban fathers come,
> And the long glories of majestic Rome.
> O muse, the causes and the crimes relate,
> What goddess was provoked, and whence her hate;
> For what offence the queen of heaven began
> To persecute so brave, so just a man.

*

Augustan Rome, like Augustan England, came about after the end of a period of civil wars.

The Roman Republic had extended its power by conquest into France, North Africa and the Middle East while retaining

the mode of government of a city state. It had made itself too big for itself. A number of Generals had attempted to give it a political structure appropriate to what it had become. The most effective of these was Julius Caesar, who was a kind of King or Dictator or Tyrant for a number of years before he was killed:

> "The Republican party had gained victory as a result of the murder in the Forum. They stabbed Caesar in the heart, but achieved nothing more. It was a horrific act precisely because it was so absurd and futile. It is odd that Brutus should have acted like an executioner, carrying out the sentence on a condemned man because of an oath taken by the citizens of Rome half a millennium earlier. And, like an executioner, he then went home. No one stopped to think what would happen afterwards…" (Mommsen: *A History Of Rome Under The Emperors*, p63. Doesn't this remind you of something? The war waged by Eoghan Harris's Official IRA!)

Caesar had hesitated to clarify the political nature of his power and establish it openly. It was a kind of personal power. With the removal of the person, the power was also removed and had to be re-established by civil war: first between Caesar's defenders and his killers, and then between the members of the Triumvirate formed by his defenders.

The final war was between Mark Anthony and Augustus.

Anthony had set himself up with Cleopatra in Egypt in command of the Eastern region of the Empire in what might have become a Hellenistic state. The Greeks did not have an aptitude for statecraft, which makes the description of them as the founders of democracy absurd. The so-called Greek democracies were little more than fleeting local anarchies, always at war with each other, and entirely incapable of joining themselves together in a state that could be called Greece. It was through becoming a cultural component of the Roman state that Greece made an impression on the affairs of the world.

Augustus fought his corner by means appropriate to a civil war. He did not win just because he was Caesar's great-nephew and adopted son, but undoubtedly that helped. He could fight dirty and not be tainted because he had a sense of himself as a man of destiny whose essence lay beyond his actions of the moment. And, unlike our would-be man of destiny, he had no taste for bravado. He preserved himself, not caring if in certain situations he was suspected of cowardice.

He crushed Anthony, kept all the conquests of the Republic together, and gave the whole a Government that preserved many of the forms of the Republic but was indisputably subject to a power that lay beyond them.

His name had been Octovian. It then became Augustus, after which the best month of the year is named in the Christian calendar. The preceding month is named after his great-uncle Julius.

Jesus was born in Roman/Greek Palestine during the reign of Augustus.

George Moore, a Catholic gentleman of Connacht—one of a series of George Moores who somehow managed to retain a patch of land during the Penal Laws which enabled them to be Catholic gentlemen—maintained that Paul was the actual founder of Christianity. He took whatever it was that Jesus created in Palestine and took it to Rome.

This George Moore produced another George Moore who was once a famous novelist and has a claim to be considered

To page 4

Contents

Part 14 of **Séamas Ó Domhnaill**'s Life & Work Of Eoghan Ruadh Ó Súilleabháin will not appear till some time in 2015, due to the pressures of a growing family

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!

Sales:

https://www.atholbooks-sales.org

Church & State

Editor: *Pat Maloney*

ISSN: 0332-3625

All Correspondence should be sent to:

P. Maloney,
C/O Shandon St. P.O., Cork City.
TEL: 021-4676029

SUBSCRIPTIONS: €20 (Sterling £16) for 4 issues

ELECTRONIC SUBSCRIPTIONS: €8 (Sterling £6)

Cheques/postal orders payable to ATHOL BOOKS please

from

athol-st@atholbooks.org

one of the founders of modern Irish literature. This literary George Moore, who was bred to horse-racing and only took to writing novels to make money after the Land League cut down his income from rent, wrote a novel about Jesus, *The Brook Kerith*. In a Preface he recalls arguments he overheard as a child between his father and John McHale, Archbishop of Connacht, about this matter of the foundation of Christianity.

Moore and McHale, two substantial figures in the evolution of nationalist Ireland in the late 19th century, have both been forgotten. Nationalist Ireland has not improved itself by forgetting. The process of enlightenment it has recently undergone has consisted of little more than an erosion of memory. And if you forget enough things about yourself you cease to exist, and put yourself at the mercy of the state that does not forget.

About 'true Christianity' we say nothing. The Alsatian philosopher, Albert Schweitzer, went in search of it in his Quest For The Historical Jesus, and found that the closer he approached it, the more indefinite it became. Paul said he had never met Jesus but didn't seem to think that disqualified him from being an apostle. He picked up something about Christianity through his efforts as a Roman to suppress the Christian cult in Palestine, fed it into his Roman understanding, took his version of it to Rome in the service of the Empire, and got martyred. But the line of Christianity pioneered by Paul flourished in the Empire, to whose needs it adapted itself. Then, after a couple of centuries, it was taken in hand by the Emperor Constantine, combined with the symbols of a rival religious cult, Mithraism, which was popular in the Army, and made the official religion of the state.

Greek philosophy, politically ineffectual in Greece, had been absorbed into the culture of the Empire, and it fed the elaboration of Christianity as the Roman State religion.

The Emperor Julian, who followed Constantine, was a pagan philosopher. He tried to unsettle the Christian Establishment and revive the gods of Greece and Rome. But he found it was hopeless. They had lost credibility. Christianity had taken root. Julian went off to fight the Parthians and got killed. And that was that.

The Parthians, in the region of what is now Iran, had over centuries proved invulnerable to Rome and set the eastern boundary of the Empire. Its northern boundary was set by the Germans:

> "The forests and morasses of Germany were filled with a hardy race of barbarians, who despised life when it was separated from freedom; and though, on the first attack, they seemed to yield to the weight of Roman power, they soon, by a signal act of despair, regained their independence, and reminded Augustus of the vicissitudes of fortune. On the death of that Emperor, his testament was publicly read in the Senate. He bequeathed as a valuable legacy of his successors, the advice of confining the Empire within those limits, which Nature seemed to have placed as its permanent bulwarks and boundaries; on the west the Atlantic Ocean, the Rhine and Danube on the north; the Euphrates on the east; and towards the south the sandy deserts of Arabia and Africa.
>
> "Happily for the repose of mankind, the moderate system recommended by the wisdom of Augustus, was adopted by the fears and vices of his immediate successors" (Gibbon, *Decline & Fall Of The Roman Empire*, Chapter 1).

The distinction between Church and State began with the Establishment of Christianity as the state religion of the Roman Empire.

Although Christianity was shaped to the requirements of the State under the direction of the Emperor, it had had a long history of its own prior to its Establishment, it had a cultural content which had not been present in the pagan religion of the Empire, and it retained a latent momentum of its own, even when it was being guided most decisively by the Emperor, who did not simply dream up doctrines, but settled some of the arguments that went on between the intelligentsia of the Church who were made fiercely disputatious by the Greek philosophy which entered Christian thought at an early period, and which had also in large part become the philosophy of the Empire.

The Church paralleled the structure of the Empire, and the quality which enabled the Empire to carry on despite bad Emperors also enabled the Church to carry on despite bad Popes.

The Empire, before being Christianised, had many gods, and the peoples incorporated into it did not have the Roman gods, or the Latinised Greek gods, imposed on them. The Christianised Empire did not continue this practice, but it developed itself in a variegated form that made provision for a wide variety of human impulses, which might be regarded as the impulses which had given rise to the pagan gods.

The diversity of orthodox institutions within the united, centralised Roman Church would require a large Encyclopaedia to list and describe. And, from the viewpoint of the streamlined, and implicitly theocratic, theology of what is called the Christian Reformation, it is seen as nothing but a continuation of pagan idolatry on which a Christian veneer has been painted.

In the Christianised Empire the Church paralleled the State with which it was united. And, as the Empire declined, the Church stood out more clearly as a distinct component of it. The Church carried with it the ideal of the declining State.

Thomas Hobbes, a secular totalitarian English political theorist writing at the time of the theocratic Cromwellian English Republic, described the Roman Church as the ghost of the Empire dancing on its grave. Two centuries later Lord Macaulay, the Liberal ideologue of the middle class emancipated by the 1832 Reform, was not completely certain that the Roman Church was only the ghost of the Empire. It was, he said somewhere, a political Church which carried the idea of a State with it. And he was driven to express the subversive thought that the Church, which the British Empire had imagined it to be its destiny to remove from the human scene, might still be there after the British Empire had gone.

About a thousand years after the Christianisation of the Roman Empire, the great epic poem of the Roman Catholic world was written. Dante wrote *The Divine Comedy*, in which he viewed this world from the vantage point of the other world.

Dante wrote his epic in exile from his home town of Florence. He lost out in the party politics of Florence, which was then in many ways the centre of the world, in which many features of the present-day world were being pioneered.

The two components of the Christianised Empire, the State and the Church, had given rise to the party politics of Guelphs and Ghibbelines—the party of the Pope and the party of the Emperor. Dante was exiled as a propagandist of the Empire at a moment when the Papal party was dominant in Florence.

This was not a conflict of totalitarian systems, each of which aspired to exterminate the other and reduce public life to itself. The Papacy and the Empire

were not systematic and essentially incompatible alternatives. They were parts of a whole which neither could sustain by itself.

Dante appears to have supported the Empire because he did not see Florence as being self-sufficient and he was concerned about the political development of Italy. And he argued that, while Church and State had separate sources of authority, the authority of the Empire had primacy when there was serious conflict between them, because the Empire was there before the Church and the Church was a development within the Empire.

In the *Divine Comedy* Dante is wandering around, having lost his way, when Virgil, the pagan poet who glorified Augustus, comes across him and takes him in hand, guiding him to the other world—as Aeneas himself had been shown the other world by the Sibyl in the *Aeneid.*

About 20 years ago Pat Kelleher of Clondrohid suggested that something should be written about the fact that the English State declared itself an Empire when breaking with the Roman Empire for reasons of State.

The historical meaning was that it declared itself to be an absolute sovereignty, and therefore the creator of a new world of human existence. *"The Empire"* then, and for another four centuries, meant the European state created by Augustus, in some credible continuation of it. *"The Empire"* was the European world. By declaring itself an Empire, England set itself to be apart from, and against, the European world, and declared itself to be a centre of energy around which a new world would be created.

It was through being part of the English Empire that Protestantism became a force in the world. If it had not been adopted by the English Empire, it would probably have remained a local, communal cult in corners of Germany and Switzerland and France—as Christianity would probably have remained a local cult in the Middle East if it had not, on Paul's initiative, shaped itself to the Empire of Augustus and got itself adopted by Constantine. Christianity was made a world force by Rome, and Protestantism by England.

But there was a very great difference in the relationship between the religion and the State in Rome and in England. Rome did not create the religion which it made the religion of the Empire. That religion had been developing itself for three centuries against Rome before being adopted by Rome. Constantine adjudicated on matters that were in dispute within the Christian religion, doing so, as far as I know, in consultation with the philosophical intelligentsia of the religion—a practice continued in later centuries by the Popes as Roman Pontiffs.

The English Empire did not adopt an existing religion and blend it into the framework of state. It did not break with Rome on religious grounds. It broke on political grounds. The King apparently conceived a vast ambition in the course of breaking with Rome in order to grant himself a divorce, and for the realisation of that ambition he needed a new religion.

England was Roman Catholic up to the moment of the breach. The King had contemplated leading a Catholic crusade against the Protestant heresies on the Continent. The Normans had conquered England as a secular arm of the Papacy, and Henry II had conquered Ireland on a Papal mandate to Romanise the Irish Church. Then Henry VIII, because the wife he wished to divorce was too well connected with the Empire for the Pope to be able to annul the marriage instantly, decided on the spur of the moment (in historical terms), to break with Rome instead of organising a crusade in its defence.

The English State was unstable, volatile. The populace was malleable. The King broke with Rome and the people fell into line—those who didn't being massacred. A new religion was announced, and the people, by and large, believed it on the authority of the State without needing to know what it was that they believed.

The two incompatible meanings of the word *"protest"* seem to derive from this state of affairs. It means both to affirm and to declare against, with the latter being predominant. A Calvinist might protest a creed, in the sense of affirming it. What the English did was protest against Roman Christianity.

The long-drawn out piecing together of a new religion by the State *after* it rejected the Roman religion had an infuriating effect on sections of the populace which needed to know what it was that they were supposed to believe. Theological frenzy set in at the end of the 16th century and continued through the seventeenth (causing a civil war and a *coup d'etat*) into the eighteenth. The settlement that was then made was that political power was to be monopolised by those who subscribed to the Creed of the State religion as a ritual without having to make a serious pretence of believing it, while believing Christians of a Calvinist or Lutheran disposition were allowed the private practice of their religion in exclusion from political power but within free participation in the economic life of the Empire, which consisted largely of the Slave Trade and the Slave Labour Camps in the West Indies.

This arrangement was confirmed by a Toleration Act. Toleration was extended on those terms to believing Protestants of the affirmative, essentially Calvinist, kind—to Nonconformists. It expressed the unity of State Protestants and Believing Protestants against Roman Catholicism.

Differences between the two kinds of Protestants were laid aside in the interest of Anti-Catholic unity. Toleration meant Pan-Protestant anti-Romanism.

Political power was monopolised by the State Church, which was a Department of the State. All members of Parliament were members of the State Church. And the State Church was not allowed to meet as a Church, lest it should start discussing religion and upset the applecart. (This remained the case, I think, until the 20th century.)

The Toleration introduced by the Glorious Revolution of 1688 was put into effect in Ireland in the form of the Penal Laws which criminalised Catholicism.

English Protestant Toleration extended only to itself. It embraced only the different kinds of anti-Romanism produced by the haphazard 'reformation' of Christianity by the State.

What the English Reformation certainly did not do was discover a pure, pre-Imperial Christianity an adopt it as its religion of state. It would have been absurd if, in the course of declaring itself an Empire and asserting an Imperial presence in the world, it had done that.

English Christianity was an Imperial conception. It had no presence in England prior to the decision to assert that the Catholic Kingdom within the Roman system was henceforth going to act as an Empire.

Romanism was not the nationalist religion of Rome, as Anglicanism was of the English Imperial State. Rome established an Empire and found a religion within it which it made the

religion of the Empire. From this there arose the distinction between Church and State which is unique to the Roman civilisation. That distinction broadened the range of the Empire, and give it a long spiritual afterlife with political implications.

The Protestantism of England was an English nationalist religion created by the State as it declared itself an Empire. There could therefore be no operative distinction between Church and State in Imperial England—nor could there be in the affirmative Protestantism of the Swiss cantons of Geneva (Calvinism) and Zurich (Zwinglism).

Authentically affirmative Protestantism is theocreatic in essence. The pragmatic nationalist Protestantism of the English State was also theocratic, though it came to it from a different direction.

In breaking with Rome England abolished the Roman aberration of distinguishing between Church and State, and having two sources of authority in public life. It constructed a Church for the State. The Church was a department of the State, instructed by the Government. There was no moral authority within the country which could pass judgment on the action of the State. The State was its own moral authority.

It guaranteed the consciences of its agents and its subjects. It could do no wrong because the decision of what was wrong lay with itself—and it would be a peculiar State which decided something was wrong and then went ahead and did it.

This idyllic state of affairs lasted until 1914, when it was severely damaged by the Germans in the course of suffering a nominal defeat, and the self-sufficient good conscience of the State as its own moral authority never recovered—not that that made its conduct any better.

Augustus let the Germans be and created an Empire. It was proposed by the Unionist leader, Joseph Chamberlain, after the conquest of the Boer Republics, that England should be content with the big chunk of the world it had conquered, let the rest of the world live its own life (particularly the German and Turkish parts of it), and consolidate its conquests into an integral Empire. But the Liberals wouldn't hear of it. They swept back to power in 1906 and prepared for war on the Germans and the Turks.

They revived the memory of the defeat of Augustus by the Germans, who remained barbarians because of their resistance to Rome, and decided to wage a war of civilisation against them. And that was the end of the possibility of England constructing an Empire such as Augustus had constructed.

The English Empire was no more than a conquering English nationalism which gained possessions here, there and everywhere around the world.

And when its intellectuals looked for an era of cultured Augustan peace on which to rest their minds, they could only find it in the actual era of Augustus. Translations of Virgil continued to pour out of the Universities all through the 19th century and well into the 20th. The future towards which Imperial England aspired—at least there were some who aspired to it—had happened once and for all two thousand years ago.

Virgil also figured in the Hedge Schools in which Gaelic Ireland had its last phase of coherent existence.

The nationalistic English Empire was capricious—which is not what an Empire should be.

The destructive wars of the new Empire against the Irish went on for about a century and a half. And then England had its pretended Augustan age.

Why an Augustan age, if it was the creator of a new world? Because it found after all that it did not have within itself the makings of a new world which would resist the gravitational pull of Rome.

The centrepiece of the Augustan ago of Imperial England was–Virgil!

Dryden, the great poet of the age, translated Virgil to be the English Augustan literature for the vulgar elements of the elite. But it seems that in the 'public schools', where the masters of the Empire were trained, preparation for ruling the world lay in familiarity with the Augustan literature of Rome in Latin.

Dryden: who reads him now? A Tory Education Minister doesn't see the use of it. And Addison—who's Addison? And Swift—well, there's his children's story, and his strange love letters which make the Anglo-Irish feel distinguished. And Pope, with his mock epic on *The Rape Of The Lock*.

And poor Goldsmith, who was a fish out of water, counterfeited an Augustan age for England in the warmongering reign of Queen Anne.

The authentic Augustan literature of Imperial England was the actual Latin literature of the ago of Augustus and Tiberias read in the 'public schools'—vicarious participation in the Empire which England had committed itself to replacing. And the pull of Constantine's Rome was felt by those who lived vicariously in Augustus' Rome.

Dryden became a Catholic. That was an occupational risk for English Augustans. (Pope had always been one.) Christianity became functional in the world in the Empire created by Augustus and Virgil, the hagiographer of Augustus, is a virtual saint in Roman Christianity.

The perpetual Irish question was a product of the essential incoherence of the powerful English State. The Irish made repeated attempts to adapt to English requirements, and they would probably have come to some arrangement if England had only decided what it was and stuck to its decision. But England would not decide. One year it would be this and the next year it would be that—and the Irish, in the process of adapting to this, would be caught by the switch to that and punished mercilessly for the treason of being out of alignment with English vagaries.

The Gaels at the end of their tether found solace in the literature of the Augustan age, to which they were connected by the Roman religion, however lightly they bore it. The obsession of cultural intellectuals of pseudo-Imperial England with it was tantamount to an admission of the failure to make good Milton's project of establishing English *"precedence in teaching the nations how to live"*.

94th ANNIVERSARY OF THE KILMICHAEL AMBUSH
1.30pm, 30th November 2014
at the ambush site.
Guest speaker
Jack Lane
(Aubane Historical Society)

Report from Manus O'Riordan

Gender And Orange Card Politics In The Appointment Of A Fine Gael Minister Of Culture

[The demonstrably incompetent performance of Heather Humphreys as Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht has elicited from *Irish Daily Mail* columnist Brenda Power a furious denunciation of those of her fellow women commentators who have rushed to the defence of Humphreys *"as a woman"*. Previously, however, another *Irish Daily Mail* columnist, Paul Drury, had suggested that the appointment of Humphreys had very little to do with gender. Writing as a discerning Protestant Gaeilgeoir, Drury surmised that Taoiseach Enda Kenny was in fact playing the Orange card in appointing Humphreys as the Minister in charge of the 1916 centenary commemorations. The salient arguments of both Power and Drury are reproduced hereunder. M.O'R.]

(1) ***The Irish Daily Mail*****, 30 Sept. 2014:**

"Not having a woman in the Cabinet would be bad; giving Heather a job is even worse

It is always hard to believe a politician who's been forced into an expression of regret but Taoiseach Enda Kenny brought a whole new layer of insincerity to the art of the backhanded apology this weekend. We're used to the gritted teeth, the smarmy tone and the 'I-am-sorry-if-anyone-tookoffence' line, which is not so much an apology as a dig at the cranks and the whingers and the perpetually outraged. But it takes real skill to issue an apology that is at once utterly meaningless and profoundly confusing —nobody seems quite sure what, exactly, the Taoiseach was so disingenuously regretting in his less-than-finest hour. Was he saying sorry for contriving to appoint his pal John McNulty to the Irish Museum of Modern Art board so as to boost his arty credentials or for proposing him for the Seanad's Cultural and Educational Panel in the first place? Was he admitting that it was his idea to put Mr McNulty onto the board of a fine art museum—in which, apparently, he never set foot during his tenure as a member of its governing body—and not that of Arts Minister Heather Humphreys, despite earlier suggestions to the contrary? Or was he apologising for appointing as Minister for the Arts a woman who apparently cannot string two unscripted words together? In all the furore over Mr McNulty's suitability to sit on the IMMA board or to qualify for a Seanad nomination, nobody has questioned the sort of political reasoning that elevated Ms Humphreys to a full Cabinet position. We have become so used to the promotion of Enda loyalists, regardless of their competence, that the spectacle of a newly-appointed senior minister who is seemingly not up to the job has passed by without comment.

Worse still, some observers suggested that the treatment of Ms Humphreys by the Taoiseach in this whole affair amounted to a 'gender issue'. She's only a woman, in other words, and couldn't possibly be expected to have mastered her brief in the Cabinet role for which she is quite happy to accept a fat salary and all the associated perks, privileges and pensions that go with being a minister in an Irish government. She's only a woman: you surely don't think she was allowed to make big important decisions all on her owneo. Astonishing. She's only a woman: how could she have been up to the sort of stroke politics that saw a Donegal petrol-station owner parachuted onto the IMMA board so as to give him a quick dousing in culture? She's only a woman: she didn't realise she'd be asked to defend an appointment she claimed she had made to a State board that was already oversubscribed. She's only a woman: it was unfair to ask her to speak off the cuff without a team of speechwriters holding her hand. She's only a woman: of course she couldn't think for herself. Most astonishing of all, the majority of the voices defending poor Ms Humphreys as the victim of a gender-based ambush and claiming she'd been 'hung out to dry', were those of women commentators…

Demanding that women ministers be cut extra slack just because they're women is a pretty daft way of advancing the campaign for increased female representation in political appointments and nominations. Not to mention a grave insult to working women everywhere. Ms Humphreys is, it is true, a recent appointment to a senior Cabinet position. She was elected to the Dáil for the first time in 2011 but she's been active in local politics since 2003 and, prior to her election, she was the manager of the Cootehill Credit Union. There must have been occasions before last week when she was required to defend a decision or address a crowd or speak without a script—all of which, you'd imagine, ought to be fairly basic accomplishments for anyone proposing themselves as a public representative. A man with a similar pedigree wouldn't expect much sympathy if he made such a dreadful botch of his first significant appearance some ten weeks into the new job… She must have known she would have to justify Mr McNulty's appointment, since that was the reason she was addressing the Seanad in the first place… Yet in response to perfectly legitimate questions, Ms Humphreys was dumbstruck. Instead of making the slightest attempt to answer them, she simply reached for the script that somebody else had written for her. And she read it again… But it does matter. It matters, for a start, that we've got a minister in charge of culture, in a country famed for its literacy and its eloquence, a minister who will be mingling with writers and artists and thinkers from all over the world, who, when questioned in the Seanad, cannot utter two coherent sentences without a script … It matters because appointing an inept woman to a senior post, so as to dispel accusations of gender bias, is worse than appointing no woman at all… "

Brenda Power

(2) ***The Irish Mail*****, 18 July 2014:**

"Gaeilgeoir he may be: but where the future of Irish is concerned, Enda Kenny speaks with forked tongue

Joe McHugh tells us—in what can only be described as the Damascene conversion of a man who sat pass Irish in his Leaving and who admits he has let even that elementary knowledge grow rusty in the intervening years—that he found himself *'ag smaoineamh as Gaeilge'* (thinking in Irish) the other night. I am truly impressed. As somebody who has been speaking Irish—and only Irish—in the home for the best part of a quarter century and who has been working and socialising on and off through the medium for all my adult life, I have to confess that I continue to think, and dream, in what is for me, like Mr Mc Hugh, my native language of English. I will, I suspect, do so until I die. Language, you see, is not something that most of us can assume and discard like a suit of clothes. But that's the miracle of politics for you. Barely 24 hours after his appointment as Junior Minister for the Gaeltacht [with Heather Humphreys being appointed to the senior position of Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht], Mr McHugh—a man who has never before evinced the slightest interest

in the language—has managed somehow to change his linguistic DNA… It pushes credulity to its limits. Just, in fact, as Mr Kenny has done in seeking to defend his choice of Mr McHugh and of Heather Humphreys for their new roles.

Ms Humphreys is another interesting case. In an attempt to make up for her glaring lack of qualifications for the Gaeltacht role—and, indeed, as far as I can see, apart from learning piano from the age of six, for the Arts portfolio—much play has been made by Coalition apologists of the fact that she is a member of the Presbyterian Church. And, of course, there is nothing wrong with that. (A brief declaration of interest here, as they say in the *Irish Times*: I myself am a member of the Church of Ireland.) Indeed, Ms Humphreys arguably owes her Dáil seat, which she in effect inherited from another Presbyterian, Seymour Crawford, as much to her religious background as her political one. It is an ill-kept political secret that Cavan-Monaghan boasts the largest Protestant population south of the border. For years, an influential organisation called the Protestant Association (the Orange Order in all but name) made sure that community's interests were well represented in the Dáil and on the county and urban district councils. During the 1960s, the chairman of Clones Council, Bobby Molloy, was able to publicly declare that he was 'still an Ulster Unionist'. And while the late Erskine Childers briefly won this Protestant vote over to Fianna Fáil in the 1960s, it rapidly reverted to Fine Gael, where it has remained ever since. Nor is there anything wrong with that either.

Ms Humphreys, in short, is the legitimate political representative of a minority—and, as such, brings to the Cabinet table a valuable insight into both Protestant and unionist thinking. And that may indeed be quite useful in the run-up to the 1916 centenary; certainly, it will do no harm. The problem is that she has now, with Mr McHugh, been placed in charge of the interests of another minority—those who speak Irish either, in the case of a rapidly dwindling number of Gaeltacht residents, purely by geographical accident, or who like me do so, with the State's official blessing, by choice—and about which, by her own admission, she knows next to nothing… "

Paul Drury

Larry Iles

Letter To The Editor dated 8th July 2014, sent from Eastbourne

Shaw & The Great War

I appreciate Brendan Clifford, *Bernard Shaw And The Great War* (*Church & State*, 2nd Quarter 2014) is writing both satirically and snapshot survey. But, frankly, as anyone who troubled to read the actual extracts from 'GBS' subsequent to his article, what a load of 'balls', proverbially. There are so many inaccuracies that the good points are drowned beneath the sheer showoff (BC!) paradoxicality that I almost felt that Shavian side of myself that insisted upon clear-incoming rose and comprehensibility was being appealed to.

One, Liberal Imperialism did *not*, alas, 'run out of steam in the course of the Great War' from its 1890s beginnings under that 1890s Tony Blair equivalent former PM Lord Rosebery. Covered up by the English establishment historians over here is the fact that of the major resignees from the 1914 August Liberal WWI War Cabinet, Morley, Burns and junior level Charles Trevelyan. *All* of them attributed the war involvement to the Liberal Imperialist faction, whose leaders PM Asquith, For Sec Gray and War Secretary Haldane all endorsed the Belgian pretext as more rightly Clifford puts it for war. Indeed posthumously in 1922 Morley published a Memorandum in which he argued precisely this Lib Imp war lot causal responsibility. Again anticipations of Blair's turn-of-our-own century anti Islam war, New Labour warmonger.

True, the whole thrust of GBS's articles on WWI was precisely THE OPPOSITE of what Clifford has failed to understand. He was against WWI, contrary to his position which really DID shock his fellow Fabians in at least their rank and file in the earlier Boer War, which he had supported vociferously notoriously because they, the Boers, were allegedly 'backward' farmers in 'race'.

Because, rightly, Shaw was perceived as by satire deliberately undermining the war, he faced far more reprobation in WWI than he ever had beforehand. Especially as he launched his sarcasm, that the Brits and Allies were no better than the demonised Central Power "Huns", strategically. He refused to join his radical Liberal intellectual counter-part Charles Masterman's first-ever State Propaganda Bureau up in London's Mall—off the Strand. Wellington House unlike a later self-regretting set of over 25 UK/Irish writers like H.G. Wells (see Wells' notorious *Mr. Britling Sees It Through*)). And very conspicuously GBS used ILP anti-war meetings to support such things as the Lansdowne-Loreburn peace plan by negotiation by 1917 that forced LG's Coalition to do what indeed it didn't want: discuss at least post-war aims. Why Brendan can't understand this I don't know but his error is as profound as if one were to say *St. Joan* by GBS has absolutely "NO" pro-feminist intent on changing real history.

Finally there is the overall misuse of the terms 'Fabian' and 'Irish' in Clifford's polemic. Wonderful show-off satire, I don't deny but again an actual distortion of real history so bad that it confounds the real GBS for posterity if it is believed literally. The Fabians by 1914 were much more mainstream *dissident* than Clifford obviously hasn't studied. On the eve of the war itself the rising Jewish Australian intellectual LSE OSC and de-facto already head of the newly emergent Womens Labour section, Dr. Marian Phillips was so powerful in the Fabians that she had successfully challenged the old Shaw-Webb 'permeation' tactic of the Liberal Party (GBS himself once served as a Progressive Councillor in London). You simply by 1912 could not LEGALLY be a Liberal MP/candidate and a Fabian but had to be Labour.

More to the WWI point she challenged in a famous debate and pamphlet the pro-Liberal Dr. R. Ensor, official historian and Fabian against any Fabian endorsement of a likely WWI. True she did not by 1915 keep her anti-war position up but it was enough to impress even the 'old Shavian Guard'. And that's why, Mr. Clifford, GBS felt he could safely be anti-war by means of satire supposedly for it in the conflict itself. As always, though with GBS conceit he assumed too much: most

editors, especially of pro-war liberal papers like the London *Daily Chronicle* not only published his articles and famous letters to the editor but with cautions and dissociation! They knew unlike Clifford what he *really* wanted.. After WWI for rest of his life GBS proudly could and did associate with anti-WWI Labour and radical Liberal ex-MPs.

Finally the 'Irish'. Well again Mr Clifford needs to do some reading of much recent historical findings. Its barely 5 years since the Irish Embassy in DC publicised and funded a Canadian academic *Shaw as an Irishman* special conference. If anything the pendulum now has gone so far away that that side of GBS that was proudly too Dublin English has been forgotten. *Church & State* needs to watch in future that it isn't passing off wishful thinking to suit show-offs as the facts on GBS and WWI.

Editor: We have done our best to render this letter accurately, but the writing is very hard to read.

Wilson John Haire

Book Review

'One Girl's War'

On learning of the death of Steve MacDonogh, publisher of Brandon Books, Dingle, Co.Kerry, four years after that sad event, I picked a book in his memory*: One Girl's War* by Joan Miller, an MI5 operative in the B5 (b) counter-espionage section during WW2. It was published in 1986 by Brandon and now it can be got second-hand for one penny plus £2.80 postage from Amazon. A blurb at the back says:

> "This is the book the British Attorney General tried to stop in the High Court in Dublin, saying that it's publication would do irreparable damage to the British Security Service, MI5."

Margaret Thatcher also tried to have it banned in Britain. A year later, on 31 July 1987 *Spycatcher*, the memoirs of Peter Wright, a senior MI5 operative, were published in Australia and again Thatcher fought, and was successful for a while, in having it banned in Britain. Wright's book dealt with MI5 burglaries across London, in order to plant listening/transmitting devices in the homes of left-wingers and the homes of staff of foreign Embassies in London. The CPGB was repeatedly one such victim but it did manage to infiltrate the security services.

So what is the difference between *One Girl's War* and *Spycatcher*?

Wright's book gives you the superficial mechanics of a security service, while Miller's book has the human touch. You feel that what was going on inside MI5, with its affairs of the heart, its betrayal of wives and husbands, that was very much going on outside in war-torn London. Certainly coming into puberty and adolescence in Northern Ireland during WW2 was advanced by the sexual atmosphere of both country and town. Women in failing or taken-for-granted marriages found a new lease of life. Husbands coming back on leave from the War sometimes found the door barred against them. There were many scandals even in the deepest rural areas and *crime passionnel* wasn't uncommon, with two tragic happenings in my own area of Carryduff, County Down. War had its exciting side obviously.

Peter Wright had some grudge about being looked down on by the upper class elements in MI5 and was also dissatisfied with his pension. With Joan Miller it is more difficult to understand totally her reasons for writing this book. In relating one or two incidents she does go further than Wright in her revelations and, like Wright, she remains patriotic to her country. And, like Wright, she sees Communism as the fifth column of Soviet Russia in Britain but she doesn't make too much of it. She was probably a better operator than Wright for she is totally unassuming. Her background was rural bourgeois and we first hear of her when she is taking a holiday on the Island of Sark, part of the Channel Islands, when she hears on the radio war being declared by Chamberlain. Her mother, newly married again to an colonial administrator, is about to set out for the Sudan to join her new husband. She advises her daughter to do something for the war effort. So she applies for a job in the War Office and is picked for MI5, mostly because of her elitist contacts plus a letter of recommendation from the Dame of Sark. But she doesn't tell us how she met the Dame.

The Dame of Sark was later to entertain high-ranking German officers during the invasion of the Channel Islands. Like France, thirty miles away, things carried on normally with the police in the street directing German military traffic, the shops and schools open. Some Channel Islanders even pointed out the English residents thus seeing them arrested and carted off to German prisons. It was probably a pattern for an England under German occupation.

In the meanwhile thousands of half-starved Russian prisoner were to be employed building concrete fortifications on the islands.

Joan Miller doesn't mention anything about her training. Her first job is to penetrate a meeting being held in a flat over the Russian Tea Rooms in South Kensington. What is called the Right Club is meeting there. It is an Anglo-German organisation, founded in 1938 by a Captain Archibald Maule Ramsay, Unionist member for Peebles since 1931. The Right Club throughout England includes about 300 very important members consisting of peers and MPs with a vigorous anti-Semitism as part of their belief. Head of her anti-espionage section is Charles Henry Maxwell Knight, generally known as Captain King but known in the office as `M' or Max.

Being called the Russian Tea Rooms of course it had to be owned and run by a émigré Russian Admiral (White Russian), his wife and daughter. The Admiral had been the Tsar's naval attaché in London when the Bolshevik Revolution broke out so he felt it was better to stay where he was with modest means for the time being. Now there was the possibility of a German invasion of the Soviet Union to reverse things.

The logo of the Right Club was an eagle attacking a snake with the letters: P.J. (Perish Judah)

An MI5 infiltrator was already inside the Right Club. She was known as Mrs. Amos (Margie Mackie) and is described as a cosy middle-aged woman. She introduces Joan to everyone. They are all woman, their husbands being already in internment under regulation 18b that deals with enemy aliens. Also inside the Right Club is yet another MI5 operator, a young Belgian girl, called Helen,

convent educated. So we have three MI5 personnel inside this London branch of the Club which at this point only consists of ten or twelve members, all woman, under surveillance by three women.

But Joan still has to work hard to get herself invited up to meeting in the flat above. She hangs around the tea rooms for a period of time discussing her sham anti-war views and talking with the Admiral's daughter, Anna Wolkfoff, about a supposed affair she had had pre-War with an Nazi army officer, presumably posted to the German Embassy in London.

With the present governments, both Labour and Conservative, when in power, pumping out propaganda claiming Britain to be anti-Nazi during the 1930s, members of the Gestapo found London relaxed enough to make Elizabeth Arden's (cosmetics and perfumes) Central London's flag-ship a pre-War rendezvous point. Oddly enough, this is where Joan Miller once worked. Fascist support had now been off the cards since 1938 so MI5, with caution to begin with, was ordered into action.

Anna Wolkoff, the leading pro-Nazi in her family, has a coded message for William Joyce about how he should conduct his radio programmes in relation to London. But how to get it to him. Mrs. Amos tells Anna that Helen has a friend in the Rumanian Embassy. The diplomatic bag could be used. The letter is then handed to Helen who takes it to M, who passes it on to Bletchley to be decoded. Some deletions are made, and bits of misinformation added, before being handed to an MI5 contact within the Rumanian Embassy, and thus into a diplomatic bag and on to William Joyce at the Rundfunkhaus, Berlin. When Joyce acknowledges receipt of the letter, as he had been instructed, by referring to Carlyle in one of his broadcasts, the Right Club and its communications with Berlin is confirmed. MI5 strikes and has the Right Club members arrested. The author doesn't seem able to reveal the names of some of these English elite consisting of MPs and peers and what happened to them. (We still don't know.) All we know is that Anna Wolkoff gets seven years.

It was interesting to note that Joseph Kennedy, the father of J.F., is American Ambassador to Britain at this time. MI5 asks him to suspend the diplomatic immunity of one of the Embassy's code-clerks, which he isn't pleased about. The clerk had spent five years in the American Embassy in Moscow before being transferred to London. He was thought of as a fascist and so is accused of being implicated in passing information to Berlin. Years later he is unmasked as a communist, his fascist *persona* being a tactic while fascism was popular in Britain up until 1938. He apparently went past the sell-by-date without knowing it.

Joan Miller tells of a burglary they made on the home of R.Palme Dutt, who were away at the time. He is the main CPGB ideologue and Editor of Labour Monthly. She is ashamed of this act of breaking into people's places. The reason for the break-in is to open a locked box under the bed of Mr. and Mrs. Palme Dutt. Inside the box some informant has probably told MI5 that there is a an important sealed letter. They want to see what the contents says. The box is opened and the sealed envelope is opened carefully by Joan who has been taught how to do so without damaging it. Inside is the marriage certificate of the Dutts. Feeling duped by possible malicious false information, they nevertheless search the house but find nothing of significance.

Then there was the targeting of Krishnan Menon. He originated from Kerala in Southern Indian and is known as a left-winger. He is a Council member on the Borough of St Pancras. He was also an avid Indian nationalist. (Later he become High Commissioner for Indian and Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland.) He was considered a security risk and marked out for close investigation. The author was chosen to go to some of the political meetings he had arranged, with the object of getting to him personally. When she did manage to get him on his own, it appears he ranted so much about the British in India and colonialism in general she thought he was unhinged. Being unable to get through to him she asked to be taken off the case.

Helen, the Belgian girl, was then put on the case. In her flirtatious way she managed to have some calm conversations with him. What the result was hasn't been recorded. It is doubtful if she learnt anything other than that he was left-wing and an Indian nationalist and a Councillor for St Pancras Borough. Now it was him trying continually to contact her for polite conversations plus a romantic encounter. She was already having an affair with her case officer and now Krishna Menon's persistent pursuit of her is said to have driven her to taking drugs, not turning up for work, and being hospitalised in an MI5 private clinic.

The author then gets tired of counter-espionage after that, and wants out of that Department, and for another serious reason I will mention later. She tries for another position and lands in the PID (Political Intelligence Department), mostly to do with dispensing propaganda broadcast and misinformation directed at Germany and German-occupied countries. She is put alongside an army major who is in charge of the many cables and signals coming from the Middle East. Soon after she notices that he is copying quite a lot of them, jotting the contents down on paper. She gets suspicious and tells her old boss M. Surveillance is put on the major and he caught passing these copies to someone at the CPGB headquarters in King Street, Covent Garden. He is arrested but not put on trial. The matter is dropped and he is given a less significant job in another part of the country. Later he is part of the Control Commission in a defeated Germany. She is mystified at first but then thinks things through.

In her own words:

> "It's possible, of course, that he was treated leniently simply because his actions benefited the Russians, Britain's allies at the time: at the time England's survival was still dependent on the military effort of the Russian army. Up until September 1944, when it became clear that the invasion of France had succeeded, we had to keep considering the possibility that the Anglo-American armies would be driven back into the Channel: in that case nothing but the Russians could have saved us."

You get the feeling when reading this book that she is a fair-minded woman who is put upon dreadfully by a promiscuous husband, and later a lover, or would-be lover M. In writing this book she could have put herself into a lot of trouble with surveillance and possible threats plus the animosity of Thatcher and the political elite. There was no chance of her making millions out it as Peter Wright did with *Spy-catcher*. In fact, knowing Brandon Books and its limited resources, she stood to make very little. In fact she didn't even see the book published for she died at her home in Malta in June 1984 shortly after completing the manuscript.

London was under heavy German air raids and later the V1 pilotless bomb and V2 rocket raining down even after D-Day. Frantic affairs were going on even more now and marriage break-ups were happening everywhere. She has a

quite a long affair with her boss M. It was that in name only for it was never consummated. Obviously, being still in her early twenties, she wanted a proper relationship that could lead to marriage and children. M made some excuse about some sexual trauma he had had early in life but did say he felt he could come out of it anytime. This kept her going and they moved in together.

While staying in a house they had rented down in the country, she opened the door one Saturday morning to a young man, a bus mechanic M had advertised for to help him maintain three motorcycles he owned. When this young man came again the next week-end and then the next week-end after that she wondered how much maintenance three motor-cycles needed.

She was looking out of the window over the yard during one of those week-end mornings when she noticed M walking in a peculiar way when he was approaching the young man. M always had this anti-homosexual attitude and anti-Semitic attitude whenever those subjects came up. He took her round some well-known homosexual haunts in Central London to show her some male prostitutes and how they walked when trying to attract clients. Now he was walking like one of them. She realised his so-called impotency was a lie. Now she wonders how to approach him about this matter but grows afraid of him. M's first wife had died in some mysterious incident to do with the occult. She describes M as having a disquieting interest in the occult. Then there was another terrifying matter.

In her own words:

> "There was an unedifying Canadian, I remember, an ex-drug addict and jailbird known as Frank, who'd performed some unofficial jobs for M such as getting rid of an unreliable double agent in the middle of the North Sea. It didn't cheer me up to envisage this sort of end for myself."

M must have realised something had changed in Joan so he stopped trying to make love to her, much to her relief. She believed he had some sort of extra-sensory perception. (She herself had gone to fortune tellers in the past.) But she was now very afraid and as quickly as possible phoned some friends to come down to keep M and her company.

The upshot was she moves out of the London flat they shared and got herself transferred to the PID, which I have already mentioned.

She meets up one day with M's second wife and finds out that that marriage was also unconsummated. They decide, though he had been generally kind to both of them, they had just been a front to keep his job, as had been his anti-homosexual rhetoric.

Joan is still fond of M and so much so she finds him a female. Somehow, this girl has totally lost her libido through some past incident with a partner (or so it goes). She moves in with him, knowing that he is homosexual, knowing he will practice it. They eventually marry and remain together for life.

In her own words:

> "Towards the end of 1945 I was summoned by M to a rendezvous at the Royal Court Hotel; though I didn't realise it, this was the last time I was ever to see him. There, he told me quite brutally that he had taken steps to ensure that the blame for destroying the Andrews/Darwell file—an act of M's which had shocked me greatly in 1941—would fall on me, should the matter ever be brought to light. I think I must have stared blankly at him for quite a while, as the implications of his statement sank into my mind.
>
> "'You have arranged to put the blame on me', I said, to get it quite clear. Max, this is perfectly dreadful of you. You know it isn't simply true.' "

It all started when a friend of Joan's, Richard Darwell, had been invalided out of the land armed forces and was looking for a job. She felt he could fit into MI5 and asked M. He needs someone for the office and is glad he is Joan's *protégé*. Darwell had been in a relationship with a girl called Eve Andrews. Joan, by coincidence, knew her from when they both worked at Elizabeth Arden. But It seems that, in the interval, Eve has got up to something which has brought her to the notice of MI5. What it was the author doesn't say but it must have been something political. Richard Darwell's friendship with her now sees him also on MI5 files. The file is destroyed by M out of friendship for Joan, and Darwell gets the job. MI5 files being inviolable in their minds it has came back to haunt the both of them.

Later M retires from MI5 and finds work in BBC radio. Various well-know names are mentioned who, on leaving the security services, find jobs in the cultural and entertainment field like public-subsidised theatre and television. I know, I have come up against them when contributing, or attempting to contribute, material to the theatre.

14 September 2014

Wilson John Haire

GCHQ/NASA has a notion that the population of any country is a haystack and that the needles within it are the terrorists. So in hacking into probably millions of phone calls and emails of the mostly innocent they hope to find the `needles in the haystack.'

I took the general shape of this poem from a favourite musical of mine, *Pyjama Game*, which is about a strike in a pyjama factory, and which was first staged in the early 1950s in New York and which has been revived twice since on the London stage, and is running at the moment. One of the songs from it is *'Hey there.'* about a broken relationship. This poem can be sung to its tune.

Hay There!

Hay there, you and your satellite dishes,
making a haystack out of us
that hides needles so vicious.

Hay there, frothing in cyberspace,
you with your wholesale hacking
without a curtain-twitching face.

What a great fuss.
you in control of `Who Dares',
thinking we're dancing with lust
for revenge bombs of despair.

See, you celebrate it all,
that century-old killing,
hear, the bugles still call
for more blood-pools a-filling.

A bullet in one ear
out the other?

Can't you remember it,
the rout from Afghanistan,
the bones of Iraq that never knit,
Libya now a quicksand.

Hay there, we're much too big a
haystack,
and it's you who make the needles,
your spooks will become nervous wrecks
trying our brains to wheedle.
But you it still doesn't bother,
a bullet in one ear and out of the other.

22 July 2014

VOX

Kyoto
Gloom?
Protestant Decline
More British Than . . .
Patsy McGarry
Bruton
Penheligon
German Church Clash
Islamic State

PAT

Kyoto

"City saved by Sentimental Attachment: US Secretary of War, Henry S. Stimson vetoed the choice of Kyoto as the preferred target for the first atomic bomb as he had spent his honeymoon there and thus had a sentimental attachment to the ancient Japanese capital".

If only Anthony Eden had spent his honeymoon in Dresden! (*History without the Boring Bits*, Ian Crofton, Quercus, 2007)

****

Glenstal

"Pupil numbers at fee-paying Glenstal Abbey soared to 218 this month—the highest in its 80-year history.

"A record 56 new students were enrolled from first to fifth year—11 are day boarders from the Limerick, Tipperary and Clare areas.

Glenstal in Murroe, Co Limerick, is bucking the trend—pupil numbers in most fee-paying schools are continuing to slide" (*Irish Independent*, 26.09.14).

Around 10% of the students in the school are from overseas—hailing from places as diverse as the UK, Continental Europe, USA, Mexico, UAE and Singapore. Fees this year stand at ¤17,375 for seven-day boarders and ¤10,250 for day boarders—both include a ¤1,000 capital development levy. The school's ¤6 million extension was officially opened last January. It was the first day of school in Glenstal this week for the 56 boys, as well as for the new headmaster, Fr William Fennelly.

Fr Fennelly, from Dublin's South Circular Road, takes over from Br Martin Browne. The headmaster said that just two years ago numbers were at 181.

****

Protestant Decline

"Sir, The subject of Protestant depopulation in the area of independent Ireland continues to provoke analysis and comment, especially within the scholarly community.

John M Regan mentions the recent publication by Prof David Fitzpatrick on the subject of Southern Irish depopulation. It is particularly gratifying to see that Prof Fitzpatrick has arrived substantially at the same conclusion I arrived at in 1993 in my article in the *Irish Economic and Social History Journal*. In a study of the Dublin Protestant working class (with conclusions on the whole Protestant experience), I concluded that the causes of Protestant decline in Dublin, apparent since the 1820s, were social and economic.

The de-industrialisation of Ireland led to economic decline, leading in turn to a fall in immigration of Protestant persons from Great Britain, along with accelerating out-migration of Irish Protestants.

However, also very significant was the social force of marriage, especially the marriage pattern of Irish Protestant women marrying British military grooms on an Irish tour of duty.

I found that fully one-third of Protestant brides married British military grooms. The loss of young marriageable females to British soldiers was much more significant than the notorious *Ne Temere* decree in depleting Protestant society.

It seemed to me then, in 1993, and recent research has tended to confirm my conclusions, that social class is more important than religion in explaining depopulation.

The survival of a confident and prosperous Protestant middle class in the independent Irish state suggests that the simple category "Protestant" is not sufficient to sustain an historical explanation" (Dr. Martin Maguire, Senior Lecturer, Department of Humanities, Dundalk Institute of Technology, Dundalk (*Irish Times*, 22.09.14).

****

More British Than . . .

"A proclamation to reserve the consumption of oatmeal and potatoes "for the lower orders of the people" is among a number of measures on which the Government will canvass public opinion over the next month.

But no, this is not a deliberate leak from the latest austerity budget. It's just one of the several thousand old legal instruments proposed for abolition as part of *"the largest repealing measure"* in State history.

The oatmeal and potatoes Order dates from 1817, during an earlier economic depression : the one that followed the Napoleonic wars. Then, to counteract the soaring prices of these staples, the Lord Lieutenant proclaimed than anyone "not in the lower classes of life" should desist from eating them or feeding them to horses, "especially horses for pleasure" (*Irish Times*, 23.09.14)

However, Government might be well advised to issue a new proclamation encouraging the consumption of oatmeal and potatoes if one were to believe Bord Bia: "If present trends continue, consumption in Ireland will drop from 162,000 tonnes a year at present to less than 100,000 tonnes by 2023, said Bord Bia analyst Lorcan Bourke" (*Irish Independent*, 19.02.14).

Consumers believe spuds are fattening, old-fashioned and a hassle to cook—you look around you and half the population has its arse hanging around its ankles, mainly living on processed muck.

The Government is planning to repeal up to 4,500 antiquated laws, regulations and orders from the pre-1820 period, the largest repealing measure in the history of the State. Incredible, you might say—with more solicitors and lawyers per acre than any state in Europe, it has taken us near a 100 years to abolish the legal remnants of 800 years of occupation.

Legal instruments that face being removed include a proclamation of 1679 promising a reward for the apprehension of *"any Popish Dignitary or Jesuit"*.

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform Brendan Howlin has launched a consultation on some of the 4,500 instruments from the pre-1820 period that he intends to revoke.

The obsolete orders listed for removal include declarations of war against Denmark in 1666 and against France in 1744 and a proclamation of 1661, prohibiting drunkenness, swearing and profaning on the Lords' Day.

An Order of 1815 providing that a prayer of thanksgiving be offered for the victory at the Battle of Waterloo, and a Proclamation of 1665 appointing the first Wednesday of every month as a day of fasting and humiliation on account of the bubonic plague in London also face the axe.

After a public consultation process, a Bill will be prepared to revoke those deemed obsolete.

Some of the obsolete orders relate to events that still have echoes today. They include a declaration of war against France in 1744 : part of the War of the Austrian

Succession. A year later, 1745, in the same conflict, Irish exiles helped the French to victory at Fontenoy, a name still commemorated by several GAA clubs.

The deadline for submissions is October 15th, 2014, the day after the Budget.

****

Patsy McGarry

In a recent article in the *Irish Times*, their Religious Affairs correspondent had a dig at Labour TD Eamonn Maloney who objected to the issuing of a postage stamp in honour of John Redmond. Referring to a quotation from George Bernard Shaw: *"We learn from history that we learn nothing from history"*, Mr. McGarry stated *"He might have been talking about Eamonn Maloney, TD."*

Mr. McGarry was astounded at Maloney asserting "Ireland never forgot the dead of the first World War", but what is even more astounding is a man in his mid-50s, born and bred in the Dillon heartland of Ballaghaderreen, as McGarry was and a graduate of University College Galway and former Auditor of the College's Literary and Debating Society in 1974-1975 wasn't aware until 2005, that any of his townsmen died in that war, or that John Dillon, MP, who succeeded John Redmond, thought that the British declaration of War in 1918 was a great mistake and that the war would have disastrous consequences for Europe regardless of who won.

Yet this man was awarded a national journalism award for political comment and analysis in 1993 and the European religion writer of the year award in 1998.

'Tip' O'Neill claimed *"all politics was local"*, he could equally have claimed that *"all history begins locally"*.

In April 2014, it was revealed that McGarry was behind an anonymous Twitter account (Thomas59) which was used to attack his former *Irish Times* colleague and fellow County man, John Waters, who was born in Castlerea, just down the road from Ballaghaderreen.

Poor ould Dillon would hardly be a match for these two colossi of the Dublin media pack!

****

Bruton

Asquith! Aye! But what about another Prime Minister? John Bruton. Here is a man who has awful trouble with dates, especially 1916! But never mind the years, what about the days! He's even worse!

April 1995 marked the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Lower Saxony where tens of thousands of Jews died. John, being a world statesman, decided to formally mark the occasion by sending out invitations to a special ceremony at the British War Memorial in Islandbridge, Dublin, followed by a reception in the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham on April 15.

Unfortunately for farmer John, Saturday the 15th of April was the first day of the Jewish Passover and also the Jewish Sabbath. A week before the ceremony, this was pointed out to him and he decided to change the date of the commemoration because of the sensitivities of the Jewish community.

It then turned out that the Jews were officially commemorating the liberation of Bergen-Belsen in the Terenure synagogue on April the 26 rather than on the actual anniversary because of 'religious, dietary and other regulations governing the eight-day passover'.

John might have consulted his fellow Cabinet member, Mervyn Taylor, but alas!

Indeed, you would have thought he would have made contact with his fellow Fine Gael TD, Alan Shatter, the only Jewish TD ever to be elected for the party—but the first he had ever heard of it was when he received the invite for April 15!

I hope to God he isn't around when the 500th anniversary of the Reformation comes up in 2017.

Everything Royal appeals to John : he was born in the Royal county you know!

****

Gloom?

> "There is no gloom in the Catholic religion. It admits of the highest abnegation, but it never seeks to crush in others the life of innocent pleasure. Puritanism and rigorism became possible through the Reformation only. Asceticism itself was not dourness, but joy of spirit. The cup of life was never so full to overflowing, for the greatest and the least, as in those days when gildhood was in flower" (Joseph Husslein, SJ, Ph.D., *Democratic Industry, A Practical Study in Social History*, New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, 1919, p.194).

****

Penheligon

> "This book is flung in the face of the Irish—a fighting race who never won a battle, a race of politicians who cannot govern themselves, a race of writers without a great one of native strain, an island race who have yet to man a fleet for war, for commerce or for the fishing banks and to learn how to build ships, a pious race excelling in blasphemy, who feel most wronged by those they have first injured, who sing of love and practise fratricide, preach freedom and enact suppression, a race of democrats who sweat the poor, have a harp for an emblem and no musicians, rebelled on foreign gold and cringed without it, whose earlier history is myth and murder, whose later, murder, whose tongue is silver and whose heart is black, a race skilled in idleness, talented to hate, inventive only in slander, whose land is a breeding-ground of modern reaction and the cradle of western crime" (Tom Penheligon, *The Impossible Irish*, London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1935) (See the *Spectator* archive!)

****

German Church Clash

> "A bitter clash between the Catholic Church and the Lutherans in Germany is threatening the planned joint celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017.
>
> "The row revolves around the failure of the German Protestant Church (EKD) to mention the historic 1999 Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, in its 'position paper' on the theological foundation of the Reformation, which was published in May, 1999.
>
> "After having given the Catholic Church 'one slap in the face after the other recently, the cat is out of the bag', Bishop Algermissen, deputy chairman of the German bishops' conference's ecumenical commission, said and added that after all the consensus documents of recent years, the position paper was 'destructive'…" (*The Tablet*, 19.07.2014).

****

Islamic State

The Sun, London (Irish Provincial edition) sums up the Middle-East: Five Arab Allies Supporting America:

United Arab Emirates: Hate Islamic State [IS], al-Nusra and Syrian President Assad. Also loathe Iran—friendly Qatar. Agenda: Want to get in with US so they will protect them against Iran in future.

Qatar: Worried about growth of IS and al-Nusra. Hate Syrian President Assad, ally of Iran. Want to show the US they can fight terror threat so America will protect them from Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia: Fear IS and al-Nusra. Want to get rid of Syrian President Assad, ally of hated Iran. Also despise Qatar.Want to keep US onside but would back a fundamentalist take-over of Syria.

Bahrain: See IS and al-Nusra as threat. Hate Syrian President Assad and Qatar. Want US protection against Iran and fears democratic movement within its own people.

Jordan: Dreads IS and al Nusra. Also loathe Syrian President Assad and Qatar. Fear Syrian refugees could cause unrest. King Abdullah worried Saudis may try to topple him.

Now why can RTE not explain it as simply as that?

Stephen Richards

Obituary

Paisley: *A Gut Reaction*

I was trying to think of a suitable quasi-academic, title for this piece. *Paisley: A Provisional Assessment* was one that came to mind. But I don't think I can dignify what I'm going to say with anything so grandiose. Not only am I writing this in superquick time,* but the subject matter is such that, even had I the time to do it, I don't think I would be able to arrive at conclusions that would be of any academic significance. I can't avoid a personal, highly subjective, even viscera,l response that probably reveals more about me than about him. I have this sense that my life has been lived in his shadow; he has had an impact, if not an influence, on me that is unfathomable and, with his passing, I have experienced a strange sense of release.

So, let's not talk about Paisley, let's talk about me! Unfortunately for me, it wasn't long after I first got some orientation in the big outside world that the shadow of Paisley fell across my path. I remember being taken to what was possibly an election rally in Kells, about a mile from our home, on a snowy night, maybe at the start of 1969, where there were bigger boys who had climbed on top of the road signs to get a better view. Those were the days before the Democratic Unionist Party (a title shared with the dictatorial ruling party in Sudan in the 1980s) was thought of, and Paisley was standing for the more elemental-sounding Protestant Unionist Party. His election literature was produced on shiny paper with a blue typeface, and blue-tinged photographs of the candidate. A boy in my class came to school with one of these photos sellotaped to the front of his jumper, which I thought showed extreme commitment.

(In his ultimate statesman phase Paisley was visibly embarrassed when reminded of his opposition to the most modest administrative reforms, the early implementation of which would have drawn the teeth of the Civil Rights movement, and his encouragement of counter-demonstrations. But he was never made to squirm as he should have been.)

* Inadvertently, Stephen Richards was not given proper notice of the deadline for this issue.

Some Early Memories

There were actually two elections he contested, in 1969, a Stormont election which he narrowly lost, and the General Election of 1970, where he was successful. Around 1971, when he was already established as an *enfant* or the *enfant terrible* of Unionism, and when the disorder in our society was beginning to metamorphose into the terrible stalemate of The Troubles, Paisley took part in a kind of in-depth television analysis moderated by the late Lord Devlin, called the Devlin Tribunal, or something like that. Devlin no doubt was a particularly pompous and irritating Chairman, but there was that about Paisley's demeanour that could best be described as contumacious: he was in such a state of permanent and almost inarticulate outrage that it was wearisome to observe. Even though I was willing him to score points, it didn't seem that he was interested in obliging. His idea must have been that it was more important to play well in Cullybackey, Cloughmills and the rest of the heartland than to win arguments in the form they were put. He was always inclined to knock over the board rather than play the game.

Moving on, I didn't encounter Paisley at close quarters again until March 1976, when I got a lift up to Castlegore Orange Hall, in the East Antrim hill country where the Lodge was hosting him at a public meeting. This wasn't an election year, but Paisley had grasped the fundamental PR lesson about keeping oneself in the public eye. He also drew energy and, if that were possible, even more self-confidence, from the continual validation provided by his supporters, so the electricity passed back and forth between him and his audience. He fed off their adulation.

But the precise object of this, and presumably other similar meetings around the country, was to destroy Bill Craig, the leader of the Vanguard Party, which was one of the constituent elements of the UUUC (United Ulster Unionist Council). There had been elections to a body known as the Northern Ireland Convention the previous June, which the parties of the UUUC had entered on an indivisible and indistinguishable platform. It was probably the Autumn before the first crack appeared, brought about by Craig indicating that he had no objection in principle to voluntary coalition with Nationalist parties. Such a coalition would be brought about by ordinary political horse trading, not imposed by Dublin or London.

This was too good an opportunity for Paisley to miss. Not only could he eliminate a rival who had his own distinct support base, but I think Paisley particularly resented Vanguard, which had been the only Unionist party to make a credible contribution to the success of the Workers' Council strike two years previously [1974]. As with the Battle of the Cowshed, or whatever it was called, in *Animal Farm*, it began to be suggested that Paisley himself had played a decisive role in the Strike. So Craig had to be destroyed.

The Second Time As Farce

I still looked on Paisley as if he was a circus exhibit at that time, having thrown my modest weight behind the UUUC after the implosion of the *"pledged Unionists"* (Brian Faulkner's body) in the February 1974 General Election. Sad to say, as an immature adult, I actually voted for Paisley and the DUP on a couple of occasions before coming to my senses aged 20. I think I had fallen into the classic trap of being attracted by the Unionist who seemed to be the biggest thorn in the side of what was dismissively referred to as the 'Westminster Establishment', and indeed the Establishment in Northern Ireland, with its equality quangoes and its disdain for ordinary Protestants. Paisley was astute enough to present himself as the embodiment of principled opposition to these malign forces.

By 1977 he was in need of a new stunt to further his long term aim of becoming the undisputed champion of Unionism. If the Workers' Council Strike had been the only thing for Unionists to cheer about since the loss of Stormont, then surely the performance could be repeated. Paisley went off on a frolic of his own, forming the United Unionist Action Council, I recall the slogan at that time was *"Seven years is enough"*; and the ostensible target of the Action was *"Roy Mason's disastrous security policy*". The practical steps that needed to be taken to improve the policy weren't made clear. It was Paisley himself who had been at the forefront of the anti-

Internment agitation of a few years before. Concrete ideas about how to neutralise the IRA within the framework of the law and the courts were not forthcoming.

The authorities weren't going to be caught out a second time by the strike weapon. The workers at Ballylumford power station were of less monolithic persuasion and weren't about to walk out as one man. The Strike that was called in late May was a fiasco, badly thought out and with no defined objectives. In the second edition of *Against Ulster Nationalism* (1977) Brendan Clifford—and I quote from memory—referred to Paisley as the one Unionist politician who had remained functional during crisis of the previous few years; and his UUAC Strike of 1977 was *"formally a failure, but substantially a considerable success"*.

As I've remarked many times to anybody prepared to listen, I was bowled over by *Against Ulster Nationalism*. I had never come across anything like it. It was funny, exotic, arrogant, unapologetic. The sinister doings of Irish Nationalists were the subjects not of fear or suspicion but of mockery. In my third year at Cambridge I used to burble away to people about it, and one of them, after reading it, remarked sagely to me: *"C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre"*.

Anyway, much as it cast a spell over me, I knew that that comment about the 1977 Strike wasn't true. I knew it because I was there, walking home from school (in the absence of buses) when Ballymena was a ghost town. It was a success of sorts in Ballymena, when the local farmers, putting their faith in their mesmeric leader, rolled into town and blocked all the approaches; and their unlikely paramilitary allies stood around in sinister clumps. Undoubtedly the BBC was used by the Government as a propaganda machine (not for the last time) but it was an easy job. Attempted enforcement of the Strike resulted in the murder of several ordinary working people. Absolutely nothing was achieved. The loyalists could be dismissed as complete idiots, indeed murderous idiots, and the people of Ballymena soon found out that the planned new area hospital would be located elsewhere.

Once again Paisley waltzed away from the wreckage without a mark on him. Two years later he topped the poll in the European Elections with 179,000 First Preference votes. He was the first and greatest of the double and triple jobbers (he was a quadruple jobber if you count his pastoral charge, and maybe even a quintuple jobber if you count his perpetual moderatorial supervision of the entire Free Presbyterian denomination).

False Trails

By this time the UUUC had broken down into its constituent parts, with a Vanguard rump led by the late Ernest Baird. Soon there arose yet another opportunity for Paisley to stand out as the alpha male among his shrinking violet fellow-Unionists. Margaret Thatcher was engaging in some fairly innocuous discussions with Charles Haughey in December 1980, in connection with which I recall talk about teapots being passed back and forth. Hunger Strikes were beginning to loom and it was hoped, at least by the British, that they could be headed off with some marginal concessions. The so-called Irish Dimension was on the agenda and the series of relationships that John Hume used to talk interminably about (none of which was the relationship between the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic). There was tea and sympathy but nothing tangible from the British side.

From a Unionist point of view Haughey was one of the least objectionable southern Irish politicians but Paisley chose to paint him as a bogeyman and so he became the pretext for him to lumber into action once again, this time on *The Carson Trail*. One notes Paisley's tendency to trade on the name of departed worthies. Being in Belfast at this time, I decided to go along with the present MP for North Belfast to one of these monster rallies, in Newtownards, in early 1981. The Square was packed solid, with an almost claustrophobic press of bodies. I wondered who else (other than Van Morrison maybe) could have attracted such a huge number to stand outside for hours on a cold night in early March. The whole thing consisted of fulminations against all the traditional enemies of Ulster; and no doubt it was repeated at all the other venues.

From The Carson Trail (or the *Lundy Trail* as it was dubbed in an Athol Street pamphlet at that time), Paisley moved seamlessly on to his Third Force manoeuvres. This involved various night time gatherings at which those present held up their firearms certificates and waved them around. It was obvious even at the time that to introduce the idea of defensive vigilante squads in the context then pertaining was behaviour that was reckless to the point of lunacy. The context was that the potential members of this force were often highly stressed, living in families and communities that had suffered horribly from IRA activities, and were in some instances attached to the legitimate Ulster Defence Regiment and so had access to certain information. Some of these men were so fired up by the Paisley rhetoric that, in an inversion of Yeats's famous question, they went out and shot people, with obviously dreadful consequences for all involved. But not for Paisley. A recurring *motif* of his career was the reckless *"guldering"* followed by blustering protestations if anyone had the gall to suggest that the speeches had had an effect in the world outside. If Northern Ireland was the china shop then Paisley was the bull.

These were bad times to be alive and to be young in Northern Ireland. It occurs to me that the hunger strikes were going on in parallel with all this. It was no thanks to Paisley that the whole place didn't go up in flames.

The DUP suffered a totally foreseeable electoral setback in the 1983 General Election, one which provided an interesting insight into the character of its leader. After much agitation Northern Ireland had been awarded 17 Westminster constituencies, up from the historic 12. So, there now existed East Antrim, carved off from bits of North and South Antrim. This was slightly more debateable territory for Paisley, somewhat out of his comfort zone. Jim Allister [now leader of Traditional Unionist Voice] was selected as the candidate, with Paisley staying put where he was. In the event he was returned with another massive majority, so that he could bask at Westminster in that glory, while Allister lost to Roy Beggs of the Ulster Unionist Party by just three or four hundred votes. It may well be that it was that debacle that planted the seeds of Allister's disillusion.

1985 And After

The 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement

was for Paisley yet another heaven-sent opportunity for him to cast himself as the saviour of Ulster. I was there at that huge protest outside the City Hall in Belfast in late November, and so was one of the many thousands on whom his rhetorical flourishes were wasted, due to a fault with the amplification system. I was never so bored in my life and put in the time watching the traffic lights change.

In the Spring of 1986 things became quite fraught. The RUC was looked upon in some loyalist quarters as a body of quislings who were the paid enforcers of the Agreement, employed to put down legitimate protests. Paisley, who fifteen years later made much of Sinn Fein's ambivalence in its attitude to the police and the rule of law, was heard to issue a warning to any police officers who were insufficiently sympathetic to the loyalist position (I think I quote verbatim): *"Don't come crying to me when your houses get petrol bombed."* Further comment, as they say, is superfluous.

Paisley as Parliamentarian, or as stuntman supreme at Strasbourg, would be tedious to recollect, even more to relate. Likewise the antics of the Free Presbyterian Church in cahoots with the DUP-controlled Ballymena Council in the late 70s and early 80s. Ignoring the deleterious underlying trends in the popular culture of the day, they concentrated their firepower on such targets as *The Little World of Don Camillo*, used in some schools, and the *Electric Light Orchestra*, which was scheduled to perform at Ballymena Showgrounds, on a Sunday evening.

All through the 1990s the same themes were recycled endlessly, about *"smashing"* Sinn Fein, about every election being the last chance for Ulster, about the enormity of going into Government with unrepentant terrorists, and so on.

A Protestant Republican?

But, before we come to the great *volte face*, the great betrayal one might say, it would be worthwhile to recall a previous about-turn made by Paisley. Around the time the DUP was founded, he was beating the drum for what was then called *"total integration"*. There was no actual thought in the Unionist population as to what this would mean in practice: it was simply an ultra-Unionist position. The Unionist parliament is on its last legs, we won"t put up with Nationalists in government, so let"s get rid of that whole conundrum. It was coherent if not totally realistic.

But without any explanation Paisley soon moved seamlessly to his long term *mantra* of a strong Unionist-dominated Stormont Government, with responsibility for security policy. This was pie in the sky and he knew it. But the London politicians picked up on one aspect of it. What followed was the progressive *"Ulsterisation"* of counter-terrorism. Ulster provided the footsoldiers in the shape of the vastly expanded RUC and the UDR, most of whose members were part-time and vulnerable to being targeted at their homes, while the big operational decisions were still made by the Northern Ireland Office. Admittedly there was still some involvement on the part of special forces such as the SAS, but in the end the Ulsterisation of security meant the Ulsterisation of deaths, which was very convenient for the British Government. Hats off to Paisley once again.

What was behind Paisley's abandonment of total integration? I have heard of only two theories: first that somebody in a smoking room at Westminster got the hold of him and told him that, frankly old chap, it just wasn't on. My former boss, Lyle Cubitt, was convinced that it was all down to the influence of Desmond Boal QC, the working class boy from the Fountain estate in Derry who was to become invested in the popular imagination with almost supernatural powers of advocacy.

I know very little of Boal's association with Paisley. It's certainly discussed in Moloney and Pollak's book, which I haven't to hand. He was a co-founder of the DUP and there is some suggestion of a subsequent break. Lyle's theory was that there was never any break, and that Boal continued to be Paisley's mentor. I don't want to misrepresent Mr. Cubitt but I think he went public in the press on several occasions with his theory that Paisley was a closet Republican, under Boal's tutelage. Total integration would not be compatible with that position. This sounds bizarre and conspiracist, but it might explain why Paisley, like the IRA and (as Pat Walsh would argue) the British Government, all had a vested interest in an unstable Northern Ireland. For Paisley the chips just might fall in a way that would be to his personal advantage in a redesigned Ireland.

Hier Stehe Ich?

In that context the great *volte face* at St. Andrews might be partly explicable. It was the final act of Paisley's political career, and one that I don't think about too much. The degree of anger it produces in me I suspect isn't good for the heart or the blood pressure. For years before that I'd been totally infuriated with Paisley and everything he stood for, but I still had a residual belief, however tested at times, that he did stand for something. I didn't believe the stuff he was spouting but I was naive enough to think that he himself believed it, or some of it.

What made this naive belief plausible was Paisley's very deliberate admixture of the political and the theological, so that his political convictions were stated to be a necessary outworking of his biblical *Weltanschaung*. He was supposedly a political as well as a religious fundamentalist: everything else flowed from the non-negotiable foundational principles laid down in Scripture. In other words, *for God and Ulster*. It was in vain for me to point out to devotees that, as with Christian Socialism or Christian vegetarianism, the Ulster agenda was going to trump the God agenda. Or, if a giant meteorite were ever to crash down out of the heavens and obliterate the six northern Counties with all their charming human diversity, what would be left for Christians to talk about?

So, unlike Keynes, Paisley could never say: *"when the facts change I change my mind: what do you do?"* For Paisley the facts could never change. As with the hero of the Scottish play, *"they have tied me to a stake, I cannot fly"*. Or, in the words of the famous hymn, Paisley was *"fastened to the rock, which cannot move"*. At least that was what most of us thought.

Yet, with one bound he was free. The Paisley who spent his earlier life engaged in throwing snowballs at Sean Lemass's car, excoriating Terence O' Neill for visiting Catholic schools, raising the Shankill Road on account of one Irish tricolour in a shop window somewhere, lambasting Faulkner and Craig for their willingness to enter into power-sharing or coalition arrangements with the SDLP, shouting *O'Neill Must Go*, *Chichester-Clark Must Go*, *Faulkner Must Go*, *Roy Mason Must Go*, and *Thatcher must be handed over to Satan to teach her not to blaspheme*: that same Paisley was now prepared to do a deal with the demonic Sinn Fein, the mortal foes of Ulster, so that he could have his year or two in the sun and be feted by the political Establishments in London and Washington.

But most of his followers 'up the country' weren't astute politicians who understood the masterplan. They were still fastened to the rock. They took their

principles from him almost on the analogy of St. Paul when he urges believers to be followers of him even as he was of Christ. Paisley for them was almost that apostolic figure. Whatever their private misgivings about some of the things he said and did, they believed that, if they stuck to Paisley they couldn't go too far wrong. They would have gone through fire and water for him. It was back to *Animal Farm*. Four legs good: two legs better was the new slogan, and the baffled animals looked on. They hadn't kept up with the programme. They were expendable.

Rampaging Ego

I've often wondered about leading figures in the national histories of various countries. *L'Etat, c'est mo*i, said Louis XIV. There's surely something of that in all of them. Their sense of humiliation over, say, the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, or the terms of Versailles, or the invasion of the Falklands, seems to be a much more extreme version of the emotion felt by the man or woman in the street. The reason for that is that the health and wealth and strategic situation of the nation is intimately bound up with the leader's ego. There is no doubt some genuine patriotism mixed up with it all. But, in the case of Paisley, the extreme Ulster patriot, I can discern no patriotic element whatsoever.

It was unlucky for us all that there were all those years when he did everything he could to create political mayhem, which efforts were mitigated only by the good sense of most Ulster Protestants. It was lucky for us all when he finally decided that he had more to gain going quietly into that good night. The effect of any of this on Ulster was a matter of supreme indifference to him. Ulster was purely a vehicle for his personal aggrandisement, as with Henry VIII's attitude to England. The passion was none of it about the plight of the Unionist people. That was what the noise was about, but the substance was all about himself and anybody who tried to cross him.

The riddle of Paisley is mostly to do with that colossal ego. If I could don my psychotherapy hat for a moment, I suspect it was to do with his upbringing. *"Weren't your mama's only boy, but her favorite one it seems"* sang the late Townes Van Zandt in *The Ballad of Pancho and Lefty*. The colossal ego, the absolute self-belief, the assumption that he could get away with anything, the fury when crossed: all that psychological armour plating must surely have been fastened by a more than usually adoring mother.

Another model I've been considering is that of the tribal leader. In many ways Northern Ireland for good and ill is a tribal society. Within each community, especially in the country, there are networks of solidarity and mutual obligation, and also deep seated rural animosities that are the flip side. Very often in the newly-created African states (where there was traditionally one election followed by a series of *coups*) the President was a glorified tribal strong man of the majority tribe. The expectation was that he would use his period of Office to advance the material interests of those who had elected him. As in the Roman Republic, the comet-like strong men would be followed by a long tail of *"clients"* who would be the recipients of all kinds of beneficent patronage.

There was something akin to this in the relationship between Paisley and his followers. But instead of material goods and advantages they had to make do with guffaws, back slaps, and bone-crushing handshakes.

These and other thoughts went through my mind as I watched the silent television coverage as I travelled on the boat over to Scotland on 12th September. Our third daughter was on her way to a new life as a student in Manchester, but it felt like the start of the rest of my life too.

Next time I might like to say a bit more about Paisley as a religious leader.

John Minahane

The Spanish Polemic on Colonisation
Part 5

A Modern Criticism of Las Casas

What the Poets of Mexico Said

Daniel Castro's *Another Face of Empire: Bartolomé de Las Casas, Indigenous Rights and Ecclesiastical Imperialism* is a book that's not without interest. Castro tries to take a more realistic look at his subject. Because of his tremendous campaign to force colonial Europeans to treat non-Europeans with respect (a most ambitious thing to attempt in the 16th century, or for centuries afterwards), Bartolomé de Las Casas is often sentimentalised. But it is fair to ask the question, how much real benefit did his campaigning bring to the people it was waged for? Could it be that there was something ill-conceived, or delusive, in his entire life's work?

However, when Castro calls him *"another face of empire"* one expects to be told something about a possible alternative. There should be somebody else who was not a face of Empire but a face of . . . what? Who was there that had better ideas than Las Casas, a better grasp of what the Indians wanted and needed? And what was it that might beneficially have been done, though Las Casas didn't do it?

Castro eventually seems to give a kind of answer to these questions, though not the answer one might have expected. In a short Preface his Series Editor claims that "*he also addresses what few scholars have emphasised—the ways in which the Indians themselves confronted Spanish domination and abuses.* Another Face of Empire *highlights these strategies of resistance while showing how Spanish imperial policies undermined attempts at reform.*"

This claim simply is not true. Castro shows very little interest in the Indians' resistance—either the physical resistance that went on all over Central and South America, sometimes very tenaciously, and could flare up again after decades of quiet (as in Peru), or the mental and moral resistance. And, in fact, when he comes upon instances of the latter, he doesn't show them much respect. His instinct is to sweep them into the dustbin of history.

An example of this is his treatment of the famous encounter between the *tlamatinime* or poet-prophets of Mexico and the newly-arrived Spanish Franciscan missionaries in 1524. This seems to have been something like a public debate, with a crowd present. The statement made by the *tlamatinime* was recorded in the Nahuatl language, and the text was later discovered by the great Spanish collector Sahagún.

> "As the number of their compatriots was declining, the tlamatinime realised that this was perhaps one of the last opportunities they would have to meet

face to face with the newcomers to try to convey their anguish, impotence, despair and frustration resulting from the process of forceful domination. Fully convinced that the Europeans knew nothing of their beliefs, they nevertheless wanted to impress upon them their concept of the divine and the principles they held so dear to their hearts. Although they were aware of their subordinate position as conquered people, they were neither passive nor submissive and they proceeded to present their views in the poetic manner in which they were accustomed:

> Our lords, our very esteemed lords,
> great hardships have you endured to reach this land.
> Here before you,
> we ignorant people contemplate you…
> And now, what are we to say?...
> Through an interpreter we reply,
> we exhale the breath and the words
> of the Lord of the Close Vicinity…
> For this reason we place ourselves in danger…
> But where are we to go now?
> We are ordinary people,
> we are subject to death and destruction,
> we are mortals;
> allow us then to die,
> let us perish now, since our gods are already dead."

In the English translation by Miguel Leon-Portilla this poem has 134 lines, though some omissions are indicated. Castro doesn't quote any more than the 14 lines given above, from the opening. But even if this fragment was all that had survived, there are signals to warn us not to take too much for granted. *"We ignorant people… we common people*": the speaker who begins like that and then proceeds to talk confidently about very serious subjects is not being humble, he is trying to unsettle the other party. And the statement that the gods are dead is a very un-ordinary-looking statement. It looks highly suspicious. Who is this statement being made to, in what context, and in what tone? And what comes next?

Castro has no suspicions. He leaps right in and buries th*e tlamatinim*e under a heavy weight of Hegelian-Marxist-Macaulayan philosophy of history.

> "The Aztec wise men understood their fast-changing reality, and they were moved to speak not just out of a fatalistic sense but also as the last remaining representatives of a vanishing world. As they met, both sides were aware of the irreconcilable differences between them. The tlamatinime and the missionaries represented the two extremes of an emerging new world in which the balance of the native universe would never be restored.
>
> When the dialogue with the missionaries took place, the tlamatinime were fully aware that the death sentence against their gods and their traditional way of life had been decreed long before Cortés had set foot in Mexico. Thanks to their mastery of the technology of war, the newly styled Spanish conquistadors were able to defeat large armies of warriors armed with stone and wooden weapons who could not overcome the power of horses, gunpowder, the cutting edge of the Spanish swords, or the cohesiveness of their fighting forces". (Here Castro somehow omits to mention the great untechnological fact without which this neat story might have been different: disease.)

There are people who bury 17th century Ireland under this same philosophical rubble. The ideology of progress must be able to catch its own echoes in everything, and so Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh has no more chance of being heard than the *tlamatinime*. The latter did not in fact believe that their gods were dead. Leon-Portilla reasonably takes this statement to refer to what the Franciscans were saying. Nothing is more likely than that some Spanish Franciscan put it to his opponents in those very words: *"Your gods are dead!"* The *tlamatinime* quotes his statement and just let it hang there, merely adding that since things are so, it is time that they themselves died too.

What they say next is that they will tell *a little* about their god and their gods. The Franciscans have claimed that their gods are not true gods, and these words are disturbing (*because of them we are disturbed, / because of them we are troubled*.) It is not what their ancestors used to say. From those ancestors they have inherited their entire way of life, which involves honouring the gods. The elders taught them that it was the gods who created life, where before there was only darkness, and it is the gods who sustain life in every way. All the great peoples of Mexico have reverenced the gods; is the ancient way of life to be destroyed now?

> "Hear, oh Lords,
> do nothing
> to our people
> that will bring misfortune on them,
> that will cause them to perish…
>
> Calm and amiable,
> consider, oh Lords,
> whatever is best.
> We cannot be tranquil
> and yet we certainly do not believe,
> we do not accept your teachings as truth,
> even though this may offend you…"

That seems to be the core of the poem, not the ambiguous flourish about death of the gods. Even though a catastrophe has occurred which involves a great, inexplicable break in the continuity of life, and the *tlamatinime* know and acknowledge that, I don't see how these words can be taken as their total surrender to progress. Quite the contrary, this is spiritual resistance.

The Case Against Las Casas

The case Daniel Castro makes against Las Casas is based on three interlinked arguments. First of all, Las Casas imposed himself on the Indians as their self-appointed champion. His campaigning was done not together with them but in detachment from them, often at the other side of the ocean; he never learned any of their languages and didn't get properly to know them; as time went on he became increasingly out of touch with the reality of their lives. Secondly, he was a missionary and an organiser of missions, committed to making all of the Indians Christians; therefore he too was a part of the *"ecclesiastical imperialism"* of the Catholic Church, contributing to a *"cultural genocide*", despite his commitment to peaceful means. And thirdly, he went into political alliance with the Spanish monarchy and thereby helped to justify its imperial claims in America, which were at the root of the Indians' problems.

> "One of the greatest ironies concerning Las Casas's reputation is that it is largely built around his work on behalf of the Indians, but during his long cumulative stay in America, roughly forty years, he rarely had direct contact with them… {He} never hid his desire to be at the centre of power in the motherland, the familiar surroundings of the Spanish court, instead of being in America… His paternalistic policies towards the Indians made Las Casas a benevolent but pragmatic agent of imperialism acting in sharp contrast to the mindless, cruel, and myopic colonists, one incapable of breaking through the invisible wall of alterity separating the natives from the Europeans."

Though he knows the biographical facts, Castro doesn't show much sense of Las Casas as coming from a context. The context was his personal experience as one of the early Spanish colonists in Hispaniola. It was only after a number of years that he reluctantly concluded that the vast majority of his fellow-

colonists were cruel (but not necessarily mindless: they were simply greedy, they wanted to profit as much and as quickly as possible from an available supply of forced labour) and destructive to the Indian peoples. The colonists were the Indians' immediate and deadly enemies. So the great principle of politics came into play: the enemy of my enemy is my friend. If not enmity, there was certainly rivalry between the Spanish monarchy and the colonists for power in America. Las Casas set out to inflame that rivalry to the utmost and use it for the relief of the Indians. The Church also, which was interested in preaching Christianity to the Indians irrespective of whether this suited the colonists or not, could be appealed to on the basis of Christian principles, and in turn it could exert pressure on the monarchy. This was the strategy that Las Casas pursued with incredible resolution and energy, and it seems that his critics ought to propose clear alternatives.

> "Almost invariably these efforts were unimplemented and in most cases ended in failure; they rarely translated into tangible gains for the natives."

The New Laws of 1542, however admirable they were,

> "would have necessitated a legion of bureaucrats backed by a military army to enforce all of their provisions… In practice they were unenforceable because the crown had neither the economic nor the human resources to create an efficient apparatus to execute them."

But even if we feel that we know all this with our hindsight, it was not so clear at the time. The Spanish monarchy, in fact, had more bureaucrats than most, and it did have armies at its disposal. In the aftermath of the New Laws, an army was sent to Peru rather than lose it to rebel colonists. And Juan Friede showed that, by the time of the New Laws, Las Casas was well aware of the problem of legislation not being enforced because of the colonists' resistance. With this in mind, he made practical proposals which were sufficiently drastic to have given the New Laws a chance of working. His proposals were not adopted, but he did try.

However, all this is rather at a tangent to what really interests Castro. He quotes the doctrine of Paolo Freire, who was active in the second half of the 20th century, as follows: *"Political action on the side of the oppressed must be pedagogical action in the authentic sense of the words, and therefore, action* with *the oppressed*." Projecting this principle back four centuries and a bit, we find that Las Casas doesn't measure up.

> "From this perspective, Las Casas's work develops not with the oppressed, the indigenous people, but within the context of Spanish letrados, the imperial hegemonic culture, working to maintain the oppressive edifice represented by the occupiers."

All through the book, this insight is hovering over everything that is said: if he really believed in the liberation of the Indians, Las Casas should have been in America constantly, *on the ground*, being prepared *"to learn native languages in order to more fully understand the natives' individual and collective problems, aspirations and expectations*", and working together with them to develop some sort of political movement on the basis of what they aspired to and expected.

So then, Las Casas should have become an anti-imperialist facilitator, using his knowledge of the Empire to undermine the Empire, encouraging and promoting efforts to restore the Aztecs and the Incas? Well, . . . no! Actually, in his later years Las Casas *was* saying, loud and clear, that the Aztecs and the Incas must be restored under Spain's overall sovereignty, and that the Spanish King, on pain of the loss of his immortal soul, must take all the necessary steps to bring this about. But this isn't a goal Daniel Castro can approve of.

> "By establishing Spain's relationship with the Indies within the dichotomous context of destruction-restoration and perpetrator-victim, Las Casas ultimately failed to bring about any measurable restoration of the New World. From the perspective of this absolute dichotomy, the answer to destruction was total restoration, and nothing less was acceptable. Even within the structure of the perpetrator-victim dichotomy, Las Casas's efforts at restoration were carried out independently of the aspirations of the natives in the absence of a meaningful dialogue between Las Casas, in Spain and America, and the "victims" he was supposed to represent."

What might this *"meaningful dialogue"* have amounted to, taking realistic account of the time? (Opportunities to lead community projects in the manner approved for social science graduates trained in Freire's theories were thin on the ground in 16th century America.) With one important exception to be considered shortly, the alternative figures Castro commends seem to be *protégés* of Las Casas, better linguists than him and more tenacious missionaries, who continued campaigning for his ideals in difficult circumstances in the decades after his death—people like Domingo de Santo Tomás. But, in fact, Castro is forced to acknowledge that the best example of meaningful dialogue comes from Las Casas himself.

In the 1550s the Peruvian colonists were seeking to have their forced labour institutions (*encomiendas*) made permanent and inheritable. They offered the King of Spain a great deal of money in return for permanency. Las Casas led the opposition to this at the Spanish Court, in conjunction with the *caciques* (the Peruvian Indian lords). These lords appointed him, along with Santo Tomás and another Dominican, as their plenipotentiary. His culminating move was to offer, on behalf of the *caciques*, to substantially outbid any sum of money that the colonists offered, provided that the *encomiendas* were allowed to die out and the Indian system of social organisation was partially restored. Though the issue was not resolved, the colonists' campaign, which King Philip had been favourable to, was effectively frustrated.

Castro cannot deny that this is a spectacular example of meaningful dialogue with Indians. Unfortunately, they were the wrong Indians. *"Las Casas's inability to understand the complexity of class differentiations among the natives lent support to the creation of a dominant native class willing to continue exploiting other natives in the same way the Spanish had been doing up to then*." One deduces that a true proponent of Indian liberation —a real anti-imperialist—would have set about undermining those social structures that Indian society happened to have produced. (Pedagogically, of course.)

There are two different views in Castro's book of what was happening in America in the decades after the Spanish invasion. One of them is stated fully and clearly, the other comes in sudden, surprising interjections. The first picture can be summarised as follows.

> "For the natives, the coming of the Spaniards signified the loss of freedom and traditional cultural identities. The wanton killing of Indians and their leaders not only brought about the precipitous decline in population; it created a state of collective depression from which the natives never recovered. The colonists never developed a coherent pattern of behaviour towards the natives despite their contributions to the invaders' acquisition of wealth and nobility status. The lack of

coherence in Spanish behaviour exacerbated the endless, unresolved contradiction obtaining in America: the Spanish understood that the labor of the Indians represented an invaluable source of wealth, but they did not hesitate to exterminate them if they offered any kind of resistance…

The Amerindians had been accustomed to war and its consequences, and they had learned to adapt to life under occupation, but nothing had prepared them for the unique characteristics of these new occupying forces… The invaders assumed the role of masters and the vanquished the role of servants, an incipient proletariat in an emerging neocapitalist society still redolent of semi-feudalism. The choices available to the natives were limited to working for the occupiers and perishing —or resisting, and also perishing, while struggling to retain their own way of life…

{There was} genocide perpetrated on all natives of America by the Europeans."

However, other statements scattered throughout the book seem to imply a quite different view of what was happening, or beginning to happen, in Spanish America by the mid-16th century.

"{Las Casas} alienated the colonists, precluding meaningful dialogue with them and consequently eliminating any chance of bringing about improvement in their treatment of the Indians…

{In the *Short History*} he fails to represent the Indians as the equals of the Europeans and thus capable of social organisation, adaptation, or rebellion. His is a myopic vision that did not look far into the historical background of some highly civilised cultures nor could he envisage a future where ethnic and racial lines could be erased in an amalgamated society emerging from the main streams conforming Indoamerica. It is as if he imagined only an irreversible present…

The bishop of Chiapa once again demonstrated that he was unable to adapt to the reality of a changing, dynamic, emerging society that was developing in the New World…

Despite his professed affection for the Indians, and the show of support he had received from them in his visits to their settlements, Las Casas, as usual, seemed more concerned with the behaviour of his fellow Spaniards than with becoming closer to his native parishioners or with attempting to bridge the gap between colonised and colonisers… The Dominican tried and failed to achieve drastic changes from the top down, while remaining ignorant of the process of resistance and adaptation in which the Indians were actively participating. After decades of subjugation, the natives had discovered the advantages of reaching a modicum of understanding with the colonisers, not because they unquestioningly accepted the superiority of the invaders but because, after their military defeat, they had realised that they could retain far more of their traditional prerogatives if they collaborated or appeared to collaborate with their oppressors…

During Las Casas's lifetime, the natives, with very rare exceptions in Mexico and Peru, were never present in the process of deliberation resulting in policies affecting their lives, just as they were absent from the determination of any legal or juridical process relating to the enforcement of the laws affecting them. Despite his long experience in American territory, he never became a part of that dynamic American society so immersed in the process of creating a new world. He was always the outsider straddling two worlds, unwilling to forsake his alterity…

Throughout his long career, the friar's inability to differentiate the events and processes that had taken place in the Antilles from the particularities of the conquest of Mexico, Peru and the rest of the American mainland became increasingly evident. It was this inability to assimilate the new complex dimension of the encounter between Europe and the high civilizations of mainland America that prevented him from implementing truly effective reforms…

One has only to peruse his {*History of the Indies*} or the {*Short History of the Destruction of the Indies*} to realise that despite his knowledge and experience of America, there were profound voids in his knowledge of the nuanced relationships between coloniser and colonised obtaining in the New World…

It is largely his unwillingness to change, or even retreat partially, that defines Las Casas's existence and is greatly responsible for his inability to accomplish any unqualified victories in his struggle in favour of the Indians or, even, against his most dedicated opponents…"

Some of these criticisms are absurd. *The Short History of the Destruction of the Indies* was a description of genocide, the genocide which Castro himself declares to have happened. It was a highly-coloured sketch and its purpose was to impress the need to stop this genocide upon the Spanish king and court. But the massive *Apologetic History of the Indies* had a different aim. It was intended to make a more profound impression on thinking, and it is all about representing the Indians as the equals of the Europeans, in some ways possibly their superiors.

To say that Las Casas shies away from looking too deeply into *"the historical background of some highly civilised peoples"* is ridiculous, it's quite the reverse of the truth. As a matter of fact, he makes a point of detailing all the *"barbarous"* behaviour which the ancient Roman writers attributed to the Spanish. We cannot look down on the Indians for their faults and bad customs, he says near the end of his *Apologetic History*,

"because we ourselves in our ancestors' times were much worse, whether in our irrationality and political confusion, or in the vices and brutal customs to be found all around Spain, as has been shown in many places above."

Even from a glance at the *Apologetic History*'s table of contents, it is clear that the skeletons are being pulled out of Europe's closets.

Nor is it true that Las Casas was unable to imagine a future of racial blending. As far back as 1516, in one of the first practical schemes he submitted to the Spanish regent, he proposed a kind of cooperative agriculture, which he thought would result in the sons and daughters of cooperating Indians and Spaniards marrying one another. *"The land and the people would fruitfully multiply*" as a result. Castro has actually mentioned this himself, but he seems to forget.

However, it is not absurd to say or to imply, as Castro does, that American colonial society had changed considerably by the mid-16th century; that forced labour in Mexico and Peru was by no means as vicious and destructive as forced labour in the Antilles; that relationships between the colonists and the Indians were changing and could have been changed still further, to the Indians' benefit; and that Las Casas was out of touch with all of this. Here Castro seems to have a large measure of agreement with the pro-colonialist Christian writer Jean Dumont, who has made this case at length.

The reference to *"that dynamic American society so immersed in the process of creating a new world*" might seem surprising. Surely, insofar as there was dynamism creating something new,

it was still being exerted by the Spaniards in their own interests? And the most dynamic Indians, surely, were trying to restore their own systems, as in the great Peruvian rebellion led by the Inca Tupac Amaru in the 1570s? But that's when you take the larger social and political picture. One can't deny that at the micro-level there really was dynamism creating a new hybrid reality. Unlike the Puritan English and Dutch of later times, the Spanish were not thoroughgoing segregationists. They mixed with the Indians, creating a *mestizo* or mixed-race group. And this is the group to which Castro tells us that he himself belongs.

The modern Latin Americans can be seen as *"the children of* ***la chingada*** {"the raped one"}, *as some modern Mexican literary figures have characterised the mestizo inhabitants of America*". And nonetheless… by whatever dubious or quite outrageous means, history has managed to get this far, i.e. as far as ourselves . . . and we're making our way in the world, and not doing badly!… So the aversion to Las Casas becomes more understandable. For all that he foresaw a *mestizo* America in 1516, it seems more than doubtful whether his later ideas, if actually put into practice, would have led to something like modern Latin America four and a half centuries on.

Motolinía's Denunciation

All of this becomes clearer when we get to the Franciscan Fray Toribio de Motolinía. He was *"one of the senior members of Spanish missionary efforts in New Spain and a member of the legendary 'twelve apostles'"*, i.e. those Franciscans who had faced the *tlamatinime* in public debate in 1524. In the conflict about making the *encomiendas* permanent, where Las Casas and the Indian Lords on the one hand faced the Peruvian colonists on the other, Motolinía supported the colonists. He was also opposed to the view that Christianity should be preached by exclusively peaceful means: if the Indians showed themselves disinclined to hear the preachers, he thought force should be used.

In January 1555 he wrote one of the fiercest attacks ever made on Las Casas, which he sent to the Emperor Charles V. Castro's tone is remarkably sympathetic when he tells the story.

> "In essence, the dispute represented the two aspects of Spanish occupation: on one side stood the idealistic, reform-minded Las Casas, and on the other the pragmatic-minded Motolinía, who, by sharing the daily life of the colonists, had come to accept their outlook concerning the natives and the relationship of the colonies to the crown. Inevitably, as was the case in all polemics in which Las Casas was involved, the argument devolved to the question of the encomienda and the encomenderos. Motolinía argued in favour of the encomienda by shifting the onus of responsibility from the individual encomenderos to the king. He claimed that since the king was the ultimate beneficiary of the encomienda, to declare it illegal would be to go not only against the crown's own interests but to contravene its own authority as well. Furthermore, the Franciscan argued that at the time of his writing the letter, the encomienda was subject to such legal restrictions and scrutiny as to render Las Casas's charges of abuses null and void."

Motolinía then made specific accusations, claiming that Las Casas had personally violated some of the New Laws that he himself had drafted. Allegedly, when acting as Bishop of Chiapa, he had made large numbers of Indians carry his belongings without payment. He had also left Indians who were anxious to become Christians unbaptised, demanding an unreasonable level of preparation before baptism could be given.

> "The letter went on to condemn the Dominican's inability, or implied unwillingness, to learn any native languages. It also challenged the Dominican's claims about the peaceful conversion of Indians in Guatemala, arguing that soon after the settlement of Tuzulutlán {known to the Spaniards as *"the Land of War"* J.M.} Las Casas had departed for Spain without regard for the fate of his newly acquired native parishioners.
>
> Las Casas never responded officially to the Franciscan's accusations, but the incident illustrates the difference in approaches to the problem of the Indian between two different missionary orders and two different individuals. In addition to Motolinía's approach to the wholesale administering of sacraments (he boasted that on one occasion he had baptised fourteen thousand Indians in one day with the assistance of only a single companion), there were profoundly irreconcilable differences in their conception and approach to what constituted true support and affection for the natives."

And here we come to the crucial statement. It was not only the colonists that Motolinía was closer to.

> "Concretely, Motolinía was closer to the elementary reality of America and its native inhabitants than the peripatetic Dominican could ever be. As Silvio Zavala has indicated, the Franciscan lived and worked as an apostle attempting to bring the Christian Gospel to the natives of New Spain for more than thirty years. While the one was concerned with evangelising, the immediate task at hand, the other was preoccupied with the more abstract issues of liberty and justice for the same people. Unlike Motolinía, who felt compelled by his *praxis* to remain in America, Las Casas felt the need to be at court, close to the centres of power, even if this implied being removed from the people most affected by his acts. While Las Casas approached the question of the Indian from a theoretical and philosophical perspective, Motolinía's contact with the everyday, commonplace reality of ministering to the downtrodden found no benefit or use for the Dominican's lofty idealistic aspirations. These differences between the two missionaries were clearly delineated in the Franciscan's letter to the king. He challenged Las Casas to emulate the example of those who lived every day with the contradictions present in the New World. As he expressed in his letter, he thought little of the Dominican's *praxis:* 'I would like to see the aforementioned Las Casas, persevering for fifteen or twenty years, confessing ten to twelve sick Indians covered with sores every day.'"

After this clearly presented contrast, Castro needs to give his more doctrinaire readers the reassurance that—

> "*at the same time, {Motolinía and Las Casas} incarnated two different faces of sixteenth-century Spanish ecclesiastical imperialism*".

But what he has implied is this: Las Casas ought to have been a radical version of Motolinía. He should have abandoned his court campaigning, got right in close to natives and colonists alike, and worked to promote concrete changes in the natives' interests. In fact, he should have tried to make one particular fear of Motolinía's come true. In a part of the letter to Charles V not quoted by Castro, Motolinía says:

> "Since many of the Indians are now using horses, it would be no bad thing if Your Majesty issued an order that no permission to have horses shall be given except to the principal lords, because if the Indians get used to horses, many of them will make horsemen of themselves and in time they will want equality with the Spaniards."

Las Casas, then, (Castro implies) should have forgotten about Aztecs and Incas. He should have omitted the anti-

genocide campaigning, since that was an obsolete issue. He should have stopped unrealistically trying to abolish the *encomienda* and instead worked to transform it. And, rather than cooperate with Indian lords or try to restore any part of the old system, he should have tried to foster a movement demanding Indian equality within the colonial society that the Spanish had established.

The case can be argued. Certainly it can be argued, and it's a pity that Castro hasn't been able to make it more clearly. Two main questions arise. The first is whether politics of this kind was a real possibility of that place (or places) and time. And the second, which overlaps with the first, is whether that is what the Indians wanted.

What Did The Indians Want?

What did the Indians want? Castro himself has posed that question of *"the natives' individual and collective problems, aspirations, and expectations"*. He has raised it as an issue for Las Casas. He doesn't seem to appreciate that it's an issue for him as a historian.

One thing that people usually want is not to be forced to do what they don't want. That's universal. But, because he will not think concretely, Castro regards Las Casas's peaceful Christianity as just part of the atrocity of cultural destruction. The issue of exclusively peaceful means, which separated Las Casas from Sepúlveda, Motolinía and others, is reduced to a secondary issue, if not a triviality. Here the modern historian manages to have his cake and eat it. In his non-doctrinaire mode he can scorn Las Casas for not being an assiduous missionary, unlike the admirable Motolinía, while in doctrinaire mode he condemns Las Casas for being any kind of missionary at all.

> "Essentially, his disagreements with the others were more concerned with form while leaving the essence of the cultural onslaught untouched. It was simply a case of peaceful versus forceful conversion to Christianity, and his proposals offered a different form of implementing the same goal of converting the natives to attain the ultimate objective of the colonisation of consciousness."

What a formulation: *"simply"* a case of peaceful versus forceful conversion! The point is that peaceful adoption of Christianity would not imply *"a colonisation of consciousness"*, if that means destruction of the pre-Christian culture. The natives were capable of transforming Christianity too. There's a good example of that from elsewhere: Ireland.

Saint Patrick, Ireland's most charismatic missionary, was a Roman Briton. His writings do not show any signs of him having gone native, and there's harsh Roman-Imperial Christian thinking in a poem by his outstanding convert Dubhthach maccu Lugair. However, within a few centuries Patrick was the central figure in an official account of how Christianity had been fused with the pre-Christian culture, retaining most of that culture, by agreement with the major Kings and Poets of the time. This account was placed as an Introduction to the main collection of Irish laws, the *Senchas Már*. Modern academics with suitably doctored brains refer to it as *"the pseudo-historical prologue to the **Senchas Már**"*. But while they are correct in thinking that it isn't the kind of history Professor Ranke told them should be written, it is actually more authentic history than any one of them will ever write themselves. It records a great fact: that Christianity was assimilated, went native, in Ireland, that it didn't just destroy what went before.

Because of this assimilation, after another thousand years of Christianity, Geoffrey Keating was still singing the praises of the great pre-Christian Kings. But Keating does not write more warmly about Cormac Mac Airt than Las Casas writes about Pachacútec Inca.

Was there scope for such an assimilative act, or series of acts, in America? What did the Indians want? Could they have made their own version of Christianity? Did they show any interest in it as people free to choose?

To discover what people want, one should try to find them in the free condition and spend some time among them. There was a Spaniard who did precisely that, though not by his own will. When an expedition to conquer Florida went wrong and led to a series of shipwrecks and disasters, this man, whose name was Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, became lost with a handful of companions. They roamed through southern parts of the present-day United States, living with one group of free Indians after another, for the next eight years.

Afterwards Cabeza de Vaca wrote an account of his adventures, which was published in Seville in 1542. Like so many of the Spanish colonists, he was a fine story-teller. His account is no doubt embroidered, but it seems a more innocent kind of embroidery. On the whole, he gives credible pictures of the relatively poor and unsophisticated Indian communities that he lived with.

In my previous article I promised to give some account of this book, but my review must be held over one more time.

SOURCES

"…he also addresses what few...": Daniel Castro, *Another Face of Empire: Bartolomé de Las Casas, Indigenous Rights and Ecclesiastical Imperialism.* (Durham NC, 2007) p.ix.

"As the number of their compatriots…": ibid. p. 53.

English translation of the poem: Miguel Leon-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture: A Study of the Ancient Nahuatl Mind* (Oklahoma 1963) pp. 62-67.

"The Aztec wise men understood…": Castro p. 54.

"…because of them we are disturbed…": Leon-Portilla p. 64.

"Hear, oh Lords…": ibid. p. 66.

Contributing to "cultural genocide": Castro p. 93.

"One of the greatest ironies…": ibid. p. 97.

"(He) never hid his desire…": ibid. p. 98.

"His paternalistic policies towards the Indians…": ibid. p. 76.

"Almost invariably these efforts…": ibid. p. 6.

"…would have necessitated a legion…": ibid. pp. 114, 116.

Friede showed Las Casas aware of enforcement problem: Juan Friede, 'Las Casas and Indigenism in the Sixteenth Century', esp. pp. 169-70. In: Juan Friede and Benjamin Keen, *Bartolomé de Las Casas in History* (DeKalb, Illinois, 1971). Details given in Part 3 of the present series of articles.

"Political action on the side…": Castro p. 14.

"… to learn native languages…": ibid. p. 185.

"By establishing Spain's relationship…": ibid. p. 155.

"Las Casas's inability to understand…": ibid. p. 143.

"For the natives, the coming…": ibid. p. 52.

"The Amerindians had been accustomed…": ibid. p.54.

"(There was) genocide perpetrated…": ibid. p. 172.

"He alienated the colonists…": ibid. p. 39.

"(In the *Short History*) he fails…": ibid. p. 113.

"The bishop of Chiapa once again…": ibid. p. 122.

"Despite his professed affection…": ibid. p. 125.

"During Las Casas's lifetime,…": ibid. p. 155.

"Throughout his long career,…": ibid. p. 156.

"One has only to peruse…": ibid. p. 158.

"It is largely his unwillingness…": ibid. p. 169.

"…because we ourselves in our ancestors'…": Bartolomé de Las Casas, *Apologética Historia de las Indias* (Madrid 1909) p. 686. = Chapter 263.

"The land and the people would fruitfully multiply": Lewis Hanke, *All Mankind Is One* (DeKalb, Illinois, 1943), p. 143; Castro p. 73.

Castro belonging to mestizo group: Castro p. 185, n. 4.

"the children of **la chingada**…": ibid. p. 178.

"one of the senior members…: ibid. p. 165.

Motolinía against exclusively peaceful means: Hanke op. cit. p. 125.

"In essence, the dispute…": ibid. pp. 165-6.

"The letter went on…": ibid. pp. 166-7.

"Concretely, Motolinía was closer…": p. 167.

"…at the same time, (Motolinía and Las Casas)…: ibid.

"Since many of the Indians…": *Colección de documentos para la historia de México, Vol. 1* ed. Joaquín García Icazbalceta (Mexico 1858) p. 257.

"Essentially, his disagreements with the others…": Castro p. 8.

Saint Patrick, *Senchas Már*, etc.: Considered in detail in a book of mine, *The Christian Druids: on the filid or philosopher-poets of Ireland* (Howth Free Press, Dublin 2008). See Chapter 16, 'The Capital Poem of Dubhthach maccu Lugair'.

Las Casas on Pachacútec Inca: *Apologética Historia*, chapters 251-260. *

Report

The English *Parliament Channel*—which broadcasts Westminster debates and suchlike matter—treated the Soiree at the Irish Embassy in London, held on 2nd July, as part of British State business. A recording of the event was repeatedly broadcast. And the Chairman, Ferghal Keane (not the Irish journalist of the same name), is part of the British propaganda apparatus: he works for the BBC and specialises on giving the British 'take' in foreign affairs. The event was held to celebrate John Redmond's 'achievement' of getting a Home Rule Act put in the Statute Book on the condition that it would not be implemented, on its first centenary. The event was commented on in the last issue of *Church & State* and in the September issue of *Irish Political Review*.

Redmondite Soirée Transcript

Chairman:

Your Excellency [Dan Mulhall], thank you for having us all here tonight and organising this event. My name is Ferghal Keane. My aim is to keep myself out of this as much as possible and to try and stimulate debate whenever things flag, if they do. I have been given a heroic task tonight, sat on this stage with three leading historians and a politician and I've been told to keep their contributions under five minutes. (Laughter.) Good luck to me. I'll do my best.

In December 1909 Prime Minister Asquith declared that the Irish problem could only be solved by a policy which, whilst explicitly safeguarding the supreme authority of the Imperial Parliament, would set up self-government in Ireland with regard to Irish affairs. And the aim was to create a devolved Parliament for Ireland, the first such Parliament since the Act of Union. In this ambition the Home Rule Act almost precipitated civil war in Ireland. As Edward Carson put it: *"I'm not for a game of bluff, and unless men are prepared to make great sacrifices which they clearly understand, the talk of resistance is useless."*

Had the guns of August 1914 not intervened, an armed confrontation between North and South, between Nationalist and Unionist Ireland seemed a distinct possibility. The Act prompted one Tory leader to threaten to support rebellion against the King's Government. In much of Ulster Protestants flocked to join an armed Volunteer force because of the fear of Home Rule, an example that was emulated by Nationalists across the island.

Tonight, as you've heard, we have a distinguished panel to help us discuss this issue and consider the legacy of the Home Rule Act and some of its principal actors. I'm going to go first to Professor Paul Bew for his reading and assessment of the Act.

Lord Bew:

Thank you very much Ferghal, and I'd like to thank the Ambassador for the kind invitation to speak tonight, and the Minister [Deenihan] for the kind invitation tonight, and the Minister for his excellent introduction.

We are here tonight to celebrate a great moment in the democratic history of the United Kingdom, the moment of the passing of the Third Home Rule Bill: a great triumph for John Redmond, a man of great honour and integrity who believed that the last debt owed to Ireland was paid. When he got into politics, the land question was a major issue, now in his mind effectively resolved by the Land Acts. Educational issues were also in his view major issues. Again also resolved. This was the last debt owed to the country, and it was paid by the passing of the 3rd Home Rule Bill.

It's a victory clearly over the House of Lords, and a crucial moment in British democratic history. But, more profoundly than that, it represents the wisdom of Gladstone's analysis from 1882 onwards, that there was no other way of governing Ireland in a stable way except by the concession of a native Parliament. The alternative was some form of coercion and English liberal conscience, to be found in both major Parties, couldn't actually live with coercion as a means of governing a people within the United Kingdom. And therefore the only possible way forward was to concede a Dublin Parliament. And the passing of the Bill represents the triumph for that reason.

Having said that, I wanted to draw attention to something said in 1937 by Winston Churchill in his *Great Contemporaries* about the Gladstonian tradition. And Churchill throughout this period, and from the moment he really starts to embrace Home Rule, from 1908 onwards, in his speech presents himself as a Gladstonian. And, presents himself rather on the lines I've just put forward, saying this was Mr. Gladstone's fundamental insight, which he supported. Churchill in 1937 added this darker reflection on the Gladstone legacy. He inculcated an indifference to the population of Northern Ireland which dominated the Liberal mind for a whole generation. He elevated this myopia to the level of doctrinal principle. And, in the end, we all reached together a broken Ireland and a broken United Kingdom. And that sombre moment of realism—because the last sentence is true, it's what we did all reach together—also has to be taken into account when we discuss these matters.

And it's harder to do because Conservative historians are rightly embarrassed by certain aspects of the Conservative and Unionist opposition to Home Rule. Above all, the Larne gun-running, which is not just an Ulster Unionist event, which has significant senior Conservative involvement within it. And I understand the Unionist argument presented by Ronald McNeill, which says: You can't blame us for introducing the gun into Irish politics. Doesn't Irish nationalism have a long-standing Republican revolutionary tradition: we didn't invent it. It's absolute poppycock to say that, because we brought the guns in, that we are in some way responsible for the 1916 Rising.

And that's not a ridiculous point. There clearly was a pre-existing revolutionary tradition of some substance in Ireland. On the other hand, it's massively provoking. And you can't read the diaries of' those people in the revolutionary generation without seeing how they perceived them as representing a double-standard in the operation of law, or what happened when the Irish Volunteers tried to bring arms, and what happened at Howth, represented a sharp double-standard. You can't escape as easily as McNeill wants to do the question of responsibility for subsequent events. So Conservative historians have looked at this and they have all basically said: We're sorry! and scuttled away from it.

At the time W.F. Moneypenny took a stronger position, the two Irish nations, and in some ways a more realistic position as Editor of the *Times*, so he talked about it being a clash of two great rights, the conflict in the Home Rule period. Not between right and wrong. He was a Unionist. But between two great Rights. And he meant that in the Shakespearean sense, quite consciously,

the Shakespearean tragedy was based on the conflict between two great Rights. But Conservatives since then have not wished to contest this space. And Liberals have therefore happily declared victory, that theirs is the story of democracy and theirs is the story of a project for reconciliation which was spitefully destroyed by others.

Now Liberals of course had before that said no Government should try and deal with the Home Rule question which was dependent on the Irish Party for votes, which did not happen with the balance of power was dependent on the Irish Party. There are many aspects of this. The Asquith Government contained many members of the Cabinet who believed you were going to have to make special arrangements, which would hurt Irish nationalists, from the beginning of the conflict, but basically allowed the conflict and the pressure to build up in Northern Ireland for two years, because that's how they stayed in power. So nobody actually has the cleanest hands in this particular respect.

And I want to conclude simply by also saying that there is an exaggerated sentimentality about devolution as a lost opportunity. And I say this, despite my enormous regard for Redmond. Let me point—Look at Scotland today. [This was before the Referendum vote of September 18th.] Scottish nationalism, whatever one says about it, is a much weaker historical—has a much weaker historical basis to it than Irish nationalism. And, even at this point, we do not quite know where Scotland is going to end up. Today's poll suggests it will remain in the United Kingdom. But he point is, if one looks at Ireland, where the nationalism is so much stronger, nobody can say a devolved settlement automatically switches off this particular problem. And, if one looks at the various social tensions in Ireland in this period, this is particularly something to be taken into account.

So I do, to return to my initial remarks, say we should hail this moment as a tremendous triumph for democracy, and a tremendous moment by the way in which there's somehow a deepening in the understanding between the British people and the Irish people, and a sign of a greater mutual respect between the two peoples. We should hail it as such, but without sentimentality, and with a certain awareness about the darker side.

Applause.

Chairman

Many counter-factuals for us to explore there. For example, had it worked could it have worked. Would it have ridded Ireland of a revolutionary tradition, not just on the Nationalist side but also on the Loyalist side. Professor Michael Laffan:

Michael Laffan

While agreeing with a great deal, or most, of what Paul Bew has said, I'll take a slightly different approach to his. The Home Rule crisis before the First World War, and the Home Rule Act 1914 that effectively brought it to an end, provided historians with the sort of material that we love. Material that enables us to indulge in ironies and paradoxes. And there were plenty of them when we look at Britain and Ireland between 1912 and 14.. We commemorate this irony, I hope harmoniously, a measure that was the most divisive, the most bitterly contested, question in Ireland for generations, and in Britain for centuries, probably since the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

It brought to the surface in Ireland deep national and sectarian animosities. The Home Rule Bill of 1912, like its predecessors, was intended, at least in part, as a debt of honour to provide a constitutional solution for the grievances of Irish nationalists. There was no great enthusiasm for the Bill. It wasn't popular in Britain. As Ronan Fanning has pointed out in his recent book, the Liberals lacked all conviction; the Conservatives were filled with passionate intensity. And this intensity of course was shared and surpassed by the Ulster Unionists. But, it's important to remember, that there was a comfortable British majority in the House of Common for Home Rule. Because if you subtract all Irish MPs, Unionists and Liberals and Home Rulers, there was a Liberal and Labour majority, a very comfortable majority, in favour, in favour of Home Rule. So cartoons, like that in *Punch* of John Redmond standing on the British Lion, strumming a harp, with an Irish pig sitting on the back of the British Lion, smoking a pipe—these, however vivid, and perhaps even influential in some quarters, don't reflect the reality.

And, as the Bill made its very slow progress through Parliament over a period of much more than two years, it was accompanied by violence. It was accompanied by a planned revolution by the Ulster Unionists, and accompanied by a pre-emptive mutiny on the part of the British Army. In the history of modern Britain it's the clearest example possible, I think, of a democratic Government's inability to control its own Army. Until 1911 the House of Lords had been able to veto Home Rule. Now it seems as if, from 1914 onwards at least, the British Army was able to prevent the Government pursuing its policy.

And, in the course of this revolution, Britain conceded vastly more to force than it had ever been prepared to concede to those who used peaceful and Parliamentary methods. And it's odd indeed that the Irish revolution was precipitated in the first instance by the folly and suicide of the House of Lords.

This evening we commemorate an Act, a Law, that was never implemented. It was first postponed and then abandoned. Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland owe their existence, not to the Home Rule Act of 1914, but to the Government of Ireland Act of 1920 and the Anglo=Irish Treaty of '21. In September 1914, Redmond and Nationalists celebrated their incomplete achievement, having at last reached an objective that, since Isaac Butt's time in the 1800s, they had pursued for 40 years. And yet these supposed victors of September 1914 were wiped out politically only four years later, in most of Ireland, not in all of Ireland. After all these survive for another 50 years in Northern Ireland—a unit, an entity, that they had tried hard to prevent coming into existence. And the real victors were the Ulster Unionists, who within a few years got everything they wanted, with ultimately disastrous consequences for themselves and others.

And it's worth pointing out that all sides showed a lack of generosity. For decades the British had rejected the demands of Irish Nationalists, a large majority of the Irish population. And in turn Irish Nationalists refused to pass on to Ulster Unionists the same demands that they had made for themselves. And in turn Ulster Unionists deny those rights to Northern Nationalists. Every side showed generosity [sic] and the Ulster Unionists, as the ultimate victors, as I said a minute ago, were able to retain that lack of generosity until the late 1960s, early 1970s.

A final irony—rather different from those I've mentioned before—in case people think that my approach is too negative, too cynical. In most of Ireland, in the future Free State/Republic, revolutionaries defeated moderates. But, despite the disillusioning experience of 1912 to 14, the great majority of those successful revolutionaries were deeply influenced by British democratic and Parliamentary traditions. And our system, the one that I'm used to in the

Republic of Ireland, is in many ways a youthful copy of the system that Irish rebels had fought against for so many years or so many decades. And I think that's enough ironies for the time being.

Applause.

Chairman

Thank you for that robust contribution. We will toy with these words. Britain conceded more to force than it ever would to those who advocated peaceful means. We'll have contributions on that.

Professor Richard Toye from the University of Exeter. He specialises in British history in its global and Imperial context. And you've written two books, three books now, on Winston Churchill. Maybe we could hear what you have to say.

Professor Richard Toye

Professor Bew described the 1914 Home Rule Act as a great moment in the democratic history of the UK and a great triumph for Redmond. Professor Laffan was perhaps less optimistic and more cautious and I would side with his interpretation. Because I would argue that the 1914 Home Rule Act was by any standards a messy compromise. So the question remains, Was it a good compromise or was it a bad compromise?

Given that it was not put into effect in 1914, for the reasons that we've heard, we can argue that it might under the right conditions have succeeded. Yet this strikes me as over-optimistic. Collectively, the British and Irish politicians who were involved in the very bitter arguments over Ireland's future, weren't able to reach meaningful agreement amongst themselves over what should be done. Even though they were just about capable of reaching a supposed solution that papered over the yawning gaps between the parties for one thing would argue that this was a political failure, and quite a bad one.

Is the Home Rule Act of 1914 worth commemorating then? To answer this we need to answer two other questions. First, why did the 1914 Act come about? And secondly, why did it not solve the problem that it was designed to solve? Now, in spite of what Professor Laffan has perhaps correctly said about the Parliamentary arithmetic in the 1910 Parliament, we do have to remember that the Liberals had been elected with a huge majority in 1906 and not been inclined to anything about Home Rule at all. And it was only as a consequence, partly of the Constitutional crisis but also of the fact that the two General Elections of 1910 ended in a draw between the Conservatives and the Liberals, that the Irish Parliamentary Party's power was dramatically increased.

Now the reason that the Home Rule Act did not solve the problem that it was designed to solve was because the Unionist opponents of Home Rule viewed it as an existential issue and were willing, or so they said, to fight for it to the death. And they were prepared in public to contemplate civil war. The Liberals for their part were never prepared to call the Unionists' bluff. And of course we still don't know what would have happened, had they done so. So it's difficult to judge on this basis whether they were right to be cautious, or whether they were insufficiently bold.

The Liberals of course successfully pressured the Irish Parliamentary Party to compromise, which it did. But this was futile because, and we can either look at it two ways. It was either out of high-minded principle on the Unionists' part or stubborn intransigence, there was no meaningful compromise that the Unionists were prepared to accept. It was for this reason this stalemate, this deadlock, this very threatening situation in the Summer of 1914, that from the point of view of some members of the British Cabinet the outbreak of World War 1 almost came actually as a blessed relief.

The Home Rule Bill, as we've heard, went onto the Statute Book, but with its operation delayed until the end of the War. In effect, slamming the lid on the Irish political pressure cooker. So I ask again, is the 1914 Home Rule Act worth commemorating? Fifty years ago no one thought so. The idea of an event like tonight taking place in 1964 would I think have been inconceivable. But I say Yes, commemoration is worthwhile, in spite of everything that I've said. We may not agree on the Act's meaning, or even its fundamental desirability, but if today we commemorate the failure, I would argue, of an Edwardian political process, we can also celebrate the processes of reorientation that have brought us here to discuss this undoubtedly momentous century.

Applause.

Chairman

John Bruton is a former Taoiseach, and former EU Ambassador to the United States. And I think he wouldn't disagree if I said you were a politician firmly in the Redmondite mould.

John Bruton

Yes. I would say first of all to assess he achievement of John Redmond, T.P. O'Connor, Joe Devlin and John Dillon, you have to look at what they were dealing with. The British Liberal Party had ceased to be committed to Home Rule until they were forced into it by Redmond, when Redmond made very clear to them that he would not support the 1909 Budget unless, prior to that, the Government introduced the Parliament Act, in order to remove the House of Lords' veto. He played hardball and he won.

Likewise he played hardball again in August 1914. He did not deliver the Woodenbridge speech immediately on the outbreak of the War. He was facing a situation at the outbreak oft he War when the Unionist Opposition, and this consisted of the Conservative `Party and the Ulster Unionists, said that the whole thing should be postponed, Home Rule should not be passed, they should simply get on with fighting the War. And he insisted that Home Rule be put on the Statute Book. And he only delivered the Woodenbridge speech, in which he urged people to join the Forces, two days after Home Rule was actually on the Statute Book.

Up to that he had simply said that the Irish Volunteers would defend Ireland. But made no recommendation in regard to getting involved in the actual War effort. So the passage into law of Home Rule was the achievement of that very tough insistence on his part in that month of 1914.

Now I would contend that Home Rule, and here I don't agree at all with Professor Laffan, who said that the British Government conceded vastly more to the use of force than they did to the peaceful Constitutional methods. And I'd like to demonstrate that by reference to one or two points. First of all I'd say we would not have a united Ireland anyway. This has been brought out very clearly in Ronan Fanning's excellent book, which I'd recommend anyone to read. I don't agree with all its conclusions, but it's the most entertaining book, and very informative. Many would say, I think, that well if we'd stuck with the Home Rule approach we might have persuaded the Unionists to come in to a united Ireland. And that was Redmond's hope. And he kept pushing for that. He was an optimist. But he was unfortunately in this case, I think, too optimistic. It wasn't going to happen because, in a sense, although he denied it and said that he rejected the Two Nations theory, in practice there is, and even to this day, a separate nation in its own mind, in the North-East of Ireland, who were not prepared to be governed from Dublin or overlorded from Dublin.

So I don't claim that Home Rule would have solved that problem. But then you can be sure the Treaty didn't achieve it. Mr. de Valera didn't achieve

it in in 1932. It wasn't achieved when we declared our Republic. It wasn't achieved at Sunningdale. And it isn't achieved today. We don't have a united Ireland today. We have a much improved Ireland but it's not a united Ireland. So to criticise Home Rule, which some might, that it didn't achieve a united Ireland, well I don't think that that is a criticism of any substance.

But what it would have done, if it had been allowed to operate—and here events beyond the control of all of the statesmen involved supervened: the outbreak of the Great War—what it would have done first of all, it would have given substantially greater guarantees of not being discriminated against to the Nationalist and Catholic community in Northern Ireland. Because under the Home Rule model, what would have happened would have been that the Counties that were excluded from Home Rule would have been under direct rule, from Westminster. And, under direct rule from Westminster, you would not have had the Local Government Act of 1922, which abolished Proportional Representation, insisted on people being employed in Local Government taking the Oath of Allegiance to the Crown, thereby excluding Catholics from important and influential positions in Local Government, and thereby leading, as we all know, to massive discrimination against Catholics and Nationalists in the allocation of housing and all of that. That would not have happened. That did happen under the Treaty Settlement. It would not have happened under the Home Rule Settlement, because under the Home Rule Settlement you would have had Direct Rule. And I believe that—And you would also have had continued Irish representation in the House of Commons, reduced representation. The idea that an administration in Northern Ireland could have got away with the sort of thing that they got away with for forty years, with Irish representation in the House of Commons and with Direct Rule rather than a Stormont Administration, isn't credible. So the Nationalist community in Northern Ireland would have had a much better deal under that arrangement. And that's why Joe Devlin accepted it, reluctantly.

Secondly, this would have been achieved without violence. Now I acknowledge there was a throat of violence from the Ulster Volunteers. It came very close to being more than a threat. But it didn't actually eventuate in many people being killed. There were some people killed, people shot in Bachelors Walk and so forth. But there wasn't an outbreak of violence. And we got Home Rule on the Statute Book essentially without a shot being fired. Subsequent progress—unfortunately many people had to die, many people had to leave their homes and come over here [to England] and never return to the land in which they were born, because of the violence that was engendered by the other methods. And that needs to be put in the balance against any perceived inadequacies of Home Rule.

Secondly I would say that Home Rule would—and here I part company I think from Ronan Fanning—would have led on to Dominion Status. Would have led on to Dominion Status. Because Bonar Law himself made it very clear that, once the Ulster Question was sorted out, which it would have been by the exclusion, he had no problems with further progress as far as the rest of Ireland was concerned. And I think that, in the Coalition Manifesto of 1918, the Liberal/Conservative Coalition, they said explicitly, Home Rule is on the Statute Book. Home Rule was before Tom Barry undertook his ambush at Solohead Beg. The Coalition had accepted that Home Rule was on the Statute Book. There was no going back on legislative independence for Ireland, as far as Bonar Law and Lloyd George were concerned, because they said it in their Manifesto. So that's the enduring achievement of Redmond. After he died that was still the case.

Chairman:

I'll have to hurry you along.

Bruton:

Yes, and I'm going to hurry up. And in fact I'm going to stop because I've said all I wanted to say.

Applause.

Chairman:

Paul Bew, at least two speakers on this panel think you've been reading a completely different Home Rule Act, one full of optimism and hope for what it might have achieved.

Lord Bew:

Well, I have at lest one point to be made on my side of that argument and my view is exactly was what the main player thought. John Redmond was totally optimistic right up until the eve of the Easter Rising. It was going the right way, and going along a path that John Bruton has outlined. And there is absolutely no question that from the point of view of Northern Catholics the arrangements that were in Redmond's mind are the most advanced, which is continued Direct Rule. Irish MPs staying at Westminster, the way Scottish MPs do today, to make sure that there was justice in the excluded area of the Northeastern Counties. So one point in my favour is the simple view that Redmond was convinced that it was going the right way. He was full of optimism throughout 1914, 1915, 1916, and was on the verge of achieving something along the lines of the vision that John has laid out. I wasn't completely of a mind—— I do think one has to be aware that the Scottish case shows that the simple application of devolution isn't necessarily the quick cure for everything. I don't know what would have happened in Ireland. I simply think it's worth making the point—

Chairman (?)

With respect, Redmond would have been optimistic, wouldn't he? I mean it was his project. It was going to be his legacy for posterity.

Lord Bew:

But, look, there is no—first of all—I don't believe in—there's a number of things about this—I believe that basically the matter was resolved before the War broke out. That essentially, after the Buckingham Palace——, if you believe Professor Gilbert, the Irish Party leadership accepted—the key point was whether—what the Unionists would not accept from Spring through to the late Summer was the idea of temporary exclusion. And the Irish Party dropped the idea finally, in the aftermath of Buckingham Palace, of insisting that any exclusion for the Northeast would be temporary. After that you're only talking about the dreary steeples of Fermanagh and Tyrone. It's inconceivable that there would have been a civil war in either Ireland or Britain over such a small—The question is now narrowed down to something so small, it's inconceivable. I don't think it's necessary for the First World War to break out—it would not have happened—which deflected energies obviously in a different direction. I think this question was on the road to solution.

Now Redmond's problem is, he was a man of exceptional honour. I was reminded by somebody in the audience of a simple indication of this. For example, when a member of his family was called to a religious life as a Benedictine, takes his vows, and shortly thereafter discovers he has a crisis of Faith, Redmond is furious. The Benedictines actually are very

understanding that these things happen. But Redmond—once you've given your word, that is it. And he gave his word that, in an international crisis, if Home Rule was conceded, that Ireland would be beside Britain—in an international crisis. That's it. That's the sort of man Redmond was. You've given your word—that's it. He was also very pro-French, pro-Belgium. All these things are his—— his relatives were nuns and so on. He had given his word, so he believes that he had taken a stand, and he believed that something had changed in the relationship between Ireland and Britain. Because he had shown at Surla Bay, and other places, that he could deliver Irish people to be slaughtered—you might say from a Republican point of view.

There had been a transformation in the relationship between the to countries because he had shown that he was a serious person, a man of honour, and that the Irish Party stood for honour, and that everything therefore could only be going in the right way. And, don't forget, he is not a radical separatist. The fact that the Old Age Pensions were now being paid for from the British Treasury, which Ireland could not have afforded, is something he wants to see continue. There has to be cuts when the Republicans take over because Ireland cannot afford the various social welfare benefits of the Lloyd George Government from its own resources.

Michael Laffan:

I agree entirely that things were very much worse for very many Irish people after independence because of the break with Britain. We left just at the point that we had begun to make a profit, after so many, many, many decades, one might say centuries, when we hadn't. So, in that way, independence came at a very bad time.

I think that—to take up for example a point that John Bruton made: Of course, Redmond was convinced that Home Home Rule would come into effect once the War was over. But there would special amending legislation passed. And by the time they got round to that in 1919 and 1920, before the Treaty, they decided to scrap the 1914 Act and start all over again with what in effect was a new, Fourth Home Rule Bill, the Government of Ireland Act. And, because it was the only one of the four that was passed—that was proposed and followed through by a Conservative Government, it was deeply sympathetic to the Unionists, while the first three had been sympathetic to the Nationalists.

And it set up Northern Ireland. It set up what became the Stormont system, before the Treaty. So one might say that the Treaty negotiators of 1921 did no better than Redmond—and in many ways they didn't—they got vastly more because, I think, of the dead bodies in the streets and the fields. Because the British were so deeply ashamed of the way in which the War in Ireland was being fought. Ashamed from the very top, from the King down—he was horrified by what was being done in his name—they gave way. They were fed up with Ireland, Bonor Law and others had already come to the conclusion that it doesn't matter so much what happens in the South of Ireland, once we save the North—— OK, give them much more. And they got that much more by violence. Whether it would have come about peacefully or not, who knows? It's quite possible, just look at Catalonia, which seems to be heading towards independence peacefully. Home Rule might very well have followed the present Catalan path.

Chairman:

If we had never left the Empire, had we achieved Home Rule and had it worked peacefully: would we have all those motorways?

Bruton:

I think that what would have happened is that the Empire would have transformed itself into the Commmonwealth. Which is what happened. And it is important to say that Irish Ministers played an important role in the changing of the nature of the relationship between Britain and what had previously been her colonies, in the drafting of the Statute of Westminster and all of that legislation. And I think we would have evolved to a point where Ireland's position would be similar to Canada's position today. We would have the Queen as Head of State but for every other purpose we would be independent. And would have our own Army and all our own taxing powers and be a separate member of the European Union by now. I can't prove that. You can't prove that. But I think that's the logic of what was evolving. And it must be said the First World War itself changed things a lot because, whereas countries like Australia and Canada entered the War as essentially Colonies, by the time the War was over, by 1919 and 1920, they were separately signing the Treaty of Versailles as independent countries, along with the United Kingdom. And, I think, while Ireland wouldn't have got that far that fast, I think that was the direction of travel.

Toye:

I think this raises a very important point about some of the ways in which the language of the pre-1914 period, and some of the assumptions of the pre-1914 period, were different from what we might automatically think them to be. So there's quite an important historical argument about: was Ireland a Colony? was it a British Colony? Of course it was different in some ways from many other Colonies because it had direct representation at Westminster. But what we have to remember about Redmond's rhetoric in those 1910, 1912 period is what the IPP [Irish Parliamentary Party] were actually demanding that Ireland be like a British Colony: They said *We want to be like a British Colony*, because the comparisons they made were exactly what John Bruton was saying about 'We want to be like Australia, we want to be like Canada, we want to be like South Africa'. So it's very much worth paying attention to these subtle differences in language, which were quite different. One cannot imagine anyone today demanding as a sign of freedom, that they should be treated as a British Colony.

Bruton:

You're taking the benefit of hindsight and using the language of today. And that time there was nothing dishonourable about being a Colony, but it would have evolved otherwise, I think.

Chairman:

Are we paying too little attention here, in reflecting on the Act of Union, in the growing power of a resurgent revolutionary tradition in Ireland at the time? Wasn't the growth of advanced nationalism too much out of the picture?

Lord Bew

Well, I think there are five contested by-elections between the outbreak of the 1st World War and the Easter Rising. And, in some of these, people stand with views that you might consider to be advanced Nationalist. They're all won by Redmond's Party. I don't believe for a minute that the Irish Party machine is particularly as strong as it had been. I think it's creaking in lots of ways. I think that the land question, which had given a lot of farmer participation in the United Irish League, has—because it's solved, the farmers aren't part of the machine as much as they had been. I think it's a creaking machine. It's still good enough to win every test of public opinion before the Easter Rising. I think that is the point, that's the thing that you can't avoid. They're not great wins, but every single one is won by a follower of Redmond: every single test at a by-election. There are others which aren't fought at all.

So, on the one hand, I think there

clearly is a growing revolutionary momentum. And you could even see it in these by-elections, where there is a significant dissident vote, which there had not been before at all, before 1910 or 1912 against the—— Well, there was one famous case, one famous exception. So it's there and I also think, as I've said earlier, that you cannot escape from the Unionist perspective, the bad example of the 1914 gun-running.

This is not to say that there isn't a Unionist case. It's not to say that the Liberal Government weren't right to assume that the attempt to seriously modify and dilute a community's citizenship within the United Kingdom is an Act or a Bill just like any other Act, which doesn't require some more explicit authentication, and that they were certainly very unwilling to put it to an Election to see where the British people stood on that question. They could have avoided a lot of problems if they'd wanted to do so. So it doesn't justify their position, but you cannot escape the fact that they basically—— in other words, I think it's a naive way to say: *"Oh it's law on one side and disorder on the other*. But you can't escape the fact that it is revolutionising of nationalist elites. As I say, the diaries of the revolutionary generation show them bursting with indignation—the sort of people who were then to be found at the Post Office. So, yes, perhaps we've neglected them. But at the democratic test of opinion, we know where the Irish people were. They were with Redmond until the Rising. And that's why he was optimistic.

Chairman:

How much, though, does the effect of the War itself and the experience, there are now descriptions coming back to people, the knowledge certainly by 1916 that this is a charnel house to which young Irishmen are being sent to their deaths, how much does that decrease support for Redmond?

Unknown Speaker

Redmond, while he always opposed conscription, he was deeply committed to enlistment. In 1914 he supported voluntary enlistment to the Army, because of the deal that had been done, the commitment that had been honoured. And, naturally, very many Irish people associated him with the War effort. He was one of those who stood up and said: *Join Up*! His own brother was killed. His son fought in the Army. So he made sacrifices. His family made sacrifices. He really believed in it. And, as opinion turned against the War, as people realised what a horror it was, what a charnel-house, to use your words, it was, opinion shifted against Redmond. And of course that had already been done.

Paul mentioned the by-elections. There was the influence, the inspiration of the Ulster Volunteers, that did catch the imagination of many young people in Nationalist Ireland, particularly after the Larne gun-running. It was fairly slow to take off between November 1913 and March/April 1914. Then it took off quite dramatically. So that, first of all, followed so rapidly by the War, meant that people were thinking in terms of guns or fighting, realising that many Irish people were already fighting, some encouraged by Redmond, and some, many, had died as a result. And his and his Party's unpopularity increased accordingly, making him more vulnerable when, out of the blue—it shouldn't have bee out of the blue, but it was effectively out of the blue—the Easter Rising took place.

There had been so many leaks, so many near discoveries, it was a freakish event. There was nothing predestined about the Easter Rising. It could have been stopped very easily, but it wasn't. It came, from Redmond's point of view, out of the blue, and ultimately it destroyed him and his Party.

Chairman:

One of the striking things about this whole period is quite how late in the day it is before Constitutional Nationalist politicians, Redmond, engage in any meaningful way with Unionism. And that, I would argue, has been a consistent theme, through Daniel O'Connell, who launches his ill-fated invasion of Ulster, through Parnell, who only at the end of his career begins to come round to the idea of engaging with Unionists, and up until Redmond himself. But, the Constitutional Nationalist politicians from the South: why is it that we have been so blind historically to any kind of engagement? As Carson himself put it: You did nothing to try and win us over.

Bruton:

I think Irish Nationalists take, as their starting point, a map. And it's this map of Ireland, of 32 Counties, and that is a one and indivisible map. And the assumption is, just because one lives on the same physical land mass, one has to be politically one. People doesn't argue about that on those lies in Hispaniola, for example, or in other islands where there are two jurisdictions. But in Ireland that has always been the assumption of Nationalists, all of the Nationalists you mentioned, including John Redmond. He and Arthur Griffith took the view that there needs to be some form of recognition of the ultimate destiny of a united Ireland. And one has to say that, I think, it's not until very recent times, that Irish Nationalists have taken Unionists seriously at all, in their own terms.

We've taken Unionists seriously in a sort of patronising way of wanting to please them. But actually accepting them in their own sense of who they are themselves, that's something quite new. It's something that, I would say, as far as Irish Nationalist leadership is concerned, dates from 1990. Because that was when the main Opposition Party called for the removal of Articles 2 & 3 of the Constitution—as a unilateral act, not as a bargaining counter but as a unilateral act. And I did that.

Richard [Toye]:

Well, I would argue that it was very difficult for Redmond to engage openly in such constructive dialogue, because he had to maintain the support of his electorate. Now he was very good at managing that overall constituency. He did keep them largely onside until a very late stage in the day, as we've been hearing. But there are limits to how far he could go. And so I think that, although on the surface Redmond looks very strong, there was a degree to which he was really skating on thin ice. And was actually very clever and subtle in the degrees of compromising he was prepared to make, and the rhetorical level at which he had to still speak up to certain nationalist themes in order to make sure that he did not lose the backing of people who might in fact be prepared to go with the more extremist or revolutionary tradition.

Lord Bew:

It's absolutely the case, Richard's right, that there is a mass pressure, particularly through Joe Devlin, curtailing Redmond's flexibility. He does say, on September the 15th, in that great speech, that he had stood all his life for two principles: one, that there should be a Parliament in Dublin; two, that no County in the North that had a majority against it should be forced to come into that Parliament. And I think we can be sure that he is actually telling the truth, because he was a man who always told the truth.

His problem was that he couldn't—— he got the worst of both worlds in the months leading up to the outbreak of the 1st World War, because what Carson is effectively asking him to do is to say: No time limit on such exclusion scheme. And he cannot articulate it until the end of July, essentially. And it's too—— Stephen Gwynn writes about this in his great book, *John Redmond's Last Years*: Stephen Gwynn, the MP for Galway.

It's one of the greatest books written about Irish politics. It's extraordinarily sympathetic to Redmond. But what he says is: in Ireland you do the big thing. The thing to do was to grasp this [early?] —— not—— you know, Joe Devlin was always saying in your ear: you can't do this, you can't make this concession. Do the big thing. You should have done the big thing in the Spring of 1914, and embraced the fact of exclusion without a time limit. Had he done—In the end he ended up doing it anyway, too late, having taken an enormous political hit, and having lost the benefit of some kind of a direct understanding with Carson.

But, if the understandings are all forming after the War breaks out, after he has demonstrated his loyalty—— Look by the way at the Westminster Hall. Look at the number of Irish Party's MPs who died, the number of sons, who compare with any of the mainstream British parties, who died in that War. Look at the MPs themselves and their sons and daughters on the plaque in Westminster Hall. This is something which had a huge effect on the British during the War. And so by 1915-16 the whole relationship with Bonar Law and Carson was completely transformed. Gwynn's point is that he might conceivably, if he'd acted more decisively in the Spring of 1914, have actually got himself a better position. Gwynn says that in Ireland, do the big thing. People respond to the big generous gesture, on both sides, if you do. And he didn't. We know why he didn't do it. Because, basically, Joe Devlin was telling him throughout: You can't risk it.

Bruton:

Is it not true though that in late 1916, after the Rebellion, that he put forward a proposal which would have—which had come from Lloyd George—which would have meant exclusion for six Northeastern Counties, and Joe Devlin was able to persuade Nationalists in Belfast to accept that, which I think was a major thing for him to be able to do. Because it was clearly against the interests of the Nationalists in Belfast to accept it. But they did. So that was an attempt, if you like. Maybe too late.

Interjection:

Too late!

Bruton:

But it was an attempt. But then what happened subsequently was that Lord Lansdowne stymied that deal by going back on what Lloyd George had said, or perhaps Lloyd George was saying two different things to two different people at the same time.

Interjection

Not for the first time!

Bruton

Redmond was not fortunate in the British politicians with whom he had to deal.

Chairman:

My final point to the Panel here, before we go to the audience for questions: and that's to you, Michael Laffan. Why has it taken us a hundred years to celebrate, if you want to use that word, or at least analyse publicly, the Home Rule Act, and the legacy of Redmond?

Laffan:

Well for a long time in the Republic almost a State deification of the Easter rebels, of the violent traditions. I remember when I was a schoolboy, a very, very long time ago, reading Carty's *History Of Ireland*. More space was devoted to Pearse than to all the other rebel leaders put together as regards the Easter Rising. There was almost a State-imposed distortion whereby, not only the Irishmen who fought in the British Army in the 1st World War were air-brushed out, but the Nationalists, the Constitutional Nationalist tradition was seen as a dead end, because the other side won. Because Collins, De Valera, Cosgrave, they were the people in power. They wanted to make sure that it was *their* tradition that was honoured. And there was always a degree, I think, of defensiveness on the part of very many people, not all of course, but very many people, that they looked at Redmond who was seen as a great failure in Irish history. A loser, compared to the winners like, ultimately, De Valera.

Interjection:

An unfair judgment.

Laffan

An unfair judgment, but one that took a long time to overcome. And it has been overcome I think pretty fully now, not by everyone, but I think in most quarters.

There may, who knows, be a backlash, because of the way in which politics has been developing in the Republic in the last few months there may be an attempt to rewrite some aspect of Irish history again. We may have to re-fight old battles that we thought we had won in the 1980s and 1990s. But I think it is now more widely accepted that there were two traditions, not one. That a Taoiseach like Bertie Ahern, who paid very very little attention, with the exception of the Battle of the Somme where he did play an admirable role, but otherwise he tended to glorify the Republican revolutionary tradition at the expense of the Constitutionalist one. I think we have achieved a better balance, as is indicated by this evening. And the fact that there are so many people here, British and Irish, who are coming to listen to discussion on something that has very little, or almost nothing, to do with the until recently more acceptable face of Irish history.

Chairman:

Thank you very much, Michael Laffan. I am now going to open out to the audience. But I just want to pounce on Mary Kenny, who I see sitting in front of me, who has done some very interesting research on the feelings of the King at the time of this turmoil in 1914. Mary.

Mary Kenny:

[Inaudible] yes, I have had a very interesting time going through King George's Diary… one of his Diaries and letters during this period. And I'm saying now this with respect. I got rather fond of George the Fifth. And he reminded me very much of the Sandymount Protestants that I'd grown up with in Dublin 4, who were really very attached to the Crown and the Union, really. But absolutely determined to be fair. And they had the reputation of being very fair employers, you know. And that's the way he came over. George the 5th was absolutely an Unionists. He was the apex of the Union. But he agonised over Home Rule, because he kept saying: I must, as the Constitutional monarch, I must hold the ring. I must be fair to both sides. And he kept writing this in his Diary all the time.

He was terribly upset actually about the pressure he was being put under. He had very little contact with the Irish Nationalists. And he only met Redmond I think once personally until about 1914. But he got a bucketful of letters from Ulster Unionists, and an awful lot of letters from Bonar Law as well, whom actually George himself didn't like very much. That was just a kind of personal chemistry thing. And there were those passionate letters coming from Belfast. And I have to say, I almost—— I mean, Carson felt that George the 5th was far too Constitutional a King; that, if he was a Unionist, he should stand up for the Union. The King was appalled about the Curragh Mutiny. Partly because he thought it's not the job of a soldier to have any opinions whatsoever. This is my Army, and he, the soldier, should obey the King. So it was just rather charming to see how, although it hurt him to think, he didn't like to see the United Kingdom broken up, and yet kept

saying: I must obey the will of Parliament, and I must be a Constitutional King, and I must be fair to everybody. And he did tell John Redmond that he did see his point of view, and he wished to honour it. He was so obsessed with Ireland that he hardly noticed the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. It's very, very *en passant* in his Diary: Oh, by the way, this chap in the Balkans— And so I came to like him because he really did try to be fair. It was going against his own heart, but he wanted to do the right thing. And indeed I suppose he did endorse that when he went to Belfast to open that Parliament and he made that wonderful speech where he said Irishmen must, you know, learn to work together. So, a good man, I thought.

Chairman:

Thank you very much, Mary.

If I could just ask you to wait until the microphone gets to you, and when it does to identify yourself.

So, questioner at the back. Just wait for a moment until the microphone gets there.

Ronan Fanning:

I'd like first of all to thank John Bruton for his generous remarks about *Fatal Path*. Particularly generous remarks, as he himself said there are things in the book with which, I'm unsurprised to find, he disagrees. So I'd like to begin by expressing my gratitude on that.

I'm afraid, as far as I'm concerned, you cannot forget the way people look at history. Maybe they shouldn't think of winners and losers. But they do. And there are two things, I think, to be said about the 3rd Home Rule Bill, which are more important than anything else. The first is that it was never intended to be enacted in the from in which it was introduced: that the exclusion of part of Ulster was always in the mind of the Government. But they didn't reveal it until the last possible moment, because they wanted to keep the Irish Parliamentary Party sweet. The second fundamental fact was that, because the Home Rule Act, as it then was from 1914 on, was accompanied by a Suspensory Act; it was never intended that it be implemented in the form in which it had been enacted. That's very clear from what Asquith says in the very brief debate. And the point here I think is that Partition, exclusion of Ulster, is inevitable. It's very likely I think in February 1912. But it's absolutely inevitable from the moment Asquith stands up in the House of Commons and publicly offers the exclusionists six Counties. And, on that occasion, what everybody remembers is Carson's superb rhetorical response: *"We do not want a sentence of death with a stay of execution for six years* What people forget is that he also said, *But thanks very much, by the way we'll have Six Counties.* So there's a certain sense therefore in which I think, as the Tories pointed out, whether its appropriate to celebrate.

I don't think it's appropriate to celebrate the Home Rule Act, because it was never enacted; it was never intended to be enacted. And I think there's something I think here. One of my friends was chatting about these things. The elephant in the room is the failure, not just of the Irish Parliamentary Party and Irish Constitutional Nationalists, but the failure of all: the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party, and the Ulster Unionists for their own good reasons, from 1886 up to 1912, to accept the real difficulty was not the Irish demand for self-determination in the form of Home Rule, but the Ulster Unionists demand that they should have the same right of self-determination. And I think John Bruton gave—and that's a point on which I would agree with him absolutely—a very honest answer to Ferghal Keane's point about his question about that: That it's only very recently that Constitutional Nationalists and people in Nationalist Ireland have begun to accept that Ulster Unionists have a right to self-determination. There's going to be a pretty appalling demonstration, shocking demonstration of this in November. This is a plug. The 9th volume of the *History of Irish Foreign Policy* deals with the policies of the Inter-Party Government, 1948-51. The first volume to deal with the foreign policy of a Coalition Government: It's a large volume, about 600 documents in it. You would look in vain for any reference in the documents, which are multitudinous, that emanate from the Department of even the word 'Unionist'. That isn't even recognised. *"Tory"* is the word that's used. This is all a Tory conspiracy. The British are responsible for this. It's up to the British to put it right. And I think John Bruton is absolutely right about that. And it's only very recently that it's changed.

Chairman:

Michael Laffan, would you like to pick up on that?

Michael Laffan:

I agree entirely. There has been a readiness to turn one's back in Nationalist Ireland, in the Republic of Ireland. Remember that in 1925, when James Craig met W.T. Cosgrave in London to settle the Boundary, their parting words: *We will see each other, will be in touch.* And forty years passed before an Irish Head of Government met a Northern Irish Prime Minister. So what Ronan has just been saying, or describing, I think, fits perfectly the attitude of all parties, Fianna Fail, Cumann na nGaedheal, Fine Gael. They didn't want to know about Northern Ireland. They carried on the old assumption of Redmond and the Home Rulers, that the British would do the job for us. They carried on the attitude of Collins and Griffith in the Treaty negotiations: If we can whittle down Northern Ireland, so that it becomes unmanageable, it'll drop like a ripe apple into our hands. There's no need for us to charm, to waste time charming them. Almost certainly a lost cause, but they never tried.

Chairman:

But hold on a second here now. In all of this: How many of you here—we'll leave you out of it—have tried to charm an Ulster Unionist (Laughter) in the full flight of his political convictions.

Laffan:

I've never tried to convince an Ulster Unionist to join the Republic. I have had many long, interesting and sometimes vaguely acrimonious discussions with Ulster Unionists, both Dublin and Belfast and elsewhere. I've never said: Come and join us, please. I've always taken the view we in the Republic should sort out our own problems. Very much the sort of Sean Lemass point of view. Make our Republic attractive to them, and don't keep banging on about bringing them in. They might acquire an interest if they find us a genial admirable society.

Chairman:

Paul, what kind of response would O'Connell, Parnell, Redmond have received had they tried a more conciliatory approach?

Lord Bew:

Well, you see, I think that one of the points that's worth making here is that the actual social connections between Redmond and Carson are actually close. They both worked at the Irish Bar. It's part of their common, their educational backgrounds: Trinity and so on. They're actually close in a way that the subsequent leaders of Nationalism and Unionism are not close. And that's one reason why one looks at this as a particular area. Actually socially, educationally there's quite a lot that they have in common. And, when the War—in the period between 1914 and 1916 which you can look at as a terrible, pointless, loss of Irish lives, at Gallipoli and so on—and the birth of a Republic—that idea that it's better to die in Ireland if you're going to die like that—All of that is happening. But the other thing that is happening here is, that they are actually now talking in a different way. And I

do not think it is conceivable at all.

Even when one talks of these discussions with Craig. Craig made speeches after 1926 saying: *You can't hope for us in Northern Ireland to succeed*. When he went home, the first thing he does, he makes a speech saying: *We don't want Northern Ireland just to succeed. We want that part of Ireland that is not in the UK also to succeed. We want to work together with them*. The idea that one is dealing wit some incredible, crass, inflexibility, determined to be pursued at all points, is I think not the case. I think it's a much more complicated set of mentality.

There's a lot of crass inflexibility. But the Craig thing is a very clear example. He didn't just go home and forget about it. He talks to his own people quite extensively about the meetings he had with Cosgrave and about what it means: We want to work together and so on. And much of that fizzles out simply because De Valera eventually takes over Irish politics. So, if I could say one thing: But all this is dependent on one thing. It's dependent on the acceptance of the principle of consent. And this is the point I was trying to talk about earlier. This is the Gladstonian problem. You can't escape it by saying: *Oh, it's just Home Rule, not a Republic that's at stake here*. Because we know from Scotland that Home Rule can lead to evolution towards independence in a fairly natural way. And therefore that's the point.

The possibility of a reasonable dialogue with the Unionist community depends on acceptance of the principle of consent. Which it is now accepted. The problem, the dark side of the Gladstonian legacy and its effect on the British Liberal mind is it's not just Irish Nationalists, its British Liberals have been extremely slow to get that point

Chairman:

Can you bring the microphone to the front to Vernon Bogdanor.

Bogdanor

Vernon Bogdanor, historian King's College, London. I want to make one point about the Nationalist tradition and one point about the Unionist tradition. John Bruton has defended the Home Rule Act by saying that it could and might well have evolved peacefully into something like the Irish Free State in the 1920s, and it could have done that without all the violence and horror that occurred, which seems to me very possible, certainly. And it would be wrong I think to say an Ireland in that position would be a colony. I mean Australia and Canada weren't colonies by 1914. They were self-governing Dominions with the right to impose tariffs against the United Kingdom. They were very far from being colonies. They were self-governing countries.

But it seems to me that John's defence is really one that no British politician would have accepted. Because what he's saying is that ultimate result would be Ireland would no longer be sending MPs to Westminster—as of course it didn't under the Free State. Now, from that point of view, Asquith and the Liberals were just as much Unionists as the Conservatives. They defended Home Rule as a final settlement which would keep Ireland within the United Kingdom. And John Bruton is implying that would have worked, but not as a final settlement.

In other words, the reason for celebrating it is not the reason that British politicians gave. I think he's right. But that's not the reason that British politicians gave for supporting it. And I think, if you'd said at the time, if Redmond and others had said that at the time, very few British Liberals would have supported a Home Rule Bill. They weren't prepared to put Ireland in the same category then as Canada, Australia and so on, until after the War.

Now, on the Unionist tradition, surely the main reason why the Nationalists weren't willing to recognise it was because the Ulster Unionists, or the Unionists rather, until about 1910, were using Ulster as an excuse to stop Home Rule occurring for the rest of Ireland. When Joseph Chamberlain and Randolph Churchill spoke about Ulster, they weren't trying to get exclusion, they were trying to defeat Home Rule. And the view up to 1910 was that, without the industrial strength of Belfast, probably Home Rule might not be viable. So it was an excuse to kill Home Rule, not a way to get what Ulster wanted. And it wasn't I think, till 1912, till the Ulster Covenant, which spoke about equal citizenship, not two nations—a part of the British nation: you can't be a Unionist and believe there'[s a separate nation in Northern Ireland. You're part of the British nation if you're a Unionist. And that was a different position from the one that Chamberlain and Randolph Churchill had held.

And it's understandable if the Nationalists didn't react to this, as it were, *volte face*, on the part of Unionists. They were giving up the claim for the Union and saying that the only part of the Union they were going to defend was Northern Ireland. Now that was a powerful play—

Interjection:

a personal tragedy this.

Bogdanor:

—They were not asking for anything. They were not asking, as the Nationalists were, for a privilege, for a Parliament. They were asking that their position of equal citizenship should not be disturbed A powerful play. But to have expected the Nationalists to accommodate themselves, I think, to this sudden alteration—— So one can understand the Nationalist tradition, even if it was in the last resort faulty on that point.

Bruton

Well, I just would say in response to Ronan Fanning, that I think you'd have understood that, when Home Rule went on the Statute Book, that there would be amending legislation, which hadn't been published, but the terms of it had been under negotiation, which would indeed have provided for some form of exclusion of either four or six Counties in Northern Ireland. No, Redmond wasn't celebrating something that didn't take account of that fact. He was celebrating the fact that for 26 Counties, for sure, they had obtained Home Rule on the Statute Book. And I think that was a signal, a peaceful achievement, in face of the threat of civil war, and in face of very indifferent British politicians.

As to Vernon's point: Home Rule had evolved to Dominion Status, let's say 1930. At that stage, yes, Irish MPs, a reduced number of Irish MPs from the 26 Counties, they were going over to Westminster and would have been looking after Northern Nationalist interests through being there. They would have withdrawn. But one would have hoped that, at that stage, the way in which Northern Ireland was to be governed would have been established on much better lines. And you would not have had the *Government of Ireland Act*. It was the *Government of Ireland* did the damage. Because it created this separate Parliament in what was essentially a gerrymandered portion of Ireland, which had inevitably one party in power for ever. And that was what did the damage. I think, if you had either Direct Rule, which the Home Rule formula would have led to, I think the position of Northern Nationalists would have been better. And I think that's why, interestingly enough, while Sinn Fein swept the board in the 1918 Election, there was one seat that De Valera was defeated in. He was defeated

by Joe Devlin in West Belfast. And the Parliamentary Party candidate triumphed over the Sinn Fein candidate in West Belfast. Something that's hard to imagine now, but it happened.

Unknown Speaker

I was just going to say a word in defence of the British politicians who John Bruton describes as indifferent. It's certainly true that many of them were indifferent. But there were also many brilliant characters among them: Lloyd George, Churchill, Asquith. I don't think that any of them can be described as indifferent. So this leads to the question of why was it that these actually very talented people weren't able to solve the problem. and I think it comes back to the point raised by Mary Kenny indirectly when she mentioned the Curragh Mutiny, the language is controversial. Some people describe it as the Curragh Incident.

But the fact that the Government was unable to get its own Army to agree to follow out its instructions meant that this was a kind of fundamental crisis of the British State. There, at the same time, waiting in the wings, you had the Conservative Party, who were being intransigent, not because they are necessarily inherently inflexible. As we've heard, they can be flexible under the right conditions. But they had an advantage. There was nothing to gain from being flexible at this point, because they thought they could exploit the situation in order to use this crisis in order to take Office. So I think that what we're talking about is, certainly there was some degree of lack of political will, but it's not necessarily a lack of good intentions. And it's not necessarily the lack of the talent of the British politicians concerned. It is that there was something fundamentally structurally problematic about what was going on within the British State at this time, which meant that, in my view, the Irish problem could not be solved in 1914.

Chairman:

I just would point out, it strikes me that thus far it's been a very heavily male-dominated discussion. And I'm putting it up, as it were, to the women in the audience, to have the honour of asking the last question. So—I'll come to you after—

Kevin McNamara:

I just want to tarnish Redmond's halo a little, being Liverpool Irish and brought up not to regard him as the thing from the Calender of the Holy Mother Church. John rightly paid compliment to his playing hardball in 1914. The argument was that he didn't play hardball enough. That, given the situation that was happening, and Britain's desperate need for an Army, he did not get Home Rule, and was prepared to accept a postponement. That's the first point I want to make.

The second point is his Woodenbridge Speech. His earlier comments about using the Volunteers to defend Ireland, being prepared to do that, had the support of all the various elements in the Irish Volunteers in Dublin and in Britain. But, when he made that speech, he split the Volunteers. It also had consequences—there was no Irish element *per se* in the British Army. The Volunteers that went, particularly from my own city of Liverpool, were dispersed in the various regiments. The Irishness with which they had joined the Volunteer, in a sense, was not recognised, despite the elements in the local press and local Irish press to make these serious points.

And the third point I want to make is that his refusal to enter into Asquith's Coalition left the whole of the scene open for Carson and the whole of the Orange Unionists. And the whole attitude of the administration within Dublin changed with Government appointments —Lord Chancellors, Judges, senior civil servants. The whole of that momentum which was working towards Constitutional Nationalism within the Irish civil service was stopped hard in its tracks.

And so, while I admire many of the things which John Redmond did, I believe he was candidate in Liverpool Kirkdale, the other constituency, that I was born in, very early in his political career: I was not around. But, nevertheless, his judgment, perhaps by his sense of honour, by his sense of commitment, he lost the political advantages which he could have got.

And finally can I say, read the last speech that Davitt made in the Commons, about when I leave this House I'll say to my sons, *There's no cause so great, no idea so justified*, and those were the words, *which will be honoured by this House unless met by force*. And that is the fate of the SDLP. The Government negotiated with the Shinners.

Unknown Speaker:

The point has been well made that in 1914 the intransigence of the Ulster Unionists was pretty well absolute. But it does raise the question of what would have happened had there been nowhere for them to run in political terms. The problem being not the Ulster Unionists, who were true to form, but the British Conservative Party, and in particular Bonar Law. One aspect of their support for Ulster Unionism was brought out very clearly in Ronan Fanning's very good book. And it was sectarian. That is to say, the hostility to Catholicism on the part of most of the players on the British side, and specifically on the Tory side And that I think makes more interesting the stance of some of the notable Protestant Nationalists.It's interesting to read the second version of George Bernard Shaw's Introduction to *John Bull's Other Island*, in which he's absolutely incandescent with fury at the whole notion that the Curragh Mutiny, and the support it was given by the British Tories, could have subverted British Parliamentary democracy. I don't, I'm afraid, think he'd have much time for Professor Bew"s notion that it was a triumph of Parliamentary democracy in 1914, and indeed it wasn't the case.

And that I think in turns begs the counterfactual question, at the time they played the Party game, had it not been that the Party was led by John Redmond, an Irish Catholic, who stimulated all these antagonisms, what would, for instance, Parnell have done in the same situation? I think, as Kevin McNamara said, he might have played hardball. St. John Ervine, the very distinguished Protestant historian, said that the Catholic Nationalists were always a good deal more sentimental about the British Parliamentary system than the Protestant Nationalists. Would Parnell have been able to call the bluff of the Conservative Party, and would he have been able to call time on the Ulster Unionists in terms of a more conciliatory approach, as he seems to have adopted during his latter years?

Chairman:

This phrase, *calling the bluff*, invariably applied to Ulster Unionism, whether it is in 1912, whether it's in 1914, whether it's during the Ulster Workers' Council, whether it's at points during the 1980s, the Anglo-Irish Agreement, it comes up again, and again, and again. For our final point tonight, I'll go to you, Paul Bew. Would it have worked or would it have merely meant more bloodshed?

Lord Bew

When I think about this period the thing that amazes me the most is, we all in this room I suspect support the Good Friday Agreement. The underlying fundamental principle there is the principle of consent. And I'm amazed about how little it alters people's——. If we all accept that, then look back to 1912, 1914. Now some people will say: *Oh, it's not the same issue, because Home Rule is not setting up an independent Irish Republic and that therefore*

the Unionists would still have been in some way part of the United Kingdom. But Carson said again and again, he said, once you establish a Parliament in Dublin, you do not know, you will not be able to intervene again. And, if it progresses towards a Republic and so on, it will have a democratic basis of authority for so doing. Very, very hard for the British Parliament to come in and intervene, even if it's subsidising it. This is Carson's point.

And the experience of Scotland since devolution proves that he is undoubtedly right. Now both these things, we all know this about Scotland, and we all adore the principle of consent, but we all talk as if there is something inherently fundamentally appalling about the Unionist position in this period. And you can't square that circle. Seventy per cent of what was said tonight assumes there is something really dreadful about that position—*But of course I support the principle of consent today.* Go figure.

Chairman:

John Bruton, finally. I mean you were a member of a Government which in effect was part of what you could say calling the bluff of Unionists, with the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Was that the right course?

Bruton

Well, I think the Anglo-Irish Agreement was negotiated with the British Government, without the involvement of the Ulster Unionist Party—And I think that was a great weakness in the Anglo-Irish Agreement. And it was a weakness that it wasn't present in the Downing St. Declaration, which provided the foundation for the peace process. That was negotiated with the involvement of both the SDLP, and through the SDLP Sinn Fein, and with the Ulster Unionist Party. And, although in content it wasn't all that different in its declaratory parts, operationally it was different. That's why it worked. Because it involved everybody.

And I think Nationalists are consistently, and continue to this day to assume, that somehow or other the Unionists are not serious. Now I know the population is coming closer to equivalence between Catholics, who are roughly assumed to be Nationalists, which I think is probably not the case, and Unionists who are—or Protestants who are assumed to be Unionists, which isn't always the case either. There were many Home Rulers who were burned out of their homes in 1914—Protestant Home Rulers burned out—by Unionists. So that also existed.

But—I'm not quite sure where I'm going with this really—I have something to say. I want to reply to Kevin. First of all, to say to Kevin that Liverpool Irish were the only people who continued to elect a Redmondite until 1932. Because in Liverpool Exchange T.P O'Connor, one of Redmond's lieutenants, continued to be elected to the House of Commons, representing Liverpool. And that shows I think that some of the Liverpool Irish could see the value of Constitutionalism.

I'll just come back as well to Davitt. I mean Davitt was not a physical force man. He started as a Fenian, but he didn't end his career as an advocate of physical force. And it's interesting to note that one of my predecessors as a TD for Meath was Redmond's nominee to the National Volunteers That was Dr. Davitt, Michael Davitt's son He supported constitutionalism. So I think Constitutionalism was deeply in the blood of the Davitt family and continued to be so. And I don't think that was abandoned. I don't think, I really don't think, that force was a good thing.

And one thing we've not recalled here is the damage that was done. In 1916, 500 people were killed. Of the British soldiers killed—and I hope this is remembered when 1916 is commemorated —of the British soldiers killed in the various Regiments, the Royal Irish Regiment and others, that were contending against the rebels, about a third of those were Irishmen—of the British soldiers killed in 1916 in Dublin, a third of them were Irish. A great number of the people were innocent civilians who were killed, both, the first casualty was an unarmed Dublin Fusilier, who was shot just because—unarmed—just because he was wearing the wrong uniform. And then subsequently other people were killed. He was shot by the Volunteers.

I think we've got to ask ourselves something about the damage that has been done to the Irish psyche, not just by that violence, but by the violence that started in 1919, 1920, 1921. And I think there's a direct linear descent from the decision to use force in Easter 1916 and the legitimation of force and its use subsequently in the Civil War. If there hadn't been the introduction of violence into nationalism in that demonstrably dramatic way in Easter Week—choosing Holy Week of all weeks to do such a thing—there wouldn't have been a civil war.

Chairman:

Did Pearse justify the Provos?

Bruton:

I think he did. Yes

Interjection (Female):

He justified the Dissidents.

Bruton

I'm not talking about Pearse. I'm just talking—

Interjection

You are.

Bruton:

I've read what Pearse has said about the use of violence, and he *praised*, the Ulster Volunteers for arming. And saying this was a great day for Ireland, that they were arming. And that where Ulster was leading, we'd follow. And Eoin MacNeill said the same thing He couldn't have been more wrong—in my view. The introduction of force and violence and killing—remember violence isn't some abstraction—this is taking somebody's life. It's killing. Taking somebody's husband or wife away. That's what violence is.

Interjection:

The same as the War was!

Bruton:

The same as the War was. And I don't— The War was an avoidable tragedy. Britain probably didn't have to join that War, but they joined it because they had—

Interjections:

…

Bruton:

I want to say I think the British Conservative Party ought to have done more to facilitate the passage of Home Rule. And their allying themselves with unconsitutionalism was really serious. And the point that General Wilson, who was involved in supposedly enforcing the Government writ in Ireland at the time of the Ulster crisis was reporting tot he Leader of the Opposition on what he was doing and saying before he reported to his Prime Minister—that indicated to me a breakdown in the proper relationship, as has been pointed out by others, of what should be the relationship between the civil and the military power The military power *always* has to be subordinate to the civil power. And it was not—that was not the case in this United Kingdom in 1914. And that was a very, very serious matter, for which Asquith had to take primary blame. Because he knew what had happened. And he didn't dismiss Wilson.

Chairman:

John Bruton, thank you very much. And to the rest of the Panel a huge thanks for such a wonderful series of contributors… Finally, I'm going back to the Ambassador to say a few words.

A Comment On The *Soirée*

Professor Laffan strayed far from the historical truth when he said that the Ulster Unionists *"got everything they wanted, with ultimately disastrous consequences for themselves and others"*. The Ulster Unionist policy in the 1918 Election was the exclusion of the Six Counties from the Home Rule Bill on the basis that they would in future be governed as part of Britain, within British political life. And, when the establishment of a *"Northern Ireland"* system of sub-government was proposed two years later, the Unionist leader said in Parliament that they did not want it, and that it was not the Ulster Unionist ambition to have Catholics to govern.

What the Ulster Unionists got was what they had not wanted, but what they were browbeaten into accepting with threats that something worse would befall them if they did not accept it.

Partition was a concession to Ulster Unionism: the means by which it was enacted was not.

They had asked simply to be part of the British political system, governed like every other part of Britain. The concession that was made to them was that they might exclude themselves from an Irish Home Rule Government or State on the condition that they agreed to run a 6 County sub-government, in partial separation from Britain, in which they would have to govern a very large minority of Catholics.

This is the arrangements that had disastrous consequences. Responsibility for it clearly lay with the British Parliament which enacted it without the support of any Ulster Unionist votes. The Ulster Unionists submitted to the will of Whitehall in the matter, describing their submission as *"the supreme sacrifice"*. This was not an exaggeration.

The British Parliament was entirely responsible for the disaster of Northern Ireland. But we understand that that was something that could not be said in a debate to be broadcast on the Parliament Channel.

Some speakers said that, if Redmond's Bill (let's call it that) had been implemented, discrimination against the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland would have been prevented by the continuous presence of a large body of Irish MPs at Westminster, and the abolition of PR in local elections would not have been allowed.

If Redmond's Bill had been implemented, there would have been no Northern Ireland system: the Ulster Protestants would have been a minority of 25% in an Irish Home Rule Parliament, instead of the Catholics being a 35% minority in the Six County system. It would certainly have been a good thing if Northern Ireland had not been invented by Whitehall; and the subjection of the Northern 25% to Irish Home Rule would have been preferable to the subjection of the Northern 35% to Ulsterish Home Rule. But that was something that the Dynamic of British party politics would not allow to happen.

PR in Local Government is another anachronism in that scenario. It was introduced only after Redmond's Bill had fallen and Sinn Fein had swept his Party aside. The reason for its introduction for the 1920 Local Elections seems to be that the British believed their own propaganda about the 1918 Election result being somehow unrepresentative of the popular will. It was expected that PR would prevent Sinn Fein from repeating in the Local Election its victory in the General Election. It failed.

Its abolition in the Ulsterish Home Rule system was no great matter. Local Authorities cannot opt out of the state within which they function. They did so in Southern Ireland in 1920, but that was part of the formation of an Irish State system in place of the British. It was a different matter when Northern Local Authorities opted out of the Ulsterish Home Rule system in the mid 1920s. The Treaty State in the South had encouraged them to do this in the first instance, but had later repudiated them when, after an initial outburst of military aggression against Northern Ireland, it made a cold peace with it.

Criticism of Stormont for reordering Local Government to make it a functional part of the system of government it was obliged to operate comes strangely from a Treatyite/Free State viewpoint.

Former Taoiseach Bruton says Redmond would have got *"direct rule"* for the Six Counties. *Direct Rule* is what Ulster Unionism wanted but was refused. If Whitehall (where the British Unionist Party was effectively in power) refused *"direct rule"* to its Ulster component, the assumption that it would have accorded it to Redmond, if he had got as far as negotiating a Partition settlement and had wanted it, is a very large one.

"Direct Rule" is in any case an ambiguous term. It was applied to Whitehall government of the North after Stormont was abolished in 1972. Whitehall governed the North directly, in place of acting through a devolved system, but the electorate of the North remained excluded from the party-political life of the state, and locked into their own communal, or 'sectarian', parties, just as in the Stormont days. It is open to question whether the devolved administration or exclusion from the political life of the state was the more damaging.

(It can hardly have escaped the notice of these eminent academics and politicians that the political parties which govern the UK have never contested UK General Elections in the North, and do not admit residents in the North to party membership—except a token personal membership, conceded around 1990 following the agitation of the Campaign for Labour Representation and Campaign for Equal Citizenship.)

The Lord Bew said that Redmond agreed to Six County Partition without a time-limit at the end of the Buckingham Palace Conference of July 1914. His authority for this is *"Professor Gilbert"*. This must be B.B. Gilbert, author of a biography of Lloyd George.

What Gilbert recorded was that Prime Minister Asquith, on 24th July 1914, thought he had got an agreement from Redmond for an amendment of the Home Rule Bill, excluding the Six Counties for an unlimited period:

> "The Cabinet met immediately afterwards—and agreed to permit the Ulster counties to renew their exclusion by the plebiscite at the end of the six year period. Exclusion would be permanent. Carson had won. But this was not quite the conclusion. The measured acquiescence in a renewal of exclusion that Asquith thought he had obtained from Redmond and Dillon disappeared almost immediately" (*David Lloyd George. The Organiser Of Victory*, p105).

The Howth gun-running and the killings in Bachelors Walk happened two days later, and in the light of this, whatever agreement Redmond had made with Asquith was revoked. And the Government, being dependent on Redmond's MPs, could not proceed with the Amendment without his support.

Professor Gilbert then comments:

> "Neither Lyons' nor Gwynn's excellent biographies refer to this monumental if temporary change of position by the Irish leaders" (p441).

The matter came up again two years tried to get agreement to implement the Act that lay in the Statute Book. Lloyd George negotiated with the Carsonites and Redmondites. He thought he had got an agreement by which the Unionists agreed to Home Rule with the exclusion of the Six Counties and the Redmondites agreed to that exclusion without a time limit. A Home Rule Parliament was to be set up immediately for 26 Counties with the Six simply remaining part of the UK system. But, when the terms were made public, there was a great cry of outrage by the Redmondites. They claimed that the Unionists had agreed to exclusion with a six-year limit, but that this had been over-ruled at Westminster. Twenty-Six County Home Rule with an unlimited Six County exclusion was rejected by Redmond. And that was that. (An Irish Convention cobbled together in 1917 was grossly unrepresentative and led to nothing.)

If Redmond had been willing to do a deal involving unlimited Six County exclusion on 24th July 1914, but felt he couldn't go ahead with it under pressure of the Bachelors Walk killings, it is surprising that he did not revert to that position in 1916 after Bachelors Walk had been marginalised by Nationalist/ Unionist bloodletting against Germany!

As to Bachelors Walk: the assertion that a double standard was evident in the contrast with the way the Larne gun-running had been handled is not soundly based. The two gun-runnings were conducted in very different ways: the Larne gun-running with great secrecy and the Howth gun-running with great public display. While it might be that, if the Larne guns were brought to Belfast in broad daylight with great display they would not have been interfered with, the fact is that they were secretly landed and were distributed under cover of night.

The confusing issue of whether Ireland was a Colony cropped at the *Soirée*. It is confusing because use of the word 'colony' has been extended beyond its original meaning. A colony is a piece of a society that hives off and takes root somewhere else. It is different in kind from an Imperial conquest. Britain used to distinguish between 'the Empire' and 'the Colonies'. Ireland was partly both. Many English colonies were planted in it, but all but one failed to take root and displace the natives.

The 19th century nationalist movement in Ireland was the movement of a native population conquered by an Imperial Power but not, as intended, effectively displaced by colonial settlements. In the course of its development, it came up against a British colony that had taken root and that was not willing to tolerate subordination in any way to the native population which it had been its mission to displace.

The relationship between Britain and its successful colony in Ireland was naturally different in kind from its relationship with the nationalist development of native Ireland, which was necessarily anti-Imperialist.

Britain's colonies on the American mainland decided to become independent. Britain tried to hold them by force and failed. It never again fought a colonial war in the sense of a war against one of its colonies. And the colonies all acted as part of the elite of the Empire

Much was made by the Treatyites of their effectiveness in participating in the Empire, and the significance of the Statute of Westminster in guaranteeing a Colonial or Dominion right to independence, for which they took some credit. In fact, actual Dominion independence became effective long before 1929 or before 1918, or before 1914. The Committee Of Imperial Defence, founded in 1905, was based on it. And it was acknowledged to be an actual fact in the late 19th century by Lord Rosebery, the Liberal Prime Minister after Gladstone. Neither side felt it advantageous to state as an abstract right what they knew to be an actual fact. When New Zealand supplied a battleship to the Royal Navy before 1914, it never crossed its mind that it might be used against it. War by Britain on the Colonies which were its offspring was out of the question. It was a different matter in relations between Britain and native populations in the Empire which were asserting a right to independence.

Part of Ireland was a colony, and part an Imperial possession, and different rules—or different feelings—applied to each in British politics, and each related to Britain in different terms.. Subjugated people struggling for independence from the Empire did not see it in the same light as did the colonial population, even though the two might be living side by side.

Stephen Gwynn, whose book on Redmond was praised by Lord Bew, came from the failed colonial element in Southern Ireland, many of whose members would have been content with Redmondite Home Rule within the Empire. The Imperialism of that element was different in kind from the Imperialism of the bulk of the Redmondites who volunteered for the Imperial War because it was put to them that it was necessary to do so in order to gain the Home Rule which the suspended Act provided for, and which they understood to be a move towards independence, and that it would probably incline Ulster Unionists towards Irish unity Their Imperialism was a form of tactical opportunism. For people like Gwynn it was their colonial inheritance. The great bulk of Redmondites passed over easily to Sinn Fein as it became clear that the Home Rule Act-In-The-Statute-Book was a dead duck. Gwynn did not. He maintained an Imperial detachment from the subsequent course of events.

Lord Bew said that Redmond was a man of honour who lived up to his pledge to deliver his Irish to the Empire for war. He did not mention when it was that Redmond had told his Irish that he had pledged them.

Lord Bew thought it was relevant to say that James Craig was not inflexibly hostile to Southern Ireland in its Free State days, that he wanted good neighbour relations with it, but then De Valera came to power.

The alienation of North and South had happened long before 1932. It had happened when Michael Collins, having signed the Treaty, and been installed in power in Southern Ireland by Britain, made war on Northern Ireland, and drew elements of the Anti-Treaty IRA into his Northern War until the day came for

imprisoning them. His actions in the first half of 1922 had disastrous consequences for the Northern minority. Northern Republicans were brought into open organisation under the eyes of Craig's Special forces, to be rounded up on the day that the Dublin Provisional Government abandoned them. And the minority community as a whole was exhorted by the Treatyite Provisional Government to engage in a comprehensive boycott of the Northern Ireland system, on a guarantee that the Free State would fund them in providing state services for themselves. Then, having encouraged them into an attitude of total antagonism towards the Belfast system, the Dublin Government abandoned them.

The subjugation of the Northern minority began on the day that Collins, in response to a Whitehall ultimatum, launched his 'Civil War' on the Anti-Treaty forces in the South, with which he had been co-operating in his Northern War until that moment.

De Valera did no more than live with the *status quo* in the North, and within the North/South relations which he inherited from the Free State.

The source of James Craig's actual intransigence, despite his good intentions, was the Northern Ireland system which he was obliged to operate in order to maintain *"the connection"* with Britain. Partition was not enacted once for all by Westminster, leaving the people of the Six Counties to get on with life in the UK until a strong anti-Partition development put the question on the agenda of practical politics. The arrangement was that Partition had to be re-enacted at every election, showing a clear Unionist majority for the Union, or *"the connection":*. That was the only issue at elections. There was no *"normal politics"*, i.e. no Bread And Butter politics. Bread-and-butter was dealt with by the British party-politics, from which Northern Ireland was excluded. Social reform came to Northern Ireland as part of the British state. The function of Unionist politics was to gain a clear win at every election, and to exert control over the large Nationalist minority, which took advantage of every reform which came to it from Westminster without feeling any gratitude towards Stormont.

This magazine grew out of a movement which, forty years ago, focussed attention on the realities of the Six-County situation. Its members demonstrated in Dublin against the sovereignty claim of Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution at a period when there was a Coalition Government of Fine Gael and Labour. They spent a night in Mountjoy, and met with an attitude of embarrassed indifference.

In 1985 when there was again a Coalition Government, and John Bruton was part of it, it focussed, in response to the Hillsborough Agreement, on the Northern Ireland exclusion from the democracy of the UK state. A Labour TD showed an interest in what we were saying. But Garret FitzGerald would tolerate no dissent, and our members in Dublin became aware that the Special Branch was paying close attention to them.

The question, *Why didn't we know any of this?*, was raised at the *Soirée*. The short, and sufficient, answer is that they didn't know then because they didn't want to know. It would have been awkward to know these things then, with a war going full blast. This naturally raises the suspicion that the new-found eagerness to know that is now being expressed—though superficially—has nothing to do with the difficulties of the North, and that it is no more than a revival of West Britishism in the South.

*

The thing that would have been appropriately remembered on the Home Rule-In-The-Statute-Book centenary was not mentioned at all.

Redmond's party did not collapse suddenly in 1918. It lost 10% of its MPs in the first 1910 Election and the loss was consolidated in the second 1910 Election. The loss was to the All-For-Ireland League of William O'Brien and Canon Sheehan. The issues were the sectarianising of the Home Rule movement under Redmond's leadership by the incorporation of a Catholic secret society, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, into the structure of the Party; the fundamentally mistaken tactic of seeking Home Rule through using its balance-of-power at Westminster to join with one of the British parties in its conflict with the other on a domestic British issue; the dismissive attitude towards the Ulster Protestant resistance, which was driving the situation towards Partition; and some land issues remaining from the Party's hostility to land purchase.

O'Brien urged that priority should be given to maintaining—in fact, establishing—a measure of Irish unity through a much weaker measure of administrative devolution, with the agreement of both British Parties. And, as an agitator and politician who had achieved a substantial reform through the Parliamentary process, the abolition of landlordism, he was sure that the British Parties could not be played off against each other successfully by the Irish Party, as Redmond was attempting.

O'Brien judged that situation well. Redmond's tactics got partition and failed to get home Rule.

The Embassy *Soirée* was a nostalgic indulgence in a might-have-been that never came close to being.

Stephen Gwynn, sensible colonial Imperialist that he was, said*"what use are might-have-beens?*| (*Redmond's Last Years* p334).

Cathy Winch

Letter to Editor

What Price Children's Rights?

The *Irish Times* says: *"It seems like a relatively straightforward and innocuous project but, for a substantial proportion of people in Ireland, the idea of empowering children is highly subversive"* (7.10.14, Making sure that children know their rights)

Telling children they have rights is not empowering them, it is telling them the environment they thought was safe and could be depended on to protect and nurture them without any effort on their (the children's) part is in fact not so. It is telling them they can't take being looked after for granted. If taken seriously, this doubt could be very upsetting, and destructive of the already shaken family unit.

Rights exists in an antagonistic environment: they have to be fought for, both to establish them and once established to make sure they are respected.

Does the *Irish Times* believe families and schools are hostile environments?

Children should be, for the time that they are children, in the situation of the rich and privileged, who don't need to claim rights but just take their advantages more or less for granted. Being able to take their temporary privileged situation for granted should be the right of every child.

In fact the Ombudsman for Children does not upset children by telling them directly the implication of rights. Its

Workshops discuss bullying, parents moving for work, etc. And 75% of cases brought to the Ombudsman were initiated by parents on behalf of children, in other words it wasn't the children who were empowered, it was the parents. That could be a very good use of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 27 says that *"children have a right to a standard of living that is adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development"*. The *Irish Times* says that 10% of children in Ireland live in consistent poverty. Their parents should take the Irish Government to court for failing to ensure adequate pay for all workers in Ireland and failing to respect children's rights. Perhaps an enterprising 15 year old could do this.

Not on the strength of the one interviewed in the Irish Times, who said baldly that if anyone denied her right to sing *"that would be really upsetting"*. I suspect that she must have been told about other parts of the world not as nice as Ireland, where girls might be told not to sing. This is the other side of the 'rights' issue: a stick to beat other countries with. Other countries which might point to the spiritual development of Irish youth with a question mark.

The notion of human rights offends peoples who consider that they are already under protection, of family, tribe or group and do not wish to imagine themselves alone and unprotected outside that group. Westerners on the other hand see themselves as standing on their own two feet, able to live anywhere in the world, unattached to any place or group of people, except sentimentally. Until recently however, Westerners considered that children were an exception to this rule of individualism: they were under the protection of their family. Now it seems that even children are standing alone in the world, in need of the State or some Court of Rights to defend them.

Kevin T. Buggy

The Saxon Shilling

Hark! a martial sound is heard—
The march of soldiers, fifing, drumming;
Eyes are staring, hearts are stirr'd—
For bold recruits the brave are coming.
Ribands flaunting, feathers gay—
The sounds and sighs are surely thrilling,
Dazzl'd village youths to-day
Will crowd to take the Saxon Shilling.

II.
Ye, whose spirits will not bow
In peace to parish tyrants longer—
Ye, who wear the villain brow,
And ye who pine in hopeless hunger—
Fools, without the brave man's faith—
All slaves and starvlings who are willing
To sell yourselves to shame and death—
Accept the fatal Saxon Shilling.

III.
Ere you from your mountains go
To feel the scourge of foreign fever,
Swear to serve the faithless foe
That lures you from your land for ever!
Swear henceforth its tools to be—
To slaughter trained by ceaseless drilling—
Honour, home, and liberty,
Abandon'd for a Saxon Shilling.

IV.
Go—to find, 'mid crime and toil,
The doom to which such guilt is hurried;
Go—to leave on Indian soil
Your bones to bleach, accurs'd, unburied!
Go—to crush the just and brave,
Whose wrongs with wrath the world are filling;
Go—to slay each brother slave,
Or spurn the blood-stained Saxon Shilling!

V.
Irish hearts! why should you bleed,
To swell the tide of British glory—
Aiding despots in their need,
Who've changed our green so oft to gory?
None, save those who wish to see
The noblest killed, the meanest killing,
And true hearts severed from the free,
Will take again the Saxon Shilling!

VI.
Irish youths! reserve your strength
Until an hour of glorious duty,
When Freedom's smile shall cheer at length
The land of bravery and beauty.
Bribes and threats, oh, heed no more—
Let nought but Justice make you willing
To leave your own dear Island shore,
For those who send the Saxon Shilling.

We are indebted to Pat Muldowney for contributing this from *The Spirit of the Nation, 1843*

VOX

Asquith
Jaw War?
Religious Teachers
Independence Casualties

PAT

Asquith

"*A man true to himself*—Asquith's mind was sound rather than quick—sound, clear, and decisive. No one knew on what he based decision. It was certainly not on private discussion. Talking things over he abominated to such a degree that he resorted to every possible devise to evade it. Colleagues and experts were occasionally invited "to have a quiet talk with Henry". History records no instance of anyone having had it. The Prime Minister could not be found; he was busy; he had a headache; he had gone for a drive; anything rather than the ordeal of talking things out. This peculiarity went so far that even his sons could seldom obtain advice or guidance.

As for blame or criticism, that was out of the question in the case either of family or colleagues. With servants he would submit to inconvenience for weeks rather than reprove anyone, while no member of the household was ever dismissed except by proxy. This unwillingness to cause pain or annoyance was indicative of the indolent generosity of his nature.

The World war required other qualities, a more ruthless temperament, a harder touch. It was a task requiring intense will power, absolute concentration, and a certain harshness. Asquith refused to worship at the altar of Bellona. A man so true to his own qualities could not bend to circumstances. He was what he was; neither more or less. Times might change; he remained the same. The Goddess of War was unappeased. Asquith fell.

History will not say he failed—will say rather that he remained true to himself; a world convulsion had upset normal values and relative worth; a great and good man had been borne down by fate in a period not suited to his genius."

Lord D'Abernon. From *An Ambassador of Peace*. (1929)

The man was a Saint? This is what Churchill thought of Asquith in a series of articles he wrote in a book titled *Great Contemporaries* in 1937:

"In affairs he had that ruthless side without which great matters cannot be handled. When offering me Cabinet office in his government in 1908, he repeated to me Mr. Gladstone's saying: "The first essential for a Prime Minister is to be a good butcher", and he added "there are several who must be pole-axed now". They were" (*Great Contemporaries*, Winston S. Churchill, Fontana, 1962, p.115.).

"When Lord Fisher resigned in May [1915] and the Opposition threatened controversial debate, Asquith did not hesitate to break his Cabinet up, demand the resignations of all Ministers, end the political lives of half his colleagues, throw Haldane to the wolves, leave me to bear the burden of the Dardanelles, and sail on victoriously at the head of a Coalition Government. Not 'all done by kindness'! Not all by rose-water! These were the convulsive struggles of a man of action and ambition at death-grips with events" (ibid. p.122).

Herbert Henry Asquith was the British Liberal Party leader who led his country into World War I, he was popularly called *"Mr. Wait and See"*! During a trip on the Admiralty yacht he was depicted asking a young officer on the bridge, *"Why is she pitching so much this morning?" "Well, you see, sir, it is all a question of Weight and Sea."*

One thing we can agree on : he was a great Butcher!

****

Jaw-War?

On the profligacy of failing to eat one's enemies—As Europe combusted into all-out war, [1914-1918] the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski was carrying out fieldwork in Papua:

"I once talked to an old cannibal who, hearing of the Great War raging in Europe was most curious to know how we Europeans managed to eat such huge quantities of human flesh. When I told him the Europeans did not eat their slain foes he looked at me with shocked horror and asked what sort of barbarians we were, to kill without any real object" (*History without the Boring Bits*, Ian Crofton, Quercus, 2007).

****

Religious Teachers

The number of priests, nuns, and brothers still teaching in schools has fallen to around 80, according to the Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI).

About 50 religious are still teaching in primary schools and 30 are in full-time teaching positions in secondary schools.

Figures from the Central Statistics Office show, in 1970, nearly one in five primary school teachers were members of religious orders but, by 1998, they represented just 3%.

The number of second-level teachers in religious orders was very high but fell sharply over the years. There were 3,700 in 1970, but only 740 in 1998.

An outline of the current situation was made by the co-director of education at CORI, Sr Eithne Woulfe, for the latest issue of the *Reality Magazine*, published by the Irish Redemptorists.

Sr. Woulfe said that there are 375 secondary schools associated with religious congregations but, over this academic year, only nine will have a religious as principal. Another four religious are principals of community schools.

About 100 religious are involved in voluntary pastoral work at primary level and about 90 religious have similar roles in secondary schools. There are 10 religious employed as chaplains in community schools.

There is at least six religious involved in full-time third level teaching and a similar number are chaplains.

****

Independence Casualties

"If the modern Catholic Church in Ireland had any substance it would gather together and publish all the incidents involving the killing of Irish priests by the British during the War of Independence. This could act as some kind of antidote to the hysterical anti-Catholicism that pervades the new Ireland. Given that the Pope has now revoked the ban on liberation priests being beautified there's many an example of Irish priests giving their lives to protect members of their flock. Isn't it about time that the Irish Catholic Church put these individuals' names forward. But I suspect the Catholic Church shares the embarrassment of the new Ireland in any reference to a republican past" (*E.D.*, 30.09.14).

****

More VOX on page 12