

Church & State

An Irish History Magazine

And Cultural Review Of Ireland And The World

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Editorial

A Warning Plague?

“This Virus is God’s warning”

The *Daily Telegraph* of March 26th carried a large photo of a man bearing a placard with this message. It was a picture of an extreme eccentric. God is dead for all practical purpose. He has been abolished by Economics.

The God of these parts warned against Globalism. He did not want the world to be united against Him. That was the message of the incident of the Tower of Babylon, through which an upwardly mobile humanity sought to climb to Heaven and be omniscient.

He prevented this turn of events by conferring on humanity a great multitude of languages, disuniting it, fragmenting it, but giving each fragment the possibility of living in its own paradise in this world, from which there is no escape—no matter how far one travels among the rocks and gasses of Outer Space.

But Globalism has come back with a vengeance. It exists in the medium of a universal market with a universal language. That language is English in its American development. It is cosmopolitan English.

America was energised by the English who were the *Chosen People* of modern times. Their language was God’s own language—the language of the inspired *King James Bible*, along with the *Pilgrim’s Progress*, and *Foxe’s Book Of Martyrs*. It was the language of the purified Christianity—Christianity purified of contact with human institutions. It removed the individual from the retarding influence of merely human institutions and gave him the absolute freedom which comes from

direct relationship of the isolated individual with the God who made the world, and this somehow produced an apotheosis of the market-place, and the conviction that it was the destiny of the entire world to become a single market, in which each infinitely precious soul saved itself—or was saved by divine choice—at the expense of others.

The universal market needs a universal language which is free of the subjectivist distortions of particular languages, which are obstacles to the rationalist accountancy. About a century ago, the great liberal philosopher, Bertrand Russell, proposed the ideal of a language consisting of noises in which the noise would stand for some clearly defined particular thing. The ground of metaphysics, romance, philosophy and religion would thereby be removed. The capacity for thoughts that gave rise to these things would be removed. And it would be the perfect language for commodity exchanges.

English, the language of sheer Individualism in the Biblical development in opposition to the subjectivist fantasies of Renaissance Christianity, is serving that purpose. It is what it calls “*pragmatic*”, and it deplores what it calls “*ideology*”. And, in the matter of trade and accountancy, it has had a great advantage over languages which seduce people into unprofitable ways by the satisfaction provided by their interiority.

As to the Virus: we would not be having it, if China had not been force-marched into world trade by the Opium Wars launched against it by Liberal Britain at its high point, at which its moving spirit was Biblicalist Puritanism, and destructive action carried on against the Chinese state and culture for a couple of generations. And if it had nonetheless sprouted in Wuhan, it would have difficulties getting beyond it.

If Globalising is persisted in, it is clear that much great uniformity must be imposed on the world that has yet been done, and local traditions must be more firmly stamped out.

The alternative is to heed God’s Warning?

Brendan Clifford

Problems Arising From The Glorification Of A Bad War

Kevin Connolly, a foreign correspondent of the BBC, ended the BBC RADIO 4 *From Our Own Correspondent* programme on April 21st with a reminiscence about a book that he picked up in Dublin in his youth: *Judgment On Deltchev* by Eric Ambler.

Ambler wrote middle-brow novels on foreign affairs of a kind that is no longer produced. They were set in East European or Middle Eastern states and were realistically conceived from a British viewpoint that might be described as petty-bourgeois social democratic. As Connolly said, the central figures were not professional spies but were ordinary men who accidentally got caught up in political events abroad.

They bore no resemblance to the James Bond *genre* that came on the scene about 1960 as simple-minded Cold War propaganda and squeezed them out.

The fictional Deltchev was the leader of the Agrarian Party

in the post-1945 People’s Democracy of Bulgaria. He stood against the Communist Party in an election. As Connolly saw it, he was put on trial on a trumped-up charge of treason and was subjected to a mockery of a trial of a kind that had been perfected in Russia about ten years earlier and that was skilfully operated in the new East European states after 1945. It was a parody of justice and was in fact just a way of knocking off opponents.

And Connolly supplied the information that Deltchev had a real life original in the form of Agrarian Party leader Nicolo Peskov, who was elected to Parliament against the Communist Party, thought he had Parliamentary immunity against arrest, but was arrested in Parliament, and was said to have been beaten to death with hammers.

But Peskov is remembered in Bulgaria. Connolly saw his house. And Peskov’s memory will live on after his persecutors are forgotten.

That is the gist of what Connolly said. I only heard it in passing, and I have not the means of bringing it up again, but that is the idea that what he said conveyed to me.

I read Ambler's novels fifty or more years ago. I also read the run of Upton Sinclair's novels about the course of European affairs from the establishment of the Versailles states, through the World War, to the post-1945 development. Both Ambler and Sinclair follow the same trajectory from Anti-Fascism to Anti-Communism. I do not recall that Ambler wrote wartime novels in which Communism saved Europe from Fascism, but Sinclair did, and I don't see what ground Ambler could have had for seeing it otherwise. And then, after 1945, the actual force that had saved Europe from Fascism—and thereby saved civilisation in Europe?—became a deadly threat to civilisation. And a more deadly threat than Fascism had been, if one judges by the intensity of the feeling directed against it.

This is comprehensible only on the assumption that a number of basic misconceptions were involved in the way that the course of events from Versailles to the Iron Curtain was understood by moderately Left-inclined writers within the British view of things. And those misconceptions were carefully cultivated by the British State propaganda, which was certainly the most influential in the Western world.

The British Government decided in March 1939 to make war on Germany, using the anomaly of Danzig as a reason—as a “trip wire”, as Andrew Roberts, who likes to blurt things out, has put it. During the preceding five years it had collaborated with Hitler, enabling him to break free of the conditions imposed on Germany by the Versailles Treaty, and by the League of Nations, which was supposed to be its instrument.

It was not through a League with the Devil that Hitler restored German independence and built up German military power. It was in league with Britain that he did it. It was not possible that he could have done it without British assistance. He took power in a state that was without a regular army worth speaking of and that was in its internal life subject to Great Power supervision.

Systematic enforcement of the Versailles Treaty would have established French hegemony in Europe and it had been British policy over centuries that that must be prevented. The German state was a late 19th century construction. It was never an Imperial rival of the British Empire, only an economic rival, but Britain decided around 1900 to make an alliance with France to crush the new German State, which it demonised much as it later demonised the Nazi State.

When Germany was defeated in 1918 the state was broken up and the country plundered and humiliated by Britain and France acting together. But Britain prevented France from making arrangements which would have insured against a revengeful German revival. It insisted that the 1871 German state—which its war propaganda had presented as the cause of all the trouble—should be maintained as a territorial entity with a few marginal deletions, but it did not give Germany the green light to break the Versailles restrictions until Hitler took power.

The breaches of Versailles then came thick and fast, culminating in the Munich Conference of 1938, by which Britain not only gave Hitler the Sudetenland but completely undermined the Czechoslovak state, which was the pride of the Versailles settlement. The Hungarians took back their bit of it, as did the Poles, and the Slovaks seceded from it, while the Czech remnant was made a German Protectorate.

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There is no known record of what went on within the very narrow British governing circle at that point, and the public relations statements are only fit for the kindergarten—or the British public, which has always been deferential when it comes to war. Judging by the sudden turn of events, it seems that the Government realised only after the event that it had conceded East European hegemony to Germany.

That hegemony properly belonged to France as its due for the contribution it made for defeating Germany, and France would have exerted it in defence of Czechoslovakia but for British pressure. But, after Munich, the matter had gone beyond recall by orderly means, and so Britain decided to undo the *de facto* situation by means of another World War.

It formed a military encirclement of Germany that looked good on paper, and would probably have been effective in practice if there had been a real British will to war as there had been in 1914. The French Empire had a strong military Establishment, the Polish Army had won the last war in Europe in 1920, and the Royal Navy still ruled the waves, enabling Britain to follow its usual practice of first declaring war and then raising an army to fight it.

With the military encirclement of Germany of March 1939 Britain challenged the hegemonic position in Eastern Europe which Britain and helped Germany to establish in the Autumn of 1938. The substance of the Versailles restrictions and punishments on Germany had been set aside by Britain without consulting the League, and now Britain decided to make war on Germany, without consulting the League, on the trivial issue of the anomalous position of the German city of Danzig which was within the nominal territory of the Polish state but not under the jurisdiction of the Polish Government.

By entering into the military alliance with the British and French Empires against the German state, the Polish Government revoked the Treaty relations with Germany established in 1934, and looked forward with confidence to war against Germany in alliance with the two Great Empires.

But, when the War came, the two Empires left the Poles to fight alone. Or, more realistically, Britain left the Poles to fight alone.

The French State had been demoralised by British treatment of it after

the first War on Germany, of which it had borne the main cost. It had been prevented by Britain from establishing a secure position against Germany after 1918, and it was not now going to act against Germany, except by joint action with Britain in which Britain led the way decisively and with a full exertion of its power. Britain did not do that. It went through the motions of preparing to fight, but it was clear that its heart wasn't in it.

When Germany responded to the encirclement by invading Poland, Britain stood idly by, leading France to do likewise. Its only action was to declare war on Germany and not act on it. For eight months it did not act.

Eventually Germany responded to the declaration of war on it with a novel military manoeuvre which separated and disrupted the Anglo-French forces on the frontier.

The British Army was brought home, apparently with Hitler's consent.

The disrupted French Army was incapable of continuing the War by regular means.

The French Parliament, which was as democratic as the British, decided to negotiate a settlement to the War which it had started and lost.

The French Government, with its country under actual occupation by the enemy force—which it had raised up against it by declaring war—was condemned for betrayal of the cause by the British Government, whose country was not under occupation and whose Navy was still dominant in the world. What Britain required of France seems to have been a general rising of the population, a *levee en masse*, such as happened in 1870 (when France had launched a straightforward war of aggression on Prussia in order to prevent the unification of Germany, and lost), and which had then proved ineffective.

Churchill became Prime Minister as the War in France was being lost. He urged the French not to make a settlement. He said he loved France. A French commentator replied that he was sure that he loved France, as a rider loved his horse! But France, after the experience of 1919, was not going to be Britain's horse for a second time. Churchill therefore made arrangements to do for the French what the French refused to do for themselves—conduct a guerrilla war, a campaign of sabotage, in France:

the kind of thing he condemned the Irish for, twenty years earlier. He set up a department of "*ungentlemanly warfare*" which trained saboteurs and assassins to be dropped into France by parachute.

He made a famous speech in which he said that, in the (unlikely) event of a German occupation, the British would never make a settlement but would continue to fight in the hedges and ditches by whatever means came to hand. France had been riddled with Fifth Columnists but the British were staunch.

It came to light about fifty years later that Churchill had made arrangements which assumed that there was in England a thick stratum of probable Fifth Columnists in the top layer of civil society. He set up a secret body, commanded by a Communist, whose job, in the event of an invasion, would be to assassinate this potential Fifth Column—at the head of the designated list of these, as far as I recall, were Chief Constables—before it could collaborate!

Churchill's speeches were magnificent posturing. England has been living in the glory of them ever since. The reality of things is very effectively concealed by them.

England declared war on Germany, in the expectation that France would fight it.

Germany was at war with England only because England declared war on it. Hitler was an admirer of the British Empire, which he saw as an irreplaceable part of what he considered civilisation, and he had learned the art of propaganda from the English propaganda of the Great War.

It was English diplomatic and military bungling that put Hitler in June 1940 in the military position where he might have struck at England with a strong probability of success. It could be said that it was militarily irresponsible of him not to do so—so his Generals thought. Because he did not do so, he found himself permanently at war.

For a year England stood alone in the War that it had brought about because Germany, when it had the opportunity, did not press matters to a conclusion by presenting England with an immediate existential choice. Churchill's policy during that year was to keep the war going with his pin-pricks, while looking for a substitute for France to do the fighting. There were only two possible replacements: the United States and Communist Russia.

Churchill put much effort into per-

suading the United States that Germany was a real and present danger to it. The States, remembering how it had won the Great War for Britain, only to have its war aims undermined, was sceptical. The President had retained Office by guaranteeing that American would not again to be drawn into a European fiasco. So the only hope for Britain lay in the Communist menace.

How much hope lay in that direction was uncertain. The prevailing view was that Stalinism, after its political Show Trials and military purges, would offer very little resistance to a German invasion. The hope that Russia would take on Nazism might prove to be an illusory hope, but it was the only hope, and it had to be tried.

On the German side, the military thinking was that, since Britain was continuing the War in the hope of German/Russian conflict, the way to end the war was to defeat Russia and thus oblige Britain to make a settlement.

Everything therefore depended on the meaning of the Show Trials and the military purges. Was Trotsky right?

On 14th March 1938, the *Times* published a long, interesting editorial, *The Moscow Trial*:

“The barbaric tragedy just enacted in Moscow has been watched by the world with bewildering fascination. Day by day it has heard the elder statesmen of the Soviet revolution, the apostles and fathers of the new political gospel, publicly proclaiming that throughout the years of their ministry they have been secret agents of heresy and schism, working for the subversion of the faith with every weapon of the conspirator and the assassin. The spectacle has only been made more astonishing to western nations by the vehemence with which men, to all appearance deliberately seeking the doom that has now been pronounced upon them, yet insist upon the accurate definition of the crimes to which they plead guilty. A Bukharin, confessing to all manner of treasons and to the organization of a vast system of espionage, will yet argue all day against the imputation of having been a spy himself; a Kazakoff, not disclaiming the infamy of a physician who has deliberately procured the death of his patient, pleads passionately that his condemnation shall not impugn the value of the curative drug he misused for the crime. The psychological problem seems to be insoluble. It may be that here is something peculiar to the Russian character which other races cannot hope to understand.

It is also possible, however, that the phenomenon is the natural product of life under a system that identifies a party with the State, sets service to the State in place of religion, and allows the authority of all three to be seized by one man...”

But then the *Times* began to remember how the England which it served came about:

“Nations that have outgrown and forgotten absolutisms may yet find parallels to those proceedings in the records of their own past. Elizabethan England, distinguished by a great outburst of vigorous national life such as its bitterest critics acknowledge in the Russia of *Stalin*, resembled it also in the despotic form of its government, and in the darkest features of despotism, the subjection of the machinery of justice to *raison d’Etat*. As with the procedure, so with the effect upon the victims. The fallen Bolshevist, who will pay the ultimate penalty of failure in the secrecy of a prison yard, must deliver his last message to the world at a trial; the fallen Elizabethan could reserve it for the publicity of Tyburn or Tower Hill. With that difference the Elizabethan demeaned himself as does the Bolshevist. ‘I must confess to you’, said the Earl of Essex at the end of a flood of self-accusation, ‘that I am the greatest, the vilest and most unthankful traitor that has ever been in he land’. Every condemned prisoner of those days could be trusted to accuse himself in similar terms, once his resistance had been broken down. In the dungeons of the Tower it was commonly broken down by at least the sight of the rack. How it was done in Moscow prisons we do not know.

“Opposition to the Elizabethan despotism expressed itself habitually in plots, and the art of administration was to turn them to account. *M. Stalin* clearly follows the ancient model. Possibly the Russian people will be able to credit the complete picture of a conspiracy of diabolic malevolence and superhuman resource; but such a belief will scarcely extend farther than does the faith in the Satanic powers of a personal devil, incarnate in *M. Trotsky*. During the twenty years that the Soviet Government has existed, these men have occupied the positions of greatest influence at home and abroad, in military and civil life. The world is now asked to believe that some of them for the whole of that time, most of them for at least half, have been secretly working in concert by every means at their disposal for the subversion of the Government of which they were the principal officers; that they have been

assisted in their nefarious underground intrigues by most of the Great Powers of Europe. Yet, after twenty years of such prodigious and sustained effort, there is nothing, according to the prosecution, to show for it all except that an elderly man of letters, racked for forty years by an incurable disease, has had his end hastened, and a few other invalids of secondary importance have succumbed to the ministrations of their doctors. *M. Trotsky* still languishes in exile, and *M. Stalin*, the man against whom the whole plot has been directed, wields an authority unequalled by the most ruthless of the Tsars.

“If most of the men in office since *Lenin* died have been traitors, and the man at the head too simple to suspect it, who has been governing Russia all these years? In order to make sense of the evidence, and at the same time maintain consistency with the observed progress of the Soviet Union, it seems necessary to abandon the prosecution theory of a single and continuous conspiracy involving all the proscribed, with the threads united in the hands of *M. Trotsky*. Instead it will appear that all the men condemned yesterday and in previous trials have on occasion conceived the idea of changing the distribution of power, but at different times, with different purposes, and by different means. *Yagoda* planned a sort of National Socialist State with *Yagoda* as Fuhrer; *Tukhachevsky* saw himself as the Russian Napoleon; *Rykoff* would have been content to become an all-powerful Prime Minister; and *Bukharin* aimed at a system in which theory should be Allah and Bukharin its prophet. In none of their Utopias was there much room for *M. Trotsky*, except in his established role as prince of the outer darkness. If they were all in one way or another opposed to *M. Stalin*, they were equally opposed to one another. Under a different system of government they would have been leaders of divergent opposition groups; but, under a Constitution that provides no legitimate place for opposition, they had no recourse but conspiracy...”

The *Times* did no more than hint at the comparison with Tudor England. It was not to its purpose to demythologise the history of the English State. But a considerable degree of comparison could be drawn between State-formation in Tudor England and Soviet Russia. Both broke free of the European system and set about establishing States based on different principles and for different purposes than had ever been seen before. Opposition was not part of the system of either of them.

Whether the English system is seen as having been launched in 1531, or 1641, or 1660, or 1688, or 1714, Opposition did not begin to be part of it *de facto* until the late 18th century, was not defended in principle until 1770, and the State was not democratically-based for more than a century after that.

The English State was founded on aristocracy and remained comprehensively aristocratic until 1832, after which it began to feel its way gradually towards democratisation.

The Bolshevik State was founded on mass action. It could be founded only because deference in the populace was broken by the experience of the Great War. Its business from the start was to direct the activity of the disrupted masses in the creation of an economic and political order of things that was without precedent in the world. It was a dictatorship of the proletariat in a country where industrial workers were a very small minority of the populace. The leadership was Marxist but established Marxist leaders in Europe saw socialist Revolution in a peasant society as a wild breach of Marxist rules, a mad adventure which was certain to end in ruin. And the governing stratum under Lenin consisted for the most part of Utopian intellectuals, each with his own notion of how the adventure might be carried through.

None of them saw an Opposition as being part of the system. (Opposition was tolerable only within well-established states, and then only within a narrow range. Legitimate opposition implied basic consensus.) Bukharin when in power joked that Russia was a two-party state but one of the parties was in prison.

Lenin himself was the greatest Utopian of all. In *State & Revolution* he painted a picture of a State, that would be quickly established after the Revolution, in which everybody would have to take his turn at the chore of running the Government. But the *Times* soon acknowledged that he had considerable aptitude for conducting purposeful government amidst the Utopianism that he generated, and never relinquished. And its Editorial of March 1938 suggested that, despite appearances, Stalin too might have things well in hand.

(Henry and Elizabeth were 16th century, but Lenin and Stalin were 20th century. But time really has nothing to do with it. It is not an independent medium which somehow carries experi-

ence along with it and diffuses it. It is a device for counting the succession of events—the succession of day and night, in the first instance, and the seasons, and the course of the sun which makes a year. History records the succession of events and structures. And what is relevant here is phases in the formation of States.)

If the effect of the Moscow Trials and Purges on the Soviet State was as the socialist idealists of a time-monitored Progress assumed it to be, then the State would have crumbled under the impact of the German Army. And the invasion of Russia—as a means of obliging Britain to negotiate an end to the War which it had no hope of winning, would have been justified. (Britain, for all its bravado rhetoric from a position of safety, is not suicidal.)

But the Red Army did not give way to the initial assault, and the State did not crumble. And, after that, the outcome of the War was, in a sense, inevitable—as it would have been if the British and French Armies had not given way in May 1940. Russian resources were far greater than German resources—as Anglo-French resources were. When the War became a War of resources and populations, German was doomed.

Russian propaganda in June 1940-41 was directed against the British policy of “*Spreading the War*”, while doing little fighting itself. But when the British policy bore fruit with the German invasion of Russia, the Russian defences held. (Of course there were some initial German advances, and these have been described as catastrophic, which raises the old trick question that used to be put to children: *Would you rather be nearly drowned or nearly saved?*)

The Russian Front held, and the nature of the War changed utterly. It became a war between the Communist State system and European Fascism. Britain became an enthusiastic but subordinate ally of the Communist State, which Churchill never ceased to regard as the fundamental enemy. If Britain was to be on the side that defeated Germany, it had to be an apparently enthusiastic ally of Communism. And if the German/Russian War was to be regarded as a continuation of the War launched by Britain, how could Britain not be on the side that defeated Germany? Nazi Germany therefore had to be represented as a force of Evil that had somehow arisen beyond the antagonism of Communism

and Capitalism as the common enemy of both, and a fundamental danger to each, and that force had to be destroyed utterly if the civilisation that was common to Capitalism and Communism was to be saved.

Capitalist democracy failed to defeat this Evil and, in its blundering efforts against it, it had actually strengthened it for its assault on the Communist State.

Capitalist democracy failed to save civilisation. It was Communist democracy that saved both itself and capitalist democracy. In order to save itself, it had to carry the war into the heart of Germany. And, in winning the war, it carried with it the political and social system that had enabled it to do so, and established it in the states it passed through on the way to Germany.

The victory of the Russian Communist State in the World War launched by Britain had the effect of dividing the globe into two competing world systems. But that was only because Hitler, after failing to crush the Soviet state, made a frivolous declaration of war on the United States after Pearl Harbour. (Japan, though his ideological ally, declared Neutrality in his war on Russia and held to it until the Summer of 1945, when Russia declared war for the purpose of occupying some Japanese possessions.)

If the United States had not been brought into the European War, with a strong will to right, and hustled Britain back into the War in Europe in 1944, after a three-year absence, who can say what might have happened?)

From the British point of view—that is, from Churchill’s point of view—that should have followed the destruction of the great Nazi Evil by the Bolshevik State was a war of destruction on the Bolshevik State which had saved civilisation from Nazism. But Britain did not have the means to do that. Bolshevism had strengthened itself immeasurably, and extended its territory, by defeating Germany, while Britain had greatly weakened its world power by bring about a war with Germany and then not waging it in earnest.

Only the United States had the power to crush the Bolshevik State. It had a monopoly of nuclear weapons for a while and it had demonstrated its will to use them. The Red Army could not have been overcome in conventional war in

1945 but Washington had pioneered the weapon of indiscriminate civilian destruction. Washington, however, did not feel the need to use it against the Soviet ally in 1945, as Churchill did. The power of the United States had grown with the World War as British power declined. Churchill in one of his famous speeches had spoken of the British Empire lasting a thousand years, but the War had made it brittle and it began falling apart within a couple of years of the German surrender. Indeed Burma had asserted its independence during the War, in alliance with Japan, and British control could not be restored. Aung San had to be recognised as leader of the independent state of Burma while Churchill was demanding that he should be tried as a war criminal.

The line of Versailles states in Eastern Europe, which came into Russian possession in the War, had mostly been fascist before the War, and many of them had taken part with Germany in the invasion of Russia. Fascism was described by Churchill in the mid 1920s as a means by which capitalist civilisation defended itself against Communism revolution. It was hardly to be expected then that Russia should leave these states to their own spontaneous development after it had liberated them from Fascism by conquering them—and there is real doubt that it was by conquest that European Fascist regimes were broken. (Could it have been otherwise, if Fascism was the means by which capitalist states defeated Communist revolutions when their democratic systems failed to do so? It was beyond them to save themselves from their Saviour.)

Between June 1941 and 1945 the British propaganda system churned out pro-Soviet propaganda. With the proliferation of television channels hungry for material, many of the pro-Soviet feature films that went into the Cinemas during the War are having another innings. There is no talk of Totalitarianism in them. The Soviet Union had its own form of democracy, which had some differences with the British form but, in the light of the marvellous Soviet resistance to Nazism, who could say it was not good?

British political culture gives little attention to the history of democracy, or to the particulars of the way it came about in England more than two centuries after being mooted in the Putney debates. And, if one is driven to think about it, as

I was under the bizarre mode of government which British democracy imposed on the Six County region of the British state in 1921, one soon finds that one of the founding fathers of the democratic ideal would not have recognised the British system finally established in 1918 as being democratic at all.

Rousseau was of the opinion that government by representatives was simply not Democracy. And, if the system of representation is such that the individual merely has a choice between two hierarchically-structured parties every five years, it becomes a kind of democratist fetishism.

The English State was built into a strong structure by the aristocracy over a couple of centuries before any input into politics by the populace was allowed. The Soviet system was constructed by active engagement by the populace in it from the start. There was no Russian ruling class which a deferential populace just had to follow. Political discourse directed to the populace was therefore rather different from discourse in a Parliament which only represented a small ruling class, securely in command of a deferential populace.

In the outcome of World War 2, the world consisted of two antagonistic systems of politics and economics, and each system was dominated by a state which had not been party to the War at all during the first two years after Britain launched it. The Soviet Union and the United States had had no desire for the War which brought each of them to dominance in half of the world. Each of them had a tacitly acknowledged sphere of influence, which was entirely incompatible with the ideology of the new world organisation, UNO.

And Britain, which had launched the war for an aim that quickly became unrealisable—the independence of Poland—ended up under the American sphere of influence itself, and it acknowledged Soviet hegemony over Poland.

Soviet hegemony was established over the line of Versailles states which it conquered from Germany in the course of breaking Nazi power. After all that had happened, it was out of the question that those states should be allowed to undergo a development hostile to the Soviet Union.

Although the USA, with Britain in tow, discreetly encouraged such developments in them, it was on the understand-

ing that they would not intervene when those developments were stifled—and, similarly with Russia, when the USA stifled developments within its sphere of influence which it saw as socialist in tendency, beginning with Guatemala.

Eric Ambler's Cold War novel, to which Kevin Connolly has drawn attention on the BBC, is set within that East European situation. But, after a promising beginning, it collapses into mere melodrama.

The Irish state refused to make itself available to Britain when Britain switched suddenly, and apparently capriciously, from being Hitler's facilitator against the Versailles system, of which it was the guarantor, to springing a military encirclement on him on a minor issue for the purpose of making war on him on its own account without involving the League of Nations.

Ireland had no reason to regret its assertion of neutrality as it saw how Britain bungled the War, left the Poles to their fate, and by its conduct actually increased the power of Nazi Germany phenomenally, until the matter passed effectively out of British hands and brought about circumstances in which the defeat of Nazi Germany could only be achieved by the triumph of Communism against it.

The Irish populace in the 1940s and 1950s did not doubt that the state had done the right thing in refusing to lend itself to Britain for the War, but its academic life was hegemonised by Cambridge and Oxford and so no history of the War from the Irish point of view was ever written.

Such a history would be useful to Europe today, which is in thrall to British propaganda history of that crucial period and is having problems arising from the actual history which the thick propaganda overlay does not dissolve.

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Martin Tyrrell

Part 3

The View from Airstrip Two

Orwell, Ireland and the War

In 1937, George Orwell reviewed Brigadier-General Frank Percy Crozier's *The Men I Killed* for the *New Statesman*. Crozier was a former British army officer who had become a pacifist. "As a pacifist", wrote Orwell, "he makes an impressive figure, like the reformed burglar at a Salvation Army meeting". But, overall, he found the book "rambling, incoherent" and largely unsuccessful in making a robust case for pacifism. In Orwell's view, the best case against war was, first, to make it more widely known that war was an exercise in profit-seeking by the rich, and, second, to emphasise, "That every war when it comes, or before it comes, is represented not as a war but as an act of self-defence against a homicidal maniac ('militarist Germany' in 1914, 'Fascist' Germany next year or the year after)". But Orwell gives Crozier his due. The former Brigadier-General passes what was for Orwell an important test for any pacifist—Crozier recognises that civil wars are not the same as foreign wars, and that a civil war, such as a socialist revolution, might have legitimacy and be morally worth supporting.

Although the review is only a couple of pages long, Orwell omits any discussion of Crozier's time in Ireland during the War of Independence, even though it was the General's disillusion with that war that led to his pacifism. Crozier had been the founder and inaugural commanding officer of the Auxiliaries—the Auxiliary Division of the Royal Irish Constabulary. He supervised what might be called the counter-revolution in Ireland, the revolution itself having been electoral. He organised the counter-revolution until distaste for what he had organised set in. In *The Men I Killed*, he wrote:

"I resigned not so much because I objected to giving the Irish assassins the tit for the tat, but because we were murdering and shooting up innocent people, burning their homes and making new and deadly enemies every day... I held a camouflaged command as a policeman trying to do a soldier's job without the moral support afforded

to soldiers in wartime. I resigned when I discovered the deception, for the Crown regime was nothing more or less than a Fascist dictation cloaked in righteousness" (Crozier, *The Men I Killed*, Athol Books, 2002, p136-7).

It is surprising, even in so short a review, that Orwell does not mention these the circumstances that made Crozier so "very engaging", a pacifist "of great value to his cause", circumstances that included establishing and managing a policing arrangement here described as fascist. Orwell himself had served in Burma in the Indian Imperial Police Force ("I was in the police... I was part of the actual machinery of despotism", he writes in *The Road to Wigan Pier*) and was by 1937 arguing that Fascism and Capitalist Democracy were fundamentally the same. Yet here was Crozier saying explicitly that a democratic state had taken a fascist turn and Orwell, surprisingly, overlooks it. Surprising, but characteristic.

Orwell seems to have had a blind spot about Ireland—which was not for want of Irish connections. His lifelong friend, Cyril Connolly, was Anglo-Irish on his mother's side and—Connolly's own words—"real Irish" on his father's. Later, in London in the 1930s, Orwell acquired a significant link to Ireland through future Hollywood screenwriter (and McCarthy blacklistee) Michael Sayers. Orwell, Sayers and the writer Rayner Heppenstall all shared a flat where Orwell's relationship with Sayers appears to have been especially close. Orwell biographer Gordon Bowker describes it as "very close, very tender, even homoerotic... They discussed their parents, and Orwell sympathised with the fact that Sayers did not get along with his father..." Sayers' father was Philip Sayers, a Jewish emigré from Lithuania and, like several prominent members of Dublin's Jewish community, an ardent Irish republican. It was Sayers who persuaded Orwell, whose literary tastes were at that time fairly conservative, to look again at Yeats. And it was Sayers who prevented an irate Orwell from

bayoneting a drunken Heppenstall with the sharp end of a shooting stick after the latter had rolled in late and loud one Sunday evening, disturbing Orwell's sleep. Heppenstall—who soon mended his fences with Orwell—went on to be an NCO in Belfast during the Second World War, an experience he used in his novel, *The Lesser Infortune*.

But it was Orwell's first wife, Eileen, who was his most important Irish connection—Eileen O'Shaughnessy, daughter of a customs official who had migrated from County Kerry, and granddaughter of a (Catholic) RIC officer. But, although many who knew her made much of her Irish background (that she looked Irish, had 'an Irish face', had a wicked Irish way, and so on—the usual blather), Orwell didn't. Not once in all his letters and diaries, which run to hundreds of pages, does he say, even in passing, that he had a link to Ireland through his wife and her family.

Eileen's father had anglicised substantially, including a religious conversion, and Eileen was, like Orwell, at least nominally Church of England, but the rest of her father's family remained Irish Catholics—one of her aunts was a nun in Texas. (All this I draw from Sylvia Topp's recent, fine biography, *Eileen: the making of George Orwell*. Topp includes the following reminiscence from Denys King-Farlow, a friend of Orwell's from Eton days: "I don't know whether it was because her name was Eileen, I thought she had a rather Irish look." I suspect that that name, and the association, became problematic during the war when Ireland and the Irish were in the doghouse over Neutrality. Working at the Ministry of Food, Eileen called herself 'Emily' for, one assumes, the same reason that *The Spaghetti House* renamed itself the *British Food Shop*.)

Orwell's lack of interest in Ireland is also odd given that what was called 'the Irish Question' had been so prominent in British politics for much of his life. And, since Orwell was frequently critical of imperialism, Ireland might have interested him as an example, close to home, of a state extricating itself from Empire. "How could one of the most eloquent critics of British colonialism in Asia sound so tone-deaf about colonialism and its aftermath next door?" asks Kevin Kerrane in his essay *Orwell's Ireland* (*The Irish Review*, Winter 2007).

As it happens, Orwell did have a few things to say about Ireland, principally in the context of the Second World War and

the country's wartime neutrality. And he had some interesting things to say about colonialism in general, enough to call into question exactly how eloquently and consistently critical he actually was of it.

"I never went into a jail without feeling... that my place was on the other side of the bars", Orwell wrote in 1936, reflecting on his time with the Indian Imperial Police Force in Burma. Accounts of that part of Orwell's life, by Christopher Hollis among others, give a mixed impression as to how he felt about what he was doing. Disillusioned with the system, yes, but not so out of sorts with it that he did not, sometimes at least, take to its ways.

On his outward journey to Rangoon, on his way to join up, Orwell witnessed the following incident. The ship he was on had docked at Colombo and local men and boys ("the usual swarm of coolies" writes Orwell) came aboard to offload the luggage. There were some police officers on hand to supervise, again local men, although their sergeant was white/British. After a time, the sergeant became angry with the way one of the baggage handlers was lifting a case. He "caught him a terrific kick on the bottom that sent him staggering across the deck. Several passengers, including women, murmured their approval". Orwell, looking back on this, reflected that no police officer would have done such a thing in an English railway station to an English porter. Do that in England, and to an Englishman, Orwell reckoned, and the Englishman would kick you right back. And any English onlookers would have been squarely on that English porter's side. But not in Colombo—

"here were ordinary, decent, middle-class people... watching a scene with no emotion whatever except a mild approval. They were white, and the coolie (sic) was black. In other words, he was a subhuman, a different kind of animal..."

And further on, Orwell commented:

"it is much easier for the autocrat to be ruthless if he imagines the serf is different from himself in blood and bone... In Burma, I have listened to racial theories which were less brutal than Hitler's theories about the Jews, but certainly not less idiotic" (*Notes on the Way, Time and Tide*, 30 March 1940).

In time, Orwell in Burma proved

capable of the same type of outburst. Historian and diplomat Maung Htin Aung recalled how, when he was an undergraduate at the University of Rangoon, he saw, the man who would be Orwell beat a Burmese schoolboy at a railway station after the boy had accidentally tripped him up. And in *The Road to Wigan Pier*, Orwell himself wrote of this time:

"For five years I had been part of an oppressive system, and it had left me with a bad conscience. Innumerable remembered faces—of prisoners in the dock, of men waiting in the condemned cells, of subordinates I had bullied and aged peasants I had snubbed, of servants and coolies (sic) I had hit with my fist in moments of rage (nearly everyone does these things in the East, at least occasionally: orientals can be very provoking)—haunted me intolerably."

Burma features in one of Orwell's earliest publications, *How A Nation is Exploited: the British Empire in Burma*, a 1929 article written for the French journal *Le Progrès Civique*. This was a critical piece that noted and bemoaned the lack of a significant Burmese national consciousness. In the absence of any mass nationalism, Orwell (then still Eric Blair) wrote, Imperialism thrived. Worse, it looked set to thrive indefinitely since it had recruited into the lower ranks of its administration the very people—educated, upper working/lower middle class—who might otherwise have been ardent separatists. To the extent that there was nationalism, said Orwell, it was confined to a small and relatively privileged caste—the few Burmese families wealthy enough to live independent of British patronage, who could afford to send their children to university (Maung Htin Aung's family, for example).

Five years on, and Orwell's debut novel, *Burmese Days*, adopted a somewhat different view of things—a suggestion, for instance, that the empire is a travesty, rather than an extension of, 'England', and that 'England' is oblivious to the colonial injustices being perpetrated in its name. In *Burmese Days*, the dark side of Imperialism is largely the achievement of "*Jews and Scotchmen*". What is more, it suggests that, if colonialism is bad, it is bad for colonist and colonised alike. This is an idea that resurfaces in Orwell's semi-autobiographical *Shooting An Elephant* (1936):

"Here I was, the white man with his gun... seemingly the leading actor of

the piece, but in reality I was only an absurd puppet pushed to and fro by the will of those yellow faces behind. I perceived in this moment that when the white man turns tyrant it is his own freedom that he destroys. He becomes a sort of hollow, posing dummy, the conventionalised figure of a sahib. For it is the condition of his rule that he shall spend his life in trying to impress the 'natives' and so in every crisis he has got to do what the 'natives' expect of him. He wears a mask and his face grows to fit it."

In *Shooting an Elephant*, Burmese nationalism—a more substantial movement in this account than in the 1929 essay—receives only grudging sympathy. The "*Burmans*", writes Orwell, were cowardly ("*No one had the guts to raise a riot...*"), given to tripping him up on the football field, or spitting betel juice at women, or jeering at him when his back was turned.

At this time in his life, he wrote, he was already anti-Imperialist and anti-British—"all for the Burmese". He hated his job, which had shown him "*the dirty work of empire at close quarters*", but he hated also the "*evil-spirited little beasts who tried to make my job impossible*"—the Buddhist priests, say, or the young men with their "*sneering yellow faces*". If part of him thought the Empire an "*unbreakable tyranny*", part of him "*thought that the greatest joy would be to drive a bayonet into a Buddhist priest's guts*".

In July 1939, Orwell reviewed Clarence K Streit's book, *Union Now*, for the *Adelphi* (a left-wing periodical that had, in Burma, often so incensed him he had used it for target practice). This was the pre-War Orwell, the "*revolutionary pacifist*" member of the Independent Labour Party. Orwell's view at this time was that Fascism was simply Capitalism in its raw, unrefined state and that there was therefore no fundamental difference between Democracies and Dictatorships. To say otherwise, to say that Dictatorships and Democracies were distinct and that what distinguished them was obvious was what Orwell dismissed as "*the sheep and goats theory*".

Clarence Streit, an American journalist, was a 'sheep and goats' man. In *Union Now*, he proposed that Britain, France, the United States and the other, smaller, democracies—the '*sheep*' as it were—should formally unite against totalitarian states like Germany and Russia, in effect forming a mutually sup-

portive democratic bloc. But Orwell was unconvinced. It wasn't that he thought Streit had misrepresented his 'goats'—Germany, Italy and Japan. "They are goats right enough", said Orwell, "and billies at that". It was the sheep that concerned him. Streit "has coolly lumped the huge British and French empires—in essence nothing but mechanisms for exploiting cheap coloured labour—under the heading of democracies". Belgium and the Netherlands, too. Under Streit's union, these colonies would continue to be disenfranchised. All they would get from the new arrangement would be that they were policed all the more effectively, possibly by a more multinational police force. That would be a "vaster injustice", Orwell argued, than Fascism. What point is there, he asked, in fighting Fascism merely so as to bolster this greater injustice of Colonialism.

A year or so on, in *Notes on the Way* (the *Time and Tide* article from 1940), Orwell, by then supportive of the War, nonetheless wrote that if he thought a British victory might result in a revival of Colonialism, he would probably "side with Russia and Germany". All countries will soon be socialist, he goes on to say. They will be socialist in the sense that they will all, shortly, have "centralised ownership and planned production". The only issue will be whether they adopt a democratic version of this Socialism, or a totalitarian version like those in Russia and Nazi Germany. But there is, he says, no necessary incompatibility between a Socialist, i.e. economically-centralised, state and an Imperialist state, particularly if the ideology of "inferior races" is kept up.

"Hitler", writes Orwell, "is only the ghost of our own past rising up against us. He stands for the extension and perpetuation of our own methods, just at the moment we are beginning to be ashamed of them."

Orwell initially thought the War would create openings for Socialism in Britain, that it would provide a basis for revolutionary social transformation, for "centralised ownership and planned production". Nationality would supply the necessary solidarity here for a revolution that Orwell speculated might soon lead to all kinds of good things—communal eating, utility clothing, the Home Guard evolving into "red militias" that would billet themselves in the Ritz. But if Britain were to be revolutionised, what would happen to its Empire, that "vaster injustice"?

Orwell's long and well-regarded wartime essay, *The Lion and the Unicorn*, is perhaps the fullest statement of this 'red militia' vision. Writing after his conversion to the war party, and advocating his proposed fusion of Public School Patriotism and Socialism—socialism "on the bones of a Blimp"—Orwell proposes, "immediate dominion status for India, with power to secede when the war is over".

Later in the same work, he outlines what he means by Dominion Status for India. He advocates that British officials work with Indians to educate and modernise the country and develop a constitution—"an offer of partnership until such time as the world has ceased to be ruled by bombing planes. But we must add to it an unconditional right to secede."

This seems to be proposing something considerably less than the independence mainstream Indian nationalists wanted. For one thing, Orwell did not equate Dominion Status with Independence. That's what I take from the repeated reference to an eventual "right to secede". (India, regardless of how it was formally presented, would not have been independent if its attachment to the British Empire was involuntary. And, if it had no immediate right to secede, it would have been involuntarily linked to Britain, linked against its will. The right to secede from—and to do things differently from—the former Colonial Power is what marks a former colony's independence). What Orwell is here proposing is technically not even Dominion Status, more a kind of managed transition towards it and with Independence proper held back until later still—not when the War is over, but when the world is no longer dominated by Governments with state of the art air forces, and by extension, supplies of the weapons of mass destruction *du jour*. And when might that particular pie in the sky ever come about?

"In the age of the bombing plane", Orwell writes in *The Lion and the Unicorn*, "backward agricultural countries like India and the African colonies can no more be independent than a cat or a dog. Had any Labour Government come into office and then proceeded to grant India anything that could truly be called independence, India would simply have been absorbed by Japan, or divided between Japan and Russia."

(As *The Lion and the Unicorn* was written, around a year before Pearl Har-

bour, Japan was not at that stage actively belligerent towards Britain, and Russia was not yet an ally. Orwell's concern here is with *potential* threats to a British strategic asset—India.)

The type of managed dominion status Orwell envisaged for India differed little from general British policy there, which was to steer the development of the country and its people so that self-government was achieved in a way that was compatible with British interests. By the 1930s, almost all senior British politicians, including most Conservatives, envisaged India achieving this type of biddable self-government, albeit at some unspecified date in the (far) future. (Churchill was an exception here; he thought Indians would never be able to govern themselves and that the Indian National Congress was a wheeze to revive the caste system by the people who had lately sat at the top of it.) Orwell too had his reservations about Indian nationalism:

"The basic fact about nearly all Indian intellectuals is that they don't want independence, can't imagine it and at heart don't want it. They want to be permanently in opposition, suffering a painless martyrdom, and are foolish enough to imagine that they could play the same schoolboy games with Japan or Germany as they can with Britain."

In his diary Orwell speculated on what might happen, were Russia to take over India. He reckoned the Russians would adopt a colonialist attitude towards the Indians because "It's very hard not to, seeing that in practice the majority of Indians are inferior to Europeans and one can't help feeling this and, after a little while, acting accordingly."

India had had war declared for it in September 1939. The colonial administration took the decision on India's behalf without consulting any organisation representative of India's people. The main Indian nationalist movement, the Indian National Congress, was incensed at this. It wanted Independence granted immediately. This independent India would then declare itself neutral and, if need be, defend its neutrality. Orwell's proposal was a highly watered-down version of this and indicated the basic lack of fit between the British and the Indian nationalist versions of India's future.

In 1942, a variant on the generic British plan for India was put on the table by Labour front-bencher Sir Stafford Cripps, who was close in outlook to the

Independent Labour Party and much admired by Orwell. By then, in the aftermath of Pearl Harbour, the fall of Singapore and the retreat from Rangoon, it looked likely the War might come to India, and that India might prove less than reliable. Many Indians were still disgruntled at having had a war declared for them, while some—led by Subhas Chandra Bose—had allied with the Japanese and established an Indian National Army. At the same time, the American Government was intimating that it would not look well on continued British rule in Asia once the war was over and that an exit plan needed to be drawn up promptly. Cripps' mission was to make India reliable by offering a political arrangement Indians might agree to, thereby getting India fully into the war and the Americans off his case.

In the end, however, he offered even less than Orwell—Dominion Status *after* the War in return for full Indian support during it, a proposition Gandhi likened to “*a post-dated cheque on a failing bank*”. Congress in response launched the *Quit India* movement, which was rapidly suppressed. Most of the Congress leadership spent the remaining years of the War in prison. But Orwell wrote:

“Outside of India I doubt whether many people blame the British government for the breakdown [of Cripps' mission]. One trouble at the moment is the tactless utterances of Americans who for years have been blabbing about ‘Indian freedom’ and British imperialism, and have suddenly had their eyes opened to the fact that the Indian intelligentsia don't want independence, i.e. responsibility”.

Dominion Status had evolved in the decade before Orwell wrote *The Lion and the Unicorn* and people were still coming to grips with what it had evolved into. Dominion was a status that had originally been conferred on those parts of the British Empire where the colonists dominated, if not vastly outnumbered, the colonised and had established reasonable overseas facsimiles of the United Kingdom and its institutions. Canada was the first of these. In 1867, most of the self-governing British colonies in North America were federated under a central government at Ottawa. No additional powers were conferred on this new polity. It was a purely administrative development. But, because the new arrangement needed to be called something, it was called a ‘*dominion*’, allegedly because the more obvious ‘*kingdom*’ would have antagonised the

United States. (The Canada brought into being in 1867 was a kingdom in something like the way Ireland had been a kingdom at the end of the 1700s—self-governing but connected to Britain through having the same King.)

Other dominions followed—Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Newfoundland. Irish Dominion Status (the Irish Free State) was different from these in that it was not a status that had been actively aspired to or particularly welcomed—the majority had wanted (had in fact established) a Republic. The Dominion Status accorded to Ireland was a lesser thing than full independence and was agreed to only because it seemed preferable to a “*terrible and immediate war*”. That it was a lesser thing was accepted by all involved (“*Dominion Home Rule*” was a term used by a number of Conservative politicians, including Churchill.) It was only on the understanding that it was less than full independence that Dominion Status was granted at all. And on that understanding it was (grudgingly) accepted.

I doubt that anyone up to the end of the 1920s would have thought of the Dominions of the British Empire as independent states. They were not quite there. Westminster could still legislate for them, for instance, and the highest court of the Dominions remained the House of Lords. In gazetteers and encyclopaedias and so forth, the Dominions were always listed as administrative units of the British Empire, a notch beneath the United Kingdom, but decidedly beneath it. And, on maps of the world, they were always shown in British Empire pink.

Following mainly Irish and South African pressure, the Imperial Conference of 1926 made a verbal declaration to the effect that the Dominions were states in their own right, equal in status to the United Kingdom. This was subsequently formalised by the *Statute of Westminster 1931*, which in effect confirmed what had been declared five years earlier: the independence of Canada, South Africa and the Irish Free State (including the right to legislate inconsistently with Britain and the right not to be legislated for by Britain). The same deal was available to Australia and New Zealand, should their Governments choose it, which they largely did in the 1940s, and did completely in 1986.

(I suspect that the Statute of Westminster was delivered in the hope, if not the expectation, that none of the benefi-

ciaries would actually avail of it to the full and that Australia and New Zealand were top of the class in this respect, and Canada was in the middle, and South Africa and Ireland were the ones to keep a firm teacherly eye on.)

In the case of Ireland, the House of Commons at the time debated whether the British legislation giving effect to the *Statute of Westminster* should include a clause to protect certain Articles of the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty—the Oath of Allegiance, the prohibition on the Irish Free State acquiring a navy (aside from some small ships for fishery protection and customs); and limitations on the maximum size of the Irish Army—against amendment under the powers that would be conferred to Ireland once the *Statute* was enacted. It was suggested that such a clause was needed because the Irish Free State was “*on a different footing from the other Dominions*”—it was the only dominion physically close to Britain and the one most likely to use its independence to act, well, independently.

While things had gone reasonably fine under the Cosgrave/Cumann na nGaedhail Government, the worry was that some future, less biddable Irish Government might use its new, Statute of Westminster powers to reject those bits of the Treaty that undermined its independence. Proponents of the clause noted that the Cosgrave Government had a slim majority, was largely rather than wholeheartedly reliable (from a British perspective), and that Fianna Fáil looked like it might be getting somewhere.

The Commons debate turned on what impact approving the clause, or rejecting it, might have on Cosgrave's prospects, and on de Valera's. In the event, the idea that the clause would weaken Cosgrave prevailed and the it was voted down. But de Valera won anyway, and over the next few years he used the powers secured under the Statute of Westminster to shed Dominion Status and make his jurisdiction unmistakably independent. (The Oath of Allegiance was abolished and when someone took issue with this and tried to appeal it to the House of Lords, he found that appealing to the Lords had also been abolished.) A new Constitution was adopted in 1937 and Ireland was neutral in the Second World War.

Irish neutrality, which was fully in accord with the letter (though not the spirit) of the *Statute of Westminster*, was a policy that angered Orwell. In his

diary, he quoted with approval Sebastian Haffner, a German refugee who thought “*the spectacle of our allowing a sham independent country like Ireland to defy us simply made all Europe laugh at us*”. Later, in *Notes On Nationalism* (1945), he would contend that Ireland was able to be neutral only because Britain was defending its neutrality—that without Britain, Germany would have invaded. The possibility that Britain itself might threaten Irish neutrality and threaten it more realistically than Germany does not seem to have occurred to him.

In 1943, somewhere between Cripps’ mission and the writing of *Notes on Nationalism*, Orwell became involved in a debate on Burmese independence in which he proved even more dismissive of Burma’s chances of independence than he had been of those of India. *Tribune* had published an article by Robert Duval, *Whitehall’s Road To Mandalay*, which questioned the sincerity of Britain’s commitment to Burmese independence and argued that this now needed to be stated unambiguously. (The background here was: Burma had come under Japanese rule following the fall of Rangoon and the Japanese had set about constructing a Burmese national state. General Alexander had said this was of no great matter since Britain would in time ‘reconquer’ Burma. This seeming commitment to reconquest unsettled both moderate Burmese nationalists and the Americans, particularly as it was not immediately retracted).

In view of Orwell’s time in Burma and the fact that he had written about the country factually and in fiction, *Tribune* invited him to comment on what Duval had said—essentially, that Britain should commit unambiguously to Burmese independence. Orwell wrote: “*Burma is a small, backward country...it will never be independent*”. Many Burmese, he said, did not want independence but, even if a majority were to want it, they would never have it. “*It is impossible*”, he said, “*for a country like Burma to be fully independent, with its own private army, tariff barriers, etc.*” Talk of Burmese independence was ‘nonsense’, even if it were sometimes promised in the heat of wartime propaganda. It would be irresponsible for any British politician to say that there would ever be a Burmese state.

It is interesting that Orwell thought of Burma as ‘small’—it was (and is) some two and a half to three times the

size of the United Kingdom. Orwell had lived there and travelled in the country and would surely have got some sense of the size of the place. But the size of a country is important to Orwell’s wider argument, and it is therefore important that he typifies it as small. “*Small nationalities*”, he claimed, “*cannot be independent because they cannot defend themselves*”. In his view, a national state that cannot defend itself has to form some kind of arrangement with a bigger, more powerful state, but if it does that, if its independence is reliant on the protection of a great Power, then it is, in Orwell’s opinion, a “*sham*” (the same way Haffner had thought Irish statehood was a “*sham*”). In the whole world, Orwell reckoned, only five or six countries could be truly independent and, as a result, it was essential to discourage “*petty nationalism all over the place*” and the creation, in Asia, Europe and elsewhere of a “*patchwork of comic opera states*”. Rather than an independent Burmese state, Orwell advocated a federation of South East Asian states under Chinese (i.e. Nationalist Chinese) hegemony.

What about closer to home? Challenged by a Welsh nationalist, Keidrych Rhys, Orwell responded that he had no difficulties with Wales operating as a separate administrative unit within the

United Kingdom. And he had no issue with a Welsh administrative unit promoting Welsh culture since, in the absence of an active and credible Welsh separatist movement, this was of no political significance. But imagine a Welsh nationalism, he said, whose advocates hated England to the extent that Wales was a risk to British security. In Orwell’s view, Britain could never tolerate a Welsh state based on such an ideology. “*In self-defence we could not [allow it]. We should have to do our best to crush every trace of Welsh nationalism including the Welsh language.*” And Irish nationalism, too, no doubt, if the need had arisen. If, for instance, Churchill had, indeed, “*come to close quarters with Mr de Valera.*” If that had happened, I cannot see that Orwell would have been displeased. What irked Churchill about Ireland—its independence, neutrality, refusal to give up the Treaty Ports—surely irked Orwell as well. Here was a state, physically close to Britain, and acting in a way that was arguably unhelpful to British interests. What matter that neutrality was legal, or that participation in the war might have cost Ireland dear in lives and livelihoods, British interests were what they were and Irish interests were getting in the way of them. Had Churchill made good his threats, the wartime Orwell at least, would have been undoubtedly supportive.

Hugh Duffy

Unpublished Letter to the *Irish Independent*

The RIC Has Been Portrayed As A Legitimate Police Force !

It has been the mantra of the last Government that the Royal Irish Constabulary were the legitimate police force of their day and should be honoured as such. This was also the view of the Redmondites.

Dr. F.S.L. Lyons stated in his book on the period that *The Redmondites were in fact in his opinion out of touch with many of the movements which were attracting the active and intelligent young Irish Nationalists.*

So back to the word “*Legitimate*”, I quote from Sir Robert Peel who set up the RIC:

“I make no bones about the fact that we are treating Ireland in a distinctly unusual, unprecedented, and quite un-English manner. Indeed, we almost gloried in having introduced into Ireland something akin to those gendarmeries of continental Europe so fiercely condemned as inimical to the rights of free-born Englishmen. Irishmen, being essentially different and inhabiting an essentially different country, merited, we felt altogether sterner treatment”

(Parl. Debate, 23rd June 1814).

Much nearer the period 1916-22, Lord Salisbury, leader of the Tory Party, said during the debate of the *Home Rule Act*, 1914: “*Some races like the Hindus and the Hottentots, were unfit to govern: the Irish was one of them...*”

Continuing, he said first, because of the taint of idolatrous popery but second (by no means less important), because of the laziness, greed, harshness, corruption of the Irish landed and professional classes. Above all the gentry were too often absentees seen in London, Cheltenham, or Bath, spending the rents of estates they did little to improve, relying on the police to protect rent collectors.

Peel, when he was Chief Secretary, visiting Roscommon said he believed “*that the common people believe that the Government is a large animal that lives in Dublin Castle*”. Peel said that a country “*at such a low-level of civilisation required mediaeval policing*”. On another occasion, in a more ironic mode, he delivered an unforgettable maxim, “*I never yet saw an Irish man that had not something Irish about him*”.

During the Famine Sir George Trevelyan said “*God sent the famine to punish the Irish People and we should do nothing to mitigate it*”. Was this “*just carrying out normal police work*”? That is, to evict the tenants for non-payment, To convey them on their way to being deported in coffin ships (because at Four pound ten shillings per had, it was cheaper as a once off payment to the owners of the coffin ships than to sustain them in the Workhouses).

The police also guarded the export of food from Ireland to the UK at the height of the Famine.

To quote Sir Walter Scott on his visit to Ireland in 1825,

“The police there reminded me of the Gendarmerie of France being in fact soldiers on foot and horse”.

This is one of the reasons that History should be taught in our schools: without History, Governments can “*manufacture history to suit their present needs*”, as quoted by the late r. Ronan Fanning in his book *Fatal Path*.

Under Concrete Steeples

The streets are empty like small rural rivers.
 A bus drifts empty like flotsam.
 If you make your way along Magdala Avenue -
 you might ask but mostly you won't -
 who titled it thus? Google it.
 A great name giver,
 the British Empire, an expedition to rescue missionaries,
 the ears and eyes of colonialism,
 through a battle in Magdala, Abyssinia, 1868.
 All is calm now, too calm.
 Then someone comes towards you
 and at the last minute careers across the street.
 The idea is not to mix.
 Is he a carrier of the virus.
 Does he think I might be.
 How many times have we had this.
 Wasn't such events written on papyrus
 during a much emptier earth.
 Am I too old to be out.
 From the Whittington Hospital a sleek limousine too good
 to be a hearse—
 Was that a shout?
 I know of those blackened windows
 and the ambulance sirens in the night,
 And I know now the self-isolation of limbo.
 Dare I cough or wipe a drop from my nose.
 No aircraft in the sky.
 The squeals of children from the playground gone,
 now locked into their pressure-cooker life.
 Not another guy!
 Should I make him a carrier by crossing the street
 in a tit-for-tat.
 It's rife.
 everyone is doing it.
 That is, the few with hurried steps on this new landscape.
 Now, who's coming towards me.
 It's Spring and I scarcely noticed. Blossoms are
 on the bough.
 I try to avert my attention but there's no escape.
 Dark glasses, a large white mask,
 a hat pulled down over the face.
 The quick flash of golden skin in the cold sun
 asks:
 Is she Chinese.
 In her agony of dress I want to say:
 'I'm not blaming you.' (not like the rest)
 But she's gone and I have not been able to please,
 not in this stark atmosphere.
 Not many pickings for the pigeons, no fast food remains.
 McDonald's is closed..
 The blackbird so bold and even bolder now.
 Some starlings have come down from their clockwork
 crazy whirling cloud, their dark rainbow feathers glow.
 They look me straight in the eye before they're up again
 in with some sort of argument.
 Quieter still this mighty city as a village.
 Another bus, one lone passenger unloaded as spillage.
 The burst into the Archway hub:
 Navigation Square, commemorating the Irish navvies who dug
 for England, when life was less than fair.
 Coarse bread and raw onion their grub.
 The supermarket is in sight, it's a queue of anxious people
 distancing even more in an already socially-cold city.
 Sheltering under the new build of the concrete steeples.

*

Wilson John Haire. 7.4.20.

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Here And There
A Protestant Love Song To A Catholic People
For The Birds?
Corona: A Reminder!
Joys Of Spring!
Diversity In Cork
End of Jewish Chronicle

P
A
T

distributing tracts, slept in country cabins, and lived, like the natives, on a few potatoes ... What makes the situation funnier is that this stout Protestant seems to have fallen madly in love with the Capuchin priest and temperance advocate Fr. Mathew. We may even suspect that he fell a little in love with her, because she admits rather coyly that he gave her a gold brooch. Her book is a love song; a Protestant love song to a Catholic people".

“ASHAMED OF your name? Jews who switched.

Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger [1926-2007] changed his name from Aaron Lustiger. Yes, the former Archbishop of Paris is in fact a Jew. For a moment, the world’s first bona fide Jewish Pope was a possibility. Sadly, the German non-Jewish Joseph Ratzinger beat him to the post after Cardinal Lustiger’s mentor, John Paul II, died in 2005.” (YES, but is it good for the Jews? -Jonny Geller-Allen Lane, Publisher-2006)

Jews who would be good to Marry—

Harvey Weinstein (born 19 March, 1952 in Queens). If you are in search of a big personality in a big frame, look no further. Not for the sensitive, as he is known for his huge temper, undiminished by his crash dieting, and his, shall we say, ‘focus’. Hugely successful and must be applauded for naming his company Miramax after his mom and pa, Miriam and Max. Nice Jewish boy. (ibid.-2006)

Judological eligibility rating: 4

A PROTESTANT love song to a Catholic people—

Nicholson, Asenath: Ireland's Welcome to the Stranger, or, An Excursion through Ireland in 1844/45, for the purpose of personally investigating the condition of the poor. New York: Baker and Scribner, 1847. pp.

Asenath Hatch Nicholson (1792-1855) was an American vegan, social observer and philanthropist. She wrote at first-hand about the Great Hunger in Ireland in the 1840s. She observed the famine as she distributed bibles, food and clothing.

Nicholson was born in Chelsea in Vermont in 1792. Her family were members of the Protestant Congregation Church and this was the source for her given name. She trained and became

a successful teacher in her hometown before she married a man with three children and went to New York. She and her new husband, Mr. Nicholson, became interested in the diets recommended by Sylvester Graham.

In the 1840s they opened boarding houses that offered the vegan diet prescribed by Graham. Amongst her guests were Irish immigrants and she was intrigued by their accounts of Ireland.

In May, 1844, she left New York for Ireland and when she arrived she walked around Ireland visiting every County but one. She noted that people lacked work and they relied almost entirely on their crops of potatoes. She left for Scotland in August having observed Ireland just before the outbreak of the Irish Famine.

She returned in 1846 during the second crop failure which, together with high unemployment, was creating a national disaster. Nicholson was concerned that she would just have to witness the suffering but she wrote to the New York Tribune and The Emancipator in New York and assistance from their readers was organised. In the following July five barrels of corn arrived from New York although it has been noted that on the same ship there was 50 barrels for the Central Relief Committee, but Nicholson preferred to go it alone.

She wrote at first-hand about the Great Hunger in Ireland in the 1840s. She observed the famine as she distributed bibles, food and clothing. Nicholson died in Jersey City in 1855.

According to Frank O'Connor, this book and Carleton's unfinished autobiography offer

"the best descriptions of this depressing period that I know ... The former is almost entirely unknown, though in its own right it is one of the really remarkable travel books ... it has also a certain comic charm, because it is the story of an American Protestant missionary who trudged through Ireland

FOR THE BIRDS?

A University College, Cork Islam lecturer revealed how the college was left red-faced after a ‘racist’ attack on a Muslim exhibition piece turned out to be the work of a defecating bird.

“He said they were shocked after hearing that someone had spat on a photograph in what was initially believed, was a racist attack . . . The news sparked widespread condemnation until it was learned that the Boole Library in UCC had in fact being infiltrated by an unwelcome ‘party pooper’ . . . A bird! (The Echo-5.3.2020)

As Martin Luther used say: “You cannot keep birds from flying over your head but you can keep them from building a nest in your hair”

But you could never be sure around the Quad at U.C.C. — with some of the dozers there you could build two nests in their hair, especially around the history department!

CORONA: A REMINDER: “Sixty thousand people died from tuberculosis in the fifteen years to 1948.” (Barry Desmond-No Workers’ Republic-Reflections on Labour and Ireland, 1913-1967-Watchword-2009-p.203.)

SEPSIS: One-in-five patients here who develops sepsis dies from the condition and mortality rates are on the rise again after falling for almost a decade.

The HSE figures show the mortality rate rose from 17.6pc in 2017 to 19.4pc in 2018.

Meanwhile, nearly twice as many people around the world are dying of sepsis than was previously thought, according to a new global study.

Researchers found the condition, in which the body suffers an out-of-control response to infection, caused 11 million deaths globally in 2017 out of a total of 49 million cases. (Irish Independent-18 .1.2020)

ANNUAL GLOBAL Road Crash Statistics: Nearly 1.25 million people die in road crashes each year, on average 3,287 deaths a day. An additional 20-50 million are injured or disabled. More than half of all road traffic deaths occur among young adults ages 15-44.

Over 24,000 people have died on Irish roads since records began in 1959.

Joys Of Spring!

Letter to *The Limerick Leader*:

Dear Editor, By a strange coincidence, I was prompted to think of the Corona virus while engaged in the task of planting some flower bulbs last week. I was planting Lily of the Valley, or *Convallaria majalis*, which sounds rather like the dreaded virus. The similarity does not end there: most parts of Lily of the Valley are poisonous. However, the bad news ends there. The beautiful flower, with its bell shaped white flowers, is also known as ‘Our Lady’s Tears;’ a name said to derive from the tears shed by Our Lady while watching Jesus die on the Cross. However, death was followed by resurrection and the flowering Lily of the Valley is said to signify the return of happiness. This thought may help us at the present time.—**Brian P Murphy**, Order of Saint Benedict (o.s.b.), Glenstal Abbey, Co. Limerick (14.4.2020)

Diversity In Cork!

The first time that Black American Kimberly Reyes walked down Cork’s Patrick Street, she “*was shocked*”. She recalled: “I saw more black people that day than I had seen in San Francisco in four years.”

Kimberly, 42, is a Fulbright scholar doing a Masters degree at U.C.C. on post colonialism and identity.

“I wasn’t expecting the kind of diversity that is here,” she said. “But living here for a while, you realise it’s not exactly Utopian in terms of race relations.

“Being a Black American is unusual in Cork. People assume that I’m probably Nigerian. When I start talking with my American accent, people ask me where I’m from and why am I here. Quite frankly, I love it.

“Whether in Australia or London, I always found myself navigating towards Irish people. Not Irish Americans but Irish people from Ireland. Maybe it’s the banter.” (*The Echo*, Cork, 20.2.2020)

The Jewish Chronicle and Jewish News

in the U.K. are to close and their staff made redundant, according to sources at the outlets, after their parent company ran out of money as the coronavirus pandemic devastates the media industry. (*The Guardian*-8.4.2020)

A collapse in print sales and advertising revenue is hitting news outlets hard, with many local and independent newspapers facing severe financial strains.

The oldest Jewish newspaper in the world, it was founded in November, 1841. Its rival, the *Voice of Jacob*, ceased publication in 1848.

“In 1906, the *Jewish Chronicle* was bought by four leading Zionists, and was later purchased by the Kessler family. David Kessler became managing director and in 1984 he handed over control of the paper to a trust. With a

circulation of almost 50,000, it has a readership of more than 250,000 and reaches almost every Jewish household in Britain.” (*The Encyclopedia of the British Press 1422-1992*-Edited by Dennis Griffiths-Macmillan Press, 1992)

CHINA: A thought for the European—

The Chinese were an old, old nation, highly civilized a thousand years before ever Julius Caesar landed his legions on the English coast. To the Chinese time does not exist. They may well be still one of the great nations of the earth when London and England and all its civilization are no more than memories of history.—A. Corbett-Smith-*Countries of the World*, The Fleetway House, London, 1923

Stephen Richards

Reliquiae Baxteriana Part 5

Boston And Beyond

Why did the rediscovery in Scotland in the early eighteenth century of an obscure English mid-seventeenth century treatise on the Law and the Gospel (*The Marrow of Modern Divinity*) cause such an explosive reaction in the Church of Scotland? Readers may remember that the explosion was activated by the rather insouciant expressions in the so-called *Auchterarder Creed*, to the effect that repentance from sin was not a condition precedent to accepting Christ by faith and thereby being engrafted into the Church.

“And therefore the General Assembly do hereby strictly prohibit and discharge all ministers of this Church, either by preaching, writing, or printing, to recommend the said book, or, in discourse, to say anything in favour of it; but, on the contrary, they are hereby enjoined and required to warn and exhort their people, in whose hands the said book is, or may come, not to read or use the same.”

The *Marrow* was perceived to be an *Antinomian*, libertine sort of book. This *ex cathedra* condemnation by the Scottish Kirk has never been revoked.

The Dark Side Of Life

In October 2008 I attended a weekend conference at NUI Maynooth on John Calvin and Ignatius Loyola, comparing and contrasting those rough contemporaries. I don’t remember much of what was said except that on the Friday night Stephen Williams, Aberystwyth-born and onetime systematic theology professor at Union Seminary Belfast, gave a general introduction, in the course of which he commented that, in the western Europe of the sixteenth century, people at every level of society were beset by an overwhelming sense of personal sinfulness. This was, to put it mildly, a problem in their lives, if not to the same extent for everybody. Their inner lives were dominated by thoughts of sin, death and judgment. For most of them their outer lives weren’t much fun either: it was the beginning of the Little Ice Age, and to be cold, hungry and flea-ridden was just normality, as it was to be at the mercy of bands of outlaws, and nasty members of the knightly class.

The Reformation teaching tended to accentuate the issue. Chesterton, hardly an apologist for the Puritan movement, comments about it: “*it had the unique value of theology, that it brought a philo-*

sophical problem of some sort to knock at every man's door" (London Daily News Review of Dowden, *Puritan and Cavalier*). No matter how pronounced a predestinarian you may be, your fate was in your own hands. The gate into the kingdom was like a turnstile at a football ground. We come to faith one by one, just as we die one by one ("*There is one dance that you will do alone*": Jackson Browne, *For a Dancer*, from the 1973 album *Late for the Sky*).

As for the five centuries since then, none of them, least of all the last, has given us any reason to revise the gloomy anthropological assumptions of our ancestors. The demands of so-called British empiricism have been well and truly satisfied on the subject. By a happy coincidence the handy mnemonic for the Five Points of Calvinism affirmed at Dordrecht, Holland, in 1619, comes out as *TULIP*, where the T stands for Total Depravity. That is strong language, as the BBC says. However, it doesn't mean that all of us are as bad as bad as can be, but that we are disordered at every level of our personality: our will, our intellect, our imagination and our affections. It doesn't preclude recognition of human behaviour that is noble, selfless, magnanimous and so on, but contends that even our best actions are contaminated with some of the twists and corruption of our fallen human nature. Thus the image of God in us, the *imago Dei*, has been so defaced as to be largely, if not completely, unrecognisable.

So then, it might be argued, why are people in general today not wandering around "*bowed down beneath a load of sin, by Satan sore oppress'd*"? (John Newton). I suppose we don't really know in any individual case if they are or not, but I think it's clear to see that our popular culture has little patience with any such religious mania. This is the age of self-realisation and high self-esteem. We can be whatever we want to be, and we're not to let anything stand in our way. Strange to say, the centuries when Old Western Man was hag-ridden by his accusing conscience and by fear of death, judgment and Hell, have left us a pretty decent literary, musical and artistic legacy. All of human life is there, and glimpses of love, hope, joy and human worth, even in the midst of the grim treadmill of life.

And what have we got today, post-1945? We have Stockhausen, John Cage, Tracey Emin, Damien Hirst, Harold

Pinter, Samuel Beckett. Behind all the surface glitter and the entertainment there's an emptiness, and indeed an ugliness. Maybe, as Chesterton argues in his biography of Browning, "*the doctrine of original sin*" is "*the one grand and logical basis of all optimism*". I'm not sure what he means by this, but I've noticed that if you bear in mind the T of Tulip you will then often be pleasantly surprised by the random acts of kindness you experience as you go through life, whereas Rousseau will lead you along the enchanted way to despair.

The Unbearable Lightness Of Being

What I've set out above is the typical Dover Beach-type lament you hear from conservative Christians. It's not an original analysis. David Wells in his 1995 book *God in the Wasteland* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.), with its echo of T.S. Eliot, comes up with an interesting phrase. He talks about the "*weightlessness of God*" in today's culture. The God of the Bible is in a sense oppressive: demanding, intrusive, and immanent as well as transcendent: "*Where shall I flee from your presence?*" asks the Psalmist. But these days God is a very light sort of Being indeed. If you ever listen to *Thought for the Day* on BBC Radio 4, you will get the sense of what I mean. God is wheeled along, if at all, solely to provide cover for some misty socio-economic theorising.

The sin-conscience may have been the result of cultural conditioning or it may be deep-woven into human nature, so that when we lose it we become that much less human. St. Paul argues hard for the latter. For him the pious if hypocritical Jews, the sophisticated Greeks and Romans, and the savage Scythian tribesmen who lacked a written law-code, were all in the same boat. They all had hard-wired into their psyche a sense of external standards that they were constantly failing to live up to. They were all equally without God and without hope. This was the common denominator of humanity in its state of alienation.

To some extent we all suffer from impostor syndrome. We have some sort of reputation in society to maintain, yet we know deep down that we're not really very good people, or even very nice people. We're making ourselves out to be nicer than we are, because otherwise society couldn't function. Society is sustained by the decent fictions of life, just as the Victorians are supposed, wrongly

I think, to have draped the piano legs. We suspect that the same condemnation might apply to our neighbours as well, but we don't know them as we know ourselves, so we have to give them the benefit of the doubt. To the best of our actual knowledge we are worse than them, but we tend to suppress this knowledge.

But what about the noble savage in his sexually liberated Edenic state, as popularised by Gauguin, Margaret Mead and others? It turns out that there was more wish-fulfilment than rigorous observation in their reports. Basically, these privileged Westerners had an agenda: they found what they wanted to find.

The strange thing is that, even as a result of Paul's missionary journeys, there was a significant response in Graeco-Roman society to preaching that, objectively speaking, was the product of a Judaistic cult. Why would people embrace this message? You might be in a middle-ranking job or trade, with a reasonable standing in society. In a city like Corinth or Ephesus there would be plenty of entertainment. You could have sex with the temple prostitutes, or you could spend your spare time and money betting on the chariot races, or indeed watching the gladiators fighting one another or fighting savage beasts in the arena. You haven't been brought up to think there might be anything improper or undesirable in any of this.

You then accept Paul's message, you join a Christian *ekklesia* (assembly). Many of your fellow-believers will be slaves, people you wouldn't have passed the time of day with before; your livelihood may be in jeopardy; and your social life is affected because of the feasts that take place in idol temples. And of course you stay away henceforth from the circus and the prostitutes.

Why would anybody do that, whose conscience wasn't already causing trouble? There seems to have been a burden of guilt lying over the ancient world, which, in the words of the anonymous writer of the Letter to the Hebrews, gave rise to "*a fearful expectation of judgment*".

We're All Doomed!

But are we all such blithe, guiltless spirits as our modern prophets daily insist?

The idea of judgment is closely related to catastrophic thinking. Of course

we're surfing a wave of catastrophism in this Spring of 2020, enough to submerge the child crusaders of the Extinction Rebellion movement, not to mention the whole global economy. While I find Tom Holland to be an uneven and frustrating writer, it's worth dipping into his *Millennium*, the story of the crisis that took over western Christendom in the years leading up to the year 1000 AD, even among illiterate sections of society who hardly knew what year it was. It seemed a reasonable apprehension: the Christian millennium was drawing to a close, and, according to the *Book of Revelation*, this was to be succeeded by an eruption of fire, flood and pestilence which would then usher in the end of the world and the last judgment. So, whether embedded in pagan mythology or Christian theology, the sense of impending doom—catastrophism—is almost a default position in human nature. It will show itself in various ways.

Classic Marxism, liberation theology, the Climate Emergency: these are just some of the sticks that the middle classes use to beat themselves up with. They all have their doctrines of the Fall, and Judgment to come, their deep-dyed villains, and their saints and martyrs. We now even have our latter-day Joan of Arc.

Yet the thing is, while these cults may all be symptomatic of societal insanity, there's some truth in them all. We should not be turning a blind eye to the trashing of the environment, the oppression of the poor and vulnerable, or indeed the persecution of minorities, still endemic in many countries. With all heresies it's the element of truth, taken out of context, that gives them their potency. Of course with all these belief-systems we find that sin-consciousness has been externalised: not me, guv'nor!

Liberation Theology In Ettrick

Not only are the sense of sin and suspicion of coming judgment woven into our human nature but the corollary is that we're all legalists at heart, "*accusing and excusing one another*" (Romans 2:15) and doing things to quieten our consciences. The *locus classicus* of this is the OT story of Namaan, the Syrian General who unfortunately suffers from leprosy. On the advice of an Israelite slave girl in the house, he goes off to consult the prophet Elisha who instructs him to dip himself seven times in the Jordan river. But Namaan is highly offended. The remedy is too simple: "*if only the prophet had urged me to do some great thing*", he complains, until

at last he's persuaded. This is how, as St. Paul says, "*we go about to establish our own righteousness*". God is a great big policeman who is just waiting to wallop us. We may not be conducting animal sacrifices to offer up to an offended deity, but the human instinct is always that we have to do something, to justify our existence in this world and maybe ensure a happier existence in the next.

Thomas Boston, outwardly diffident, self-suspecting, maybe somewhat depressive, who had never been to charm school, turned out to be a liberation theologian himself. He reports that after his encounter with the *Marrow*: "*I had no great fondness for the conditionality of the covenant of grace*": that is, the teaching that says to the unbelieving populace that if they do this, God will do that. His congregation may have had reason to doubt this view of their pastor, as they smarted under his preaching of the moral law. And the habits of a scholastic approach to preaching die hard. But from his remote Borders parish he was able to identify and repudiate the legalistic, mechanistic view of the *ordo salutis* which had been the dominant strain even in Reformed seminaries.

Protestant Catholicism

The nineteenth-century Marrow Man John Colquhoun amusingly warned his students as follows: "*Noo, I daurna advise ye to read The Marrow o' Modern Deveenity, for ye ken the Assembly condemned it, but they didnae condemn Tammis Bowston's Notes on The Marrow*".

Here is Colquhoun again:

"A man is to be counted a legalist or self-righteous if, while he does not pretend that his obedience is perfect, he still relies on it for a title to life. The unbelieving Jews who sought righteousness by the works of the law were not so very ignorant as to pretend to perfect obedience. Neither did those professed Christians in Galatia who desired to be under the law, and justified by the law... On the contrary, their public profession of Christianity showed that they had some sense of their need of Christ's righteousness. But their great error was that they did not believe that the righteousness of Jesus Christ alone was sufficient... Thus they perverted both the law and the gospel and formed for themselves a motley covenant of works."

These strictures could describe the Baxterian deviation: to put it crudely, there is an evangelical obedience where we fall short but are acting for the best,

and the atoning sacrifice of Jesus will make up the gap, so that we'll be acceptable to God. And, if we think back to William Craig at Auchterarder, we'll remember that the issue was whether people had to go through a respectable period of repentance and abhorrence of their sin before making so bold as to accept the Gospel offer. On one view, that of the General Assembly, the "*Creed*" was subversive of all morality, which is how men like Walter Scott would have viewed it. But in a subtle way you're then holding out your repentance as the reason why God should take pity on you.

A supposedly extreme version of Calvin, emphasising and internalising the doctrine of election, thus led to self-absorption and legalistic bondage. To whom is the promise made? Only to "*awakened sinners*", who have experienced the convicting marks of the Spirit of God. Boston needed to escape from this maze.

The author of *The Marrow*, Edward Fisher, has this to say:

"Let me confess ingenuously. I was a professor of religion at least a dozen years before I knew any other way to eternal life, than to be sorry for my sins, and ask forgiveness, and strive and endeavour to fulfil the law, and keep the commandments... and truly, I remember I was in hope I should at last attain to the perfect fulfilling of them; and in the mean time, I conceived that God would accept the will for the deed; or what I could not do, Christ had done for me."

This reminds me of the James Delingpole Dogpoop Milkshake Test. Delingpole imagines a milkshake parlour where you can obtain all kinds of wonderful flavours and combinations of flavours of milkshake, but on one condition, that a little bit of dog poo will be included in the mixture, just to make the taste more interesting. Sounds reasonable. Unfortunately the admixture of self-justification fatally infects the reception of the Gospel promise. The promise is made to those who don't work but who accept the free gift.

The Big Gospel Tent

In terms of actual content, and leaving the liturgy aside, there wasn't a whole lot of difference between much of what was preached from a lot of Presbyterian and Roman Catholic pulpits in Ireland from about 1900 to 1970. Despite the Westminster Confession and the

fairly recent history of the 1859 Revival, Establishment Presbyterianism reverted insensibly to a sort of points-based version of natural religion: religious exercises, moral effort and self-improvement, albeit expressed in the framework of New Testament phraseology. Mainstream Methodists went the same way. Of course this was seen by the leaders of the newly-formed Gospel Halls and Mission Halls as a case of turning against the light, rejecting the precious blood of Christ in favour of man-made nostrums. These fundamentalists (as they would now be called), like Isaiah Berlin's hedgehog, knew only one thing, but they knew it well.

Later on, of course, the fundamentalist critique degenerated into the raucous, semi-political anti-Catholic, anti-ecumenical demagoguery of Ian Paisley and his friends; and the emphasis on the blood of the Lamb could easily descend into sloganising. The history of the Mission Halls shows that they were largely uninfected by this political polemicism; and the Gospel Halls run by the Brethren movement (for all their other shortcomings) not at all. But they were alike guilty of a repetition of set phraseology that could be a bit of a closed book to those outside the camp.

There's no doubt that mission hall religion, what the Americans called "that old-time religion", not least in the associated Gospel hymns and choruses, was a good antidote to the muddled messages coming from mainstream pulpits. But there was a fair bit of dross mixed with the gold too; and I repeat I'm indebted to Sinclair Ferguson (*The Whole Christ*, Crossway books, 2016) for identifying the marrow of the Marrow Controversy.

As Boston found, and as Ferguson elucidates, the root of the malaise in the legalistic (and indeed the antinomian) mind is the separation between the law of God and the character of God. Even the Ten Commandments are introduced by:

"I am the Lord your God who brought you up out of the land of Egypt: therefore...."

But the Antinomian logic seems to free us from any concern with the moral law because we're saved by grace apart from the law: in the out of context words of the hymn, "free from the law, O blessed condition"! The Antinomian is more interested in this thing called salvation than he is in a relationship, and forgets that the point of salvation is that we're saved into a relationship.

The legalist is really the other side of the same coin: we have to try to justify ourselves to some extent by reference to the nature of our repentance or the state of our obedience, so we end up as slaves in the Father's house and not children.

Doing, Doing, And Done

St. Jerome didn't help on the question of repentance. In the Vulgate we're exhorted, *paenitentiam agite*: do penance, whereas the Greek command was *metanoiete*: repent, as per Luther at Wittenberg church door: "when our Lord Jesus Christ said 'repent' he meant that the whole of the Christian life should be repentance". Repenting and believing the gospel were one and the same thing. Repentance is not one step in a process of preparationism. Here are the imaginary disputants in *The Marrow*:

"Evangelista: But because it seems you conceive he ought to repent before he believe, I pray tell me what you do conceive repentance to be, or wherein does it consist?"

Nomista: Why, I conceive that repentance consists in a man's humbling himself before God, and sorrowing and grieving for offending him by his sins, and in turning from them to the Lord.

E: And would you have a man do all this truly before he come to Christ by believing?"

N. Yes, indeed, I think it very meet he should.

E. Why then, I tell you truly, you would have him do that which is impossible... The truth is, a repentant sinner first believes that God will do that which he promiseth, namely, pardon and his sin and take away his iniquity; then he rests in the hope of it; and from that, and for it, he leaves sin, and will forsake his old course, because it is displeasing to God....."

What Boston therefore was rightly reacting against was a sort of de-personalisation of Christian faith, whereby it becomes mechanistic rather than relational:

"Until a man truly come to faith, by Christ, the legal disposition will still be reigning in him: let him turn himself into what shape, or be of what principles he will in religion; though he run into Antinomianism, he will carry along with him his legal spirit, which will always be a slavish and unholy spirit."

On analogous reasoning the gospel message hammered home in the mission hall environment runs into similar difficulties. It reminds me of times when you end up looking at something so

intently you stop seeing it. Or the more desperately you try to remember somebody's name the less chance there is it will come to you.

The mission hall emphasis was on Salvation. "What must I do to be saved?" The hearers needed to desist from all their futile efforts and rest on the finished work of Christ: "it is finished". This was true enough, but the stress was wrong. As Ferguson points out, the question was becoming: "how do I get these benefits into my life?" instead of "how do I get Jesus Christ into my life?". What is offered in the gospel isn't a magic key into a life of joy and blessedness, free from condemnation. What is offered is Christ himself. The benefits of salvation aren't to be abstracted from Christ. The free gift is Christ, so Jesus isn't just the subject of the gospel message, he is the gospel message. Contra the liberal theologians of a hundred years ago, the Gospel of Jesus isn't so much the Gospel that Jesus preached, rather it's the Gospel about Jesus.

The Long View

A case can be made that the Marrowmen cleared the decks for the massive evangelical revivals on both sides of the Atlantic later on in the century. Jonathan Edwards, over in Northampton Massachusetts, comments on Boston's Fourfold State: "I liked it exceeding well." By 1738 there was a sort of concert of united prayer for revival in Scotland and New England. There quickly followed the First Great Awakening in America and the Cambuslang Revival in Scotland. In England at the same time the Wesleys, Whitefield and (in Wales) Daniel Rowland were coming into prominence, pioneers of what would become the Methodist movement, which later split into its Calvinistic and Arminian wings.

Of course other factors were at work too. But the context in which the Revivals took effect (including the last great Revival of 1858-59) was the free Gospel offer: the object of faith was a Saviour who received sinful men and women gladly, and not grudgingly after the satisfactory completion of preparatory spiritual exercises. It was emphatically declared that the Gospel message was for sinners, and we didn't have to wait to clean up our lives before we 'closed' with the gospel offer.

Fast forward to the Billy Graham campaigns which, even in England, created quite a stir, especially the first,

the Haringey Campaign of 1954. The anthem of the Graham meetings was the Victorian hymn, *Just As I Am*:

“Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bid’st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come”.

The satellite villages that ring the town of Ballymena now advertise themselves on our approach to them by some sort of title, as in Broughshane: Gateway to Slemish (which reminds me of Garrison Keillor in Lake Wobegon Days: Lake Wobegon: Gateway to North-Central Minnesota). When it comes to Kells and Connor, as you drive in on the winding Liminary Road, one of the last remnants of what is possibly the oldest road in Ireland, the royal road from Tara to Dunseverick, you will be confronted by a sign: Welcome to Kells; and, below that the exhortation, *Come As You Are*. I have puzzled over this sign. Is this a modest disavowal of sartorial pretensions, or is there an echo here of the Revival message?

Saucy Doubts And Fears

Downsides to the working out of the Marrow theology? For one thing, it has led over the past centuries to a slow loosening of denominational cement, especially in Presbyterian circles, and a parallel fissiparous tendency within evangelical Protestantism generally. The first big split in Scottish Presbyterianism, the breakaway Secession Synod of 1733 (replicated in Ireland), came about partly as a by-product of the Marrow Controversy, although the proximate cause was to do with lay patronage. The brothers Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, both Marrow Men, were leading figures. The shared commitment to the pure Gospel message created a bond among evangelicals from many different denominational allegiances. The next step was the formation of para-church organisations, and then the forsaking of the old-style denominations altogether in favour of the more shifting sands of modern church fellowships.

I think there has been something lost here. Maybe church discipline is an anachronistic concept but I still like the marriage certificates that talk about the Form and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The idea that people grow up within the nurture of the Church and develop at different paces, and that for some of them the penny of Gospel enlightenment may not yet have dropped,

and so everybody makes allowances for everybody else; the concept of the Church as to some extent parish-based, and not a gathered company of the saved, who are all keen Bible students: well, I think that makes for a measure of humility. The poacher and the gamekeeper both sit under the same preached Word.

There are some paradoxes here. It has been remarked on that, statistically speaking, there’s not much discernible difference between the divorce rate in secular America compared with evangelical America, which must be a cause for some concern. Other ethical litmus tests may show a similar lack of differentiation. It may be a case of back to where we started. The Marrow teaching may fit best into a culture where there is already a profound sense of personal sin and exposure to judgment. The exhortation not to indulge in legalistic OCD behaviour before accepting the Gospel offer may thus have been addressing a context that’s less prevalent today, to put it no more strongly.

And this leads me to say something else. I say this as a convinced Marrow man. It seems to me that there is yet another paradox going on here. Years ago a young woman colleague commented to me that her perspective on Protestantism was that it was an Old Testament religion of judgment and legalism, whereas the Catholic Church emphasised the New Testament teaching of love and forgiveness. There was so much wrong with what she said that I hardly knew where to begin. Of course we looked on the Catholics as the legalists!

And yet, I wondered, if that was the impression she picked up on as she moved around, and she was a perceptive girl, could that be totally pooh-poohed? Is there some counter-intuitive tendency for born-again believers in the Evangelical Churches to come over to others as rigid, self-righteous, legalistic and judgmental in their day-to-day dealings in the world? (I’m reminded of the Heaney poem in his second collection, *Wintering Out*, about the Protestant neighbour who casts a judgmental eye over the scrubby Heaney paternal acres.) If so, how can this be explained, given that our self-assessment is that we’re “guilty, lost and helpless”, cheerful bankrupts in the courts of God’s grace? Of course it would be another form of judgmentalism to tar my fellow-evangelicals with this brush. And in my own experience I’ve come across less in the way of legalism

and a lot more in the way of kindness, hospitality, and forgiveness than I had any right to expect, in those same circles. But if this is how we’re perceived, there may be a problem.

I would like to skirt round any discussion of the so-called Protestant Work Ethic, the Spirit of Capitalism and so on. That is a big topic, which has been well ventilated by a lot of more able people than me.

Flowers In Their Hair

To finish on a more upbeat note: the Jesus People movement sprang up in southern California in the late 1960s and swiftly spread and mutated, the ultimate in the freewheeling un-self-conscious mindset of the acceptance of the free unconditional Gospel offer. By the mid-1970s it was starting to burn out, but at the same time its informal, counter-cultural approach was infiltrating the traditional Churches in America and is with us to this day. For a good, readable, account by an author without any axe to grind I would recommend *God’s Forever Family* by Larry Eskridge (OUP 2013), which I believe started life as a Ph.D. thesis at Wheaton College Illinois.

We read of Chuck Smith, the strait-laced pastor of Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa baptising these hippy converts in an hotel swimming pool. And there were the experiments in communal living, along the lines of the Book of Acts, accompanied by the photos of the bearded, beaded, long-haired men, and the young women in their Laura Ashley-style floral print dresses and flowers in their hair. There were one or two serpents in that garden too, but the overall impression is one of innocence and joy. It seems a far cry from Thomas Boston in his freezing cold manse in the Scottish Borders three hundred years ago. I wonder if he would have been happy to own them as his spiritual children?

I reckon I’m open to the same criticism as Michelle Obama, who, apparently for her dissertation at Princeton University, chose the following riveting subject: the experience of being a woman of colour at Princeton. I’ve tended to inflict on my readers my own preoccupations and my internal debates, for which I really appreciate the editorial indulgence. Next time I’d like to write about something completely different: George Borrow and the Gypsies.



The Pogroms (Part Three)

In his discussion of the 1881-2 pogroms, Solzhenitsyn naturally emphasises the fact that—contrary to what is still widely believed—there is no evidence that the Russian Government, or dark forces close to the Russian Government—were behind, or in any way supported, the attacks on the Jews—that, on the contrary, the authorities did what they could, albeit with limited means, to suppress them. In my last article I showed that recent English language research (Hans Rogger, John Klier, I.M.Aronson) supports him in this. It also tends to support his view that contemporary accounts of assaults on the persons of Jews, in particular of rape, were very much exaggerated. The main target was property.

This research, like Solzhenitsyn's, is largely based on Government reports. The more horrific alternatives, which appeared in the London-based *Jewish World*, but also in Russia itself, were put together by Jewish writers interviewing victims. There was probably a great deal of hearsay and rumour in these accounts, but they reflect the absolute terror which was felt by the Jews—both in the areas affected and more widely—since no-one knew where the pogroms might break out next. In an essay on the St. Petersburg-based Jewish Russian language paper, *Razsvets* (Dawn), Steven Cassedy (Professor of Slavic and Comparative Literature in Princeton University) comments:

"what matters for a picture of the historical moment of the pogroms is not that contemporary beliefs about a government conspiracy later proved to be baseless, but that those beliefs were present at that time; not that the government never really sent well-dressed agents-provocateurs to urge violence against the Jews, but that people at the time believed this was true. The commonly held conviction at the time was that the government and local authorities were cooperating and conspiring, that the anti-Semitic press was acting at the behest of the government, and that the government was rewarding rioters by meting out absurdly light punishments."¹

¹ Steven Cassedy: 'Russian-Jewish Intel-

The Question Of Emigration

The effect on Jews in the Russian Empire, both at the popular level and among the intelligentsia, was enormous and is rather underplayed by Solzhenitsyn. In particular, Solzhenitsyn doesn't discuss the drama that took place in the Polish town of Brody (in Galicia, at the time part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire), which experienced, both in 1881 and 1882, a large, for the time, influx of Jews fleeing from the Pale of Settlement.

According to Jonathan Frankel in his book *Prophecy and Politics*:

"...by the summer, July and August 1881, emigration was becoming the central issue. The cause of this shift of interest was straightforward enough. A sociopolitical chain reaction had been set in motion in April. Large population movements had been started by the pogroms. In Kiev, for instance, in late April there were numerous reports of a mass flight from the city; ten or twelve extra carriages had to be coupled onto every train leaving for Berdichev and Belaia Tserkov. In turn, according to secret governmental reports, the population flows served to increase popular excitement through the south and contributed to new outbreaks of destruction in the region: In the months of June and July, respectively, there were large-scale pogroms in Nezhin and Pereiaslav. The prolonged turmoil, for its part, brought trade in southern Russia almost to a halt. On 30 May, T. S. Morozov wrote secretly in the name of the Moscow business community to [Minister of Internal Affairs] Ignatiev urging him to do everything in his power to halt the pogroms because the major trade fairs were being canceled throughout the south and huge quantities of food were piling up in the Moscow warehouses. The spreading economic chaos made it all the more difficult to employ the refugees or even to provide them with enough food to keep them from starving. This spiral

lectuals Confront the Pogroms of 1881: The Example of "Razsvet", *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 84, No. 2/3 (Oct., 1993 - Jan., 1994), pp.136-7

of violence, flight, and disruption was exacerbated by the popular tendency to blame the catastrophe on the Jews themselves. Emboldened by the failure of the government to take an effective stand, in word or deed, against the pogroms, the *zemstva* [local assemblies] now joined the press in calling for a halt to Jewish competition in various areas of trade and education or, as they put it, to prevent the Jews from exploiting the local population. Some petitions even demanded that the Jews be totally evacuated—expelled—from their areas."²

Berdichev and Belaia Tserkov were both in the Russian-controlled part of the Ukraine. Berdichev had been an important centre of Jewish culture but was at the time in decline. Belaia Tserkov seems to have been in the process of becoming an important centre (54% of the population in 1897. They are both categorised as 'shtetls' in the online *History of Jewish Communities in Ukraine*—jewua.org)

Frankel goes on to say that the impetus towards emigration was encouraged by outside forces, in the first instance the Paris-based *Alliance Israélite Universelle*. In 1870-1, during a famine in Lithuania, the Alliance had supported the emigration of some 500 Jews to the United States. In the Summer of 1881, it was considering a similar scheme—"*a selected group of able-bodied Russian Jews*". However, as Frankel says (p.59), "*plans that were tentative and modest in Paris were blown up to gigantic size as if by a distorting mirror in Russia*". Late in August a delegate from the Alliance on his way to Russia was diverted to Galicia, to Brody, near Lvov, where he found some 500 Jewish refugees. That, however, was only the beginning.

Frankel describes an intense debate which arose among Russian Jews between those deeply opposed to emigration and those in favour. The opponents argued that it would only encourage the ambitions of the Russian Judeophobes. Since they wanted to expel the Jews, a policy of emigration would amount to an incitement to violence. The case for emigration was put by Grigorii Bogrov and Simon Dubnow. Readers of earlier articles in this series will recognise the names. Grigorii Bogrov, who was for a while Editor of *Razsvets*, was indeed

² Jonathan Frankel: *Prophecy and Politics - Socialism, Nationalism and the Russian Jews*, Cambridge University Press, 1984 (first ed 1981), p.58. Frankel was based in the Department of Russian Studies and Institute of Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He died in 2008.

the grandfather of the Bogrov (Dmitri, or Mordko, depending on how Jewish you want him to be) who assassinated Stolypin. Dubnow appeared in the last article as the historian whose account of the pogroms had been universally accepted until challenged by Rogger, Klier and Aronson. Both Bogrov and Dubnow had been champions of the reform and modernisation of Jewish life. Bogrov indeed at the end of his life converted to Christianity, though his son, Dmitri's father, remained loyal to Judaism. In my last article I quoted an account of Dubnow, suggesting that his views had not been greatly changed immediately by the pogroms—he still believed that an advance of Jews towards equal rights in the Russian Empire was inevitable—but Frankel gives a different impression.

The crisis saw the emergence of the group *Am Olam*, led by Monye Bokol and by M.I.Rabinovich, who would later be well known as a novelist under the name 'Ben Ami' (son of my people). They had been involved in setting up self defence groups in Odessa—among the 500 people arrested during the Odessa pogrom in May were 150 Jews "*preparing for a open battle with the Christians*".³ *Am Olam* means '*The Eternal People*' and this in itself marks a substantial new development. Previously the main emphasis among Jewish radicals, Socialists and Revolutionaries, had been on the needs of the Russian *narod* (people), arguing that the duty of Jews was to abandon their backward religious ways and fuse with the Russian movement.

Solzhenitsyn develops this case, pointing to the involvement of Jews in the Russian populist movement, the immense influence of "*Nihilism*" on Jewish revolutionaries from wealthy families, the willingness of Jews to join the movement of "*going to the people*". To quote Solzhenitsyn (p.241) "*Neither could one accuse these early Jewish revolutionaries of anti-Russian motives, as some are doing at the present time in Russia. Not in the slightest!*" With regard to the attraction of Russian '*Nihilism*', as represented by Chenshevski's novel *What is to be done* and by the character of Bazarov in Turgenev's novel, *Fathers and Sons*, I've already said something on this in my previous article, discussing the formation of Simon Dubnow. The Jewish Enlightenment, the *haskalah*, aiming to modernise Jewish culture and reconcile

³ Frankel p.54, quoting the acting governor of Odessa, Count Dondukov-Korsakov.

it with the best in European culture, had turned in Eastern Europe, together with modern minded Russian intellectuals, towards writers such as J.S. Mill in England and Auguste Comte in France.

What is called '*Nihilism*' in Russia is not far removed from what was called liberalism, utilitarianism or positivism in Western Europe. It did not see itself as a 'negative' tendency. It was absorbedly interested in exploration of the material world, and in the practical arts, medicine, engineering. The '*nihil*' in question was a rejection of religion and conventional morality. Erich Haberer's book, *Jews and Revolution*, giving a detailed account of Jewish involvement in the populist movement, especially in the 1870s, points to a policy of self-education circles developed by the quite brilliant Jewish revolutionary, Marc Natanson, and suggests that "*as a philosophy of emancipation Russian Nihilism can be viewed as an extension of Jewish enlightenment*".⁴

Am Olam—The Eternal People—broke with this essentially non-Jewish orientation and argued that the Jews were themselves a *narod*, a people in their own right and that the task of politically-minded Jews was to fuse with their own *narod*. In early 1881 the *Am Olam* theorist Monye Bokal was planning an agricultural commune (not the first or the last by a long shot to think of agriculture as a future for Jews!) but, in the context of the pogroms, he engaged in a propaganda tour of the affected areas arguing for emigration. Meanwhile his colleague Ben Ami went to Paris to try to persuade the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* to finance it.

The idea gained traction and on the 13th October (Frankel, p.65) another representative from the Alliance said that ,since the beginning of September 3,000 refugees had arrived in Brody. The Jewish advocates of emigration wanted to raise money themselves but could not do so without the permission of the Government, which Ignatiev, probably listening to the St Petersburg Jewish magnates grouped round Gintzburg, refused. It was therefore down to the *Alliance*, which initially was supportive.

Both the *Alliance* and *Am Olam* envisaged emigration to the United States. Between 22nd October and 20th November some 1300 refugees were

⁴ Erich Haberer: *Jews in Revolution in Nineteenth Century Russia*, Cambridge University Press, 1995. Quotation p.15. Haberer is Associate Professor of History at Wilfred Laurier University in Toronto.

sent in seven parties to New York but this of course created an incentive for more refugees to come. It also created panic among the Jews in New York and the Board of Delegates of the *Union of Hebrew Congregations* in New York demanded a halt. The three thousand refugees still in Brody were encouraged, both by the Alliance and the Russian Government to return home. (Frankel doesn't elaborate on whether or not they had homes to go to.) By January 1882 only about one hundred were left.

Britain And The Return Of The Jews To Palestine

But that STILL wasn't the end of the story. In 1882, the initiative for Jewish emigration passed over to the *Mansion House Conference* in London. This is where the remarkable figure of Laurence Oliphant (who, strangely, isn't mentioned by Solzhenitsyn) comes into the picture.

There was a lively tradition of '*restorationism*', as Zionism was known in the nineteenth century, in Britain. Some time in the 1820s a woman called Mary Seddon was confined to a lunatic asylum after she had hired a donkey and set off with a group of Jews for Jerusalem to begin the return of the Jews to the Holy Land (the group of Jews abandoned her in France). That may be an eccentric example but it is worth mentioning because she happened to be the grandmother of Beatrice Webb. Eitan bar-Josef, in his essay on *Christian Zionism and Victorian culture*, takes it as a paradigm for his argument that though restorationist views were widespread and held by often very influential and wealthy people they were still regarded as not quite respectable. He quotes a story told by the very keen restorationist Anthony Ashley Cooper, Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, in 1862:

"Once when he was sitting on the [Lunacy] Commission as Chairman the alleged insanity of a lady was under discussion, he took a view of the case opposite to that of his colleagues. One of the medical men who was there to give evidence, crept up to his chair and, in a confidential tone, said, 'Are you aware, my lord, that she subscribes to the Society for the Conversion of the Jews?' 'Indeed!' replied Lord Shaftesbury; 'and are you aware that I am President of that Society?'..."⁵

⁵ Eitan bar-Yosef: '*Christian Zionism and Victorian Culture*', *Israel Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Summer, 2003), p.20. Bar-Yosef is a historian based in the Ben Gurion University in the Negev.

The reference is to the *London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews*, established in 1809 with the restoration of the Jews to Palestine as one of its main aims. Bar-Josef's argument is that, although the return of the Jews to the Holy Land in fulfilment of prophecy was a major and serious concern of many well-known and powerful people, it had to be represented in terms of a practical Imperialist interest if it was to achieve respectability. Getting British control of Palestine as part of a process of facilitating access to India could be seen as a valid foreign policy objective but it was by no means obvious that peopling Palestine with Jews was the best way of achieving it. Thus Shaftesbury describes the means he had to employ to win Palmerston, his father-in-law, to the cause in 1840:

"August 1. Dined with Palmerston. After dinner left alone with him. Pro-pounded my scheme, which seemed to strike his fancy; he asked some questions, and readily promised to consider it. How singular is the order of Providence! Singular, that is if estimated by man's ways! Palmerston has already been chosen by God to be an instrument of good to His ancient people; to do homage, as it were, to their inheritance, and to recognise their rights without believing their destiny. And it seems he will yet do more. But though the motive be kind, it is not sound. I am forced to argue politically, financially, commercially; these considerations strike him home; he weeps not like his Master over Jerusalem, nor prays that now, at last, she may put on her beautiful garments..." (p.28)⁶

Palmerston, for whom preservation of the Ottoman Empire as a bulwark against Russia was a major foreign policy objective, was well aware of the religious motive behind the restorationist cause:

⁶ The context here was an upsurge of interest in the possibility of Jewish emigration to Palestine prompted by 'the struggle between the Sultan and Mehmet Ali [of Egypt], in which the Powers intervened, for the lordship of Palestine, the appointment of a British Consul at Jerusalem, Britain being the first of the Powers to take that step, the Damascus outrage [a pogrom prompted by the charge that Jews had used Christian blood to bake unleavened bread] which shocked the British conscience and moved Parliament and the City of London to protest.' In 1845 Britain claimed a right of protection for the Jews living in Palestine. This comes from Albert M. Hyamson: 'British projects for the restoration of Jews to Palestine', *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, No 26 (1918), pp.134-5.

"Pray don't lose sight of my recommendation to the Porte, to invite the Jews to return to Palestine', he wrote to the British ambassador in Constantinople on 4 September: 'You can have no idea how much such a measure would tend to interest in the Sultan's cause all the religious party in this country, and their influence is great and their connexion extensive.' These issues 'excite a very deep interest in the minds of a large number of persons in the United Kingdom and the Sultan would enlist in his favour the good opinion of numerous and powerful classes in this country' ..." (Bar-Josef, p.29)

Laurence Oliphant— His Religious Views

In his book *Land of Gilead*, published in 1880 shortly before the 1881 crisis, Laurence Oliphant wrote:

"It is somewhat unfortunate that so important a political and strategical question as the future of Palestine should be inseparably connected in the public mind with a favourite religious theory... So far as my own efforts are concerned they have no connection whatever with any popular religious theory upon any subject" (Bar-Josef, p.33).

Well, maybe. But Oliphant had an interesting religious trajectory of his own. His parents were followers of Edward Irving, the highly respected Minister of the Scottish Presbyterian Church in London, friend of Coleridge and of Thomas Carlyle, who adopted a pre-millennial and restorationist position (the second coming of Christ would precede and inaugurate the thousand years of His personal rule and be accompanied by a return of the Jews to the Holy Land); but who subsequently championed the 'gift of tongues', an early moment in the development of nineteenth century Pentecostalism. An account of his life was written by Margaret Oliphant, a well-known novelist of the time who also wrote a life of Laurence Oliphant. Philip Earl Steele, an American historian, specialist in Polish history, whose account will be the basis of much of what I have to say about Laurence, says that the two Oliphants weren't related, but the Wikipedia account of Margaret Oliphant says that they were cousins (her maiden name was Wilson. Wikipedia says that her husband Frank Wilson Oliphant was also her cousin. I really don't feel inclined to pursue the matter any further at the present time).

Oliphant himself was a successful diplomat, travel writer (*A Journey to Katmandu*, 1852; *The Russian Shores*

of the Black Sea, 1853), satirist (*Piccadilly*, first published in serial form in 1865), journalist, becoming an MP in 1865. But in 1868 he threw all that up to join the spiritualist, preacher and poet, Thomas Lake Harris, in his '*Brotherhood of the New Life*' in Brocton, New York state. I haven't established if Harris had any interest in restorationism. It seems unlikely. He wrote an interpretation of the Apocalypse, available at *archive.org*, which says nothing about the contemporary position of Jews or the Holy Land, and is mainly concerned with a system of breathing that would characterise a new Christian humanity in harmony with the divine breath that animates the Universe. A defence of his *Brotherhood of the New Life* published in 1891, says:

"Conscious human life begins and ends with the fact and consciousness of breath : all men are aware of the fact that they breathe from and breathe into nature. Immersed by the continuous act of respiration in this beautiful and bounteous natural world; they living in it; it living in them; their faculties open to the knowledge of Nature and their senses are thrillingly fed and solaced by its joys. With me the breath is twofold: besides the usual breathing from and into Nature, is an organic action of breathing from and into the Adorable Fount and Spirit of existence. First realised as by a new birth of the breathing system; a breath of new intellectual and moral infancy, this carefully held, reverently and sacredly cherished as a gift of God, has advanced till at present each organ of the frame respire in breathing rhythms, making of the body one conscious form of unified intellectual and physical harmony: the spirit, the real or higher self, is absorbing the lowly naturehood, yet meanwhile nourishing it with the rich and vital elements of a loftier realm of being. This gift that I hold is the coming inheritance of all.

Mankind awaits its New Humanity
As Earth once waited for the first-
born rose.

Every act of my respiration for the last forty years has partaken of this complex character. 'He breathed upon them and said, receive ye the Holy Ghost.' [spiritus ; breath.] He breathes into me so that I receive the holy breath continually. In my lowly, creature emptiness and nothingness, I yet realise the organic presence of the Christ. I witness, in this age of unbelief, to the fulfilment of the Master's promise."

He continues (and I quote this to indicate the apparently very severe discipline he imposed on Oliphant and on his

wife and mother and perhaps to suggest that Oliphant's motive was genuinely charitable):

"But this mortal mind and flesh, this action and passion of the frame, can not be translated from naturehood into humanhood by any process but that of the acceptance and adoption, by each individual, of the whole corporate interest of mankind as his interest; to be embraced and served in the full denial of any superior self-interest, or family or churchly or class interest. With the discovery that he begins to breathe in God, comes to the man the discovery that God lives in the common and lowly people of the world.

"Here then is found the present cross of Christ. The aristocrat must be crucified to aristocracy; the plebeian to plebeianism; the luxurist to luxury; the ascetic to asceticism; the exclusive to exclusionism. It is a strict, honest give up and come out from spoilage, pretence and illusion. For this God is a jealous God: he proffers to man the wealth of a consummate and indestructible manhood, to be realised in each filial and fraternal personality; but man, to receive the gift, must first accept the common burden and sorrow and service of mankind." ⁷

He saw himself (as the title of his Apocalypse commentary — *Arcana of Christianity* — would suggest) as a successor to Swedenborg. We're certainly not in the usual territory of Protestant Utopianism. Both in Brocton and in his later commune in Santa Rosa, California, he developed a reputation for the production of fine wines, and the Japanese Kanaye Nagasawa, who became Harris's successor after his death in 1906, was to earn the nickname 'Wine King of California'.

Oliphant broke with Harris in 1876, launching an eventually successful law suit to regain the money he had given him. He was later to publish a novel, *Massolam*, based on his experience with Harris, in 1886 ⁸ and in fact he also seems to have continued his interest in Harris's ideas, publishing a treatise on the spiritual (and sexual) significance of breathing,

⁷ Thomas Lake Harris: Brotherhood of the New Life - Letter from T.L. Harris with passing reference to recent criticisms, Santa Rosa, California, Fountaingrove Library, Vol 1, No 2, July 1891, pp.4-5 and 7-8.

⁸ There is an account in Julie Chajes: Alice and Laurence Oliphant's Divine Androgyne and "The Woman Question" apparently accepted for publication in the Journal of the American Academy of Religion 2015. I have it from Academia.edu. Julie Chajes teaches in the Goldstein-Goren Department of Jewish Thought, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

Sympneumata, in 1885. According to the account by Philip Earl Steele "it was in 1978 that Oliphant began to squarely focus his attention on Palestine".

After the break with Harris —

"it comes as small surprise that Oliphant, in searching for a new field of endeavour for his restless energy and feverish mysticism, turned towards the Restorationism he had been raised with. Another factor was that of the changing international situation. This particularly concerned the fears of Great Britain that, following the Congress of Berlin in 1878, Russia... would now attempt to seize areas in the Levant from the Ottomans."⁹

Oliphant's 'Plan for Gilead' was, as he explained in a letter written in 1878,

"To obtain a concession in the northern and more fertile half of Palestine... Any amount of money can be raised upon it owing to the belief which people have that they would be fulfilling prophecy and bringing on the end of the world. I don't know why they are so anxious for this latter event but it makes the commercial speculation easy..."

He quite easily secured the support of Prime Minister Disraeli and of Foreign Minister Salisbury. Also of the novelist George Eliot, whose last novel, *Daniel Deronda*, published in 1876, had finished with the hero discovering that he had a Jewish mother and committing himself, without any apocalyptic motive, to the cause of a Jewish return to Palestine. With credentials from the British Government, he secured the support of the Governor of North Palestine and a sympathetic hearing in the Sultan's court in Constantinople. (According to Steele he wrote to Disraeli saying that —

"In his talks with the Turks" he had "stressed that Protestants from Great Britain and the United States would

⁹ Philip Earle Steele: 'British Christian Zionism (Part 2): The Work of Laurence Oliphant', Fathom Journal, Jan 2020, available online. Harris and Oliphant both believed that a new age was about to dawn in which humanity would be completely - and physically - transfigured. Given the connection to breath I would speculate that they had in mind something like the third age envisaged at the end of the twelfth century by Amaury of Bène - the age of the Holy Spirit (the Old Testament was the age of the Father, the New Testament of the Son). Oliphant settled in Palestine to write his own versions of Harris's ideas, together with the novel in which he criticised Harris. I think it quite possible that he might have seen the return of the Jews to Palestine as part of the process of ushering the new age in - not quite mainstream restorationism but an interesting variant.

provide enormous funding to help realise the aim of establishing a Jewish colony, and he confessed to the prime Minister that it was difficult to explain to the Turks why that was."

Land Of Gilead was published in England in December 1880. According to Steele:

"Oliphant's efforts in the Ottoman Empire and now the publication of his resulting book made him an all but universally known figure in the Jewish Diaspora, with the Jewish press extensively and most often excitedly reporting on the progress of his plans."

This included the London-based *Jewish Chronicle*. There was of course a great difference between Oliphant's argument, based entirely on the interest of the Jews, of the Turks, and of course not neglecting the British, and the approach of the Christian Zionists organised in a society nominally at least devoted to the conversion of the Jews, or simply seeing the restoration as a necessary prelude to the return of Christ. If Oliphant had hopes of that sort he kept them carefully under wraps.

The Mansion House Initiative

Meanwhile in England in 1880 Gladstone had become Prime Minister. There was a certain groundswell of hostility to Russia and sympathy for Jews, owing to the case of L. Lewisholme, a German Jew but naturalised British citizen who had been refused permission to stay in St. Petersburg on account of his Jewishness. This was in contravention of the 1859 *Anglo Russian Treaty* that allowed British citizens free access to Russia. Between May and August 1881, there were fourteen interventions in the House of Commons, mainly from the Anglo-Jewish Conservative MP for Greenwich, Henry de Worms. But, although this was the high point of the Russian pogroms, the questions mainly concerned Lewisholme. ¹⁰

British public opinion did not really start moving on the pogroms until late in 1881. A Russian Jewish Committee was established under Sir Nathaniel de Rothschild after a joint Conference of the Board of Deputies and the Anglo Jewish Association. Still there was little enthusiasm for a policy of emigration, and certainly not to Britain. Frankel (pp.71-2) quotes editorials in the *Jewish Chronicle* complaining —

"that the migration of 'the raw
¹⁰ John Klier: Russians, Jews and the pogroms of 1881-2, Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp.238-9.

unfledged Polak', of 'the swarm of Polish Jews', was the root cause of antisemitism in Rumania, in Germany (where 'they vex the soul of Professor Treitschke') and indeed throughout the world."

It seems to have been the pogrom in Warsaw in December that brought about substantial change. Two very influential articles were published in *The Times* in January, based on the most dramatic Jewish accounts; and on 1st February there was a public meeting in Mansion House (official residence of the Lord Mayor of London), condemning Russian barbarism. This was attended by, among many others, the Bishop of London, Cardinal Manning, Professor Bryce and Lord Shaftesbury. Frankel says that—

"similar public meetings were held in the month of February in most of the major cities across the country and the British press was suddenly filled with articles condemning the pogroms."

A Committee was set up, usually chaired by the Mayor of London or by Cardinal Manning, but mainly attended by prominent Jews. By mid-February, £50,000 had been raised. The policy agreed was to aid emigration to the United States but on 15th February *The Times* published an article by Oliphant saying that (to quote Steele),

"many of the refugees wished to settle in Palestine where—differently than in America—their religion and way of life would be safeguarded and invigorated. News of Oliphant's stance spread at once across Europe with much of the Diaspora again placing its hopes in him. Mansion House responded by drafting Oliphant into its special committee and then dispatching him as a commissioner to Galicia."

Oliphant and his wife Alice Le Strange seem to have taken their time going to Galicia. They stayed for a fortnight in Vienna where they met Perets Smolenskin, publisher of the Hebrew language journal *Ha-Shahar* (The Dawn). Smolenskin had published an account of Oliphant's plan for Palestine the previous Autumn. Oliphant also won the support of the leading Polish Hebrew language journal *Ha-Majad* (The Preacher), which published an article by him arguing that it wouldn't be the Jews of Great Britain who would help in the colonisation of Palestine but the Protestants who "will contribute thousands, I may well say, hundreds of thousands to promote this great object".

The Oliphants finally arrived in Lvov, near Brody, on the 12th April—

"and then immediately began their direct work with the refugees. This was when the Oliphant cult that had been swelling for several years in the Diaspora reached its zenith. He was now widely spoken of as a 'saviour' and 'another Cyrus'..."

"In cities and small towns in Russia, Romania and Galicia" writes the historian of Zionism Nathan Gelber, 'you could find in the houses of poor Jews a picture of Oliphant!'"

"*Oliphant committees*" were formed by Jews throughout the Pale.

Parallel with the Mansion House Committee, a fund-raising Committee was established in France, under the Chairmanship of Victor Hugo and the Baron Alphonse de Rothschild. The French Committee and the New York Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society tried to keep to the principle observed by the Alliance Israélite Universelle of only sending a select group of able-bodied refugees and giving the rest the means to return to Russia. The Mansion House Committee however had refused to send refugees back to where they were in danger of persecution—all the greater once what could have been the start of a new wave had broken out in the majority Jewish town of Balta in March. This meant virtually unlimited emigration to the United States and the Committee tried to circumvent the opposition in New York by establishing contact with Jewish Committees in other US centres.

"By June 1882 three trains a week, each carrying about three hundred refugees were leaving Brody en route to the North Sea ports. All in all, from April until the end of June, the Mansion House Committee sent some 8,000 Jews at its expense to the United States. But, of course, this was not a static process. The more who were sent, the more came."

Although the hopes placed in Oliphant contributed greatly to the influx of refugees into Brody, the Oliphants themselves only seem to have been there for less than a month. Oliphant's attention was still fixed on Palestine, but Palestine was closed to the Jews by a policy of the Sultan:

"The difficulties involved forced him to issue to the Jews an appeal, together with the Alliance Israélite Universelle, that they should remain where they were for at least the next four months until such time as the Turks would allow them to settle in Palestine."

As a result, Oliphant resigned from

his Mansion House mission at the beginning of May in order to go, via Moldova and Romania, to Constantinople to argue the case directly with the Ottoman Government: "*The British press presented Oliphant's journey to Istanbul as 'a triumphant march'.*" Writing in 1887, Oliphant himself said—

"so intensely wrought up were the expectations of the much suffering race who form the largest proportion of the population of this part of Europe [between Brody and Jassy, in Moldova] that at every station they were assembled in crowds with petitions to be transported to Palestine, the conviction apparently having taken possession of their minds that the time appointed for their return to the land of their ancestors had arrived, and that I was to be their Moses on the occasion." ¹¹

However the political situation had changed drastically since his earlier visit to Constantinople. In 1879 the priority of the British Government had been to curtail the ambitions of Russia after its victory in the Russian-Turkish war. In 1882, however, Britain was engaged in the seizure of Egypt. In those circumstances the very reason that Jews had placed such hope in Oliphant—that he represented a substantial body of British public opinion if not actually the Government—had become a pretty fatal handicap. The Turkish Court was now intensely suspicious of any initiative coming from Britain. In Constantinople Oliphant tried to enlist the support of the US Ambassador—without success but it's worth mentioning anyway because the Ambassador in question was Lew Wallace, author of *Ben Hur*.

Nor was Oliphant particularly supported by the British Government. The public agitation which produced the Mansion House meeting obliged the Gladstone Government to produce a couple of Blue Books on the situation in Russia but, though of course condemning the pogroms and expressing sympathy for the victims, they took a view similar to that of Klier and Solzhenitsyn, that accounts such as those that had appeared in *The Times* were greatly exaggerated and that the Russian Government had done what it could to control the situation. In March, in the context of the Balta pogrom, De Worms, against

¹¹ Oliphant did have one success. He secured the removal of Romanian Jews to Palestine, pointing out that after independence the Romanian government had refused to extend Romanian citizenship to Jews who were therefore still technically citizens of the Ottoman Empire.

the wishes of the Jewish Liberal MPs, initiated a debate in Parliament, but it was without consequences. Gladstone declared (Klier, p.242) "*I am bound to believe that the Emperor of Russia and his government regard these outrages with the same feelings as we contemplate them ourselves.*" The Irish MP Frank Hugh O'Donnell said that, since the Jews controlled the money markets, they could look after themselves, unlike the Irish or the Indians, victims of British Imperialism.

In the event, with Palestine closed to Jewish emigration, and the US facing a recession and refusing to take any more, the Mansion House Committee was forced late in June to reverse its policy and press for the return of the Jews, still flooding into Brody. (There were some 9,000 there in mid-July after the transportations to the US had stopped.) I might note in passing that I've seen no mention of a possibility of emigration to Britain. At the beginning of June, Ignatiev, suspected of anti-Jewish sentiments, was replaced by Count Dmitri Tolstoy, who issued a convincingly firm circular insisting that further pogroms would not be tolerated. It was generally believed, at least among non-Jews, that the violence was at an end. On 21st June Tolstoy, at the urging of the Jewish railway magnate Samuil Poliakov (Frankel p.111), put out a further circular forbidding Jewish emigration.

Longer Term Consequences

By the end of 1882, it looked superficially as if everything had settled back to what it had been before the pogroms began, but this was misleading. At a popular level, two huge and complementary developments had occurred. The Russian-Ukrainian peasantry had asserted itself as a force to be reckoned with in a spontaneous outburst of raw violence. The revolutionary groups—*Land and Freedom*, *People's Will*, *Black Repartition*—had identified themselves with the peasantry, believing that it was their condition that made revolution inevitable. The policy of going to the people in the early seventies—though it had mainly concerned Great Russia not the area of the Pale—had been conducted in hopes of overcoming what was perceived as traditional peasant apathy from the days of serfdom. The pogroms could hardly be described as a political uprising, given that there seemed to be no leadership, organisation or even theory behind them. But such a spontaneous expression of popular discontent could hardly fail to throw the revolutionaries into a state of confusion. The terrorist *Peoples Will*, which had been behind the assassination of the Tsar (and a

series of political assassinations leading up to it), put out a statement unequivocally supporting the peasant initiative:

"Wherever you look, wherever you go—the Jews are everywhere. The Jew curses you, cheats you, drinks your blood... But as soon as the muzikhi rise up to free themselves from their enemies as they did in Elizavetgrad, Kiev, Smela, the tsar at once comes to the rescue of the Jews: the soldiers from Russia are called in and the blood of the muzhik, Christian blood, flows... You have begun to rebel against the Jews. You have done well. Soon the revolt will be taken up across all of Russia against the tsar, the pani [Polish landlords—PB], the Jews ..." (Frankel, p.98)

This was issued late in the day, in August, by which time the violence had died down but it was the result of intense debate in the Executive Committee (meaning that, even if some of them were unhappy with it, they knew what they were doing when they issued it).

It was written by G.G. Romanenko, the party's specialist in Ukrainian affairs: 2,000 copies were printed and extra copies were produced locally in Elizavetgrad. It was later repudiated but it illustrates the problem facing the populists. How could they condemn as backward, barbarian, and ignorant the very peasantry they regarded as the revolutionary class, who had risen in opposition to a people who had traditionally played the role of *kulak*, the role of the bourgeoisie? Frankel (p.99) quotes an article by Romanenko defending his manifesto in the October issue of the party journal:

"Do you remember one of the stories of the French Revolution from Taine? One of the crowd throws himself on the corpse of a woman who has just been trampled to death by the infuriated mob. He tears open her breast, drags out her heart and with exaltation sinks his teeth into it. But should Robespierre, Danton, St. Just and Desmoulins have abandoned their role and obligations in French history because of the excesses of the people enraged by oppression?... We have no right to react with indifference, still less with hostility, to a true popular movement... Elemental forces will erupt, the horrors of the French Revolution and the Pugachev rebellion will repeat themselves..."

One can see how convenient, indeed necessary, was the thesis that the peasantry had been misled by occult forces close to the Government.

The difficulty experienced by the

revolutionaries was a reverse image of the difficulty experienced by the Government. As the revolutionaries could see the uprising as a foretaste of possible revolution, so could the Government. As the revolutionaries wanted to be on the side of the peasantry to exploit their revolutionary potential, so did the Government in order to dampen it down. As it was convenient for the revolutionaries to blame occult forces close to the Government for misleading the peasants, so it was convenient for the Government to blame the revolutionaries. On both sides to actually condemn the muzhiks was seen as politically and ideologically very dangerous.

Which put the Jews, both at the popular and at the intellectual and political level, in a difficult situation. At the popular level, while relations had long been tense, they may not have realised quite the extent to which they were hated by their neighbours. From now on they could never know when that hatred might again break out in a wave of destructive violence or what sort of protection they could expect from the Government if it did. And there appeared to be very little they could do to change the economic status that had brought this hatred upon them.

On the intellectual and political level the effect was to reinforce a tendency that was already developing away from the general political interest of the whole population towards concern with the specific problems faced by Jews.

Frankel argues that it was only after a number of years had passed that the long-term consequences of the pogroms could be assessed. As the main institutional consequence he sees the emergence of—

"two political movements... on the one hand, the proto-Zionist movement—the Hoveve Zion [Friends of Zion—PB] in Russia, the colonies in Palestine—and on the other, the Jewish Labour Movement in the United States... They had become the first political movements, as distinct from pressure groups, philanthropic organisations, ideological sects and newspaper campaigns, in modern Jewish history... Thus the division within the Jewish world (which would become increasingly important until 1933) between a socialist camp virulently hostile to the Zionist idea and a nationalist camp committed to it can be traced back to the late 1880s."

That will be the main subject for the next article in this series.

John Minahane

The Spanish Polemic on Colonisation

Part 18

Theodore Roosevelt and World War I

Considering possible outcomes of World War I from an American viewpoint, a recent writer speculated:

“If the Germans had won on the Western Front, presumably they would have acquired territory their soldiers occupied in France and Belgium. This probably would have amounted to less than the German territory seized by the French conqueror Napoleon Bonaparte a century earlier. The rivalry between the French and the Germans had been going on for a long time, and one wonders why American lives should have been sacrificed when the French and Germans got into another war.”

We might ask: why didn't the American political elite in 1914-18 take this view of the war occurring in Europe? Specifically, why didn't Woodrow Wilson think like this? There are good reasons to believe that the American people in their great majority regarded the European war as not their affair—in particular, the fact that Wilson won the 1916 presidential election on the slogan “*He kept us out of war!*”, and that his Republican opponent Charles Evans Hughes did not dare to propose American involvement. Why did Wilson change course within months of his re-election?

Jim Powell, the writer quoted above, goes on to say that, if the Germans had won, victory would have come with a whole host of problems. There would always be the great menacing bulk of Russia to the east, and one way or another there would be trouble in Austria-Hungary. It was not in the least likely, even in the event of a German victory, that postwar Germany would be equipped to do serious damage to the interests of the United States.

As a matter of fact, President Woodrow Wilson understood this perfectly well. Three months into the war he discussed the issue with Colonel Edward House (his principal fixer and a kind of pseudo-Secretary of State, who could discuss any problem at length with any political leader while committing Wilson to nothing):

“(Wilson) did not believe there was any necessity for immediate action (to expand the armed forces); he was afraid it would shock the country. He made the statement that no matter how the great war ended, there would be complete exhaustion; and even if Germany won, she would not be in a condition seriously to menace our country for many years to come.”

So then, why should the United States not take a position of strict neutrality, leaving Europe to find its own “*balance of power*”? This was in fact the policy position of Wilson's first Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, as Eamon Dyas explains in *Blockading the Germans*. Bryan was a long-standing critic of the arms race, maintaining that peace could be preserved by negotiations and treaties. His efforts had produced as many as thirty Treaties, Jim Powell says.

“Bryan urged that Americans be prohibited from traveling in a war zone, since more loss of life might convince more Americans that they should enter the war to avenge the deaths—and end up with far more people killed. Wilson could have taken a similar position, since he had told some 50,000 Americans in Mexico that because of the civil war they stayed at their own risk.”

But, when Bryan pressed his arguments in April 1915, Wilson refused to see the issue like this. Wilson maintained that Americans had a God-given right to sell what they liked where they liked, and anyone who was fighting round them had to take good care not to hurt them. And then, a month later, the Germans sank the *Lusitania*, a British vessel flying a false American flag, “(which) was carrying 118 American passengers—and, as later discovered, 173 tons of rifle cartridges and shrapnel destined for Britain”. Wilson was not yet ready to go to war, but his response to this incident was confrontational.

Bryan apparently understood that there was a slide towards American involvement. Three weeks after the sinking, he resigned.

The Official Reasons for War

Taken at face value, the reasons given by the United States for entering the war in 1917 were absurd, Powell says:

“What about the provocations that led Wilson to ask Congress for a declaration of war against Germany? There were two. [Firstly, Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare in the North Atlantic, announced on February 1, 1917. J.M.]... Germany didn't have enough surface ships to rival the British Navy, so the aim was to establish a blockade around Britain with submarines. They weren't more sinister than any other weapon of war, certainly no more sinister than Britain's surface ships. Nor was a blockade with submarines morally different from a blockade with surface ships. Wilson took the absurd position that Americans had a God-given right to travel in a war zone. Well, if anybody wants to venture into a war zone, that's their business, but they need to accept responsibility for the risks they're taking. As a practical matter, a war zone is best avoided.”

The second pretext for American involvement was something that could have had no reality unless and until America did get involved (and even at that it had an air of comic opera). Arthur Zimmermann, the German Foreign Minister, instructed his Ambassador in Mexico to sound out the possibilities of a Mexican-German alliance, should the United States declare war on Germany. In that event the Mexicans would receive financial support from Germany for a war on the United States, whereby they might hope to win back some of their lost territories.

Neither of these issues had caused any basic change in American public opinion. Despite the sea warfare in Europe, and despite Zimmermann's soundings in Mexico, “*the great majority of Americans apparently still held to their 'double wish' to uphold national honour and stay out of the war*”, John Milton Cooper says.

Besides these issues, there was Wilson's claim that he wanted to make the world safe for democracy. Powell comments:

“It was curious how Wilson could imagine himself making the world safe for democracy by allying with Britain and France, since both nations were determined to hold onto their colonial empires. France had rapidly expanded its colonial holdings since 1870, in

Africa and East Asia. The French had a reputation for brutal colonial rule. In terms of global extent, the British Empire was unmatched in human history, with a presence in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. During World War I, Britain was trying to suppress the Irish struggle for independence.

The most brutal colonial rulers were the Belgians—British and French allies—who murdered perhaps 8 million people in the Congo, a colony personally owned by King Leopold II. The death toll has been estimated as high as 10 million.”

Finally, even if Wilson had initially given some credence to Allied propaganda and believed that the Germans were trampling upon humane values that the other side upheld, two years of the European war should have taught him differently:

“Ironically, despite Wilson’s high-minded ideals, when entering World War I he joined the side that placed a lower value on human life. British and French generals were notorious for squandering human lives—as many as 19,240 in a single day, and hundreds of thousands in a single battle... By contrast, because the Germans were outnumbered on the Western Front, they were more inclined to conserve soldiers and make tactical retreats to locations that could be more easily defended.”

Quotations above are mainly from Jim Powell, *Wilson’s War: How Woodrow Wilson’s Great Blunder Led to Hitler, Lenin, Stalin and the Second World War*. To my mind, the only disputable word in this title is “*blunder*”. We normally think of a blunder as something done hastily and impulsively, or at any rate carelessly, without giving the matter sufficient thought. But Woodrow Wilson was not an impulsive man. He entered the war only after long and careful thought. And even then he refused to hurry or be hurried. He committed his ground troops only when they reached a critical mass and could attack the exhausted Germans with devastating effect.

To manage his country’s very profitable ‘non-involvement’ for the best part of three years, then to enter that gigantic war and succeed in winning it quickly and efficiently—that has to be regarded as a major feat of opportunistic statecraft. I think there cannot be many examples to compare with it. (Of course, the results were as in Powell’s title, but that’s another story.)

Economics And Politics

Eamon Dyas has described how American trade with Europe was revolutionised in the two years between mid-1914 and mid-1916. Trade with Britain and its allies was trebled. At the same time, trade with Germany and its allies was shrunk incredibly, down to almost nothing, less than one six-hundredth of what it had been two years before. The shrinking was done audaciously by Great Britain, using intimidation, bullying and outright terror, but all of this carefully combined with intensive lying diplomacy. To mine the North Sea and declare it a war zone, while bitterly complaining that they were forced to do this, left with absolutely no alternative, because . . . Germany had been mining the North Sea! That was a virtuoso performance.

A sharp-eyed American observer could see just what the British were up to:

“England in its turn has violated our neutrality rights, and while exercising both force and ingenuity in making this violation effective has protested as if she herself were the injured party”.

Of course, England/Britain could never have got away with this if she hadn’t been opening up huge new markets for American goods that would more than compensate for the markets lost. These goods were paid for in considerable measure by American loans. It follows that, by early 1917, the United States stood to lose a good deal if the Allied war effort were to collapse.

But besides the economic interest, engineered so well by Britain, another factor behind America’s declaration of war must be taken into account. Some large political vision was required for this great campaign of intervention in distant lands. It couldn’t be justified, or indeed even thought about, purely in terms of dollars. A decision like this had to have its political co-ordinates, prepared before the event.

In my opinion, the man who did most to provide the political co-ordinates for an ultimate American decision to enter the war was Theodore Roosevelt. He had himself been President of the United States in recent times (1901-9) and was still a presidential hopeful. Among other things, he had won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1906. (Taking a larger view of Roosevelt’s career, this might bring to mind Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s remark that the award should really be called the Nobel Prize for War. However, Roosevelt genuinely did mediate a peace between

the warring states of Japan and Russia in 1905.) Early in 1915 he published a collection of recent newspaper and magazine articles, entitled *America And The World War*. Roosevelt was a clear and forceful writer, and his book laid out a series of landmarks. Most people, even in the elite, might initially reject a lot of what he was saying about world politics, or specifically about America’s position and role. But the landmark positions were set out clearly, ready for others, including Wilson, to take up with the passage of time.

The Dangers of Military Weakness

The first thing Roosevelt had to say was that the United States was militarily weak. As such, it was dangerously placed in a heavily-armed world. President Wilson liked to say, when asked if America could defend itself against attack, “*We have always found means to do that, and shall find them whenever it is necessary*” (and Bryan likewise). But this wasn’t true: in 1814 a small British Army had been able to sack Washington and burn the Capitol, simply because there was no military preparedness on the American side.

Something like that could happen again. Roosevelt happened to know of two nations that had plans, in the event of war with the United States, to seize the Panama Canal and certain American cities. Such was the neglect of the military, “*at the present time an energetic and powerful adversary could probably with ease drive us not only from the Philippines but from Hawaii, and take possession of the Canal and Alaska*”.

There were certain writers who argued: let us do nothing to build up our armed forces, so that we will show the world we are no threat to anyone and no one can have reason to attack us! But that was the way to end up like China, which had pieces of its territory occupied by several different Powers. Besides, it was a particularly bad idea to be unarmed if you were rich.

“Surely one does not have to read history very much or ponder over philosophy a great deal in order to realize the truth that the one certain way to invite disaster is to be opulent, offensive, and unarmed. There is utter inconsistency between the ideal of making this nation the foremost commercial power in the world and of disarmament in the face of an armed world.”

The American Navy had been allowed to run down badly in the few years since Roosevelt himself ceased to be

President. The Army was in a wholly inadequate state. These two services needed to be put in good order, and the Army should have a large and well-trained reserve. Roosevelt did not want a large standing army, but he did want universal military service on the model of Switzerland. (No country would dare try to treat neutral Switzerland as neutral Belgium had been treated. France and Germany both knew that the Swiss would make it more trouble than it was worth.)

Treaties are Useless Unless Backed By Force

“In every serious crisis the present Hague conventions and the peace and arbitration and neutrality treaties of the existing type have proved not to be worth the paper on which they were written. This is because no method was provided of securing their enforcement.”

That was one of the principal lessons of the European war.

In reality, whenever a treaty endangered a nation's vital interests, the nation in question would tear that treaty up. This was natural behaviour. Of course, Germany's breach of the Treaties guaranteeing Belgian neutrality was terrible and deplorable. But the German side saw this from a different perspective.

“The men who shape German policy take the ground that in matters of vital national moment there are no such things as abstract right and wrong, and that when a great nation is struggling for its existence it can no more consider the rights of neutral powers than it can consider the rights of its own citizens as these rights are construed in times of peace, and that everything must bend before the supreme law of national self-preservation. Whatever we may think of the morality of this plea, it is certain that almost all great nations have in time past again and again acted in accordance with it. England's conduct toward Denmark in the Napoleonic wars, and the conduct of both England and France toward us during those same wars, admit only of this species of justification; and with less excuse the same is true of our conduct toward Spain in Florida nearly a century ago.”

Roosevelt thought that the many treaties which Bryan had negotiated would probably never be materially harmful, because the United States would always break them before that happened. However, there would be moral damage incurred in making these necessary

breaches of agreement. The principles on which Bryan based his activity were ridiculous. Bryan had publicly said:

“I believe that this nation could stand before the world to-day and tell the world that it did not believe in war, that it did not believe that it was the right way to settle disputes, that it had no disputes which it was not willing to submit to the judgment of the world”.

If Bryan meant what he said, Roosevelt commented, then it followed that

“he also believes that we should not have interfered in Cuba and that Cuba ought now to be the property of Spain. He also believes that we ought to have permitted Colombia to reconquer and deprive of their independence the people of Panama, and that we should not have built the Panama Canal. He also believes that California and Texas ought now to be parts of Mexico...”

Not everything could be arbitrated. Some things had to be defended. And others would care about your rights only if you were prepared to fight for your rights. Belgium had fought, and the violation of Belgian neutrality was now a great international moral issue. But Luxembourg's neutrality had equally been violated, and Luxembourg had done nothing, and no one cared about Luxembourg in the least. And who cared about Korea?

“Korea is absolutely Japan's. To be sure, by treaty it was solemnly covenanted that Korea should remain independent. But Korea was itself helpless to enforce the treaty, and it was out of the question to suppose that any other nation with no interest of its own at stake would attempt to do for the Koreans what they were utterly unable to do for themselves. Moreover, the treaty rested on the false assumption that Korea could govern herself well. It had already been shown that she could not in any real sense govern herself at all. Japan could not afford to see Korea in the hands of a great foreign power. She regarded her duty to her children and her children's children as overriding her treaty obligations. Therefore, when Japan thought the right time had come, it calmly tore up the treaty and took Korea, with the polite and businesslike efficiency it had already shown in dealing with Russia, and was afterward to show in dealing with Germany.”

(After the war John Kenneth Turner, exposing the double standard applied to the neutrality of Belgium, used Korea as an example. “*The king of Korea ob-*

jected, appealed to both England and France—and for that matter, to one Theodore Roosevelt, then president of the United States—to intervene to help preserve the integrity of Korea. Not one of the three gave any help.” However, Roosevelt at least had always made it clear that he did not apply a single standard to the different nations.)

If the United States were ever occupied by a foreign power, Roosevelt said he hoped the inhabitants would resist as resolutely as the Belgians—more resolutely, in fact, because the Belgians had agreed to pay ransom to avoid the destruction of Brussels, and Americans should never make such a bargain.

Even worse than relying on treaties, it was still more foolish to rely on the power of public opinion, in the absence of adequate force. Nor could one rely on alliances.

“Alliances are very shifty and uncertain. Within twenty years England has regarded France as her immediately dangerous opponent; within ten years she has felt that Russia was the one power against which she must at all costs guard herself; and during the same period there have been times when Belgium has hated England with a peculiar fervor. Alliances must be based on self-interest and must continually shift.”

As a general rule of conduct he recommended the proverb “*Speak softly and carry a big stick*”.

The Peoples Believe Their Causes Are Just

Roosevelt expressed warm admiration for the warring peoples of Europe—all of them. Each of the nations, from the Serbians to the English, had good reasons in national interest and honour for doing what they did. In fact, all of them could reasonably feel that they had no alternative: they could not possibly have acted otherwise. All of them were convinced they were in the right:

“As far as the present generations of Germans, Frenchmen, Russians, Austrians, and Servians are concerned, their actions have been determined by deeds done and left undone by many generations in the past. Not only the sovereigns but the peoples engaged on each side believe sincerely in the justice of their several causes.”

Roosevelt wrote very warmly of the Kaiser, the German people and the German war effort, and he scorned those pro-Allied writers who went in for cheap

detraction:

“To paint the Kaiser as a devil, merely bent on gratifying a wicked thirst for bloodshed, is an absurdity, and worse than an absurdity. I believe that history will declare that the Kaiser acted in conformity with the feelings of the German people and as he sincerely believed the interests of his people demanded; and, as so often before in his personal and family life, he and his family have given honorable proof that they possess the qualities that are characteristic of the German people. Every one of his sons went to the war, not nominally, but to face every danger and hardship. Two of his sons hastily married the girls to whom they were betrothed and immediately afterward left for the front.

This was a fresh illustration of one of the most striking features of the outbreak of the war in Germany. In tens of thousands of cases the officers and enlisted men, who were engaged, married immediately before starting for the front. In many of the churches there were long queues of brides waiting for the ceremony, so as to enable their lovers to marry them just before they responded to the order that meant that they might have to sacrifice everything, including life, for the nation. A nation that shows such a spirit is assuredly a great nation. The efficiency of the German organization, the results of the German preparation in advance, were strikingly shown in the powerful forward movement of the first six weeks of the war and in the steady endurance and resolute resourcefulness displayed in the following months.

Not only is the German organization, the German preparedness, highly creditable to Germany, but even more creditable is the spirit lying behind the organization. The men and women of Germany, from the highest to the lowest, have shown a splendid patriotism and abnegation of self. In reading of their attitude, it is impossible not to feel a thrill of admiration for the stern courage and lofty disinterestedness which this great crisis laid bare in the souls of the people. I most earnestly hope that we Americans, if ever the need may arise, will show similar qualities.”

It was the warring nations of Europe that would eventually make the peace. They would not be impressed by any soft-spoken person proposing himself as a mediator, if they saw he had no big stick.

“The storm that is raging in Europe at this moment is terrible and evil; but it is also grand and noble. Untried men who live at ease will do well to remember... that when heroes have battled

together, and have wrought good and evil, and when the time has come out of the contest to get all the good possible and to prevent as far as possible the evil from being made permanent, they will not be influenced much by the theory that soft and short-sighted outsiders have put themselves in better condition to stop war abroad by making themselves defenseless at home.”

The World Must Be Policed

These three themes are threaded through Roosevelt's book and the various articles that compose it. The same is true of the theme that I turn to now: *world policing*.

For Roosevelt, there cannot be order without force to uphold it. There is a clear correspondence between ordinary civic existence and international relations.

“By degrees the work of a national police has been substituted for the exercise of the right of private war. The growth of sentiment in favor of peace within each nation accomplished little until an effective police force was put back of the sentiment. There are a few communities where such a police force is almost non-existent, although always latent in the shape of a sheriff's posse or something of the kind. In all big communities, however, in all big cities, law is observed, innocent and law-abiding and peaceful people are protected and the disorderly and violent classes prevented from a riot of mischief and wrong-doing only by the presence of an efficient police force. Some analogous international police force must be created if war between nations is to be minimized as war between individuals has been minimized.”

Or, to say the same more succinctly: “*What is needed in international matters is to create a judge and then to put police power back of the judge.*”

How is this to be done? By a league of nations.

“From the international standpoint the essential thing to do is effectively to put the combined power of civilization back of the collective purpose of civilization to secure justice. This can be achieved only by a world league for the peace of righteousness, which would guarantee to enforce by the combined strength of all the nations the decrees of a competent and impartial court against any recalcitrant and offending nation. Only in this way will treaties become serious documents.”

One of the advantages of this kind

of international action was that it could provide authoritative rulings on the period of validity of treaties. At some time or other treaties must be terminated or lapse; but when?

“The difficulty at present is that each case must be treated on its own merits; for in some cases it may be right and necessary for a nation to abrogate or denounce (not to violate) a treaty; and yet in other cases such abrogation may represent wrong-doing which should be suppressed by the armed strength of civilization. At present in cases where only two nations are concerned there is no substitute for such abrogation or violation of the treaty by one of them; for each of the two has to be judge in its own case. But the tribunal of a world league would offer the proper place to which to apply for the abrogation of treaties; and, with international force back of such a tribunal, the infraction of a treaty could be punished in whatever way the necessities of the case demanded.”

Was it utopian to believe this possible? Roosevelt put his cautious faith in progress. There was a “*slow growth of sentiment which is assuredly, although very gradually, telling against international wrong-doing and violence*”. Even in the current tremendous conflict in Europe, certain kinds of atrocities which had occurred in the 17th century would not recur. The German assault on Belgium had been frightful, terrible things were done:

“but our sympathy and indignation must not blind us to the fact that even in this case there has been a real advance during the last three hundred years and that such things as were done to Magdeburg and Wexford and Drogheda and the entire Palatinate in the seventeenth century are no longer possible.

Of course, whether there was any possibility of establishing a league of righteousness would depend very much on the nature of the settlement made to end the European war. Roosevelt denounced those “*pacifists*” who called for an immediate peace, giving no redress to Belgium. Under his own Presidency the United States had signed the Hague Conventions, which “*forbid the violation of neutral territory, and, of course, the subjugation of unoffending neutral nations, as Belgium has been subjugated*”. Now, either the Hague Conventions were meaningless, or they meant what they said. In the second case, it was the duty of the United States to make every effort to see that they were

upheld. By refusing even to denounce the German attack on Belgium, Wilson and Bryan were guilty of a “*timid and selfish abandonment of duty*”.

Roosevelt condemned all who—

“strive to bring about a peace which would contain within itself the elements of frightful future disaster, by making no effective provision to prevent the repetition of such wrong-doing as has been inflicted upon Belgium... The peace advocates of this stamp stand on an exact par with men who, if there was an epidemic of lawlessness in New York, should come together to demand the immediate cessation of all activity by the police, and should propose to substitute for it a request that the highwaymen, white slavers, black-handers, and burglars cease their activities for the moment on condition of retaining undisturbed possession of the ill-gotten spoils they had already acquired. The only effective friend of peace in a big city is the man who makes the police force thoroughly efficient, who tries to remove the causes of crime, but who unhesitatingly insists upon the punishment of criminals. Pacificists who believe that all use of force in international matters can be abolished will do well to remember that the only efficient police forces are those whose members are scrupulously careful not to commit acts of violence when it is possible to avoid them, but who are willing and able, when the occasion arises, to subdue the worst kind of wrong-doers by means of the only argument that wrong-doers respect, namely, successful force. What is thus true in private life is similarly true in international affairs.”

At this point, one should note that the proposed league of nations wasn't for everyone. Mexico couldn't be in it. To begin with, at least, it was for Euro-America plus Russia and Japan: the civilised nations that had force. One must remember that the great colonial Empires were still in existence, and Roosevelt did not question their right to be so. Even if he didn't want an empire of quite the same kind for America, he certainly did want America to join with the Empires in ruling the world. Roger Casement in 1913 identified Roosevelt as “*representative of American imperial interests*”, and not unreasonably.

For the *League of Righteousness* Roosevelt speculated on a possible two-tier structure and identified candidates:

“No power should be admitted into the first circle, that of the contracting powers, unless it is civilized,

well-behaved, and able to do its part in enforcing the decrees of the court. China, for instance, could not be admitted, nor could Turkey, although for different reasons, whereas such nations as Germany, France, England, Italy, Russia, the United States, Japan, Brazil, the Argentine, Chile, Uruguay, Switzerland, Holland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Belgium would all be entitled to go in. If China continues to behave as well as it has during the last few years it might soon go into the second line of powers which would be entitled to the benefits of the court, although not entitled to send judges to it. Mexico would, of course, not be entitled to admission at present into either circle. At present every European power with the exception of Turkey would be so entitled... There are various South American communities which at the present time would not be entitled to come in; and, of course, this would at present be true of most independent Asiatic states and of all independent African states.”

It is implied that the civilised powers, with their formidable united strength, would have options of interfering in the affairs of their less civilised neighbours—for example, to look no farther, Mexico.

“At this moment there is hell in Belgium and hell in Mexico; and the ultrapacificists in this country have their full share of the responsibility for this hell.”

“*Under the proposed plan,*” Roosevelt believed, “*there would be a strong likelihood of bettering world conditions. If it is a Utopia, it is a Utopia of a very practical kind.*”

The Warrior and the Priest?

The Warrior and the Priest by John Milton Cooper, published in 1985, is a comparative study of Roosevelt and Wilson. ‘Warrior’ and ‘Priest’ are two human types contrasted by Nietzsche. The warrior is the noble man who pursues honour and glory, relying mainly upon his own strength. The priest is the cunning man who puts expediency before honour, and who compensates for his physical weakness by his skill at manipulating minds. Cooper uses the Nietzschean terminology only as a starting point, to set the scene. But it's one way of putting these two statesmen, whose political attitudes were in dramatic contrast at the end of 1914, into the same picture. Nietzsche's opposition corresponds to some degree with how Roosevelt represented his rival, whom he called “milk-and-water” and “pusillanimous”.

Wilson was relaxed about Mexico. There had been an armed clash, but, much to Roosevelt's disgust, Wilson refused to let it go any further. He understood that a great revolution was occurring in Mexico and that it was wiser to let it take its course. He was also relaxed about the European War. As mentioned earlier, he refused to say anything about Belgium, and he also rejected a big development programme for the military: he thought it would shock the nation, giving the impression that American involvement in the war was being prepared. And, in January 1915—

“he confided to a journalist that he hoped for a deadlock in Europe. The opportunity, he believed, ‘of a just and equitable peace, and of the only possible peace that will be lasting, will be happiest if no nation gets the decision by arms...’ Further, inasmuch as Wilson thought Germany was probably ‘not alone responsible for the war... it might be well if there were no exemplary triumph and punishment’”.

Roosevelt at that point was heading in a different direction. He took to moralising. As the War continued and expanded in scale, it seemed to become more moral, and neutral America was seen to be morally in the wrong.

“More and more I come to the view that in a really tremendous world struggle, with a great moral issue involved, neutrality does not serve righteousness, for to be neutral between right and wrong is to serve wrong”.

In H. W. Brands's view, what drove him was more the feeling that when something so big was happening America had to be in it:

“By early 1915 it was becoming tragically evident that the war, far from being a limited conflict like those that had marked European politics for a century, was a struggle on the Napoleonic scale. Roosevelt simply couldn't bear that his country should not have a central role in the great struggle of the age.”

When the Lusitania was sunk, Roosevelt thought this “*a clear casus belli*”. Again he was disgusted when Wilson stopped short of war. But Wilson, in fact, handled this issue so that it became a festering sore, still working its poison two years later when the United States declared war. Wilson made this issue something like what Roosevelt wanted the issue of Belgium to be. And of course, at this juncture he parted company with Bryan.

Late in 1915 Wilson announced a build-up of the armed forces. He grandly declared that America would have a navy second to none—enabling the practically-focused Roosevelt to say that nothing so ambitious was either practicable or necessary: he himself would be satisfied for the moment with a navy that was second only to Britain's!

Roosevelt often criticised Wilson in terms which implied that America should join the war. But he implied joining the war, rather than called for war explicitly. According to Cooper, in 1915-16 Roosevelt “never issued an outright call for intervention, and he sometimes claimed that a tougher stance would keep the United States out of war”. Given the known mood of the American population, this ambiguity is understandable, given that Roosevelt first of all hoped to be the Republican candidate for the Presidency in 1916 and afterwards was a leading campaigner for Charles Evans Hughes against Wilson.

Roosevelt was the first major politician to come out in favour of a *league of nations*. Other leading Republicans took up the proposal during 1915. And so eventually did Woodrow Wilson, immediately after his re-election in November 1916. By then Roosevelt had gone off the idea, saying that the time was not opportune. But that didn't matter. He had fixed the political coordinates and launched the policy, leaving it available for Wilson to take up and develop in his own moralistic way.

When, early in 1917, Germany announced its policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, the countdown began to American involvement. But Wilson still took his time. In response to the German announcement, he broke off diplomatic relations but did not declare war for another two months. His rival, of course, was avid for conflict. Roosevelt—“*the last Romantic*”, H. W. Brands calls him—was possessed by the romance of war. But Wilson understood that the romance had fled from the kind of war then being waged in western Europe.

“Deprived of glory, war loses all its charm,” he wrote in a memorandum late in 1916. “... The mechanical slaughter of today has not the same fascination as the zest of intimate combat of former days, and trench warfare and poisonous gases are elements which detract alike from the excitement and the tolerance of modern conflict. With maneuver almost a thing of the past,

any given point can admittedly be carried by the sacrifice of enough men and ammunition. Where is any longer the glory commensurate with the sacrifice of the millions of men required in modern warfare to carry and defend Verdun?”

He knew that war would mean a huge increase in the political influence of big capitalism, which he as a reforming Democrat did not identify with (“*the big interests will be in the saddle*”). War would have a brutalising effect on American public life, he predicted. He was conscious that he would be sending young men to die in a distant continent, and he knew the kind of war they were going to.—And yet, when the moment came, he declared war, for the avowed purpose of making the world safe for democracy.

But he still took his time. He did not, as Roosevelt demanded, rush his troops immediately into battle, or spread them out along an enormously wide range of conflict zones. (As his last great adventure, Roosevelt wanted to be sent to Europe at the head of a division. Wilson was not obliged to indulge him in this, and he didn't.) His strategy was patient and hugely successful. And then, just when he had won the war militarily, he became seriously ill and his great political skills deserted him.

Of course, Wilson would have left Europe in ruins even if he'd been in the pink of health, but America would have come out of it looking better. Ill as he was, he couldn't appreciate that the key people in the US Senate were deeply worried: would his League for policing the world perhaps end up policing America? What if the League majority had strong views about racial segregation, or something like that? Wilson didn't understand that he had to placate his critics. So he threw away his victory, leaving the spoils to the British and French.

John Milton Cooper sums up Wilson as follows:

“The only correct element in the Nietzschean categorisation of Wilson has been the recognition that he was not a Warrior. But neither was he a Priest. Instead, Wilson's beliefs in self-control and a realization of ideals through self-interest made him resemble more the figure who embodied Nietzsche's idea of self-overcoming and creative expression of the will-to-power—not the Warrior, but the Superman.”

It seems strange to think in this way of Woodrow Wilson—the perfect model

of the undertaker's clerk, as Roosevelt at his nastiest once called him. But I suppose there could be something in it.

Conclusion

A few years ago Niall Ferguson, currently the most ambitious propagandist of Anglo-American power politics, argued that World War I was Great Britain's great blunder (*The Pity of War*, 2014). The aim of the War was to stop the rise of Germany to dominance in Europe. But Germany was going to dominate Europe eventually; witness the European Union. It would have been better to make terms early on with the inevitable. Britain could perfectly well have lived with a German-dominated Europe. As for gallant little Belgium and the guarantees of its neutrality, it was possible to take the realist attitude that great States have always taken to treaties: even supposing that some treaty requires us to go to war in support of Belgium, our national interest says that we shouldn't, and we won't.

Ferguson's hindsight can hardly be faulted here. But, without the great blunder, if one can call it that, on the other side of the Atlantic, the British blunder could never have gone so far. The British elite would never have defied the emerging balance of Europe for so long, they would not have fought so doggedly and destructively, without credible hopes that America would rescue them in the end.

Even while formally neutral, America was an unbalancing agent. When committed, it was fatally so. In 1917 the idea that Theodore Roosevelt blurted out in 1910 (“*we ourselves are becoming, owing to our strength and geographical situation, more and more the balance of power of the whole world*”) became a mission.

*

This series of articles, which began in sixteenth-century Ireland, went back to Columbus, thence to sixteenth-century Spain and South America, and finally to North America, can reasonably end here. We have come to what exists currently: where America, seeking to be the Balance of Power in the whole world, unbalances great parts of it. One doesn't know when that will end.

During these explorations, for me the great discovery was Bartolomé de Las Casas. Here I will repeat what I said in Part 9 of this series, at the end of a summary:

“Las Casas hoped to abort what we think of as modern Imperialism, before

it went any further than it had by 1550. But he was not fundamentally 'anti'. He had a positive vision of things. Las Casas thought it was possible to have peaceful contacts with overseas peoples based on mutual respect. His idea of a peaceful Christian conversion was in principle quite plausible: what it would have meant, as I pointed out in previous articles, was a Christianisation of an Irish type, a naturalised Christianity.”

A world that evolved as Las Casas imagined would have been slower, less globalised and technologised, more respectful of peoples and the planet. But things have taken a different turn. We live in a fast-moving world of great systems, which is difficult to police.

NOTES

“If the Germans had won...”: Jim Powell, *Wilson's War: How Woodrow Wilson's Great Blunder Led to Hitler, Lenin, Stalin and the Second World War* (New York 2005) pp. 5-6.

“(Wilson) did not believe...”: Charles Seymour (ed.), *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House* Vol. 1 (London 1926) p. 304.

“Bryan urged that Americans...”: Powell, op. cit. p. 89.

“(which) was carrying 118...”: *ibid.* p. 60.

“What about the provocations...”: *ibid.* pp. 12-13.

“the great majority of Americans...”: John Milton Cooper, *The Warrior and the Priest* (Cambridge, Mass. 1985) p. 318.

“It was curious how Wilson...”: Powell, op. cit. p. 93.

“Ironically, despite Wilson's...”: *ibid.* pp. 6-7.

Dyas on American trade with Europe: Eamon Dyas, *Blockading the Germans!*, (Belfast 2018) Ch. 12; cf. table on p. 508.

“England in its turn...”: Theodore Roosevelt, *America and the World War* (New York 1915) p. 156.

“We have always found...”: *ibid.* p. viii.

“At the present time...”: *ibid.* p. 271.

“Surely one does not have...”: *ibid.* p. 136.

“In every serious crisis...”: *ibid.* pp. xii-xiii.

“The men who shape German...”: *ibid.* pp. 20-1.

“I believe that this nation...”: *ibid.* p. 129.

“He also believes that...”: *ibid.* p. 130.

“Korea is absolutely Japan's...”: *ibid.* p. 29.

“The king of Korea objected...”: John Kenneth Turner, *Shall It Be Again* (New York 1922) p. 200.

“Alliances are very shifty...”: Roosevelt, *America and the World War* pp. 253-4.

“Speak softly and carry...”: *ibid.* p. 33.

“As far as the present...”: *ibid.* p. 7.

“To paint the Kaiser...”: *ibid.* pp. 65-7.

“The storm that is raging...”: *ibid.* p. 277.

“By degrees the work...”: *ibid.* p. 63.

“What is needed in international...”: *ibid.* p. 78.

“From the international standpoint...”: *ibid.* p. xiii.

“The difficulty at present...”: *ibid.* p. 82.

“slow growth of sentiment...”: *ibid.* p. 83.

“but our sympathy and indignation...”: *ibid.* p. 86.

“forbid the violation...”: *ibid.* p. 227.

“timid and selfish abandonment...”: *ibid.* p. 229.

“strive to bring about...”: *ibid.* pp. 235-6.

“representative of American imperial interests”: Roger Casement, *The Crime Against Europe* (Belfast 2003) p. 120.

“No power should be...”: Roosevelt, *America and the World War* p. 239.

“At this moment there is hell...”: *ibid.* p. 240.

“Under the proposed plan...”: *ibid.* p. 241.

“he confided to a journalist...”: John Milton Cooper, *The Warrior and the Priest* (Cambridge, Mass. 1985) p. 273.

“More and more I come...”: H. W. Brands, *TR—The Last Romantic* (New York 1997) p. 754.

“By early 1915 ...”: *ibid.*

“a clear *casus belli*”: *ibid.* p. 755.

“never issued an outright call...”: Cooper, op. cit. p. 305.

“Deprived of glory, war...”: *ibid.* p. 310.

“the big interests will be...”: *ibid.* p. 320.

“The only correct element...”: *ibid.* p. 321.

“we ourselves are becoming...”: Howard K. Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power* (Baltimore 1987) p. 447.

Manus O’Riordan

An Irish History Quiz For The Cocooned!

- (1) Name the three outstanding Trade Union leaders, all born in Liverpool, who each had the same two names.
- (2) A 1916 martyr is commemorated with—not just one, but two—memorials on the same thoroughfare:
 - (a) Who was he?
 - (b) Where is he memorialised?
- (3) Who was the significant religious personality whose birthplace on that same thoroughfare is also marked with a plaque?
- (4) This year marks the centenary of the martyrdom of of Terence MacSwiney.
 - (a) What was the name of his wife?
 - (b) What was the name of the Republican leader whose son their daughter would marry?
- (5) When 1916 Rising Commandant Eamon de Valera was released from an an English prison in June 1917, where was the home to which he first returned?
- (6) James Connolly spent the nights before the 1916 Easter Rising in Liberty Hall, Dublin, headquarters of the Irish Transport & General Workers’ Union. But where was the home he had been living in during the months beforehand?
- (7) A leading Irish Volunteer, who was opposed to the 1916 Rising, was kidnapped on Good Friday and held prisoner until after the Rising had commenced on Easter Monday.
 - (a) Who was he?
 - (b) Where had he been held prisoner?

- (8) Name a 1916 leader who was a brother-in-law of the writer John Brennan, author of the autobiography "*The Years Flew By*".
- (9) A Belfast born President became known in that city by the same first name as a son of another President, albeit with one vowel change in that name. Name both men.
- (10) The establishment of SIPTU in 1990 ended a decades-long Union split. Give the full name of the person who founded the Workers' Union of Ireland in June 1924, as a breakaway from the ITGWU.
- (11) Name either the birthplace of 1916 leader Thomas Clarke, or a better known place nearby.
- (12) Who was the Churchill bastard that Patrick Sarsfield's widow married?
- (13) What War of Independence leader was born in Dalymount Terrace?
- (14) Name each of the three famous wordsmiths born in Dorset Street, Dublin.
- (15) Where was Tom Barry born?

QUIZ ANSWERS:

(1) These Liverpool born Union leaders were:

(a) Big Jim Larkin, General Secretary, Irish Transport & General Workers' Union 1909-1924, and General Secretary, Workers Union of Ireland 1924-1947.

(b) James ('Young Jim') Larkin Junior, General Secretary, Workers Union of Ireland 1947-1969.

(c) Jack James Larkin Jones, General Secretary, Transport & General Workers' Union 1969-1978.

See http://free-downloads.atholbooks.org/pamphlets/Jack_Jones_Vindicated.pdf for more on Jack James Larkin Jones.

(2) A 1916 Rising martyr:

(a) Seán Healy, a 15 year old Fianna Éireann scout, was mortally wounded when shot in the head by a British soldier occupying a position at Phibsboro Bridge, Dublin.

(b) Phibsboro Road. The first plaque marks the spot where he had been shot, at Doyle's Corner. The second plaque marks his birthplace, and then family home, at 188 Phibsboro Road.

See <https://fiannaireannhistory.wordpress.com/2017/04/27/john-sean-healy-na-fianna-eireann/> and <https://stairnaheireann.net/2017/04/25/otd-in-1916-sean-healy-one-of-the-youngest-martyrs-of-the-easter-rising-was-shot-and-fatally-wounded/> for details.

(3) Frank Duff, founder of the Legion of Mary (in 1921). He was born at 97 Phibsboro Road in June 1889.

(4) Terence MacSwiney:

(a) Married to Muriel - Muirgheal Bean Mhic Suibhne.

(b) Their daughter Máire would marry Ruairi, son of Cathal Brugha.

See www.indymedia.ie/article/76009 for an Easter 2006 commemoration of MacSwiney in Catalunya.

(5) Eamon de Valera in 1916:

Munster Street, Phibsboro, Dublin, where his wife, Sinéad de Valera, had moved back in with her Flanagan family (at No 34) in the aftermath of the 1916 Rising.

(6) James Connolly in 1916:

Leinster Road (No 49b), Rathmines, Dublin - the home of Constance Markievicz.

See www.indymedia.ie/article/76008 for a 90th anniversary Connolly lecture in 2006.

(7) Kidnapped by the IRB on Good Friday, 1916, and placed under house arrest:

(a) Bulmer Hobson

(b) Cabra Park (No 76), Dublin

See www.rte.ie/centuryireland/index.php/articles/chronology-of-the-easter-rising for more information.

(8) 'John Brennan' was the nom de plume of Sidney Gifford. Two of her sisters' husbands were executed leaders of the 1916 Rising. Muriel was married to Thomas MacDonagh, while Grace married Joseph Mary Plunkett in Kilmainham Jail just before his execution.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=YSR4k-wcJIQs>

(9) Vivian and Vivion:

Chaim Herzog, President of Israel 1983-1993, had been born in Belfast in 1918, and reared in Dublin (initially, in the then numbered 106 South Circular Rd, Portobello, but since renumbered as 18 SCR, the house where his brother Yakov was born in 1921, and where I myself would be born in 1949). He moved to Mandatory Palestine in 1935. He served in the British Army during the Second World War, and for a period he was

based in Belfast. There he was known by the name of Vivian - the Hebrew L'Chaim! being equivalent to Viva! To Life!

Major Vivion de Valera, a TD from 1945 to 1981, was the eldest child of Eamon de Valera, President of Ireland 1959-1973.

(10) The Workers' Union of Ireland was founded by Peter Larkin in June 1924, as a breakaway from the ITGWU, of which his brother, Big Jim Larkin, had been the founding General Secretary. In June 1924, Jim had been in Moscow, attending the Comintern Congress, and became the first General Secretary of the WUI upon his return to Dublin.

(11) Thomas Clarke was born in March 1958 in Milford-on-Sea, Hampshire, which faces across the sea to the Isle of Wight.

(12) Honora Burke, widow of Patrick Sarsfield, afterwards married the Jacobite Duke of Berwick, James FitzJames, illegitimate son (which is what the Norman-French word Fitz signifies) of King James II, from his liaison with Arabella Churchill, sister of the first Duke of Marlborough.

See https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_FitzJames_1st_Duke_of_Berwick for details.

(13) Harry Boland. He was born at 6 Dalymount Terrace, Phibsboro, Dublin, in April 1887.

See www.historyireland.com/20th-century-contemporary-history/harry-bolands-irish-revolution/ and www.historyireland.com/20th-century-contemporary-history/harry-boland/ and www.historyireland.com/revolutionary-period-1912-23/harry-boland-2/ re Michael Collins and the controversial killing, in July-August 1922, of his one time close comrade and friend, but now anti-Treaty opponent, Harry Boland.

(14) Born in Dorset Street, Dublin:

(a) Dramatist Richard Brinsley Sheridan, in October 1751.

(b) Dramatist Sean O'Casey, in March 1880.

(c) Songwriter Peadar Kearney, author of the National Anthem, "A Soldier's Song", in December 1883.

(15) Tom Barry, Flying Column Commander of the IRA's 3rd (West) Cork Brigade during the 1919-21 War of Independence, was born in Killorglin, County Kerry, in July 1897.

See <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=gHv5Q1LpWwQ> for "Barry's Column" sung by Dominic Behan.

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Irish Adoptions

DeV and The Germans

'Civil War' Revenge

Global Road Crashes

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of intercountry adoptions" (*Irish Examiner*-9.1.2020)

THE 1918 General Election (Saturday, 14 December, 1918):

Eamon De Valera at speaking at Mohill, Co. Leitrim on November 18th, 1918:

"England was spending her money to misrepresent Ireland, but Germany was equally interested to see that Ireland was not misrepresented and Germany was as much a match for England in the newspaper business as she was in other methods."

'CIVIL WAR' —

"LONG AFTER the cease fire had been called by the Republicans in the Civil War [24.5.1923] mopping up operations were continued by the Free State army. Aided by police and detectives, troops sought out republicans who had returned to civilian life and put them under arrest.

There were wholesale roundups and there were even executions after the war was officially over. By mid-summer of 1923 over 11,000 were in jail, some the equivalent of prisoners of war, others merely detained on suspicion.

By winter, the issue had become a major one and, perhaps underestimating the resolve of the government, the prisoners decided to embark on a hunger-strike for release. It was a mistake, and after numerous defections the strike was called off.

But the situation could not continue indefinitely : release began, first on a gradual basis and later in increasing numbers. A year after the cease fire, the number behind bars was down to near six hundred.

Among those still held was de Valera, who had been arrested at an election meeting nearly three months after the war had ended. But he was never brought to trial, as had at first been intended, and finally, on July 16, 1924, he was released. With him were released Austin Stack and Liam Deasy." (S.J.L.-Window on the Past-Irish Press-16.7.1992)

ANNUAL GLOBAL Road Crash Statistics: Nearly 1.25 million people die in road crashes each year, on average 3,287 deaths a day. An additional 20-50 million are injured or disabled. More than half of all road traffic deaths occur among young adults ages 15-44.

Over 24,000 people have died on Irish roads since records began in 1959.

More VOX on page 14

THE BISHOP and the Listowel R.I.C. mutiny:

The Listowel mutiny occurred during the Irish War of Independence when Royal Irish Constabulary officers under the command of County Inspector O'Shea refused to be relocated out of their rural police station in Listowel, County Kerry and moved to other areas.

The mutiny proved a seminal moment in relation to the occupier's dependence on the Royal Irish Constabulary.

The mutiny began on 17th June, 1920. On 19th June, Lieutenant-Colonel Gerald Smyth arrived to inform the police of a new policy regarding rules of engagement with the IRA and their supporters. Smyth had been appointed District Commissioner for Munster. In the course of his address, he mentioned that in pursuit of their duty they would be given the power to shoot IRA suspects on sight.

Order No. 5, which was issued on 17th June, 1920 stated that the police could shoot if a suspect failed to surrender 'when ordered to do so'. One of the apparent reasons for the constables' mutiny was because they were horrified by the thought of killing fellow Irishmen "on sight".

Lt.-Col. Smyth was born in the Punjab, India. On the evening of 17th July 1920, he was assassinated by the I.R.A. in the Smoking Room of the Cork and County Club. He was interred in Banbridge, Co. Down.

Along with Constable Jeremiah Mee from Galway, one of those who refused to carry out Smyth's policies, was Constable Thomas Hughes from Hollymount, Co. Mayo who went on to become a Catholic priest and bishop in Nigeria.

Thomas Hughes joined the *Society of African Missions*, and went on to serve as the Bishop of the Diocese of Ondo in Nigeria. Thomas was described as "a gentle and brilliant six foot athlete".

He was ordained a priest in June 1927, at St. Colman's Cathedral, Newry, 14 miles from where Smyth was laid to rest in Banbridge, Co. Down.

Bishop Hughes brother, Patrick (Paddy) was also a missionary for the Society of African Missions, and their Sister became a nun, their niece Sr. Thomasina Hughes OLA, also became a nun.

Suffering from heart problems, he resigned as Bishop, Bishop Hughes died in Cork in 1957, and is buried in St. Joseph's Wilton Cemetery, Co. Cork. (*Irish Bulletin*, Volume 11, May 3, 1920 - August 31, 1920-p.712, 721.

SEE THE *IRISH BULLETIN*-a full reprint of the Official newspaper of Dail Eireann giving news and war reports in four volumes 1, 2, 3, 4a.

The most comprehensive account of Ireland's War of independence. From:

jacklaneaubane@hotmail.com

IRISH ADOPTIONS: "About 80% of children adopted into Ireland over the past three decades have come from five countries.

"In the first of a series of short research reports, the Authority of Ireland analysed the 4,989 intercountry adoptions that were approved between January 1991 and September 2019.

"Between January 1991 and October 2010, there were 4,282 inter-country adoptions, from 33 countries, with 83% of children coming from five countries: Russia, Romania, Vietnam, China, and Ethiopia. Children born in Russia accounted for 1,414 adoptions.

"Then, between November 2010 and September last year, there were 707 intercountry adoptions, from 23 countries, and 80% came from just five countries: Russia, Vietnam, Ethiopia, USA, and China. Adoptions since 2010 have taken place under new legislation and highlight a decline in the number