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Bomber Bull & *The Irish Times*

Constitution vs Common Law

Dail Committee: 1974 Bombings
(*Labour Comment*, back page)

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Find The Fascist!

Is Ireland going Fascist? The message of the Government seems to be that it is because of the rise of Sinn Fein. An alternative view is that it is the Government that is going Nazi since it is mired in corruption (judging by its own Tribunals) and is introducing a biological test of citizenship.

Justice Minister McDowell declares it to be an established fact that Sinn Fein is funded by the proceeds of criminal activities and then he condones those activities by doing nothing about them. Is that not exactly the way the authorities of Weimar Germany behaved towards the Nazi Party when the German electorate started voting Nazi?

By making this assertion about Sinn Fein and doing nothing about it McDowell is debasing public life in the Republic beyond the abysmal depths it had already reached. It doesn't matter whether he believes his assertion or has invented it as a piece of Parliamentary banter—either way his conduct is inexcusable.

And then there is his proposal to introduce a biological test of citizenship. Under it people born in the State will no longer have an automatic right of citizenship. On their first entry into this world they must be able to show that they are Irish in some other way than by simply being born in Ireland. They must have a genealogy.

Finian McGrath of the Independent Hospitals Alliance, the most consistently reasonable and practical TD in the Dail, says that he has noticed a significant increase in racist attitudes amongst his constituents since MacDowell started stirring up this issue.

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Rwanda:

A Tribal Conquest

The Tutsis of Rwanda are conducting an ace media campaign to cover up their tribal conquest of Rwanda and on-going oppression of the 90% Hutu majority, who have been reduced to a people without rights in their own country. Vincent Browne and a host of other journalists and do-gooders from around the world were brought to this poverty-stricken country on the 20th anniversary of a supposed Holocaust of Tutsis 'and moderate Hutus', and subjected to very clever propaganda. Browne got *de luxe* treatment in "*the finest hotel I have stayed in*" (31.3.04), whilst undergoing blatant appeal to emotion with artistically-chosen artefacts, such as heaps of skulls. It is strange that someone who prides himself on his analytical and polemical abilities is so easily taken in by such charlatanism.

More serious than the seduction of Browne is the commitment of the Catholic Church in Ireland to propagating the Tutsi line. The Lenten campaign of *Trócaire* (an aid agency of the Irish Hierarchy) has focussed on Rwanda and the supposed Holocaust there, with the result that school-children have been subjected to the one-sided Tutsi self-justification. The Irish Church wonders why it is losing ground to secularism while replacing evangelisation with politicking—and misjudged politicking at that. The present Rwandan military dictatorship is serving the interests of American and British imperialism in Africa: that is why it is allowed to get away with murder (literally) and why pro-Imperial papers in Ireland and Britain continue to give it a good press. Thus we

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Labour Comment, edited by **Pat Maloney**:

1974 Bombings: DAIL COP-OUT!

Find The Fascist!

continued

The PDs are playing into the hands of Sinn Fein, both by their groundless accusations against it and by their racist anti-immigrant attitudes. They are of the circumstances that are bringing about the increase in support for Sinn Fein both as the party of nationality and as the anti-discrimination party.

A strange, meaningless non-event happened during the month. Fianna Fail dropped its subtitle of "*The Republican Party*" while the PDs declared that they are Republicans too. It is unlikely that the grass roots of Fianna Fail will re-make themselves into West Brits at this signal from the leadership. The PDs of course have no grass roots. And all they mean by the declaration that they are Republicans is that they do not propose to abolish the Tricolour just yet. (Perhaps they recall their abolition of God in the first careless rapture of their existence ten years ago, and how they had to let him back a short while later.)

The PDs are a small-minded provincial petty-bourgeois party which adopted the ideology of globalist capitalism but was unable to live that ideology. It is in office only because the Labour Party is unable to shake off its absurd Treatyite orientation and form a Coalition with Fianna Fail which would bring out the social and national side of that former Republican Party. ●

Rwanda *continued*

find a most sympathetic report of the Lenten campaign in the *Irish Times* by Louise Holden, *Learning From The Survivors Of The Genocide*, illustrated by pictures of children holding posters which are reminiscent of the 'black babies' collection boxes which used to grace Lenten campaigns in more orthodox times. The blurb on the Holden piece says the *Trócaire* campaign says it "*gives Transition Year students a chance to do something practical for human rights*" (17.3.04). Similarly, the *Irish News* carried pages and pages of Tutsi propaganda in the form of the sob-stories, and comments editorially on the "*the magnitude of the evil which is perpetrated by those who engage in this unspeakable crime*"—that is, the supposed genocide allegedly committed by the Hutus in 1994 (8.3.04).

An *Irish Times* journalist, Joe Humphreys, repaid his *de luxe* jaunt to Rwanda with two big-spread articles (6.3.04 and 9.3.04), copiously illustrated with shocking images in full colour. One of these, *History Written In Blood*, has an inset story, *Josienne's Story: How Irish Donors Helped The Trócaire Girl Rebuild Her Life* (6.3.2004). Both stories are reproduced on the *Trócaire* website.

The significant point about Browne, Humphreys and the rest is that the potted histories they give of the Rwanda make no

mention of basic facts as follows.

The Tutsi tribe has traditionally formed the upper layer of society in Rwanda. They resisted democratisation—which meant Hutu Government—for as long as they could and rebelled against it militarily.

In the 1990s the large Tutsi community, which had withdrawn to neighbouring Uganda after failed military action, formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front and invaded Rwanda with a view of re-conquering it for Tutsi domination.

President Yuseveni of Uganda wants to extend his influence over the area and reach out to the rich areas of the Congo. Once he had installed his former Chief of Military Intelligence, Paul Kagame, as ruler of Rwanda, they together mounted expeditions into the Congo to grab bits of territory, under the excuse of hunting Hutu military remnants.

The Americans supported these Tutsi attempts to conquer Rwanda as part of an anti-Francophone campaign—to rid Africa of the influence of France. (Uganda is English-speaking, Rwanda, Burundi and the Congo are French-speaking.) Uganda is a client regime of the West and is given the cream of all the aid. While Zimbabwe is harried for having fairly democratic elections, the Ugandans have got away with establishing what is essentially a one-party State. Rwanda has no democracy at all.

The background to the 'genocide' is that General Kagame's Rwandan Patriotic Front was successfully advancing his invasion by a brutal use of terror against defenceless Hutu villages, which were cleared by bombing and other means.

Meanwhile, the Hutus negotiated with Tutsi parties internal to Rwanda and established a Power-sharing Government with a careful balance between Hutus and Tutsis, a Hutu President and Tutsi Prime Minister. That arrangement was wrecked when a plane carrying President Habyarimana (along with the Hutu President of Burundi) was shot down by a missile.

General Kagame claimed that the Hutus had themselves shot down their own President.

It has now been revealed from a French judicial investigation (in a report leaked to *Le Monde*) that it was the Rwandan Patriotic Front that shot down the plane. BBC News on 11th March 2004 carried a story which confirms this report: a former member of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, Captain Ruzibiza, living in Belgium, has admitted firing the missile and says that two people who helped him are now senior members of General Kagame's security apparatus (see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/>

pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/3502438.stm).

The assassination triggered a mass uprising of Hutus who turned on the Tutsi fifth column in their midst in the context of the ongoing brutal tribal invasion by General Kagame's US-trained forces.

Kagame's spin on his assassination of the Hutu President enabled him to claim that the Hutus refused to engage in power-sharing and were genocidal maniacs. In fact, that description applies to him and his invading forces.

Since conquering power he has imprisoned huge numbers of Hutu males as war criminals under the most inhumane conditions imaginable, and is now using them as forced labour in the fields (see Humphreys, IT, 6.6.04).

No political parties are allowed and there have been no elections, even though it is 10 years since Kagame's RPF grabbed power. Whenever complaints are made in the Western media about this, all Kagame does is rattle the bones of the supposed victims of a 'holocaust'.

Kagame is attempting to brainwash the new generation of Hutus. A spurious 'Rwandan' identity is now *de rigueur*, "with the emphasis on reversing racial distinctions" (ibid). Of course, the 'non-existent' Tutsi element of the new Rwandan nation will continue to be the ruling class over the 'non-existent' Hutus. And the Western band plays on.

To cap the whole catalogue, the West and the UN are using the whole affair to justify interfering in the internal matters of sovereign states and engage in spurious self-criticism for allowing the 'genocide' to happen, that is, for not interfering on that occasion.

It is time Vincent Browne, the Catholic Church and all the rest caught themselves on. They have been thoroughly hoodwinked by very clever, sophisticated and accomplished Tutsi people.

Angela Clifford

PS: As we go to press, there are new claims of deliberate 'AIDS-rapes' of Tutsi women by Hutu men. It has taken 10 years to come up with this allegation—aimed at exciting outrage amongst the powerful Western feminist lobby. Meanwhile Rwandan jails remain packed with prisoners who have still not been tried.

Vincent Browne's radio programme was broadcast from New York in early March. He had on it a woman who said she supported the invasion of Iraq because Saddam Hussein hired gangs of men to go around raping women. Browne, in superior European mode, mildly indicated surprise at the credulity of these simple-minded Americans. But Rwanda is sacred, and Browne becomes as credulous as any American child when he thinks about it.

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EU Constitution: *Does it stack up?*

A concern which is being expressed about the possible introduction of an EU Constitution is the matter of the functions of the Constitution in different EU member states, which may have very different legal systems.

Roman Law and Canon Law to some extent underlie the legal systems of nearly all EU member states. However, English and Welsh law is strongly reliant on Common Law and Equity which are expressed not in statute law but in Judge-made law or Case Law as it is usually called.

Scottish Law is somewhat of a mixture of systems which derived from French Law and later from English influences.

The law in Ireland is in an interesting phase. On the one hand, the 1937 Constitution of Ireland Article 15.2 states:

"The sole and exclusive power of making laws for the State is hereby vested in the Oireachtas: no other legislative authority has power to make laws for the State."

On the other hand, the Courts in Ireland more or less ignored Article 15.2 and the Courts continued to use Judge-made law i.e. Case Law after 1937 and up to this day. Thus an Irish diplomat recently is quoted in the Irish Examiner (25th March 2004) as stating:

"the government believes there will be sufficient safeguards to protect Ireland's common law system which is different to that operated in most other EU member states"

If this diplomatic statement reflects the true opinion of the Irish government, it bodes ill for the Irish Government's ability to properly negotiate a new EU Constitution when the Government itself does **not know** where it stands under its own Constitution of Ireland.

A common law system is incompatible with the Constitution of Ireland Article 15.2.

Michael Stack
31st March 2004

Launch and Informal Discussion

Aubane Historical Society:

With Michael Collins In The Fight For Irish Independence by Batt O'Connor, TD

Seán Moylan: In His Own Words: His Memoir Of The Irish War Of Independence (3rd edn)

Athol Books, Germany & Ireland Series:

Connolly And German Socialism

Luise Haushofer's Jail Notes

Labour & Trade Union Review:

Iraq: Lies, Half-Truths & Omissions by David Morrison ("The Morrison Report")

at

Teachers' Club

36 Parnell Square, Dublin

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The Cory Report

Last month this magazine published an extract from the *Cory Report*, which criticised Kevin Myers for making the most serious allegations of collusion between Irish security forces and republicans on the basis of no evidence. Unfortunately our report did not provide any context for that extract, which means that the significance of Judge Cory's censure of Myers will have escaped many readers. And they will not have found enlightenment in the national press: blanket silence has protected not only Myers, but also Toby Harnden, who was also censured by Judge Cory for publishing allegations with no proof to support them in a book.

Justice Peter deCarteret Cory, a retired judge of the Canadian Supreme Court, was appointed in May 2002 to investigate allegations of collusion between State security forces and paramilitaries. He was commissioned by the Irish and British Governments to examine accusations relating to each of their jurisdictions. The appointment came after a long republican campaign which, after the Americans came on board, eventually won grudging assent from the Governments. The Republicans campaigned on a real issue, collusion in Northern Ireland but, to provide a semblance of 'balance' in response to Unionist anger at what appeared to be yet another 'concession' to nationalists, Justice Cory was given two allegations of Southern 'collusion' to investigate along with four glaring instances in the North. The cases he looked into were—

- the killings of human rights lawyers Patrick Finucane and Rosemary Nelson, in 1989 and 1999, respectively;
- the 1997 sectarian killing by a loyalist mob of Robert Hamill, a 25-year-old Catholic man;
- the 1997 killing of Billy Wright, a leading Loyalist paramilitary, shot dead in the Maze prison;
- the 1989 killing of Chief Superintendent Harry Breen and Superintendent Bob Buchanan, two RUC officers;
- and the killing of Northern Ireland's Lord Justice Maurice and Lady Cecily Gibson in 1987.

The first four cases listed above relate to the North. In three of them Catholics were killed; the fourth, that of Billy Wright, concerns a Protestant, whose

father has campaigned long and hard to keep the issue of the killing of his son in the public domain in his search for an explanation of how it could happen in a state security institution. Many believe that Billy Wright was imprisoned on a trumped-up charge and, when he threatened to expose his association with security-force handlers, the authorities allowed the INLA to kill him in prison.

Finding compliant judges who produce pre-arranged findings is a speciality of the British State. The practice keeps critics at bay: criticism of the subject matter remains muted during the lengthy period it takes to compile the report, and government is exonerated by 'impartial' justice.

Justice Cory was not asked to deliver verdicts on the cases he examined, but merely to declare whether a Public Inquiry was justified in any of them. Last Autumn, as his report was nearing completion, the Judge let it be known to the press that he would brook no interference with his findings. This strange announcement (which implies that an attempt was being made to get him to tailor them) must make him almost unique in British governance. (When I was going through the Northern Ireland Cabinet papers for 1969-70, I found the NI Cabinet negotiating with the British Cabinet on the terms of the recommendations of the Hunt Report (Abolition of B-Specials) which was about to be issued.)

But it seems that Blairite expectations were not to be fulfilled in this instance. Cory had already got the measure of the British Government—possibly his fellow-Canadian, General de Chastelain, had filled him in. (The latter has been altogether too honourable for British liking and his International Monitoring Commission in its role of overseeing the ending of paramilitary capacity under the Belfast Agreement is apparently being superseded—at least in part—by an Independent Monitoring Commission.) The Dublin-based magazine, *Phoenix*, reported that Justice Cory declined the generous British offer of office space for himself and his investigators. No doubt, here he was drawing on the experience of the Stephens team investigating RUC collusion with Unionist paramilitaries—an enquiry which suffered break-ins, thefts and fires in offices located in police stations (shades of Castlereagh!). Instead, Justice Cory found space for his team in the Canadian Embassy. He also politely declined the offer of personnel to help with his research.

It seems that he also exerted sufficient clout to see original British documents, rather than summaries as were given to the Irish Judge Barron in his preliminary inquiry in the Monaghan-Dublin Bombings.

A report produced in such circumstances was bound to make recommendations not to British liking, and so it proved in October 2003 when Cory submitted his work. While the Irish Government published the Cory Report insofar as it related to the Southern 'collusion' cases, the British Government delayed for five months. Justice Cory was angered by the delay and feared that the British Government was intent on forgetting about its commitment to publish his findings. He contacted the families of those who had died and explained that the delay was not his doing. The Irish Government published the parts of his report relevant to it, in order to exert further pressure on the British Government to publish.

The Finucane family brought a case in Belfast High Court for publication, where the Judge took the unprecedented step of setting a further hearing in the legal holiday period, to exert pressure on the British Government to abide by its assurance that it would be publishing the report. In the end, Premier Blair conceded to pressure at home and abroad and published.

Judge Cory has recommended full Public Inquiries in the four Northern cases in the face of substantial evidence of collusion, and lesser inquiries in the Southern cases, where he did not find collusion. So, the search will be on for a batch of compliant Judges. It seems that Peter Mandelson suggested former NI Lord Chief Justice Hutton to head the Kelly Inquiry. That recommendation rebounded to an extent because a section of the public felt that it had been too much a whitewash of the Government in view of the public evidence. No doubt Tony Blair will be casting around for Judges of just the right type, who will exonerate the top levels of Government—meaning the Committee under Prime Ministers which sanctioned the collusion strategy—while criminalising some fish lower down the scale.

Meanwhile Judge Cory's strong criticism of Kevin Myers and Toby Harnden has had no discernible impact on their careers in face of concerted silence from the national press. Myers continues to produce half-baked columns in the Irish Times which, despite its pretensions to being *the* paper of record in Ireland, failed to publish Judge Cory's strictures on its star columnist.

Angela Clifford

An Cor Tuatail

Sliabh Geal gCua

Δ Σλίabh Γεal γCua na féile, is fada uair i gcéin mé
I mo shuí cois cuain i m'ádhair go créicilaz fadó bhrón,
An cuile buí ar taob thiom roir mé is cír mo éilíbe,
Is Δ Σλίabh Γεal γCua na féile, nac zéar é mo sceol!

Tá mbeinn-se i measc mo zóolca, in séicín glaz na séimíear,
Mar Δ scaipeann ceas na gréine ann ón spéir síl zan trád,
Ná tá mbeinn-se ansiú fadom réileann nuair Δ éisceann brúce ar féar ann,
Δ Σλίabh Γεal γCua na féile, tá mba féioir í t'fáil!

Is é mo léan ná fuairas cózairc le léann is mórcuro eolais,
I nZóoluin uasail ceolmar, ba seolca mo béal,
Do éabharfainn cuairc éar sáile, is éabharfainn bua éar barr éuzac,
Mar, Δ Σλίabh Γεal γCua, ba breá liom tú t'árad é réim.

Mo zrás-sa éall na Déise, roir bánca, zleanna is sléibce,
Ó snámas anonn éar créanhuir, éim créicilaz zan bhrí,
Ac ó coil le Dia mé Δ zlac as, mo sláince siar le héirinn
Is slán, Δ Σλίabh na féile, le saoréas óm éroi.

Πάδραϊς Ó Μίλεαδha

Bright Sliabh gCua

O bright Sliabh gCua of the dacency, you are far away from me
And I sitting alone by a harbour, laid low by grief,
The shining sea alongside, between me and the land I love,
O bright Sliabh gCua of the dacency, how bitter is my story!

If only I were among my kinfolk, in the green abode of the kindly people,
Where the heat of the sun beats endlessly on the meadows,
Or if I were there in the moonlight when the dew falls on the grass,
O bright Sliabh gCua of the dacency, if only it could be!

It is my regret that I was not reared with learning and great knowledge
In noble musical Irish my tongue would be eloquent,
I would go on an expedition across the sea, and I would bring you a great victory,
Because, O bright Sliabh gCua, it would be my desire to raise up your dignity.

I send my love to Decies, her plains, valleys and mountains;
Since I sailed across the mighty ocean I am weak and lifeless,
But since it was God's will to call me away, here's a health to Ireland
And farewell to you, O bright Sliabh gCua, from the depth of my heart.



This song is the West Waterford anthem. *Sliabh gCua* is the old name for the Knockmealdown Mountains. **Pádraig Ó Míleadh** (1887-1947, in English this surname is pronounced approximately Malay) was born on the southern slopes near Kilrossanty. In 1903 he went to Wales to do factory work near Swansea. A trade union activist, he played a big part in the great strike of 1921 and was sacked in 1922. He was also active in Irish affairs and secured employment as a teacher of the Irish language when he returned to Co. Waterford. The song above continues to be popular in the area; probably the best version is by the Ring fisherman/singer Nioclás Tóibín. The phrase *Sliabh Geal gCua na féile* could be translated as *bright (beautiful) Sliabh gCua of the hospitality*, but the sense is expressed better by the word *dacency* (not *decency*!), in the meaning of its everyday usage. I do not know the meaning of the word *séicín* (second verse), but it might be a misinterpretation of *Sceichín*, as Ó Míleadh was born in the townland of *Sceichíní* (Little Hawthorns). *Déise* (the Decies) is the area covering Co. Waterford and South Tipperary. Its most famous literary figure is Seathrún Céitinn (Geoffrey Keating, born near Clonmel and author of the history *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, 17th century). The poets Donnchadh Ruadh Mac Conmara and Tadhg Gaelach Ó Súilleabháin (18th century) both came from west Munster but lived in Co. Waterford. Seán Ó Dálaigh (John O'Daly, 19th century) whose *Poets & Poetry Of Munster* marks the beginning of the Irish Revival (i.e. the discovery of Irish by English-speaking Ireland) is associated with the area. John O'Donovan of the same period took part in the 1840s Ordnance Survey and, just in the nick of time, saved the meanings of Irish placenames. He was born in Sliabh Rua, just outside Waterford city, on the Kilkenny side.

The Irish Times Defends Terror Bombing

A week before it was condemning the bombing of Madrid the *Irish Times* was justifying a bombing that resulted in the deaths of five hundred times more people than that in Madrid.

The *Irish Times* of 6th March contained a review of Frederick Taylor's book, *Dresden: Tuesday 13 February 1945*. It is penned by a Derek Scally. No information is given about Scally save that he "writes for the *Irish Times* from Berlin".

The present writer does not have a copy of Taylor's book. Writers for the *Northern Star* do not receive review copies from publishers. We do not matter to the publishers because we do not indulge in mutual backslapping of their producers and products. We take things purely as they are and assess the facts as presented. We are, therefore, not conducive to the commercial process.

So this is a review of the review rather than the book.

The review headline is *Unmasking A Masterstroke*—the "masterstroke" being the "firebombing that went horribly right", according to the headline writer of the *Irish Times*.

We remember how the *Irish Times* and other papers, on the anniversary of the La Mon firebombing, when an IRA bomb incinerated a dozen or so people, tried to connect it to Gerry Adams. Peculiarly enough the *Irish Times* did not describe it as a "firebombing that went horribly right" for the IRA. But a far bigger firebombing that killed maybe more than a hundred thousand in Dresden is casually described in such terms.

Perhaps that is fair enough. After all, La Mon went horribly wrong for the IRA in that the horrible deaths of civilians was unintentional—whereas those hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths perpetrated by British Bomber Command were wholly desired. Although, not according to Scally and Taylor.

Taylor's book has a very high moral purpose according to Scally. Not content

with justifying the bombing of innocent civilians, "Taylor reweighs the moral scales of a firebomb attack that went 'horribly right' and retells the story in a way the dead of Dresden deserve". "Reweighing the moral scales" apparently involves making sure that even the dead civilians of Dresden, slaughtered by the British bombers, are to be slandered to vindicate the moral righteousness of John Bull actions, via the *Irish Times*.

Taylor's book sets out to challenge the understanding of the Dresden massacre that has unfortunately taken root:

"The unimaginable firebomb attack of February 13th, 1945, has given Dresden a special status in the history of the Second World War: a city that still serves as shorthand for Allied barbarism and revenge lust. Dresden, so the argument goes, was not a vital part of the war machine but a city of culture, teeming with refugees just weeks before the Nazi capitulation. The British knew all this and bombed the city anyway despite its limited military importance."

But this is Nazi propaganda, according to Scally via Taylor:

"This generally accepted view of Dresden was one of the last masterstrokes of Nazi chief propagandist Joseph Goebbels. Rather than hush up the attack to maintain morale, as had happened after raids on other cities, he dispatched camera crews to document the destruction.

"Only with evidence of the demonic rage of the enemy could he sell his version of events, of Dresden as an innocent victim of allied aggression." So Goebbels, that frightful Nazi manipulator of propaganda, took his cameras to Dresden, filmed what he saw and produced a monstrous lie!

And further Nazi sympathizers have continued the lie:

"It's a story that continues to be peddled today, primarily by David Irving, who began his career as a historian in the 1960s with a book on the city's destruction.

"In recent years, however, Irving

has been exposed as one who manipulates facts to suit his view of history. Still, Irving's work remained the standard work on Dresden in the English language, making Frederick Taylor's Dresden a timely arrival."

The modern Irish low level of historical knowledge, the lazy academic mind used to a diet of sloganeering and little actual thought, are all illustrated in Scally's suggestion of continuity between Goebbels and Irving: Goebbels = Nazi, Irving = Holocaust denier. Eureka!

But anyone with historical knowledge would know that it is completely false to suggest continuity between them and only an ignoramus could do so.

Irving's book, *The Destruction of Dresden*, was published about 40 years ago. It was published at a time when it was not generally known in England what Britain had done to Dresden in February 1945, when the war was being wound up. It caused quite a stir in England and made many react with revulsion.

There had only been a few critics of Churchill's conduct of the war (mostly from British military backgrounds, like Captain Grenfell)—who wondered whether the war which Britain had declared, supposedly to free Poland from totalitarian government and which had resulted in totalitarian government installed across half of Europe, had really been worth it. But there was little actual knowledge of the things that the Allies had visited on Germany in punishment for its success against the Anglo-French armies.

Irving had written his book on Dresden after finding out the facts for himself when he had been working in Germany as a welder. It has a Foreword by an Air Marshall of the RAF, Sir Robert Saundby—an unusual contributor to the work of an heir of Dr. Goebbels. And it is too fair by half on Britain, if anything.

In the last decade or so—25 years after his book on Dresden—Irving has been accused of denying the holocaust and has been ostracized as a result from respectable academic circles. In fact he has not disputed that there was a holocaust, so far as I know. He challenged the numbers of Jews who were killed at particular camps and has suggested a final total of 4 million killed, as opposed to the 6 millions that some people estimate. About fifteen years ago he was prevented from speaking

in a number of Irish universities because of this, although at the time no evidence from his books was produced to justify the assertion. (Irving's books published into the 1980s reveal no denial—rather the argument that the SS got on with the killing of the Jews rather independently of the Fuhrer.)

What this has to do with his work on Dresden—which should be allowed to stand on its own merits—is not obvious. But, of course, Scally realises if you throw some slogans to do with “*fascism*” or “*anti-Semitism*” at someone these days thought is not necessary.

According to Scally (and Taylor?):

“The numbers game around the final death toll began with Goebbels and the communists and is continued today by Irving and neo-Nazi groups, inflating the total number of dead to over 250,000. Taylor presents ample convincing sources to conclude that the death toll was probably no more than 40,000, still a shocking number.”

We must condemn, at all costs, even though condemnations serve merely as a kind of device whereby the act itself is condoned while the result of it is deplored in the next breath. Scally's tone is that 40,000 is mere trifle, but then he thinks twice of it and inserts: “...*Still a shocking number.*” But not as bad as 250,000—and acceptable for that reason, we must presume!

Irving certainly did not suggest in any edition of *The Destruction of Dresden* from 1963 to 1985 that 250,000 had died in Dresden. He said in a prominently displayed *author's note* that the accepted minimum estimate was 35,000, the post-war German estimate was 135,000, and American sources had put it at 200,000. Where is the reference to 250,000 from Irving? Scally does not provide it.

It is quite obvious why accurate figures for casualties in Dresden were hard to come by—the British bomber crews incinerated tens of thousands of refugees seeking shelter from the advancing Communist armies in Dresden, as well as foreign labourers and prisoners of war. Its 600,000 population was swollen by an estimated further 500,000 refugees fleeing from the Red Army. It was both hard to count the bodies and know who had been there before the incineration and account for them afterwards.

Nobody knows for sure just how many

innocent civilians were bombed and burned to death in Dresden. What was beyond dispute—until now—was that its destruction was of no military significance whatsoever. It did not shorten the war by a minute, nor was it really intended to.

The war to all intents and purposes was won in February 1945 and the city itself had no military, political or industrial significance. And the British Government was well aware that it was defenceless against air attack.

But Taylor, according to Scally, has done a great service—to whom, apart from the “*dead of Dresden*”, he does not say, although we can imagine—in justifying Dresden's come-uppance at the hands of Bomber Command:

“Taylor paints a picture of Dresden as it was: a Nazi hive. Support for the fascists was higher here than nearly all other German cities. He provides ample evidence to rubbish the notion held to this day that Dresden was simply a collection of pretty buildings or one big porcelain factory.

“Hitler described Nazi Dresden as a ‘pearl in a new setting’: the new setting was a war setting and Dresden was central to the war effort.

“True, the city lacked the industrial smokestacks of the Ruhr, but Taylor presents evidence showing how its precision engineering works were put to good use manufacturing torpedo shells and Aircraft parts. Radio factories became fuse wire factories. Cigarette factories became bullet factories.”

So Dresden was “*a Nazi hive*” that participated in the war and deserved bombing. That is the type of innuendo whispered by the more extreme sectarian elements in Northern Ireland after a massacre of civilians had taken place in the other community. It would have not been allowed in the press but now it is blatantly stated in the *Irish Times* with regard to Germans.

And, according to Scally:

“He also makes the case that bombing Dresden's railway Infrastructure knocked out the vital gateway to Sudetenland and Bohemia: 20,000 officers passed through one of Dresden's two main train stations each day. Eye witnesses described Dresden, not as a city of culture, but an “armed camp: thousands of German troops, tanks and artillery. Weeks before the attack the Nazis reclassified Dresden a *Verteigiungsbereich*, a defence area of strategic military importance.”

Surely the fact that the Red Army was bearing down upon it would make Dresden “*a defence area of strategic military importance*”? If “*20,000 officers passed through one of Dresden's two main train stations each day*” the whole officer corp of the German army would have gone through it in just over a week!

But was the railway junction the target of the bombers, as Taylor asserts? We have first hand evidence to suggest it wasn't—or at least to verify it became the “*target*” only *after* the event, for reasons of propaganda.

This letter by a member of bomber crew, Mr. A. Williams of Nottingham, published in *The Observer*, 8th August 1984 suggests that the real target for the bombers was not the military facilities of Dresden but the people of the city and refugees from the Communist advance:

“On 13th, February, 1945, I was a navigator on one of the Lancaster bombers which devastated Dresden. I well remember the briefing by our Group Captain. We were told that the Red Army was thrusting towards Dresden and that the town would be crowded with refugees and that the centre of the town would be full of women and children. Our aiming point would be the market place.

“I recall that we were somewhat uneasy, but we did as we were told. We accordingly bombed the target and on our way back our wireless operator picked up a German broadcast accusing the RAF of terror tactics, and that 65,000 civilians had died. We dismissed this as German propaganda.

“The penny didn't drop until a few weeks later when my squadron received a visit from the Crown Film Unit who were making the wartime propaganda films. There was a mock briefing, with one notable difference. The same Group Captain now said, ‘as the market place would be filled with women and children on no account would we bomb the centre of the town. Instead, our aiming point would be a vital railway junction to the east.’

“I can categorically confirm that the Dresden raid was a black mark on Britain's war record. The aircrews on my squadron were convinced that this wicked act was not instigated by our much-respected guvnor ‘Butch’ Harris but by Churchill. I have waited 29 years to say this, and it still worries me.”

Britain's air war against German

civilians was a result of its inability to face its soldiers in the field of battle. The Anglo-French armies massed on the German frontier had outnumbered the German army in early 1940. But they had been routed in a couple of weeks and the British Expeditionary Force fled across the channel, leaving its allies to their fate.

Britain lost the European war in 1940 and only refused a settlement in the hope that—as in 1915, when things got tough—a world war could be created. In 1914-5 the Minister in the British Cabinet whose main aim was to spread and escalate the war into the Balkans and Middle East was Churchill. His strategy had been to bring as much of the world as possible, regardless of the consequence, into the conflict to destroy Germany. And he was the man brought back again in 1940 to do so. Churchill gambled that Germany would turn on Russia, and America might be brought into the conflict, if things were not allowed to settle down. Then England could at least get on the winning side. And while Britain proved incapable of fighting toe to toe with the Germans its contribution to the war was the instigation of terrorist attacks in areas under German occupation and aerial bombing—called terror bombing in Germany.

In 1940—before Churchill took power—there was an unspoken agreement between the warring powers that civilian bombing was not a desirable development for anyone. This can be demonstrated practically by the fact that from the fall of Poland in September 1939 until the battle for France in May 1940 there was very little fighting done on the ground or in the air. The air forces of Britain, France and Germany had ample opportunity to wage war against the civilian populations of their opponents, as a substitute for land war. But, though a bombing holocaust was predicted by the press, and governments issued gas-masks and evacuated children to the countryside, nothing happened.

“The construction of bombing airplanes would soon be abandoned as superfluous and ineffective if bombing as such were branded as an illegal barbarity. If, through the Red Cross Convention, it definitely turned out possible to prevent the killing of a defenceless wounded man or prisoner, then it ought to be equally possible, by analogous convention, and finally to stop the bombing of equally defenceless civil populations.”

That quotation is from Adolf Hitler, who was against civilian bombing as a form of warfare—and whose air force was always used—even in the ruthless Russian campaign—primarily for military objectives in support of the German ground forces.

In 1940 the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, declared bombing to be “*absolutely contrary to international law*” stating that “*the British Government would never resort to the deliberate attack on women and children for the purposes of mere terrorism*”. Chamberlain gave instructions during the Norwegian campaign in 1940 that “*it is clearly illegal to bombard a populated area in the hope of hitting a legitimate target which is known to be in the area but which cannot be precisely located and identified*”. This statement is recorded in Volume I of Churchill’s *History Of The Second World War* (p482). But Churchill, upon taking power, instigated an illegal inversion of Chamberlain’s policy in the mass civilian bombings of German cities during 1942-5.

Churchill, rather than Hitler, was the first to authorise civilian bombing. J.M. Spaight, CBE., Principal Secretary to the British Air Ministry, notes in his book *Bombing Vindicated*, page 47, that

“Hitler only undertook the bombing of British civilian targets reluctantly three months after the RAF had commenced bombing German civilian targets. Hitler would have been willing at any time to stop the slaughter. Hitler was genuinely anxious to reach with Britain an agreement confining the action of aircraft to battle zones.”

Spaight noted:

“Because we were doubtful about the psychological effect of propagandist distortion of the truth that it was we who started the strategic bombing offensive, we have shrunk from giving our great decision of May 11th 1940, the publicity it deserves.”

Phillip Knightley in his book, *The First Casualty*, suggests that Churchill’s reasoning for waging this type of war was to sacrifice British civilians in the hope that America would come into the war and save Britain:

“Churchill was obsessed with getting America into the war. He tried to frighten Roosevelt with the prospect of an early German victory. He searched for an outrage, such as the sinking of the *Lusitania* in the First World War, that would arouse American public opinion. German

bombing of British civilians might well achieve this. But for weeks it looked as if the Germans had no intention of being so obliging.”

The RAF raid on the night of May 11th 1940, although itself trivial, was a deliberate breach of the fundamental rule of civilised warfare in Europe that hostilities should only be waged against the enemy combatant forces. The British concept of Total War, pioneered in the use of concentration camps against Boer civilians in the South African war, was adapted to aerial warfare and brought to Europe, to keep the pot boiling.

According to the booklet, *The Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany* published by H.M Stationery Office, London in 1961:

“The first ‘area’ air attack of the war, was carried out by 134 British bombers on the German city of Mannheim, on the 16th, December, 1940. The object of this attack, as Air Chief Marshall Peirse later explained, was, ‘to concentrate the maximum amount of damage in the centre of the town’.”

The Fight at Odds is a book issued by HM Stationary Office, and described by its author, Dennis Richards, as “*officially commissioned and based throughout on official documents which had been read and approved by the Air Ministry Historical Branch*”. Richards revealed that the British introduced anti-civilian bombing to goad Hitler into bombing cities and raise the stakes in the war:

“If the Royal Air Force raided the Ruhr, destroying oil plants with its most accurately placed bombs and urban property with those that went astray, the outcry for retaliation against Britain might prove too strong for the German generals to resist. Indeed, Hitler himself would probably lead the clamour. The attack on the Ruhr was therefore an informal invitation to the Luftwaffe to bomb London. The primary purpose of these raids was to goad the Germans into undertaking reprisal raids of a similar character on Britain. Such raids would arouse intense indignation in Britain against Germany and so create a war psychosis without which it would be impossible to carry on a modern war.” (p122)

In March 1942 Churchill’s War Cabinet accepted a plan put before it by Professor Lindemann in which ‘top priority’ as an objective for air attack was in future to be given to “*working-class*

houses in densely populated residential areas”.

This decision of the War Cabinet was kept a closely guarded secret from the British public for nearly twenty years until it was revealed in 1961 in a book called *Science and Government* by the physicist and novelist, Sir Charles Snow. Snow described the genesis of this policy:

“Early in 1942 Professor Lindemann, by this time Lord Cherwell and a member of the Cabinet, laid a cabinet paper before the Cabinet on the strategic bombing of Germany. It described in quantitative terms the effect on Germany of a British bombing offensive in the next eighteen months (approximately March 1942–September 1943). The paper laid down a strategic policy. The bombing must be directed essentially against German working-class houses. Middle-class houses have too much space round them and so are bound to waste bombs; factories and ‘military objectives’ had long since been forgotten, except in official bulletins, since they were much too difficult to find and hit. The paper claimed that—given a total concentration of effort on the production and use of aircraft—it would be possible, in all the larger towns of Germany (that is, those with more than 50,000 inhabitants), to destroy 50 per cent of all houses.” (pp. 47-48.)

The Terror bombing proposed in the Lindemann Plan was a novelty in warfare rendered possible by the Allied conquest of the air. It was not, as the Germans complained, indiscriminate. On the contrary, it was concentrated on working class houses because, as Professor Lindemann maintained, a higher percentage of killing per ton of explosives dropped could be got from bombing houses built close together, rather than by bombing middle class houses surrounded by gardens.

Dresden was not a military target in any reasonable sense of the term. The object was not to destroy the German ability to continue the war—which was on its last legs. It was to incinerate the inhabitants by use of a technique perfected over the previous two years.

According to Scally: “*Taylor... presents a history of air war and the bombing of cities from Warsaw and Coventry to Hamburg and Dresden*”. But the use of terror bombing of German cities by the RAF was a very different technique

from the earlier bombings of cities—like the German attacks on London—where a scattering of bombs were dropped on selected targets over a couple of hours. What bomber command did was drop a huge concentration of bombs in a very short period with the intention of making an inferno of working class districts to burn up the labour force and their dependants. The concentration of incendiaries produced a firestorm which was not the sum total of each bomb but was in the multiplying effect of the firestorm.

The whole firestorm tactic was scientifically worked out by a committee in London which included firemen and scientists collaborating on ways of wreaking the most destruction. Different kinds of bombs were dropped in different locations to maximise the destructive effect, with the whole being preceded by aircraft dropping green and red markers to guide the pilots carrying the ordnance. The object was to cut off the supply of air in city centres, so that those escaping the explosives, the bomb fragments, and the fires, would suffocate.

The only real debate on the subject of terror bombing took place in the House of Commons on the 6th March 1945, three weeks after the mass terror air raid on Dresden. In it the cat came out of the bag with regard to Dresden.

The debate was initiated by Richard Stokes, MP, who demanded to be told why an authorised report, issued regarding the raid by the Associated Press Correspondent from Supreme Allied Headquarters in Paris, had gloatingly described “*this unprecedented assault in daylight on the refugee-crowded capital, fleeing from the Russian tide in the East*”. Stokes declared it showed that “*the long-awaited decision had been taken to adopt deliberate terror-bombing of German populated centres as a ruthless expedient to hasten Hitler’s doom*”.

Stokes read this report and reminded the House of Commons that it had been widely published in America and broadcast by Paris Radio. On the morning of The 17th February the Censor had released it in Britain but in the evening of that day it had been suppressed from publication—presumably as a result of the unease that it might have aroused.

Stokes asked,

“Is terror bombing now part of our policy? Why is it that the people of this country, who are supposed to be

responsible for what is going on, the only people who may not know what is being done in their name? On the other hand, if terror bombing be not part of our policy, why was this statement put out at all? I think we shall live to rue the day we did this, and that it (the air raid on Dresden) will stand for all time as a blot on our escutcheon.”

After the war the Labour Minister, Richard Crossman described the bombing of Dresden as “*the worst massacre in the history of the world*” and wrote: “*The devastation of Dresden in February, 1945, was one of those crimes against humanity whose authors would have been arraigned at Nuremberg if that court had not been perverted.*”

If the Germans had won the war and had had a Nuremberg; if they had hanged Churchill and Bomber Harris as war criminals for the holocaust they organised against the German cities like Dresden; and if the *Irish Times* had published a review of a book saying it had never really happened as it had been suggested it had, would that have made the *Irish Times* a holocaust denier?

It seems to be the business of historians to remove the blots on England’s escutcheon these days and for Ireland to provide some service in this project, for some political purpose that is not hard to imagine. These days, of course, British mythology about the war has gained prevalence in Ireland and it seems likely that even mass terror bombing and incineration of tens of thousands of civilians can be made acceptable—if it is our side that does it, of course, and we don’t pay any price in return.

Which is exactly the logic of those who bombed Madrid.

Pat Walsh

Next month we examine the apprenticeship of Bomber Bull in Afghanistan and Iraq during the 1920s and 1930s and how and why Britain scuppered European attempts to outlaw civilian bombing at the League of Nations in the 1930s.

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REPORT: Martin Mansergh devoted his column in *The Irish Times* on 3rd April 2004 to an attack on Jack Lane, Brendan Clifford, the Aubane Historical Society, *Phoenix* magazine, and assorted other opponents, real or imagined. We reproduce the article below for the benefit of those who may have missed it, along with two letters in reply, which it will be interesting to see whether the paper deigns to publish.

"Why I'm Not A Spy In Spite Of All You Hear"

by *Martin Mansergh*

Anyone in public life can expect to have their integrity, capacity and even family scrutinised, challenged and impugned.

Politicians, like racehorses, carry handicaps, some they grew up with and others of their own making. The more prominent, the more questions they face. Everyone sits regular examinations, with extra papers in their own area of special difficulty.

The conspiracy theory is a great weapon. Considerable political (and journalistic) time is given to testing out conspiracy theories, and trying to stand them up. If plausible, or partly true, they lead to tribunals and inquiries, even crises. Few victims are entirely innocent, in terms of never believing conspiracy theories about others, including newspapers.

My first article for *The Irish Times* stirred up latent paranoia. "Mansergh sleeps with the enemy" was the headline in the *Phoenix* (26/9/03). Described as "hardly the most republican forum in the media", the paper isn't the least republican either.

For praising the *Irish Times* Trust, which keeps at bay wealthy proprietors with the power to hold governments to ransom, I drew down the wrath of two fertile local historians of the North Cork Aubane Historical Society. An angry letter from Jack Lane is circulating in print, with Brendan Clifford asking what I was up to (*Northern Star*, March 2004).

Clifford depicts *The Irish Times* as the "Irish" newspaper acceptable to Downing Street. No doubt, someone there scans *The Irish Times*, as they do *Le Monde*, but no one on the paper has featured recently in the British honours list.

"Proof" of a conspiracy operating to this day is a report by the British ambassador, Sir Andrew Gilchrist, in October 1969 about conversations with an *Irish Times* board member, Maj Tom McDowell, who apparently complained, using an appalling racial metaphor, of the renegade editorial line of Douglas Gageby on the North, while seeking guidance from Downing Street on lines to follow.

I interpret that differently as editorial control slipping away from a deeply conservative old Protestant business class

that still looked instinctively to England, in a new Ireland post-Lemass facing into the Troubles.

As for the Trust, it was reformed before I started writing for the paper. A few years ago *The Irish Times* quarrelled with attempts by Lane and Clifford to excise Elizabeth Bowen from every canon of Irish literature or identity, in complete defiance of pluralism.

A distant relation of my father by marriage, she was (mostly) proud to be Irish and is remembered annually at Farahy Church near Kildorrery, of which I am a trustee. Though distasteful, her wartime "spying" activities were about as sinister as any by John Betjeman.

It was probably fortunate to have working for the British administration during the war Irish people who understood neutrality was necessary, and whose analysis helped others restrain Churchillian aggressiveness. They included my father, who was cleared by Joe Walshe, secretary of the Department of External Affairs, to work in the Ministry of Information, where Shevawn Lynam and Rita Dudley, later President Childers's wife, also worked.

If one comes from that diminishing Protestant sub-class, those of Anglo-Irish background; was born in England; and educated at public school (only a minor public school, King's School, Canterbury, as Senator Shane Ross points out), decades of Irish public service will not dispel every single lingering suspicion.

The question was put to a noted Irish-speaking historian from Galway by friends some time ago: "Can we trust him?"

Or, as a former Fianna Fáil minister, quoted in Kevin Rafter's biography, asked (with a laugh): "He was educated at Oxford University, right? Well, then you'd have to ask, who does he work for?"

An editor telephoned me in 1987 with a bizarre story from the previous government. Two ministers told Peter Prendergast, the government press secretary, they had reason to believe I was an MI6 agent, asking him to find out more.

Imagine. At a time of tension over Northern policy it might, if true, have discredited the leader of Fianna Fáil the Republican Party as brilliantly as the

exposure in 1974 of an East German spy, Günter Guillaume, in the private office of the Chancellor, Willy Brandt.

I reported to the taoiseach, Mr Haughey, how I was being maligned. He looked up, laughed and said: "Join the club".

A couple of historical experiences that ended unhappily created some wariness of cultural difference in nationalist politics. Controversy over Parnell's love for a married woman wrecked Home Rule, though it would be absurd today to regard the private morals of a non-Catholic as a particular political risk factor.

Erskine Childers snr wrote a famous spy novel, *The Riddle Of The Sands*, credited with fuelling the naval arms race before the first World War, and was a wartime military intelligence officer. Yet as a skilled yachtsman he was central to the Howth gun-running, and a brilliant propagandist during the war of independence.

A conscientious opponent of the Treaty, he was accused of being the godfather of republican anarchy and a British agent out to wreck the Free State. The fact that Churchill gloated over his execution, the high esteem Childers was held in by de Valera and Frank Gallagher, and no evidence to support conspiracy theories only highlight the tragedy. The Wicklow TD and Minister of State, Dick Roche, has successfully pressed for his portrait to hang in Leinster House.

People rarely think calumny through. To be one's whole adult life the agent of a neighbouring country, one would need to be a consummate actor and unblushing liar, calmly deceiving family, friends, colleagues, and neighbours.

Supposing a desire to serve Britain from conviction, then the straightforward course would have been to join the British civil service or a political party.

A belief that I, and more belonging to my tradition, should serve Ireland brought me home over 30 years ago. I have enjoyed great trust, so I am not intimidated by the thought that conspiracy theories, like empires, strike back.

MARTIN MANSERGH NOT A SPY

Mr. Mansergh implied in his article on 3rd April that members of this Society consider him a spy. He provided no evidence for this because there is none. Neither have we had any need whatever to indulge in conspiracy theories when commenting on what he does and says. Based on what he has written in your paper and in correspondence with us (published and not just 'circulating', as he

states) he has consistently misrepresented the Irish Times Trust, Major McDowell and the role of Elizabeth Bowen in Irish affairs and this is what we have sought to point out. The fact that we now find ourselves in their company, as another object of his misrepresentations, is a rare achievement indeed on his part. *A la Adlai Stevenson*, we offer to stop telling the truth about him if he stops telling lies about us. Yours etc., *Jack Lane*, PRO, *Aubane Historical Society*, Aubane.

Madam, In his column of April 3rd Martin Mansergh attempts to portray Jack Lane and Brendan Clifford of the North Cork Aubane Historical Society as irrational conspiracy theorists. In doing so he refers to an article by Brendan Clifford in the March edition of the Northern Star/Irish Political Review (NS/IPR) in which the Irish Times is described as “the ‘Irish’ newspaper that is acceptable to Downing Street”.

Later in the column which has the title, Why I, m not a spy in spite of all you hear, he describes various Government Ministers and others who have suspected him of working for British intelligence. He concludes by lumping all the ‘conspiracy’ theorists, together.

In all of this Dr Mansergh is misrepresenting articles and arguments that originated in the NS/IPR and avoiding serious engagement with the underlying ideas.

Firstly, as he states, Brendan Clifford and Jack Lane were the first to draw attention (in the NS/IPR) to the significance of a letter, released into the public domain in 2003, from the the British Ambassador, Sir Andrew Gilchrist, to the Irish Times majority shareholder, Major Thomas McDowell, referring to the former Irish Times editor, Douglas Gageby. Major McDowell had previously expressed his concern to the Ambassador in words to the effect that his editor had ‘gone native’. Dr Mansergh is happy to give the Irish Times a clean bill of health on this matter and conveniently sidesteps commenting on the Irish Times Trust that was ‘reformed’ before he started writing for the paper.

But is it reasonable that a newspaper as influential as the Irish Times should escape investigation by an independent third party when its owner is shown to give his allegiance to an outside power? Would any other national institution get such gentle treatment?

Secondly, notwithstanding the heat that is generated in arguments about the extent of Elizabeth Bowen's spying activities

during the war, there is a more important underlying point. Given that she spied for a foreign power against this state, why should she be claimed as an Irish writer? Her novels were a contribution to English literature. That she is still defended by various influential Irish academics, including Dr Mansergh, testifies to a collapse of faith in the national tradition on the part of what might be called the Irish intelligentsia.

Thirdly, Brendan Clifford,s article in the NS/IPR referred to by Dr Mansergh is entitled, The Soul of Fianna Fail. Its central point is that politics and journalism are severely out of joint in that the majority of opinion formers in the Irish media are hostile to Fianna Fail, while Fianna Fail continues to be the largest party. Brendan Clifford is arguing that without news-

papers that side with the main political parties, Irish democracy is degenerating.

None of these points have received an airing through the media, yet they each need to be debated publicly. Dr Mansergh impugns the people who are grappling with them and otherwise, for the most part, ignores them.

Dr Mansergh has every right to defend his reputation through his column. He also deserves credit for the public service he has given through Fianna Fail over two decades. Is it too much to ask that he use his column to deal with important and difficult issues of the day that so far he has only skimmed the surface of?

Yours etc. *David Alvey*, Publisher of *Irish Political Review*, 2 Corrig Road, Dalkey, Co Dublin

‘Irish’ Revisionists And Madrid or, The Last Gentlemen’s War?

The Madrid bombing of 10th March may have knock-on effects in Ireland. The Baghdad government in 1991 was less than impressed by Ireland’s ‘neutrality’ which allowed it to facilitate the US Air Force at Shannon airport. That Government has been blown away in the gale of the world, but the people organising the resistance to the ‘Coalition occupation of the territory appear to be of a similar mind to the former administration. It is clear that soldiers from the minor allies have been deliberately targetted (e. g. Italians and Poles)—the latest batch being San Salvadorans. Shia militia also attacked Spanish soldiers over the Passiointide weekend (to speed them on their way home?) The Shia were supposed to be the community in Iraq which perceived the overthrow of the Ba’ath régime as liberation—their exchanging fire with the occupying troops (including US troops) is genuinely the ‘nightmare scenario’. The year ahead of Bush and Blair may be even worse than they one they have endured since the resounding success of Operation Shock and Awe.)

The Madrid bombing was a strike at one of the most enthusiastic of the minor allies of the US/UK. The bombers almost certainly knew that the Spanish people were deeply out of sympathy with their Government in this matter. They planted the bomb anyway presumably feeling that Spain, in that sense, was a soft target. Ireland’s ‘neutrality’ was even less evident during the latest Gulf War than it was last

time. US military personnel are guarding parts of Shannon airport. Prior to the commencement of hostilities Ireland’s rôle was quite craven. The State had a temporary membership of the Security Council, and facilitated the USA’s war-mongering all along the line. It will be interesting to see if Ireland gets some of the Madrid treatment from whichever agency is behind the export of violence from the actual area in contention. (Which is not just ‘Iraq’ but most of the Middle East, including Israel and Saudi Arabia. And the stone which the US / UK flung into this pool has created waves which have eddied out to the ends of the Arab and of the Muslim worlds—Mr. Ahern and Mr. Cowen have ensured that Ireland will be living in ‘interesting times’.)

There is also what might be called the ideological spin-off of the Madrid bombing. A BBC Radio correspondent immediately after the bombing dismissed the Aznar Government’s assertion that it was the work of ETA. This was on the grounds that “ETA are trained by the IRA and *always* [his emphasis] give warnings”. When discussing the possibility that London might be a target for the bombers, the Chief Constable, Sir Alan Stevens opined that it would be somewhat different from the IRA bombing campaign. The latter always gave warnings of their bombs and deaths were, essentially, collateral damage. He did not use the latter phrase but one along the lines of ‘unforeseen consequence’. It is clear that the Blair

government quickly issued orders that this sort of thing was a form of 'loose talk'. Downing Street seems to feel that the Republican Movement should remain in the exterior darkness, despite (or possible because of?) its valiant attempts to make the Peace Process work.

This sort of thing puts the 'revisionists' in a difficult position. Their stock in trade for the past quarter of a century has been that the IRA is the most brutal, 'ruthless' terrorist organisation on the planet. Its aims are illegitimate, in so far as they are genuine aims and not a cover for mere criminality.

One of the two latter is Ruth Dudley Edwards, who appeared with Danny Morrison on BBC Radio 3's *Night Waves* arts programme on the Friday after the Madrid bombing. The discussion was about what to do with the prison at Long Kesh. It was stated by the BBC that 'Long Kesh' is what Republicans call the Maze Prison. But before it became HMP The Maze, in fact before it became the internment camp (called 'the Lazy Kranch' by the habitués) it was an RAF airfield called: Long Kesh, and the area has been Long Kesh for centuries. HMP The Maze was yet another Thatcherite attempt to hid the real nature of a venue by changing its name, in the manner of Windscale nuclear power station.

Dudley Edwards suggested that the place was a monument at present to the paramilitaries 'on both sides' and should be simply razed to the ground. This is the first time she has even mentioned any group other than the IRA. She has never mentioned Loyalists or Unionists in anything other than a positive way. It was noticeable that she could not bring herself to actually described the paramilitaries on the 'other side' so to speak, as Unionist or Loyalist. When Morrison mentioned Internment, Dudley Edwards disdained to mention the imprisonment of the hundreds of men aged from fifteen to the late sixties and seventies, with no charge, no release date, and no indication of why they were thrown into prison in the first place (one sixteen year old had the same name as a man who was interned in the 1930s!), This is apart from the deeply unpleasant induction into the place (usually a visit to Palace Barracks, Holywood and several days of sustained violence), followed by a stay in the smelly, inadequate, Victorian Crumlin Road prison. Then a journey to sharing a hut with up to fifty other people for an unknown length of time. Is it any

wonder the revisionists do not want to think about what their land of heart's desire, England, can do when it feels it necessary? Have any of them allowed themselves to become involved in a discussion about Bloody Sunday, or the Savile Inquiry? Presumably they would not take Dudley Edwards's view that she approved of internment, though admittedly for 'both sides'. The major problem with interment in 1971 was that 'both sides' were not affected. (There were a few Protestants interned but that was because they were, or were deemed to be,

Republicans). Apart from the sheer injustice of internment, and the violence involved in the round-ups and arrests, the Catholic community was outraged by the fact that, while eminently respectable men and innocent youngsters were tossed into prison, known Protestant paramilitaries were left alone.

The problem Dudley Edwards and the rest of the revisionists have is that in the light of the 9 / 11 and Madrid bombings the behaviour of the IRA appears positively gentlemanly.

Seán McGouran

Ground Rent

Part 10 of review of Das Kapital

INTEREST AND RENT

Most capitalists come up against the problem of whether to buy or rent a particular asset. From the capitalist's point of view this is a financing problem. If he decides to buy a machine, for example, he can finance the purchase from his own resources or by borrowing. The financing costs of the purchase will equal the rate of interest. This is the case even if he makes the expenditure from his own resources because if he had not made the purchase he could have earned interest for himself by putting the money in a bank.

Alternatively, he can decide to rent the asset. There is no difference in substance between renting and buying an asset when the term of the lease is equal to the useful life of the asset. In this instance the "risks and rewards of ownership" have been transferred from the legal owner of the asset (the Lessor) to the user of the asset (the Lessee). Accountants call this type of lease a "Finance Lease" and divide the "rent" into its capital expenditure and interest components. In this instance the Lessor is usually a finance company.

On the other hand if he rents the asset for a period that is shorter than its useful life, then the substance of ownership remains with the Lessor. Accountants call this type of lease an "Operating Lease". If the capitalist finishes using the machine after a short period of time it reverts to the Lessor who must find someone else to rent it.

Ownership and Rent are different ways of obtaining the use of an asset. From the capitalist's point of view the appropriateness of one over the other will depend on

whether the use is long term or short term and whether the use is constant or is only for specific times during the year.

The capitalist's overriding objective is to maximise his rate of profit or to maximise his profit with the minimum of capital outlay. His need to use assets to produce commodities represents a finance problem. To him it doesn't matter whether the asset is a machine, a truck or a factory building, all such assets require an outlay of capital in order to be used.

GROUND RENT

However, Marx was aware that a factory building was different from a machine. A machine is the product of human labour. A factory building on the other hand has two elements. There is the human labour used in constructing the building and then there is the price of land on which the building is located.

The land itself has no human labour expended on it. It has no value but does have a price. It has a price because the owner exerts a monopoly over that small area of the earth's surface. This monopoly enables him to charge rent to tenants who use the land and to sell it to potential purchasers at a price.

In Agriculture the area of land used in production is far more extensive than in Industry. This may give rise to three classes: Agricultural Labourers, the Capitalist class and the Landlord class. The Agricultural Labourer works the land and generates value. Like the factory worker he generates a surplus over and above what he consumes for himself. This surplus is distributed between the Capitalist and the Landlord.

The Capitalist Farmer invests in agricultural plant and machinery plus seeds and fertiliser etc. As with the Industrial capitalist he owns the means of production and this ownership of capital allows him his share of the total social profit. He is no different from any other capitalist in this respect. Like all capitalists he wishes to maximise his rate of profit or return on capital employed. If it is below the average social rate of profit he will reduce his investment until his rate of profit equals the average social rate. On the other hand if it is above the average social rate he will increase his investment. His rate of profit is calculated after deducting the rent from the land or "Ground Rent" paid to the Landlord.

It is important to note that the private ownership of landed property does not create rents. Private ownership of land only allows a portion of the surplus generated by the producer to be expropriated by the landlord.

There are a number of factors which influence the amount of ground rent, but like the rate of interest there is no "natural level". Also, like the rate of interest it cannot be greater than the surplus value generated and since it is not considered to be risky, the rate of profit or the ratio of rent to the price of the land is lower than the average social rate of profit. The price of land is equal to the capitalisation of its rents. There is no scientific law which indicates the relationship between rent and the price of land but given that rent like the rate of interest has less risk, a good guide to the price of land would be the annual rent divided by the rate of interest. So, if the annual rent equals 1,000 Euros and the rate of interest is 5% then the price of the land will be approximately equal to 20,000.

THE GENESIS OF THE CAPITALIST FARMER

Marx agreed with the Physiocrat School of Economics, which believed that: "all production of surplus value, and thus all development of capital, has for its natural basis the productiveness of agricultural labour".

He reasoned that, if the Agricultural Labourer only produced for himself, it would not be possible to feed an urban proletariat. Capitalist production disengages a constantly increasing portion of society from the production of basic foodstuffs, making the agricultural population available for exploitation in other spheres. In other words, the surplus generated by the Agricultural Labourer

enables the urban proletariat to be fed. The increase in the productivity of the Agricultural Labourer enables more food to be produced with less people. This creates a surplus population in the agricultural sphere which makes it possible for the recruitment of the Agricultural Labourer into the ranks of the urban proletariat.

In an earlier stage of development the rent paid to the Landlord was in the form of Labour. The direct producer owned the means of production and could produce his own means of subsistence. For part of his working week he worked on his own land to gain a means of subsistence. For the remainder of the week he worked in another area under the direct supervision of his Landlord or representatives. The labour of the direct producer for himself was separated in time and place from the labour for the Landlord. The property relationship was a direct relationship of Lordship and Servitude.

At a higher level of development the rent is given in the form of "payment in kind" or part of his product is given to the Landlord. The surplus labour is no longer under the direct supervision of his landlord and representatives. Compared to labour rent, the producer has more room for manoeuvre. He might be able to keep some of his surplus product for himself. There exists the possibility for direct producers to exploit other labourers.

A higher form than "rent in kind" is money rent. Under this form the producer must produce a portion of his product in the form of commodities in order to obtain the money in the market-place to pay the rent. The mode of production has changed. It has lost its independence and detachment from the rest of society.

The existence of Money-rent presupposes a considerable development of commerce, commodity production and money circulation. It also assumes market prices are roughly equivalent to values. If the Agricultural Tenant cannot sell his product at a price reflecting his labour, it will not be in the interest of either the Landlord or Tenant for rent in the form of money to be paid.

The existence of Money-rent enables a price to be calculated on the land (capitalised rents). This in turn enables it to be "alienated" or bought and sold in the market place. Agricultural land can now be bought or rented not only by landlords and peasants, but also by the urban population. Money-rent also facilitates a

fixed legal relationship. Such developments allow capital from the cities to be applied to agriculture. Capitalism, because of the drive to increase the rate of profit, applies science to the agricultural sphere. It interposes itself between the Landlord and the tiller of the soil and thereby brings agricultural labour under its sway. The proportion of production that is consumed directly by the producer diminishes and agricultural production becomes orientated towards the production of commodities.

This process is helped by the development of capitalism in the cities which has a tendency to undermine rural handicraft, making available a surplus agricultural population.

In part 4 of this series I looked at the origin of the Industrial Capitalist. In some cases he came from strong tenant farmers who had managed to generate a surplus. These might have been delegated by other farmers to sell their products in the market place. This person might have become a full time Merchant. He might then have developed into determining the production of his suppliers (including small handicraft producers) and finally directly organising their production under one roof in the guise of an Industrialist Capitalist.

On the other hand, such a strong tenant farmer might not have made the transition to Industrial Capitalist, but nevertheless have become a Capitalist Farmer employing farm labourers on the land. He might have used the surplus he had generated himself to borrow more capital for investment in machinery, seeds and fertiliser.

Also, the Landlord and the Capitalist farmer could be the same person. As well as owning the Land the Landlord might invest in machinery, seeds etc and employ Labourers to do the work. Another variation is a system of "*Metayage*" whereby the Landlord part owns the machinery and other working capital and the strong farmer part owns the working capital. In this instance the strong farmer is both a worker and an employer of Labour.

In Southern Ireland during the nineteenth century there was a Landlord class and a rack-rented peasantry. The peasantry was not allowed keep any of the surplus value which it had generated. The Landlords, many of whom were absentee landlords, squandered this surplus in England. Following the 1903 Land Act there was a gradual transfer of ownership from the Landlord class to the peasant

class. The peasantry became absolute owners of the land.

The widespread absolute ownership of land is not conducive to the development of capitalism. The small owner tends to produce for his own needs and requirements. Usually he consumes a high proportion of what he produces. There is no pressure on him to generate income much above a subsistence level because he doesn't have to pay rent. Even if he had the inclination to, he may not have access to capital to invest in machinery, fertiliser etc. The absence of a surplus generated in the countryside made it difficult to develop a native capitalism in the cities. The sons and daughters who didn't inherit the land are forced to emigrate.

Thomas Davitt, the leader of the Irish Land League in the nineteenth century anticipated this problem and called for the "*nationalisation of the land*". What this meant in practice was that instead of the rent going to the landlord it went to the State. The philosophy underpinning the proposal was that Agriculture was too important for the whole nation to be left to the farmers. Although "nationalisation of the land" sounds like a socialist slogan, in fact it might have facilitated a capitalist development in Irish agriculture by replacing inefficient farmers with farmers capable of paying the State rent and generating a surplus on top of that. But Davitt's ideas were set aside when the new landowning class of small farmers became the power in the land.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Interestingly, Engels believed that, in a country with a preponderance of small farmers who depended on land for their livelihood, land prices tended to be high. The sum of the prices of a lot of small parcels of land tended to be greater than the price of the equivalent large area of land. Also, the relationship between the interest rate and land prices did not tend to be the normal capitalist relationship (i.e. the lower the interest rate the higher the price of land). Instead, often high interest rates, reflecting the demand for capital, were accompanied by high land prices. This was because the purchasers also worked on the land. They did not have to pay rent, and investment in agricultural equipment was not large. Instead of rent being paid to the Landlord, interest is paid to the banks. However, over maybe one generation the loans would have been paid back and subsequent generations had no such "financial rent" to pay back.

The effect of this is high agricultural land prices and no penalty imposed for the inefficient use of the land. Therefore there is little mobility in ownership: new entrants can't afford to buy agricultural land and the existing owners can happily sit on their land. In the mid 1980s the Fine Gael/Labour coalition attempted to introduce a land tax, but it didn't have the political will to overcome the opposition of the farmers to this measure even though the opposition was not united. (Dairy farmers in the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association were not opposed to the measure).

In recent years there have been attempts to re-introduce "landlordism". Tax incentives have been given to existing owners to lease their lands to more energetic farmers. But governments since the 1990s have also reduced inheritance taxes, which is not a policy that would encourage land mobility.

Another point that Engels made was that the Landlord class was doomed. Cheap imports from countries such as Argentina would drive down the price of agricultural products which in turn would cause rents to fall.

Cheap agricultural imports have adversely affected agriculture in general not just the Landlord class. But they have reduced the price of the means of subsistence for the urban working class.

While the analysis in *Capital* might have been historically accurate, in the decades after the Second World War industrial productivity had reached such a stage in Western Europe that there was no need to further reduce the agricultural population. Indeed, it was decided by means of the Common Agricultural Policy that the rest of society should subsidise agriculture in order to keep people on the land and also because self sufficiency in food was considered important for the security of Europe.

In countries with a purely capitalist approach to agriculture, such as New Zealand, vast areas remain uncultivated because the rate of profit to be obtained by cultivating them would be below the average social rate.

DIFFERENTIAL RENT

Marx, and Ricardo before him, noticed that the economics of land were different in some respects to capital investments. In most industries there was a tendency for the rate of profit to equalise over time. If

one industry was showing a rate of profit above the average social rate, new capital would be attracted into that industry, resulting in an increase in production. The increased production would cause a fall in prices and a decline in the rate of profit towards the average social rate. The opposite applied in industries with a rate of profit below the average social rate. Also, if a specific business was showing a rate above the average due to new technology, it would be only a matter of time before its competitors would acquire that technology and eliminate the competitive advantage.

This tendency for the rate of profit to equalise does not quite apply in agriculture. As we have seen, if there is a preponderance of small owners, high land prices and the lack of availability of land may prevent the penetration of capital. Even if some landholdings are organised along capitalist lines, the capital investment in agriculture tends to be uneven. If one capitalist farm is making above the average social rate of profit, it may not be possible for an influx of capital into other farms to occur because the land may not be available.

Moreover, some areas of land have natural advantages over other areas of land. Marx gives the example of land which has a waterfall. The waterfall might be harnessed to produce power in a factory. This might require less capital outlay to an equivalent factory which uses steam power. Therefore the natural advantage of being able to use the waterfall will enable a rate of profit to be generated above the average social rate. However, unlike the case where one capitalist has an advantage over another because of better technology, the user of the steam power will not be able to eliminate the competitive advantage of the waterfall as easily. The reason for this is that the owner of the waterfall has a monopoly over that area of the earth's surface which enables a rate of profit to be made which is above the average rate.

If the owner of the waterfall is a landlord who leases his land to a capitalist, the latter will not be unhappy with a rate of profit equal to the average social rate. The landlord is therefore in a position to expropriate the remainder of the profit above the average social rate. Ricardo and Marx called this surplus profit which can be made by landowners "differential rent".

Of course, if the capitalist and the landowner are the same person the capitalist can pocket the "differential rent" for himself.

REASONS FOR DIFFERENTIAL RENT

Areas of land can also have a natural economic advantage over other areas of land because of a more favourable location, more favourable fertility or greater capital investment.

a) *Favourable Location*

An example of land with a more favourable location would be land close to large food markets or close to efficient transport. In the nineteenth century land close to canals would have had a competitive advantage. Marx makes the point that capitalism both eliminates and increases the competitive advantages of location. On the one hand, the system eliminates the advantages of location by revolutionising the means of transport. This makes markets accessible from practically any location. Also developments in refrigeration make it easier for remote locations to have access to markets. On the other hand, the system has a tendency to centralise markets in large urban centres.

b) *Favourable Fertility*

Some land is more fertile than others. Sometimes the differences in fertility can be as a result of natural conditions and sometimes they can be because of the different amounts of labour expended on the soil. The tenant, whether he be a capitalist farmer or a tiller of the soil, might find that all he achieves by working to increase the fertility of the soil is to increase the differential rent for the landlord. This was what happened in the South of Ireland during the nineteenth century. As a result there was no incentive to improve the fertility of the soil. In Ulster because of a strong tenant farmer movement the tenants won the right to retain the benefits of improvements in the soil. Tenants could actually sell the value of the improvements made to the land.

Capitalist farmers also often tried to obtain long term leases so that the landlord could not increase the rent as a result of gains in fertility.

c) *Uneven Capital Investment*

As indicated above not all agricultural production is organised on a capitalist basis therefore not all land is available for capitalist penetration. The areas of land which have been penetrated may be able to generate a rate of profit above the average (i.e. differential rent) in the long term. This differential rate or surplus profit may not be eliminated because of the lack of availability of land.

ABSOLUTE RENT

There are areas of land which have no differential rent. If capital was invested in them the rate of profit would be equal to or below the average social rate. Since these areas do not generate a surplus profit or differential rent, it would be logical to assume that the land has a zero market price. If rents are zero how can the price of the land be anything other than zero?

But the landlord does not lease any land for free. Marx first suggests in Chapter 39 of Volume 3 that the price of uncultivated land equals the price of cultivated land less the costs in making uncultivated land cultivated land. In Chapter 45 he suggests that the absolute rent is equal to the value less the price of products produced on a given area of land. His reasoning is that because agricultural is not as capital-intensive as other industries, its price will be less than its value. However he does not make it clear why the absolute rent has to equal the value less price. I would suggest that there is no connection between the difference of value and price on the one hand and the level of absolute rent on the other. Nor does he make it clear how agriculture products produced on land without a competitive advantage can obtain a higher price in the market place than their prices of production.

One possible explanation for prices in the market place being higher than the prices of production is that all land can command a rent or monopolistic prices above the prices of production because its supply is limited to the earth's surface. Secondly, the land might have uses other than production. For example a landowner might be able to extract a price out of someone who wants to build a house even if the land is in a remote area. Thirdly, the land might be able to support a family and also generate a surplus by being worked on with little or no capital investment.

However, it must be admitted that much of what Marx said in relation to absolute and differential rent has become less relevant in a world of State support for agriculture. However, his theories can be applied to shed light on the economics of the extractive industries and in particular the oil industry.

THE OIL INDUSTRY

The oil industry is such a lucrative industry because the oil which is extracted is limited to a few small areas of the earth surface. Secondly there are vast differences in the costs of extracting the oil between

the different oil producing areas. This enables large "differential rents" or surplus profits to be generated.

The key point about Marx's theory of differential rent or surplus profit (i.e. profit above the average social rate) is that it is the price of production on the poorest or 'least commercial' land that determines the market price.

I'm no expert on the oil industry but apparently Iraq has the potential to produce the cheapest oil in the world. On the other hand it is possible that in parts of the North Sea the costs of production are the most expensive.

Let us assume that the cost of oil in Iraq is 2 Euros per barrel and furthermore that the capital outlay for each barrel of oil produced is 10 Euros. Also assume that the average global rate of profit is 10%. The price of production is therefore equal to the cost plus 10% of the capital outlay which equals 3 Euros (2 Euros plus 10% of 10). Now let's assume that the cost of production in the North Sea is 20 Euros and its capital outlay per barrel is 30 Euros. The price of production of the North Sea oil will then be equal to 23 Euros.

What then will be the world price of Oil? Marx believed that the poorest land—or in this case the North Sea oil—will determine the market price. Otherwise, if the price was any lower than 23 Euros, the capitalists investing in the North Sea would cease production and invest their capital in other spheres of production which will give a rate of profit of 10% or more.

But, if the market price is 23 Euros, while the North Sea capitalists will make a rate of profit of 10%, equal to the average social rate of profit, the investors in Iraq will make a massive 21 Euros per barrel or a rate of profit equal to 1,050%.

Normally, in other industries, if one business is making such enormous profits, there would be a flight of capital towards that business and away from businesses with a lower rate of profit. But this process of equalisation of the rate of profit cannot occur in this instance because the owners of the Iraqi oil wells—whoever they will be—will have a monopoly on that specific land area. Unlike a new production process or a new type of machine which can be made anywhere in the world, the use of land in which there is a special natural resource is restricted to the owners of that land.

John Martin

This is the long-promised second part of the report on the Casement Symposium. Part One appeared in the issue of December 2003.

Casement And The First World War

Brendan Clifford said that Casement's only book published in his lifetime was *The Crime Against Europe*. It dealt with British policy which brought about the First World War. He had looked at a dozen biographies of Casement—most didn't list the *Crime* in their bibliographies, some mentioned it, but did not assess it.

The *Crime* had been reprinted once between 1916 and 2003. That was H.O. Mackie's edition half a century ago. The most substantial biography of Roger Casement, providing the best appreciation of him was Brian Inglis's. The next best was Denis Gwynn's in the early 1930s. These mentioned Casement's position on the War, but did not discuss it—both authors had served in the British Army and both were in sympathy with Casement, though he had sided with the enemy. Other books were grossly inadequate. Adrian Weale made a pathological analysis, regarding Casement as diseased, suffering from anti-English paranoia.

It is significant that these authors found it unnecessary to discuss the position that Casement published at the critical moment—and for which he was best known in his life time.

The Great War was the first *World war* for 100 years—and this made the omission both absurd and understandable. A great State embarking on all-out war sets the framework for thinking. Such a war is a massive undertaking for which the State has to persuade the population of its necessity and build support for across the whole society. The population had to be emotionally engaged with the cause. In the aftermath of such a war it was hard to stand back and assess the matter dispassionately.

Most of Casement's biographers are English, so it was not surprising that they could not engage with his position on the War.

The morality of the War was determined by the needs of the great World State—no other evaluation of the rights and wrongs of the conflict could prevail if the State was to win its objectives, and consolidate its victory as morality.

The speaker remarked that he himself had puzzled over Britain's aims in the War and had come to the same conclusion as Roger Casement. His own position was not that of an Irish nationalist looking to make a case against Britain, nor was Roger Casement's. The speaker had spent a quarter of a century trying to get Northern Ireland political life incorporated into that of Britain, as opposed to the rather bizarre arrangements established after devolution. This was not a position which inclined him to view England as an abominable State—his bias had rather been the reverse. Indeed, he would have been happy to find Britain to be in practice what it was portrayed as in the Remembrance Day celebrations.

In Northern Ireland there was an absolute identification of the Unionist community with World War 1 and the Battle of the Somme—in which the casualties were phenomenal right from the first hour of the first day, perhaps 50,000 in that period. And the Battle lasted 5 months from 1st July 1915 until November. He wondered what possessed human beings to walk into machine-gun fire for weeks on end. Something very powerful had to be motivating them—the comparison with the demons possessed by the gadarene swine came to mind.

So he had worked to find out how the War came about and he found that his conclusion was the same as Casement's, which was written before the War and published in September 1914.

Ordinarily, Mr. Clifford said, he was not impressed by predictions in human affairs or in political science, but it was different in Casement's case. He knew the future because he was mixing with the people in high places whose intention it was to bring about those events, and he knew that no project was beyond their attempting.

Roger Casement started out as an Imperialist and was on the British side in the Boer War—he did not begin with anti-Imperialist prejudices. He was part of the British ruling class—and had an honoured position in it. He knew Britain's intentions

in world affairs and saw the preparations it made for carrying them into effect. He came to the conclusion before 1914 that there was an intention to disable Germany and that it would be put into effect. The British ruling class was an impressive phenomenon—it formed plans and put them into effect. And the practical success of its plans proved that it was 'right'.

Britain had long made plans for continental war. It was instrumental in establishing Belgium in 1830 to give itself a *casus belli* in European wars. It had established the principle that that part of the Continental coastline facing Britain had to be under its influence. And it intervened in Continental affairs using a Balance of Power strategy which maintained British predominance by fomenting disharmony and war among the European States. Belgium gave Britain a 'moral' reason for interventions when required. Britain did not want a 'settlement' of European affairs, which could enable Europe to challenge Britain in its activity around the world.

Though Irish himself, and growing up accepting neutrality, Brendan Clifford said he did not have anti-English prejudices—and he had worked to bring Northern Ireland political structures into those governing the State—yet he had come to the conclusion that Britain had deliberately brought about the 1914 war. It was one thing for an Irishman to come to this view. What was striking was that, Roger Casement, as a member of the British ruling class, had come to that opinion.

As he studied history, he came to understand the magnitude of what Roger Casement had done, in view of his background as part of the English ruling class.

Edmund Burke had put it that for Britain the only legitimate wars were very great wars which enabled the victor to shape the world in the aftermath.

The victor writes the histories—and the structures of the world follow in line and are moulded around the facts established by the victors.

If Britain had won the Great War in the way it expected, the matter of the causes of that war would now be closed as issues of political or moral concern. They would be mere history. Britain had not established a *Remembrance Day* after the Napoleonic War. Britain gained a clear victory and its values were globalised. The country "moved on". The entitlement to rule the world followed the winning of the war. Winning established a moral position. But the 1914 War went astray on Britain in

1918—it could not consolidate its victory morally or militarily.

When the speaker went to London in the 1950s, Remembrance Day was becoming extinct. The Cold War (with its requirement of alliance with West Germany) required a different emphasis. But, since the end of the Cold War, the event had been revived and enhanced. Now there was now escaping the two-minute silence, which was enforced on the Day, not on the Sunday. And those commemorations were a celebration of the War which Roger Casement held to be a Crime against humanity.

Not a single British historian of the mainstream admitted the British role in escalating a continental dispute into a world war. That was one reason why Roger Casement's actual views were passed over. Most of his biographers were British—and the British intelligentsia were still bugged by the War.

He had not seen Angus Wilson's biography, but believed he did not really deal with this touchy area. In 1914 there were four Great States with issues to sort out: Russia was expansionist; France wanted Alsace-Lorraine back; Germany had no territorial demands, but wanted safety against France; Austria, with its Balkan interests, wanted safety against Russia. If Britain had declared neutrality, it could have restricted the scope of the European war. Alsace-Lorraine would have been sorted out and a settlement reached in the Balkans. When Britain engaged, having given Germany to understand it would be neutral, it expanded a European conflict into a world war.

And that was very fairly described by Casement as a Crime Against Europe.

There was some discussion. Kevin Mannerings referred to a 1915 edition of *The Crime Against Europe*, issued by the Continental Times [of Germany] with some amendments. The work was extraordinarily modern. The fact was that there should be a natural alliance of Britain and France. As for Roger Casement's mission to Germany, the War was expected to be over by Christmas 1914. But a German officer disobeyed his orders, the army got bogged down, and the propaganda task then escalated.

A questioner asked Brendan Clifford to sum up what Casement said about World War I. He replied that Casement characterised the war in the way he had outlined. Britain had prepared methodically for World War I, and had waited for an opportunity to enter a European dispute.

The object was world domination. It was already dominating a large section of the world. Unification of Germany meant that it was able to become an economic rival to Britain. Germany itself did not pursue colonial power, so there was no conflict of interest there. Both Connolly and Casement pointed out that part of the secret of German success was that the unified State made social provision for the new working class. Britain itself had become dependent on international trade in order to feed itself, Germany was following that pattern in 1900. The British military arm was the navy: those depending on world trade became vulnerable to British naval power. Roger Casement had an acute understanding of these matters and Connolly saw them too. Britain had to reinforce its pre-dominance because of increasing German power and the United States coming up. Indeed, some of the elite magazines were predicting first war on Germany, and then on the United States. What he had said on Germany was in Roger Casement.

Asked what Britain's motive was in the War and what were British interests in Europe and Germany that was motivating the Liberal group, the speaker said that Germany was consolidating the Ottomans by building a railway. This threatened the British ambition to connect India and Egypt by land. German economic power was also a reason in itself. Freedom of the seas was anathema to Britain, it could not accept a German navy. However, Germany needed a navy as Britain used her sea-power to interfere with the trade of others, e.g. in the Boer War.

A member of the audience said that Casement originally thought it was good to expand, but later became a menace.

Mr. Clifford pointed out that German capitalism was 'socialism' in British eyes, municipal government which sponsored community projects. This made Germany more dangerous as a trade rival, as Britain—the home of liberal economics, which was non-interventionist—could not compete with the socialised system.

Kevin Mannerings said that Casement was furious about the Triple Entente trapping Germany and the role of Grey. He considered Redmond to be a traitor. He organised the Howth gun-running in response to the Unionist importation of arms. He was also concerned with the Persian nationalists and the effects of Imperialism in Egypt and Persia. In 1905 he supported the Russian Revolution as 'pure Bolshevism'.

Brendan Clifford commented that the issue of who would dominate Persia, which had long been a bone of contention between Britain and Russia, was settled by Britain in order to bring Russia into the Triple Entente.

Mr. Mannerings continued that Casement underwent an evolution in his thinking. Early on he had composed a poem to Queen Victoria and supported Britain in the Boer War. The exposure of conditions in the Congo and the treatment of primitive oppressed peoples influenced him. He recommended Angus Mitchell's biography, which was a short book and easy to read. Casement's evolution from Unionist to Nationalist took 5-6 years.

Another member of the audience agreed that Mitchell's book was a great read, but he didn't mention the *Crime Against Europe* or mention the bigger picture or the British dimension or consider Casement's position on the First World War.

Mr. Garton suggested that Alice Stopford Green exerted an enormous influence on Casement.

Brendan Clifford stated that the Empire and Ireland were two different issues. Alice Stopford Green was horrified by Casement's position on the War and even Morell was not happy with it. Roger Casement was not averse in principle to a well-conducted Empire—nor would he be himself, as a world of independent nationalities with no-one interfering with them was not conceivable.

Mr. Mannerings said that when Casement went to the Congo, he encountered slave-raiding by Arabs and cannibalism. He became British consul and tried to enforce an Imperial law and order and promote human rights. By the time the Boer War started, he was still supporting Britain on the grounds that the Boers were infringing the rights of the Black Man. It was Kitchener's Concentration Camps which made him turn away from the British Empire. Angus Mitchell laid stress on the falseness of Casement's mission to Germany.

Mr. Clifford said the British ruling class was denounced in Irish nationalist rhetoric, but it had this quality of seeing through a course once it had determined about it. He quoted a passage he had never come across before from Pat Walsh's new book, *Imperial Ireland*, in which Balfour explains to an American diplomat in 1910 why it would be reasonable for Britain to

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COLLUSION

“The biggest outstanding issue following the Dublin/Monaghan bombings is whether there was collusion, committee chairman Sean Ardagh (FF) said.

“The committee said Judge Barron was entitled to form a view in relation to the issue of the response of the government of the day, albeit strongly challenged by others. ‘There is no doubt things would be done differently today. For example, in modern times much greater emphasis is placed on the needs of victims than might have been the case in the past.’” (Irish Independent, 1.4.2004).

“The Oireachtas committee said it was ‘astonishing’ that better care was not taken of vital documents relating to the Dublin/Monaghan bombings and that there is no full explanation for their disappearance.

“It recommended that an investigation with statutory powers should be set up to probe the missing files.

“The Committee also called for a separate Inquiry to find out why the investigation into the atrocities was wound down in 1974 and why the gardai did not follow up on certain leads.

“The Gardai knew ‘the names of several people whose identities had been recognised with greater or lesser degrees of certainty by witnesses.’

“Among the leads which should have been investigated, it says, was a white van with an English registration plate parked outside the Post & Telegraphs department on Portland Row, Dublin.

“Another was a man who stayed in the Four Courts Hotel, Dublin and his contacts with the UVF, as well as a

British soldier sighted in Dublin at the time of the bombings” (ibid).

“The Committee has not really gone forward at all. It has restated Judge Barron’s findings, and on foot of that is going every which way. Above all, it wants to shift the onus onto Britain. It makes little sense, and is an affront to parliamentary procedures in respect of another jurisdiction, to be directly arguing for an inquiry into security collusion with loyalist paramilitaries by the British.” (Bruce Arnold, Irish Independent, 3.4.2004).

“These demands, if implemented, could take years to come to any kind of closure. And the unsatisfactory nature of it is already evident in the British reluctance to comply with the demands made by Judge Barron. They are even less likely to take an initiative in Britain to investigate the Dublin and Monaghan bombings... What is proposed will not actually end human suffering and loss. It will extend indefinitely.

For Blair: “...terrorism has become his primary concern. In addition to this being directed at Anglo-American relations, the war on al-Qaeda and in Iraq, and the new defences required at home, it has also changed his view about the security forces. He does not want their activities laid bare in a succession of public investigations. This applies also to the Dublin and Monaghan bombings, only more so. And the pressure to act is easier to resist” (ibid).

“The members of the ‘security axis’ [Cosgrave and Donegan of Fine Gael, Tully and Cruise-O’Brien, Labour] were neither inexperienced nor stupid. I don’t think they showed ‘little interest’; I think they reached a decision to play

the whole matter down” (Justin Keating, Labour cabinet minister in the 1974 government, on that administration’s attitude to the Dublin/Monaghan bombings, Irish Times, 3.4.2004).

BRITISH SECURITY INFILTRATE GARDAI
Individual Garda officers acted as paid agents for British intelligence during the Troubles, a new book claims.

The book, *Stakeknife*, is written by former British agent, Martin Ingram and journalist Greg Harkin.

The book claims that British intelligence regularly crossed the Border into the Republic—and recruited agents within *An Garda Siochana*.

“Several members of the Garda Siochana worked for the British intelligence community over many years and each of them provided valuable information,” it says.

“Despite what the politicians said publicly, on-the-ground co-operation between the security forces of both sides was virtually non-existent.

“The only source of information for the British on Southern activity was that supplied by agents.”

The book even claims that one senior Garda officer became a valuable agent for the British.

“Because of his rank and position he was able to provide detailed information about on run IRA members, as well as activists based in the Republic”, the book states.

“His motivation was simple—he was anti-IRA, and didn’t feel his side were doing enough.

“The money helped too; a Garda salary was nothing to write home about and a few hundred pounds sterling every month helped this officer take his family abroad on foreign holidays and change his car when he needed to”.

further its interests by making war on Germany.

This showed how the British ruling class thought of things and how it could go to war purposefully. This had been its mentality until 1914, but not afterwards, because things had been so badly bungled in 1914.

Casement himself was Liberal by orientation, but it was the Tories that had the pragmatic ruling position. As a result of the Boer War and the subsequent grant of self-government, S. Africa became the most imperialistic part of the Empire (as is explained in Pat Walsh’s book).

When Casement became a Liberal it was as a Gladstonian. It was the smart Liberal Imperialists who subverted the British Empire with their new approach. He himself had an amoral position, and could see that there might be a role for an Imperial power.

Jack Moylett, the Chairman, commented that the *Crime Against Europe* was a brilliant work. It was a truth which affected his whole future. He conveyed Casement’s words setting out his position. Britain was attempting to do to Germany the same as it had done to Ireland, to subvert its

development—and, as an Irishman, Casement burnt his boats. The choice was to go to wall on an issue of principle or become English himself. He nearly became Imperial, but found he was “*the incorrigible Irishman*”. Edward VII had a big hand in the First World War. In the period leading up to the war he travelled to Europe, seeing various statesmen and the Pope. The Orangemen made a fuss when he went to see Leo XIII, but it was part of the preparation. He also cemented the alliance with France, the *Entente Cordiale*, in 1903. The war was long in preparation.

Angela Clifford

COP-OUT continued

did their predecessors of 1974, to those of you who voted against a Public Inquiry, you're a disgrace."

"These politicians had a chance to succeed where their predecessors had abysmally failed. They had the chance to right a dreadful wrong. Unfortunately, our present day politicians couldn't find the moral or legal courage to distinguish themselves from the wretched behaviour of their colleagues of days gone by," the statement said (Irish Times, 1.4.2004).

"The relatives said the decision was irrational, unreasonable, procedurally improper, unjust and perverse. It is left to us to continue our quest for something that cannot be compromised—the truth. If we have to do that via the courts, then so be it," the statement said.

"It also stated there was not the political will to do the right thing in the State, which remained subservient to the British" (ibid.).

"The Oireachtas Joint Committee has passed the problem created by the Barron Report smartly out of the jurisdiction (or perhaps not so smartly) and to the authorities in Britain and Northern Ireland." (Maurice Hayes, Irish Independent, 1.4.2004).

JUSTICE GROUP

The Justice for the Forgotten Group, representing the relatives, said the recommendations represented "progress" towards finding the truth of what had happened in the "mass murders".

But they expressed their disappointment that a full Public Inquiry into the atrocities was not recommended.

"If the British Government does refuse to co-operate then we must be told what action the Irish Government intends to take," stated Mr. Greg O'Neill, the Group's solicitor.

"Will the British Government be given a veto over the rights of the people of Ireland and over Irish Government action in its own territory? Will the Taoiseach stand side by side with the British prime minister and denounce terrorism while Britain refused to have its actions in Ireland investigated?"

Mr. O'Neill, insisted that if the Commission of Inquiry into the Gardai's investigation into the attacks and the subsequent loss of numerous files relating to their investigation was to be successful then the new *Commissions of Inquiry Bill* must be adopted as soon as possible.

"This bill is still not the law of the land. If the families are to be persuaded that this process of inquiry reaches international human right's standards, then this Bill must be enacted without delay."

The Commissions would have similar powers to a Tribunal of Inquiry but, to minimise cost, they would conduct their work mostly in private.

Chairperson of Justice for the Forgotten, Bernie McNally said: "*On behalf of the families I would like to say we will accept the Tribunal of Enquiry into the Garda investigation and missing files*". Details of such Enquiry must be announced before April 27, 2004, she said.

Ms. McNally added that the families will reserve their position in relation to the collusion allegations.

Mr. Greg O'Neill, solicitor for Justice for the Forgotten said that if there was not an announcement before the inquest opened on 27 April 2004, the Taoiseach could end up being subpoenaed to appear before the City Coroner, Brian Farrell, to explain the Government's position.

The families said that Tony Blair cannot pontificate about the war on terror at the same time as it is abundantly clear that British state agencies were involved in terrorist acts in Ireland.

The Taoiseach has also been told his Government must bluntly tell British Prime Minister Tony Blair that a full Public Investigation should be held into the atrocities. The Sub Committee said this was the preferred way forward.

"As for the demand that the Taoiseach bring the search for truth to Downing Street, if Tony Blair responded with a whole heart, in my belief he would end up proving that Britain is a state which concealed its own state terrorism. In the middle of his 'war against terror' I think this outcome a mite unlikely."
(Justin Keating, Labour Party Minister for Industry and Commerce (1974), Irish Times, 3.4.2004).

The Taoiseach's special relationship with Blair will work wonders, indeed. The Northern Secretary Murphy, along with his predecessors Reid and Mandelson refused to visit Dublin and give evidence before the Committee. Murphy has stated that "*information has been provided in the fullest possible manner*". In "*these days of London/Dublin cordiality*" all will be right on the day. And then the Government have the ultimate trump card: the European Court of Human Rights!

The Human Rights Act is not retrospective and governments, whether intelligence or security interests are concerned, are not easily shamed into compliance.

An appeal to the European Court would take years!

COMMITTEE FINDINGS:
—High probability of British collusion in bomb attacks;
—Government should push for public inquiry in Britain on collusion;
—Government should go to European Court if necessary;
—Private investigation by a judge should precede such an inquiry; Inquiry needed to examine winding down of Garda investigation;
—Inquiry needed to examine loss of Garda security files on bombings;
—Committee findings should be endorsed by Irish and British parliament.

"For a number of weeks, there was much speculation that the Committee would fall short of calling for a full Judicial Inquiry.

"Technically, that is the case... Politically, the recommendation seems to be astute and realistic. As the Committee points out, those who carried out the bombings came from the North; and the information and documentation that may touch on collusion is in the North and Britain." (Irish Examiner, 1.4.2004).

What is envisaged is an investigation that exactly replicates the model under which Judge Peter Cory operated, based on the Weston Park proposals which provided for investigation into deaths in which official collusion was suspected.

"The committee has taken the easy option, absolving Irish Governments from primary responsibility and publicly proposing a bilateral solution without consulting the British Government." (Irish Times editorial, 1.4.2004).



LABOUR

Comment

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Dail Cop-Out!

AHERN Pledges EU Security Plan To Fight Terror was the headline in the *Irish Examiner* (18.3.2004):

“Taoiseach Bertie Ahern told US President George W. Bush yesterday he will bring a package of security measures to European leaders tomorrow, designed to prevent future terrorist attacks like last week’s bombings in Madrid” (ibid).

Bertie Ahern has strutted across the world, in his country’s role as European President, mouthing about how he is going to tackle terrorism. Yet, in the week before the Madrid bombing, he worked might and main in an endeavour to prevent a sworn Public Inquiry into the worst massacre in the history of the state: A singular act of moral and political cowardice almost without precedence in any democratic state.

And why? Because the real perpetrators of the crime are his nearest neighbour, Britain, who are themselves leading a world crusade against so-called terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan.

That was not Britain’s first terrorist incursion into a neighbouring democracy. There had been a major interference in December, 1972, to force the introduction of the amended *Offences Against The State Act*, causing the deaths of Irish citizens. And it was never brought to book, again through political cowardice.

If nothing else, Ahern’s behaviour highlights one thing: the current invasion of Iraq is most certainly not about a war on terror! How could it be—when it is jointly lead by a state which specialises in terror itself!

A Public Tribunal of Inquiry into the Dublin and Monaghan bombings should be held in Northern Ireland or Britain, the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice has recommended.

The Committee called for British authorities to appoint a senior international judge to investigate allegations of state collusion with the loyalist bombers who killed 33 people in 1974.

If the British Government does not cooperate with the setting up of an Inquiry, then the Government should initiate proceedings against it in the European Court of Human Rights: that is the recommendation.

The Committee also said that the judge conducting the investigation into the atrocities should have the power to recommend a Public Inquiry in either Britain or Ireland if he sees fit.

It recommended that the British/Northern Ireland Inquiry must have the power to call witnesses for interview, to study documents and to inspect premises.

The Committee also called for the setting up of two separate internal Inquiries relating to the murders: One, to inquire into the original Garda investigation and why certain leads were not followed up, while a second Inquiry should look at how relevant files went missing from the

Department of Justice.

This has followed an examination of the issues raised by the Report into the bombings by Mr. Justice Barron in December, 2003.

But the all-party Justice Committee has not come out in favour of a Public Inquiry here, as has been sought by relatives of the 33 victims of the bombings on Friday, May 17, 1974.

Committee chairman, Mr. Sean Ardagh, (FF), believed such a request to Britain to hold the Inquiry would be accepted because of the co-operative spirit of the peace process.

The Committee has concurred with the broad Barron conclusion that: “*The probability of collusion is exceptionally high*”.

One committee member, Independent TD Finian McGrath, wanted a Tribunal of Inquiry in the Republic, the remainder support the view expressed by Chairman Sean Ardagh that an Inquiry should take place in the UK “because the perpetrators, information and witnesses are outside this jurisdiction”.

The Dail will debate the report in the coming weeks, after which the Cabinet will make decisions and recommendations.

THE FAMILIES

A statement on behalf of the O’Neill, O’Brien, Sunderland and Bergin families read:

“This horrendous process deserves a slap on the back and a thank you from British Prime Minister Tony Blair, his cohorts in the British security services and their friends in the UVF.

“It’s a job well done by a group of politicians in 2004 that are equally failing in their responsibilities to us as

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