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## Fianna Fáil and Sinn Féin

Is Sinn Féin set to assume the leadership of Irish Republicanism following Fianna Fáil's disastrous General Election and inept handling of the Presidential campaign? Martin McGuinness's entry into the Presidential race is a bold move suggesting that even in the new era of peace and reconciliation Sinn Féin is prepared to defend its record of support for the armed struggle.

The contrast with Fianna Fáil could not be more stark. That party has accepted the media's view that it is a "toxic brand". Its leader refused to stand a candidate and, worse still, solicited a chat show host to "sort of" represent it. After a few days preening himself Gay Byrne decided it would be too much trouble: a humiliating rejection for a once great party.

The cause of Fianna Fáil's collapse did not begin with the Presidential election; or the last General Election; or even when the IMF/EU was called in. Its provenance can be traced to events, which long preceded that date. The character of a political party—no more than a person—is not revealed by the mere fact of experiencing a crisis, but by how it deals with it.

Although some of its leaders such as Martin, Lenihan and Cowen showed some fight before the last General Election, their voices were disembodied because the most successful democratic political party in Europe had lost its self-belief. That is the only conclusion that can be drawn from the Party's electoral collapse.

It could be said, and has been said in this magazine, that the media was biased against Fianna Fáil and indeed against the State itself. But the Redmondite *Independent* Group and pro British *Irish Times* have almost always been anti-Fianna Fáil. What changed is that Fianna Fáil itself disowned its own history, accepting without demur its rewriting by others.

There was a time that Fianna Fáil had its own media. However, the moral collapse of the *Irish Press* long preceded its burial in 1995.

The event which caused the long-term decline of Fianna Fáil was also the largest scandal in the history of the State because it struck at the heart of the very existence of the State and how it viewed itself.

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## Germany— *the problem/solution!*

Helmut Kohl caused a stir recently with a criticism of Germany's foreign policy under Merkel. "Former German chancellor Helmut Kohl has launched a stinging attack on his political successors, warning that Berlin's "erratic" foreign policy risked breaking up the EU." He went on:

"We have to be careful that we don't gamble everything away. We have to return, urgently, to our old reliability," said Dr Kohl, warning that Germany was in danger of abandoning the core pillars of post-war foreign policy" (*Irish Times*, 25 August).

Kohl must surely know that the main pillar of post-War politics is long gone—the Cold War. There was some logic to an alliance between Europe and the US in this conflict. But we have long since had a 'new world order' that is, to put it mildly, "erratic" and in which all accepted norms of international behaviour have been abandoned. The latest being the adventure in Libya. It has become an erratic world. He seems oblivious to this new reality. He goes on:

"Beyond Europe, the former CDU chancellor said Germany was losing sight

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## Cenotaph

One John A Sibbald of Edinburgh, writing in *The Times* (of London) in December 2010 declared that it hardly seemed credible that a second-year history student at Cambridge could be unaware of the significance of the Cenotaph in London's Whitehall.

I decided to begin at the beginning, as the King said to the White Rabbit, in the *Adventures Of Alice In Wonderland*. So I consulted an *Oxford Dictionary*, which

advised me that a Cenotaph was an empty grave.

Further inquiries established that Whitehall's Cenotaph was unveiled by King George V on 11th November 1920, purportedly to honour those of his Forces killed in the Great War, on the second anniversary of the 1918 Armistice.

On the same 11th November 1920 the mortal remains of an Unknown Warrior of His Majesty's Forces, killed in the Great War, were interred with great pomp, in His Majesty's presence, in Westminster Abbey.

And, on the same 11th November 1920 the *Better Government of Ireland Bill* had its Third (and Final) Reading in the House of Commons in Westminster. On 23rd December 1920 His Majesty Graciously gave his Assent to the Bill, which partitioned Ireland and became (British) Law.

However the Bill did not have the Assent of the Irish people, nor did any Member of Parliament for an Irish constituency vote for it. Three quarters of the Irish Members returned in the General Election of December 1918, had, in accordance with their mandate, Boycotted

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*Labour Comment*, edited by **Pat Maloney:**  
A Model Democracy?  
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### Next month:

Niall Meehan - Reply To Jeffrey Dudgeon  
 Desmond Fennell - It's Not Sufficient To Be Sour

Westminster, and those of them not in His Majesty's Prisons established a separate Sovereign, Republican Parliament, Dail Eireann, in Dublin. In September 1919 His Majesty's Government declared Dail Eireann, amongst many Irish bodies, an illegal Assembly.

Great numbers of volunteers to His Majesty's Forces from 1914 to 1918 had been persuaded by the politicians that their service was to establish justice and freedom. Scores of thousands of Irishmen had joined on the understanding that Home Rule, on the Statute Book since 1914, would be implemented at the end of the War.

One week before the 1918 Armistice, the Allied Powers led by Britain and France, had endorsed the declared War Aim of their Associated Power, the United States of America, "*the self-determination of nations*".

The following day the pro-Home Rule Irish Nationalist Party, led by John Dillon, had proposed in the Commons that this principle be applied to Ireland. The motion

was heavily defeated. Dillon's party lost all but six of its Irish seats to Sinn Féin in the General Election the following month.

Lewis Carroll could not have invented a more wondrous world than that of Britain's rulers.

Is it too fanciful to imagine that the Unknown Warrior buried in Westminster Abbey was a decent man, perhaps even an Irish Home Ruler, spinning in his grave at the cynicism of politicians and that the Cenotaph in Whitehall, far from being an empty grave, is stuffed with the dishonoured promises which led generations of decent men to untimely death?

**Donal Kennedy**

## Germany *continued*

of its strategic relationship with the US, evidenced by abstaining from a UN Security Council resolution against Libya" (ibid.).

So Merkel and Germany should have joined in the Libya adventure and this

would show they were therefore dependable and not "*erratic*"! This is putting logic on its head. Apart from anything else, the Libya adventure was not initiated by America—it was done by France closely followed by Britain. This was Europe being erratic—not the US. Kohl is living in some sort of time warp if he believes otherwise. It is to Germany's great credit that it has been reluctant to go along with this and some other adventures against further groups of fuzzy wuzzies.

Kohl is the 'good German' and the "*dependability*" he talks about is doing what he is told by the Anglo Saxon world. That day is over. The good Germans always believed the Anglo Saxons, behaved themselves, paid their bills, and accepted the structures set up to contain and guide them which in the post-War world were—the Cold War, the EU institutions, the sanctity of the UN, their social model, the Euro, etc. These are gone and, where not completely gone, they are transformed into hulks and burdens.

In the case of the Euro problem there is a clamour for German leadership and the *Irish Times* is to the fore. It joined in Kohl's criticism of Merkel and editorialised about—"in particular her (Merkel's) failure from the outset to offer clear and decisive leadership on the euro financial crisis" (26 August). The paper's Economics Editor, Dan O'Brien, follows up with an item headlined "*Assertive Germany now vital if euro debacle to be resolved*" (27 August).

Shorn of all the rhetoric this means quite simply—you pay up as before and be happy about it.

Germany would no doubt pay and is able to pay as before if there was something worthwhile to buy. But the product called 'Europe' seems more and more a pig in a poke. And, if Kohl is to be the guru, it means more Libyas, Iraqs, and Afghanistans. No wonder all sensible Germans are hesitant.

These calls for German leadership that echo everywhere today are actually calls for Germany to do the very opposite—do as we tell you and be quick about it.

If Germany gave leadership and set about setting up a fiscal union which everyone wants, apparently, it would mean a German Minister of Finance deciding on our income tax, corporation tax, property tax, VAT, septic tank charges, water charges, etc., etc. How soon would it be before we heard squeals about German

aggression—to put it mildly? The Germans hate the thought of doing anything like this and so does everyone else but all must say it should be done.

The problem is that Germany can't win in the eyes of the Anglo-Saxons—who have made that the increasingly Irish view as well. But more significantly many Germans have convinced themselves that they can't win either, no matter what they do.

That has been the problem since they first appeared as a united Germany at the end of the 19th century, when Germany began "*to take its place among the nations of the earth*". The "*land of poets and dreamers*" could no longer maintain itself like that. Nation states were now the order of the day. It had to do as everyone else.

But this was soon labelled a threat to the world by Britain. Dan O'Brien introduces his *Irish Times* piece on Germany as follows:

"What does Germany want? The German question has rarely been anything other than a central strategic concern for Europe since that state's founding in the 19th century upset the Continent's balance of power" (ibid.).

German unity only upset the Balance of Power from Britain's point of view. It was a new strong power in Europe therefore Britain had to decide on a new 'divide and rule' strategy, which is only another name for the Balance of Power, but the latter sounds so much more benign. Germany wanted to 'have a place in the sun', along with everyone else, but that was deemed a threat to Britain. 'Europe' did not enter the question.

O'Brien then goes to recite the usual stereotypes:

"German aggression in the 1914-45 period caused distrust and suspicions which linger to this day... But time only partially dimmed suspicions. In the late 1980s when the prospect of reunification arose, fears quickly resurfaced. And this despite almost a half century of peace in Europe and studied German unassertiveness over that period... There is nothing inherently aggressive and dominating about Germany or in the German people. To say so is as stupid as saying, for instance, that the Irish have always been and will always be feckless drunks... But such restraint in the post-war decades could be attributed to tactical manoeuvring, in an effort to seek rehabilitation, rather than a deeper underlying change. Some feared that once enough time had passed, Germany would revert to type."

*continued on page 4*

## What About The Boundary Commission?

The report on the talk on *the Treaty and the Party Structure* from Jack Lane (*Irish Political Review*, September) makes fascinating reading.

A question arises regarding one section of the talk. Lane is reported to have commented that Collins was convinced by Lloyd George during the negotiations that "*the Boundary Commission would not work*". What exactly is meant by this?

Collins was more obsessed with the question of the North and partition than any other nationalist/republican leader of the time. It could not but have entered more into his calculations.

What was afoot, during the Treaty negotiations, regarding the Boundary Commission, on the part of Michael Collins and Lloyd George?

Tim O'Sullivan

## Reply

Tim has a valid query on the way this point about the Boundary Commission was reported.

For Lloyd George the Boundary Commission was a tactical matter. Originally it was something to get him out of a tight spot with the Unionist Party whereby he got Griffith to agree with the proposal privately and sign a document saying so. Then he later used this agreement to discredit Griffith when the latter tried to make Ulster and Partition a breaking issue in the negotiations. Lloyd George claimed he had already accepted Partition in accepting the Boundary Commission and this was sacrosanct and Griffith was going back on his word.

After Collins failed to show at the next Downing St. meeting following the Dublin Cabinet meeting of 3rd December 1921, Lloyd George now saw there was a real split within the delegation and between it and Dublin. He jumped at the opportunity to develop this and did so by meeting Collins on his own the morning after and made big play of how the final implementation of the Boundary Commission would inevitably make Partition unworkable as large areas would secede from the 6 Counties.

Whether Collins believed this or wanted to believe it is impossible to know. He had a way of having people seemingly convince him of doing what he had wanted to do anyway. One can only go by what he did then and later, not by what he said or wrote or believed or convinced himself to believe.

Lloyd George made the Boundary Commission a very significant issue with Griffith and had made it of little significance when dealing with Collins. Both strategies worked on the day—in this case, the same day.

It is true, as Tim says that Collins was obsessed with the North in a way De Valera, for example, was not. The latter was obsessed with political independence and did not mind what form it took as long as it was independence. The North's inclusion was an aspiration for him and External Association left possibilities open in that regard.

Collins tried to get the North included by waging war on it, in conjunction with the Republicans in the Four Courts. As he got new guns from Whitehall to create a mercenary army to destroy the Republicans, he gave the old ones to the Republicans for the war on the North. This obviously distracted from the reality of the preparations being made to destroy the Republicans in accordance with the 'Treaty'. Whether this was deliberate on his part or not is again impossible to know and he may not have realised it himself.

It was a crazy policy as it assumed the British were fools or could be fooled on such an important matter. A war on the North was war on the UK! Collins tried to have it every which way. The British bided their time until the new mercenary army was functional and the Free State had got a fig leaf of legitimacy in the June 1922 election and then picked the issue of the Four Courts as the excuse to launch a war before the new Dail had even met.

The excuse was that they had killed Sir Henry Wilson and Collins, the perpetrator of it, was ordered to attack them for what *he* had done! No wonder he later went on a pub crawl in West Cork and behaved suicidally when a few shots were fired at his convoy by the remnant of a dispersing ambushing party.

Jack Lane

And the "type" was spelt out clearly by the Editor of Ireland's largest selling paper a few days later, in a piece headed: "Why Merkel needs to remember the war. If things continue the way they are, Germany could once again find itself an outcast, writes Aengus Fanning" (Sunday Independent, 28 August). He concludes:

"I, ever the realist, once asked arch rationalist Conor Cruise O'Brien what would have happened if the war had gone differently and we had been colonised by the Germans. And Conor Cruise O'Brien said that if we had been colonised by the Germans, we'd all be dead. And you know, they could do it yet."

And yet he is critical of Germany for not sorting out the Euro crisis and saving us all from disaster! But who would want to be saved by a country that might wipe us all out?

All this nonsense about Germany is the outcome of the British propaganda that justified the two attempts to destroy it as it was seen as a threat to their Empire. As the Irish media mind in continuing to empty itself of all critical faculties, it is filling its collective head with this cast-off rubbish.

The logic of the case against Germany has always reminded me of Spenser's case against the Ireland he encountered in the 16th century. Here is this place with a people that are different from us. Very different, and the more closely they are examined, as he did with the Irish, the more different they appear. That in itself makes them a problem to be sorted out and made like us—or else! There is no room for both of us in this world. There can't be. If they don't acquiesce—then they are a threat and must be countered. They react against these efforts to make them something they are not and thereby confirm that they are an even bigger threat than they already seemed and are labelled aggressive, war-like, etc. And any abilities they have are to be deemed perversions, which help to maintain themselves as they are. Then there is a wonderful circular consistency established that escalates this to war and worse.

The Germans are damned if they don't save the Euro and they will be damned if they do, because of what they would have to do to save it. They are the problem and the solution all in one. That is where the Anglo Saxon view of Germany has got us today—into meaningless absurdities of caricatures and idiocy.

**Jack Lane**

## Two Obituaries

### SIR OLIVER'S ORIGINAL SIN

When (Sir) Oliver Napier died 'tributes', as ever "flooded in". He was a political giant who had held the pass for non-, or anti-sectarian, decency in the face of (essentially, but it was unspoken, Sinn Féin and the DUP) extremism. Napier, the son of a solicitor, became one himself, a very competent and successful one, apparently. His first venture into politics was the Ulster Liberal Party. The ULP was re-founded in 1956 by the Rev. Albert McElroy, the Glasgow-born Minister to the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church in Newtownards. (What they don't subscribe to is the doctrine of the Trinity; Newtownards is in northern County Down.)

Oliver Napier, along with an 'O'Neillite' Unionist Bob Cooper, who died in 2004, and who was boss of the Fair Employment Agency (then Commission, until all similar bodies were subsumed into the Human Rights Commission), founded in early 1969 the New Ulster Movement. Éamonn McCann referred to them as 'NUMskulls', but they saw the need for something of a new departure in—essentially unionist—politics. The Ulster Liberal Party chucked Napier out. The 'unionist party for Taigs', Alliance, was set up in mid-1970, at roughly the same time as the SDLP (Social Democratic (or 'semi-detached' as the Peoples' Democracy put it—they largely living in fully-detached residences) and Labour Party. The 'Labour' element was there at Gerry (Lord) Fitt's insistence. It is alleged that Fitt was asked to join the other new Party, but refused because it wasn't 'socialist'. It is useless detailing the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland's history.

Oliver Napier and the others who set up the Alliance Party were probably acting in good faith. But Napier's own original sin was leaving (that is what it was, in effect) the ULP, and his vigorous and largely successful attempt to destroy the Liberals. The ULP was treated as part of the overall Liberal Party in the UK state. The Party was a federation, the ULP fitted in quite well with the party organisation.

It was hardly Napier's fault that he could not foresee the Liberals increasing their representation in the UK Parliament in the course of the decades since 1970. But connection with even the (very) small third party might have given the Conservatives and Labour food for thought. In 1970 the membership of the NILP (Northern Ireland Labour Party) turned down the offer to become a region of the Labour Party. The 'wee-Ulsterism' of Napier and the other founders of the Party

was not unique to them. According to the internet, Labour is now organised in Northern Ireland—it isn't—people have membership cards and are allowed to do everything except what modern mass political parties are about, which is standing for election to public bodies. Some Alliance members have Liberal Democrat party cards. The Party sometimes claims that the LibDem General Election Manifesto is theirs too, rather gingerly, because apart from the many North Down lefties, the NILP has more or less collapsed into Alliance. Alliance now owns bits of NILP property.

### DUNSEITH—EVERYMAN?

Another recent death was David Dunseith. He was a former policeman, and Editor of the RUC's *Police Gazette*, who in his mid-thirties 'jumped-ship' from the RUC to UTV (Ulster Television). The 'obits' claim he was an "incisive" interviewer. One of his very first interviews was with his former boss, Sir Arthur Young, the RUC's first "Chief Constable", prior to that they had used the old RIC title Inspector General. James Callaghan, UK Home Secretary, introduced this change saying 'Inspector-General' was grandiloquent. He was probably worried about the implications of the 'General' element. Young knew that he had lost a very useful operative and was cool to the point of being cold and made rather sharp remarks about needing open-minded people in his organisation.

Dunseith really came into his own as a radio presenter. He took over the fronting of BBC Radio Ulster's *Talkback* midday programme in the mid-1980s. Prior to that it was the 'tabloid of the air' and was fronted by Barry Cowen. He was very decidedly 'a journalist'. Trying for instance to trap Gerry Adams with a well-placed question. Gerry saw it coming a mile-off.

Whether it was his decision or not, Dunseith turned the slot into a genuine magazine of the air. His attitude seemed to be that everyone had a tale to tell, and his job was to allow the tales to be told as clearly as possible. He had 'Ulster Nationalists', Gay Liberationists, Free Presbyterians, Scottish Socialists, and anybody else who had something interesting to say, on *Talkback*. And he treated them all with the same, slightly puzzled, goodwill.

It was the latter—*Everyman*—element that probably struck a chord with the audience. We tended to feel he was one of us rather than a 'broadcaster' talking down to us. Which is why he fronted the programme for two decades. All of his stand-ins tended to be po-faced broadcasters or to make attempts to emulate Dunseith, which was quite impossible.

**Wilson John Haire**



## English Thieves And Dublin Castle

Among several tourist attractions in the South to be allocated State money is a grant of 2.7m euros to the Book of Kells exhibition in Trinity College. Recently I decided, at last, to be a tourist in Dublin. First stop was Trinity. There was a charge of 10 euros to see the famous book. Or rather a couple of pages from it. I found this somewhat irritating. It wasn't the money as such, but the fact that it was being charged by one of the most well off institutions in the country. Furthermore it was being charged to see a national treasure stolen by its current owners. In the guides and signs visitors are told that the Book of Kells was given to Trinity, an Elizabethan and Protestant University, by the Bishop of Meath, the diocese containing Kells. The Catholic Bishop of Meath was the custodian of the Book. He was supplanted by a Protestant Bishop courtesy of the English military; and it was this latter Bishop who "gave" the Book to Trinity.

I then stopped off at the Cathedrals of Christchurch and St. Patrick's and also charged an entrance fee. They were also confiscated by the English for Protestantism—hence the Catholics in Dublin only have a Pro-Cathedral—*pro-temp*s! Christchurch was not really England in your face. No military regalia. There were a number of memorial plaques to English Colonels and Generals. But, taking a tip from some Belfast Loyalists who read the *Irish News* for the pleasure of reading the Family Notices (deaths), I could celebrate the gruesome parting of English officers marauding around a world where liberty and lives were their targets.

St. Patrick's Cathedral, around the corner, was another matter. The place was festooned with Union Jacks (aka the Butcher's Apron) and Regimental Flags that belonged to units of the British military as they stalked the world (including Ireland), conquering, raping, killing and looting, which has been the main pastime of the English for hundreds of years. By contrast, the excellent National Museum at Collins' Barracks, and its other sites around the town, do not charge. My visits to these places will be covered in another issue of the *Irish Political Review*.

Probably the highlight of this tour was Dublin Castle, the seat of English rule for

so many centuries. There was a charge here, but it was for a guided tour. One of the first rooms visited was the one where the Queen of England recently gave a speech. The guide talked about how well it all went. I thought "here we go". I couldn't have been more wrong. We were told to look through the front door and see what first caught our eye. It was paintings of Queen Victoria (aka the Famine Queen) and her husband, Prince Albert, hanging on the far wall. These had replaced a couple of innocuous paintings just before herself arrived and were to be removed in a few days and the old paintings returned to their rightful place.

We were then taken to a room containing the portraits of all the past Viceroys. The guide dwelt on two. The first was James Hamilton Gordon who in 1915 warned the British Government that it had better make some serious concessions to the Irish or there would be serious bloodshed. He was immediately replaced. The other one was Lord Cornwallis. His slaughter of rebels and suspected rebels before during and after the rebellions of 1798 were vividly described, including the stench of corpses in the Castle yard and elsewhere in Dublin. An American tourist suggested that Cornwallis was "making up" for the humiliating defeat he suffered at the hands of the American revolutionaries a few years previously. The guide said he'd taken the words out of his mouth.

We were shown a room with magnificent paintings on the ceiling by an Italian commissioned to do the work. These were explained as typical uses by the English of propaganda through art. One showed St. Patrick converting the pagans with a group of Druids cowering in the background. But we were told that it was not St. Patrick who brought Christianity to Ireland, but another man sent from Rome some 80 years before. This man, Palladius, did not hammer the Druids but brought about a fusion of traditional religion and Christianity which characterized the Irish Church for many centuries—and still does to an extent and in particular places—hence the "canonisation" of the pagan goddess, St. Brigid. The message of the painting was that the Christianisation and, indeed, the civilization of Ireland were given to us by a man from our neighbouring island. Another painting showed the surrender of ancient laws for 'proper' English laws, with the Gaels behaving like supplicants. The old Brehon Laws, we were told, were enabling in character. They provided a framework for an enjoyable and honourable lifestyle.

The English laws were disabling and coercive. Thou shalt not...

Coming more up to date, the guide spoke of Michael Collins' Squad's decapitation of the British Intelligence apparatus, with the execution of most of the notorious and supposedly invisible Cairo Gang. But he said this was only the beginning. There were hundreds of men around Dublin with connections to the Castle who insisted successfully on bringing themselves and their families into the Castle for protection. All offices were turned into bedrooms and dormitories—some people even slept in the Castle yard. All normal work stopped. Any serious attempt at British rule ended at that point.

We were told how the OC and Vice OC of the IRA's Dublin Brigade, Dick McKee and Peadar Clancy, were beaten to death, along with an innocent civilian, Conor Clune, that morning in the Castle guardroom. We also heard about the British revenge attack on the players and supporters at a match between Dublin and Tipperary in Croke Park later in the afternoon. One of those killed was Tipperary player Michael Hogan after whom one of the main stands is named—the Hogan Stand.

The guide said that the British "Secret" Police were mostly based in the basement area, whereas the modern Special Branch, the new 'Secret' Police are based in a yard at the rear of the Castle. The opportunity for taking more photographs was far too difficult to resist!

TO BE CONTINUED.

Conor Lynch

### HOW LONG CAN YOU MAUL THE WORLD

#### BEFORE IT HITS BACK

Mourn your victims while making more victims.

Once cannon blasted spear in dark countries then home to wife/children that century, blood-lust and treasure right up to the brim. You could not follow sailing ships and horses across those oceans, rain-forests and plain. Knighthoods, buckets of medals for campaigns, presidents, prime ministers endorses. Then they forged the AK-47, fertiliser and plastic explosive, cheap airline tickets to fly the heavens, the fake passport, the disguise persuasive, the Monroe Doctrine that led to 9/11. Them and us in warfare now cohesive.

Wilson John Haire  
11th September, 2011

# Germany: Return to the Planned Economy as Christian Democrats re-discover themselves

Ireland has introduced spurious competition in its Electricity market. At one point it looked as though it would break up, privatise, internationalise and atomise its once legendary and proud State power generation and distribution industry, the ESB. Minister Pat Rabbitte has said that the Company's transmission assets will not be broken up, but that leaves a lot of scope for destruction and it remains to be seen what will transpire. At the present time, of the countries in the European Union, only Ireland, Latvia and Greece have not broken up their transmission networks (see *Irish Times*, 28.7.11).

While this is happening at the behest of EU neo-liberal and globalist dogma, it is being applauded by our own local neo-liberal zealots within government to little complaint from Labour or anyone else. Meanwhile a revolution is taking place in Germany in energy production that will have far reaching political, social and technological consequences, and leave the destruction of the ESB seem like a monumental mistake.

Germany is finding that its radical decision to abandon nuclear power completely by 2020 and become the leading force in energy generation from renewable sources is leading irrevocably to a re-nationalisation of the energy industry and, as one prominent free market commentator, Andreas Mihm, has noted, a major step that signals *"a return to a planned economy"*.

Many have a sneaking suspicion that Germany, the industrial powerhouse of Europe, will pull this off. Abandoning nuclear power will lead to massive forced investment in renewable energy generation (under extensive State control), making the country *the* leading force in the world in this regard, creating a major economic stimulus, generating considerable new employment and industrial skills, and lead to it emerging as world leader (yet again!) in an area of cutting edge technologies.

Below are the views of Andreas Mihm on how it signals *"a return to a planned economy"* and a glimpse at how some of Germany's Christian Democrats are embracing the idea:

From: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), 6th June 2011

## A PLANNED ECONOMY FOR THE ENERGY INDUSTRY

*Despite years of public subsidisation of its development, the generation of*

*electricity from renewable sources remains considerably more expensive than from coal or gas. The "revolution in energy policy" [Energiewende] represents the abandonment of the liberalization of the electricity market.*

By Andreas Mihm (6. June 2011)

The Federal Government's revolution in energy policy goes beyond a simple abandonment of nuclear power and the promotion of electricity generation from renewable sources: the policy shift is accompanied by an implicit abandonment of the policy of liberalization of the electricity market declared twelve years ago: it will lead to a re-nationalization of the energy industry and inherently represents a return to a planned economy. The State is intervening directly in the productive structures of private energy companies. It has ordained that nuclear plants be shut down. And it hasn't stopped there. Supplementary provisions prevent the market from turning to the most economic alternatives to nuclear power generation. The energy market is to be made subservient to the achievement of political goals.

Specifically the Government has decreed the proportion of electricity generation to be produced from renewable sources over the next decades: 35% by 2020, 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2050. Currently the quota is 17%. Looked at another way, this means that while today the negotiated price of more than four-fifths of electricity supply is set by the market, these plans will see this proportion shrink to just one-fifth by 2050.

But even after a decade of subsidised development, generating electric power from renewable sources remains far more expensive than from coal or gas. To achieve the change over to "green energy", government will have to provide substantially increased subsidies over a protracted period. This will make government dependent on energy producers, not to say open to political blackmail. The debate last year on lowering the purchase price for photo-voltaic (PV) produced energy was a good example. Operators of sea-based wind farms have also now not only secured a higher subsidised price for every kilowatt hour they produce, they have also succeeded in achieving subsidised credits from the State's industrial development bank, KfW Bank, as the capital markets demand much higher risk premiums. And these

loans are guaranteed by the tax payer.

## STATE NOW ALSO INTERVENING AS PRIME LENDER

The State is not only restricting the market in setting energy prices, and is not only providing a support structure of subsidies, but is intervening directly as prime supplier of credit to the industry. This development is unavoidable as otherwise the ambitious targets set for sea-based electricity generation could never be achieved. Government is not only dictating how energy is to be generated, but is increasingly also asserting its control over the distribution systems.

While the distribution systems currently formally belong to private companies, they are *de facto* mere extensions of the Federal Network Agency [*Bundesnetzagentur*]. This agency determines what prices they can charge for electricity transmission, approves investment and determines the returns they can earn. In regulatory terms there can be few objections to this because networks represent a "natural" monopoly. But the powers and staffing of the Agency are set to be significantly expanded if the proposed regulations become law. In this way the state is already beginning to cross the boundary between justifiable regulation of a monopoly sector and restriction of power companies' rights to compete freely. In future the Agency, acting as a pseudo-market player, will be empowered not only to encourage and subsidise investment, but even to engage third parties in direct pipeline construction.

It will also be made easier for State regulators to induce network operators to become involved in production if or when it determines that network security is no longer assured—e.g. if it decides that there are too many wind plants on the coast while too many large power plants in the south, where electricity is needed, are turned off. In this way one State intervention will justify the next, with the costs being borne by the consumer. The ever widening scope of State intervention would be incomplete without mentioning the increasing involvement of cities and municipalities in energy supply. Local politicians will have a growing interest in *"re-municipalisation"* as they will see this as a new source of revenue to fund other public spending projects.

## STATE SET TO RE-CONQUER THE ELECTRICITY MARKET

Local politicians are well versed in making use of public utilities they control. They are currently already investing lavishly in *"essential provision"* of energy,

very broadly defined. This includes not only coal and gas power plants, but increasingly wind and solar farms. As welcome as their contribution as producers and competitors is in the "free" electricity market, the fact is that the entire business risk for this is being borne by the State. The Federal Parliament will find it next to impossible to withdraw from subsidising renewable energies the more local authorities become involved in them.

The slow re-conquest of the electricity market by the State has begun. The legislative changes now proposed will not only accelerate this process, but also undermine the credibility of the Federal Government's alleged commitment to liberalization of the European electricity market. Decision making in the interests of market efficiency are being overruled by political exigency. And the stock markets have noticed: the share prices of energy companies with a strong business presence in Germany have fallen by double-digit figures, with no improvement in sight.

The German energy revolution is no longer a project of the Left and the Greens. The entire initiative, with all its massive ramifications for the State and the economy, has been brought about by the traditional "conservatives", Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats. And neither is it an initiative purely of the government leadership, but has harnessed statist and communalist enthusiasms at the party's grass roots. Even among the most traditional wing of the "conservatives" — the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU), which most approximates in Germany to what Fianna Fáil once was in Ireland — there is widespread elation at the prospects opening up for traditional German communalism, which combines a belief in the "social state" on the one hand with local communal initiative and self-help on the other.

Interviewed by FAZ (also 6th June), Josef Göppel, a forester by profession and a CSU politician at local and national level, commented:

"The old approach to energy generation with a small number of massive central power plants is obsolete. The information age makes it possible to network thousands of small power producers. Politics has finally caught up with this technological revolution... A municipal utility boss once said to me: 'If I advertise to people with electricity from their own district, I get more customers.' People are willing to pay a few tenths of a cent more for locally produced electricity...

[Regarding opposition to wind turbines:] "enough people are prepared to become shareholders in locally-owned wind turbines. Local energy co-ops are

being established on the basis of the old agricultural co-op principle of the money of the village for the use of the village. This profits both the farmer on whose land it is built as well as the local people... Renewable energies bring spread ownership, and electricity consumers become producers. This leads to a more conscious use of energy and greater individual responsibility, all of which are core values of the Christian Democratic parties."

[On the claim that this can't meet electricity requirements:]

"This is the biggest misconception of the debate. To argue that we have to bring all of southern Germany's electricity from the coast is to be stuck in the big-structure thinking of the past. 56% of electricity is used by small consumers, and we can generate this share locally. We will still need the high voltage pylons for industry, but only for the remaining 44%... Gas-powered plants will only be needed to fill gaps when there isn't sufficient wind. We must formulate the legal framework in such a way that electricity from local renewable sources has priority in the network."

[On CSU founder Franz Josef Strauss's claim that "*Being a conservative means always marching at the vanguard of progress*":]

"I am not against progress. But I have a problem with the mindset that centralized and big is always better than small and regional. Take the biological processes in a lake. The principle of survival there is not the struggle of all living things against each other, but rather of finding niches. Applying this to the economy we find that the small local firm occupying a niche is more successful than the large company relying on large economies of scale."

[On whether he is an exception in his party:] "You have to be a forester to understand. Patience is essential in our trade, as trees take a hundred years to grow. In politics, too many colleagues are caught up in the day-to-day. They are at the beck and call of every text message on their mobiles. My model is a different one. I go out into the woods, sit down and organise my thoughts in peace..."

[On whether the energy revolution will make electricity cheaper:] "In the long run, certainly. Wind and sun power require high investment initially, but the fuel is for free. If there was no change in energy policy and energy prices had continued to climb as heretofore, by 2015 prices would have reached a level making solar energy competitive... Germany is not embarking on a path of 'national exceptionalism' [*Sonderweg*] but placing itself at the forefront internationally. Take Africa for a start. It offers huge export opportunities, given that African statesmen recently declared their preference for a nuclear-free Africa..."

**Philip O'Connor**

# Shorts

from  
*the Long Fellow*

## O'TOOLE ON THE STATE

It must be very disappointing for Fintan O'Toole that the nature of the Irish State has not changed with a change of Government. Indeed on the question of energy policy "*Pat Rabbitte has morphed into Frank Fahey*" (*The Irish Times*, 16.8.11). The problem appears to be:

"the State is simply incapable of dealing with one of the key challenges and opportunities facing Irish people: getting the best for the Irish people from the potentially huge resources of oil and gas off our shores" (*The Irish Times*, 16.8.11).

This sentiment is very much in line with *The Irish Times*'s editorial line since Independence. The newspaper believes that Independence was a mistake, but this must be said *sotto voce* to avoid drawing attention to the newspaper's traditional support for British Imperialism.

So O'Toole is allowed to denigrate the Irish State as long as his proposed remedies are completely impractical. In this latter respect he rarely disappoints. His proposed energy policy "*in all seriousness*" is:

"...we should give joint ownership of our oil and gas to the Norwegian State" (*The Irish Times*, 16.8.11).

O'Toole is a little vague about the nature of the joint ownership but, given that the Irish State is "*incapable*", the prospects for favourable terms for Ireland do not appear great. Perhaps he hopes the Norwegians will take pity on us!

In a second article (23.8.11) O'Toole mentions in passing that Norway already has "*a large stake*" in the Corrib gas field but he somehow neglects to outline the beneficial consequences for Ireland of this ownership.

## A FAILED STATE?

Of course, O'Toole's bizarre solutions do not necessarily invalidate his criticism. So, is it true, as O'Toole claims, that the Irish State:

"...is about to sign away almost all our resources on terms by far the worst in the developed world" (*Irish Times*, 16.8.11).

Pat Rabbitte (presumably in his morphed Frank Fahey guise) was on hand to defend the record of the State:

"Far from resulting in all of the Irish offshore being licensed for exploration, the total area covered by the 15 applications received is approximately 6 per cent of the area on offer" (*IT*, 18.8.11).

So O'Toole's "*almost all our resources*" turns out to be "approximately 6 per cent".

But is it true that the terms we offer are "by far the worst in the developed world"? Rabbitte/Fahey claims that our tax on profits ranges between 25 and 40 per cent which compares well to other countries:

"...Portugal is 27.5 per cent, 30 per cent in Spain and in France the rate is 34.4 per cent" (*The Irish Times*, 18.8.11).

Norway has more onerous rates than these for the simple reason that the oil companies' strike rate is far higher in her territory. Indeed, Fergus Cahill of *Irish Offshore Operators* points out that Norway is so confident of her resource wealth that her Government refunds 78 per cent of the cost of an unsuccessful well (*IT*, letters page, 18.8.11). This is something which the Irish State could not contemplate.

But, if our terms are so generous, why is there not a queue outside Rabbitte/Fahey's door for licenses? Cahill says that all of the eight licenses issued in 1995 were handed back to the Government.

It does not seem unreasonable to give generous terms to kick-start exploration. If such exploration is successful more onerous terms can be imposed on adjacent areas.

O'Toole didn't respond to any of these points in his article of 23rd August. Indeed he just repeated the allegation that we have ceded "control of our natural resources on the worst terms in the developed world". Instead he denounced Rabbitte/Fahey for not responding to the "imaginative pragmatism" of his Norwegian proposal.

Rabbitte/Fahey could have responded to the proposal to give joint ownership to Norway; it's just it would have been so difficult to know where to start.

#### O'TOOLE ON MCGUINNESS

It is equally difficult to know where to start on O'Toole's view that Martin McGuinness is a war criminal. It was embarrassing to listen to him attempt to put clear water between McGuinness on the one hand; and de Valera and Nelson Mandela on the other (*Stephen Nolan Show*, BBC Radio Ulster 21.9.11). Apparently, there was no fighting in Bolands Mills and the British were mistaken in condemning de Valera to death. Also O'Toole thinks that Mandela had no responsibility for the ANC's armed struggle. He was in Robben Island at the time.

O'Toole is a moralist in the service of the British newspaper in Ireland. He has no understanding of politics and would probably find it profoundly shocking if it was explained to him: Martin McGuinness could not be a war criminal because the Provisional IRA did not lose the war.

#### MCGUINNESS FOR PRESIDENT

It is the intention of the Long Fellow to vote Martin McGuinness for President. However, he has his doubts. The *Irish Independent* reports:

"When asked if he had killed anyone, he answered: 'No'. When asked if had been indirectly responsible for somebody being killed, he answered: 'No'..." (23.9.11).

Do we really want such an ineffectual person as head of our State?

#### IRISH TIMES RESULTS

Last year the Long Fellow made the following comment on *The Irish Times* financial results:

"...the old Lady of Tara Street still has a pulse and will struggle on for at least a few more years..." (*Irish Political Review*, November 2010).

In contrast to other media reports, he never believed that the demise of *The Irish Times* was imminent. However, the 2010 results do not indicate that the newspaper's decline has been halted. It showed a profit only by reducing its staff pension commitments. The Group made an operating loss of 0.6 million Euro on its day-to-day trading activities.

The Irish Times Group's ultimate owner is limited by guarantee and therefore it cannot pay out dividends. This enabled it to accumulate large cash reserves during the boom. Those cash reserves have diminished very rapidly. At the beginning of 2009 they amounted to 38.8 million. This declined to 13.5 million by the end of 2009. In September 2010 the Chief Executive Liam Kavanaugh claimed that, thanks to its cost cutting programme, the cash position would not deteriorate any further.

But this turned out not to be the case. The cash position in 2010 declined by another 2 million and in 2011 it will be down by another 3 million. Kavanaugh thinks that without further action on costs its cash reserves will be exhausted by 2013.

#### NO PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

The leader of what was once the largest party in the State announced on radio that it would not have a Presidential candidate. When asked about the Party's decline he admitted that it had made mistakes, but did not specify what these were; nor did he reflect on the Party's achievements. The past was another country from where he wanted to escape.

But the French Communist Party has a glorious past. Its prestige in French society was such that on the 5th of October 1944 Pablo Picasso joined because this act: "was the logic of all my life and work".

Could Fianna Fáil go the way of the French Communist Party? The recent TV3 series on the party gave very little indication one way or another. It was a collection of sound bites. But, within the limitations of the format, Bertie Ahern was quite convincing in defence of his record. Perhaps Fianna Fáil is wise to spurn the Presidential campaign. It needs to regroup.

Fine Gael when faced with a similar situation did not contest the last Presidential election. But if Fianna Fáil had run a candidate the obvious person would have been Ahern.

Irish society has a completely unrealistic view of what happened in the last 10 years. Even an unsuccessful campaign by Ahern would have been useful for both Fianna Fáil and the country.

## Fianna Fáil and Sinn Féin

*continued*

In 1970 the Lynch Government was engaged in a covert operation to help Northern Catholics defend themselves against Loyalist mobs. The British discovered the plan and Lynch panicked. The policy was abandoned. This alone would have caused demoralisation, but worse was to follow. Lynch pretended that the policy never existed and put some of those charged with implementing it on trial.

The jury found the defendants innocent since the evidence clearly showed that their actions had been authorised by the State itself. To have found otherwise would have been to believe that the State was subject to a higher legal authority than itself. That was the position that the Republican Party arrived at under Lynch. Its abandonment of the Northern Catholics was the very least of the damage done. The latter were forced to rely on their own resources and now in the form of Sinn Féin have "come down here"—to use Micheál Martin's phrase—to threaten the very survival of Fianna Fáil.

Fianna Fáil adapted to the moral collapse of 1970 and pretended that what happened had not happened at all. Since then it has been living from hand to mouth and has allowed the political agenda to be determined elsewhere. Competence in running the economy has not been enough. When the economic tide turned the Party was left with nothing.

For a brief period the Party was reinvigorated by the accession to the leadership of one of the defendants in the Arms Trial. The grassroots of Fianna Fáil backed Haughey as leader and helped him retain power in the face of the heaves instigated by the tenacious but aimless Lynch wing of the Party. However, it appears that the professional politicians on both wings of the Party decided after Haughey that the grassroots should never have the same influence again.

The Head Office reasserted control and the Party organisation was undermined by a professional apparatus loyal to individual politicians. After Reynolds resigned as



leader Ahern and McCreevy decided that the local organisation would be overruled and fewer candidates should stand for election. The result was that the Party managed to increase the number of seats with a diminishing share of the First Preference vote. However, the short-term electoral advantage was only achieved at the price of a further weakening of the Party.

At this conjuncture Fianna Fáil is at its lowest ebb and Sinn Féin appears in the ascendant. However, it is too early to say that the former is finished even if the possibility cannot be discounted.

The current Government has been extraordinarily lucky. External events have contrived to consolidate Fine Gael's support. It is possible that Fine Gael might replace Fianna Fáil as the party of the State. However, Fine Gael has yet to make any hard decisions. Everything was laid on for it by Fianna Fáil following the passing of the last budget.

Following the Donegal by election Sinn Féin's support levels reached a plateau. Its leaders have a very superficial understanding of politics in the 26 Counties and it is this weakness that is preventing it from evolving from being merely a protest party.

If Fianna Fáil is to recover it will have to rediscover its self-belief. Since the General Election the Party has engaged in a period of reflection. This has taken the form of accepting that "errors" occurred (though their precise nature is never specified). But it is in danger of learning the wrong lessons. Party organisation is one element of Fianna Fáil's renewal. It is necessary but is not sufficient and is certainly not where the problem is to be found. The grassroots must have something to believe in. The Party can only recover if it defends its pre-1970 legacy, which is in effect the era of de Valera. It also must defend against unjust attack the elements which have gone into the making of the nation: the Republican legacy, the Trade Unions; the Public Sector; the GAA; and the Catholic Church.

In the meantime it will have to live with the fact that many of its erstwhile core supporters and grassroots members will probably vote McGuinness for President.

## A President Unpartitioned?

"This is the Republic of Ireland 2011 — not Northern Ireland'. The Taoiseach will forgive me if, by way of introduction, I adapt this line from his celebrated speech on church-state relations because it sums up the reasons why Martin McGuinness is unfit to be President..."

That is the opening of Professor Emeritus Ronan Fanning's contribution to the anti-McGuinness election campaign in the *Sunday Independent* of 25th September. Fanning dismisses the raking over of details of the Northern war by other anti-Sinn Feiners on the ground that this will not damage McGuinness's prospects with voters who have come on the scene since McGuinness became the most effective Man of Peace of our time and place. McGuinness, he says, can only be damaged by "clinical" opposition, and therefore he deplores "rabid denunciation".

Here is the "clinical" case:

"Northern Ireland has always been, and still is, a dysfunctional statelet within the United Kingdom where the circumstances of its creation have made, and still make, the normal workings of democracy impossible. This state, in start contrast, is an independent republic with a proud and continuous tradition of democracy extending more than 90 years. That distinction explains why McGuinness's achievements in Northern Ireland in no way qualify him to become President of Ireland..."

And yet Fanning considers the role of President to have been "*admirably executed by President McAleese*", who came from that same "*dysfunctional statelet*".

If McGuinness is unsuitable to be President because he comes from an undemocratic and dysfunctional statelet, why not McAleese?

McAleese, as President, launched a hysterical tirade against the Ulster Unionists as Nazis. It is not conceivable that McGuinness might do such a thing.

McAleese, advancing her career in Belfast and Dublin by veering this way and that in opportunist adaptations, retained the chip-on-the-shoulder resentments of Hibernian nationalism. McGuinness, provoked into political action by the dysfunctional and undemocratic statelet, dealt with it straightforwardly, in war and peace, from a republican perspective which did not see the Unionists as aliens. And he established a degree of functionality by establishing a political relationship with Ulster Unionism which, a generation ago, the Unionists were certain they would never agree to. This makes McGuinness a statesman.

Statesmanship is what is conspicuously lacking amongst the politicians of what Fanning calls "*Ireland*", who have forfeited its economic sovereignty, and who are relying on the good offices of international banking to keep it functional—the very system that brought it to the brink of bankruptcy.

What is the citizen supposed to do within an undemocratic, dysfunctional statelet? Indeed, is there citizenship in such a statelet? Fanning does not tell us.

What is a "*statelet*"? He does not tell us that either.

The North was set up as an integral part of the British State and remained so. It had no State rights whatever. But, while being entirely subject to the sovereign authority of the Westminster Parliament, it was excluded from the essential processes of British democracy. The publishers of this journal attempted during the 1970s and 1980s to bring it within the British democracy, but neither Britain nor the Unionists would have it. Sinn Féin applied itself to the other possibility, democratisation as part of the Republic. Fanning evaded the issue. He is still evading it.

And he evades another issue with his statement about the "*proud and continuous tradition of democracy extending more than 90 years*"—the political tendency to which he belongs committed itself to the establishment of Fascism in the Free State in the 1930s. Fine Gael began its life as a Fascist Party. It was defeated in that project by Fianna Fáil and Sinn Féin and had to resign itself to being a party in a Parliamentary system.

In the present European situation, with a Polish Government Minister raising the prospect of European war within the next decade, the word "*democracy*" should not be tossed around casually as a magic formula to ward off evil.

A new book by Brendan Clifford, *Northern Ireland: What Is It? Professor Mansergh Changes His Mind* discusses the actuality of democracy, and includes a chapter relevant to the McGuinness affair: *The Problem Of The Legitimacy Of Violence In A Pseudo State*.

The Irish Republic has lived in a morass of confusion about the North, neither being able to act purposefully towards it as part of its own responsibilities, nor to detach itself from it as being foreign. However, Northern Ireland has entered the political scene of Ireland for the first time since Independence. First, with the election to the Dail of the Northern-based leader of the all-Ireland party, Sinn Féin; and now with the candidature of the serving Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland. The issue of partition has thus moved from the realm of rhetoric and wish-fulfilment into practical politics. It is now more necessary than ever for the body politic to get an idea of Northern Ireland. It will not go away.

### Northern Ireland What Is It?

Professor Mansergh Changes His Mind  
by Brendan Clifford

278pp. Index. ISBN 978-1-874157-25-0.  
€18, £15.

**ITEMS FROM ‘THE IRISH BULLETIN’ - 3****Some items from September 1919**

The “Irish Bulletin” (7th July 1919 – 11th Dec.1921) was the official organ of Dáil Eireann during the 1919 – 1921 period. Lawrence Ginnell, then Director of Publicity for the Dáil, first started it in mid 1919 as a “summary of acts of aggression” committed by the forces of the Crown. This newsheet came out fortnightly, later, weekly. We reprint below the summaries published for September 1919. The items are in the format in which they were originally published.

**THE FOLLOWING ARE ACTS OF AGGRESSION COMMITTED IN IRELAND BY THE MILITARY AND POLICE OF THE USURPING ENGLISH GOVERNMENT – AS REPORTED IN THE DAILY PRESS :-**

**FOR WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 6<sup>th</sup>. 1919.**

September.	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	TOTAL.
Raids:-	11	-	3	30	12	22	78.
Arrests:-	11	-	-	5	4	1	21.
Sentences:-	-	-	-	1	7	1	9.
Armed Assaults:-	2	3	-	-	4	-	9.
Courtmartials:-	1	1	-	-	9	2	13.
Proclamations & Suppressions:-	2	3	-	-	-	-	5.
Militarism:-	-	2	-	1	-	-	3.
T o t a l:-	27	9	3	37	36	26	138.

**FOR THE WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 13<sup>th</sup>. 1919.**

September.	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th	Total.
Raids:-	-	3	4	1	4	1000	1012.
Arrests:-	-	6	8	1	4	8	27.
Sentences:-	2	-	-	-	1	-	3.
Armed Assaults:-	2	2	-	3	-	24	31.
Proclamations:-	-	2	1	3	-	-	7.
Courtmartials:-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2.
Daily totals:-	4	13.	13.	8.	10	1034	1082.

**FOR THE WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 20<sup>th</sup>. 1919.**

September.	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th	Total
Raids:	500	21	140	19	14	31	725
Arrests:	9	1	3	--	1	--	14
Sentences:	4	--	2	3	-	--	9
Proclamations & Suppressions:	1	2	3	-	3	2	11
Armed Assaults:	2	2	1	-	-	-	5
Curtmartials:	1	1	-	-	-	1	3
Daily Totals:-	517	27	149	22	18	34	767

**FOR THE WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 27<sup>th</sup>. 1919.**

September.	22nd	23rd	24th	25th	26th	27th	Total
Raids:-	43	6	17	4	13	120	203
Arrests:-	-	1	-	9	5	1	16
Sentences:-	1	1	3	-	-	-	5
Armed Assaults:-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Courtmartials:-	1	-	3	-	2	-	6
Proclamations & Suppressions:-	11	9	4	7	-	40	71
Daily Totals:-	56	17	27	20	22	161	303

## Liberal Unionism At The End Of Its Tether

The list of Jeffrey Dudgeon's proposers for the Senate election earlier this year includes Professors Arthur Aughey, Roy Foster, Liam Kennedy, Lord Bew, Henry Patterson and Graham Walker, along with Austen Morgan—who somehow succeeded in not becoming a Professor and is listed as a barrister.

Also: Brian Garrett, a Belfast solicitor who was once Chairman of the Northern Ireland Labour Party and is now Chair of the Tyrone Guthrie Centre; Dennis Kennedy, a former Deputy Editor of the *Irish Times* and a member, along with Lord Bew and Prof. Patterson, of the Unionist think tank called the Gadogawn Group; M.H.C. McDowell OBE, formerly of the Unionist *Belfast Telegraph* and Harvard and now of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; W.J. McCormack, the Anti-Casement man; Michael McGimpsey, an Ulster Unionist Minister in the devolved Government; Ruth Dudley Edwards, formerly an admiring biographer of Pearse and Connolly, who became a member of the inner-circle of the Conservative elite in England and was commissioned to write the history of *The Economist*, and who has been an admirer of Sean O'Callaghan (the informer and murderer) and of the Orange Order; and of course Eoghan Harris, who has been just about everything under the sun, and who now writes a column in the *Sunday Independent*, denouncing most of what he stood for before the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Professor Aughey says that Dudgeon is "*an authentic liberal Unionist voice*". And I imagine he is. He is certainly nothing else but a Unionist, despite having hung around Athol St. for twenty years. Liberal Unionism, as far as I could grasp it, was polite Unionism which didn't talk of "*Papists*" but of Roman Catholics, and which felt that its politeness deserved something in return. The most famous Liberal Unionist was the Stormont Prime Minister, Captain O'Neill, who said that if the Catholics got baths they'd become just like Protestants. What Liberal Unionism could not do—did not try to do—was envisage the predicament of Catholics in the Northern Ireland set-up.

Of the Liberal Unionists I have known—and I knew a good many—only two stand out as having some inkling of what it was all about. The late Harold McCusker (MP) made the intellectual effort, but admitted that he could not get over the

feeling that the Northern Ireland he grew up in was a perfect world. Robert Mc Cartney was the best of them. He was the only one who seemed to understand that, however polite one was to Catholics, there was no outlet in the politics of the Unionist Family for the democratic energy of the Catholic community. He ventured out of the Unionist Family for a time with the object of establishing a common ground of politics in the political system of the state. I do not know why he pulled back. But I know that many kinds of influence could be brought to bear intensively against individuals in those times.

Dudgeon's list of supporters shows that he is the standard-bearer for the Liberal Unionist residue in the Unionist Family.

(The centenary of the Third Home Rule Bill falls next year, and there will be Unionist celebrations of its defeat. The upshot of the effective opposition to the Bill was the defeat of the Home Rule Party and the emergence of Republican Sinn Féin, Partition, and the defeat of Ulster Unionism. The Unionism that opposed the Bill in 1912 was not the Unionism that was established in local power in the Six Counties. The original Unionism was for full Irish participation in the political life of the British state. That was something which did not happen between 1800 and 1920, chiefly because O'Connell founded a nationalist movement in Ireland, instead of grounding the Whig/Liberal party there. The O'Connellite three quarters of the island would not play the British party game. When most of nationalist Ireland left the British state, the way seemed open for the Six Counties to take their place within the British political system (as they had done between the 1832 Reform and the 1886 Home Rule Bill). When Carson accepted the inevitability of Partition—the loss of three-quarters of the island—he took it for granted that the Six Counties would simply be a region of the British state. That was Unionism. He was shocked by the proposal to establish the Six Counties into a pseudo-state in which Protestants would govern Catholics outside the British system. But the Government insisted, and the local Protestant leaders in the North agreed. And so we got the Unionist Family—the Protestant community organised to govern the Catholic community at a very substantial remove from what had originally been understood as the Union. In

place of the Union there was "*the British connection*"—the connection between this semi-detached enclave and the state proper. And, within this pseudo-state there were tentative gestures towards party divisions within the Unionist Family, but everybody knew that they were not in earnest because the Family had to hang together.)

I guess that Dudgeon's Senate nomination is the final fling of Liberal Unionism (which has been marginalised by the greater resourcefulness of believing Protestantism). The North, on which it never had a real grasp, has slipped away from it, into the hands of its twin hates, the Paisleyites and the Provos. It can do nothing against Paisleyism, the substance being out of the reach of its shadow. But it can attach itself, as an 'ultra' fringe, to the 'revisionist' element in the South. And Dudgeon does so under the auspices of the penitent nationalist, Eoghan Harris, who, just forty years ago, denounced me for making the 'two nations' case.

In his journey to the South Dudgeon has jettisoned the democratisation approach to politics with which he was at least loosely associated for some years in Belfast with the Campaign for Labour Representation and the Campaign for Equal Citizenship. He has joined up with a movement which aims to establish Protestants in the South as being in a similar political position to Catholics in the North under the old Stormont system. Hubert Butler equated the two half a century ago, but in doing so he went beyond religious opinion or belief and made it a racial issue. He asserted that the Protestant stock in the South was racially superior, and to enable it to bring its superior talent to bear on the conduct of the State, and to prevent it from being dissipated amongst the inferior native types, he suggested that it should have separate (racial or confessional) representation in public life.

At a Hubert Butler celebration in Kilkenny Castle about ten years ago, at which the Protestant North was well represented, Jack Lane read out a paragraph from Butler's election manifesto in which this was said and asked why it was not racist. Edna Longley, on the platform, could not say why it was not racist, but she said that Lane's questioning of Butler's statement in this way made it understandable why Protestants in the South were reluctant to speak out.

Butler's demand that Protestants in the South should be accorded the political status of a separate community, alongside

the normal democratic politics of the state, was taken up some years after that Butler meeting, by the Protestant Bishop of Cork, apparently inspired by Eoghan Harris—whose rule of life seems to be to assert the opposite of whatever is said by a certain unnameable "*local history group*".

This matter was gone into at the time of the Butler meeting. There is no political equivalence between Catholics in the North and Protestants in the South. The Catholics did not constitute themselves a separate political body, refuse to take part in the political life of the state, and demand special arrangements. They were made into a separate political community by the State in the North, just as surely as the Catholics in Ireland as a whole were constituted into a separate community by the Penal Laws of the Glorious Revolution, by being excluded from the political life of the state and subjected to Protestant communal rule.

Southern Protestants were not excluded from the political life of the state. The party-politics of the state was open to them but was closed to Catholics in the North. Southern Protestants have been elected President and held Cabinet positions. Catholics in the North were excluded from the party-politics of the state.

Now it might be that Southern Protestants who took part in the political life of the state they found themselves in were "*guilty Protestants*" (a term which Dudgeon uses frequently) who betrayed their heritage and their stock. But that's what tends to happen in a democracy.

But Protestants in the South did not only succumb to the insidious influence of an established democracy—some of them actually took part, at considerable risk to themselves, in the foundation of the State.

I knew of only two Catholics who joined the Ulster Unionist Party. One was an English upper-class type with RAF whiskers, who joined after the collapse of 1969 and was only playing a part and doesn't count. The other was Louis Boyle, who made a point of joining in the time of Captain O'Neill, and who was willing to put up with subordination to the Orange Order in order to show that it could be done. He could not well be refused membership at the time, but then he was frozen out and left.

The object of both the CLR and the CEC was to place the Catholics in the Six Counties in the same relationship with the state there (that is the British state, because there was no other) as the Protestants have enjoyed in the Irish state: that is, to give

them access to the party-political life of the state, which is the heart of the democratic process.

Most of Dudgeon's backers did not support that aim, while some were strongly opposed to it (Lord Bew, Prof. Patterson, Eoghan Harris). Dudgeon himself never expressed disagreement with that aim during the many years that he hung around the CLR and CEC. But it seems that since he helped to wreck those movements he has come around to Lord Bew's view that the North is not part of the British state but is itself a State: "*Partition and the formation of Catholic and Protestant states...snuffed out that crossing culture*" (in the literary movement]. (This is from Dudgeon's *Life And Times Of Casement*, with which he accompanied the publication of *The Black Diaries* in 2002.)

But, if the North was a "State", it certainly was not a Protestant counterpart of the South. The population of the South was more than 90% Catholic, and Catholic opinion was naturally reflected in legislation. The proportion of Catholics to Protestants was more than 9 to 1. In the North the proportion of Protestants to Catholics was only 2 to 1 at best. In the South political life operated through the conflict of three major parties and a number of minor ones, none of which had any organic connection with the Hierarchy of the Catholic Church. In the North political life was dominated by the Protestant community organised as a political party, of which the Orange Order formed the central part. There was no conflict of Unionist Parties through which Catholics might seek advantage. There was only the Protestant community, tightly organised as a party. If the North was a State, and chose to organise itself like this, why should it not be described as a fascist state?

The South has often been described as a theocracy because of the prevalence of Catholic opinion in it. But, if there was a theocracy in Ireland, it was in the North, where the Orange Order was organically hegemonic in the 'State'. The only reason I have not described it as a Fascist State is that it patently was not a State. But I have often noticed that Liberal Unionism was affronted by my downgrading of its status. It sometimes seemed to me that one of their motives in this was to exonerate Britain. How could they hold "*the British connection*" sacred, if they admitted that Britain had wantonly done to them what it undoubtedly did to them?

The CLR/CEC put the issue squarely to Protestant opinion in the North. There

was considerable willingness amongst Catholics to go for British democracy, but considerable doubt amongst them that Protestants would go for it. Protestant opinion chose Ulsterism, which meant the attrition of the two communities. I thought it was a very foolish choice. I did my best to persuade them otherwise, but twenty years ago I was quite deliberately set aside as a nuisance by the Ulsterish—and I am grateful to them for doing it, because the project was hopeless because of them. And now the Ulsterish, having fared worse than they thought possible twenty years ago, are consoling themselves by depicting the South as a mirror image of the old Northern Ireland. And Dudgeon's *Casement* book can be taken as the Liberal Unionist manifesto for this campaign, if only because there really is nothing else.

It tells us, of course, about "*what was named in Dublin the Emergency, the Second World War*" (p543). Dudgeon has done research, of course, and found the papers describing Dunkirk, El Alamein, Stalingrad and Kursk as incidents in "*The Emergency*"! Why didn't he give us a sample?

In 1914: "*The Germans were to a degree emboldened in their aggression by a belief that Britain would be diverted by an imminent civil war in Ireland*". Why that, rather than Britain seeing the opportunity for war on Germany as a means of averting war at home? And why just "*civil war in Ireland*"? Britain itself was split down the middle on the Home Rule issue.

He concedes that he might have listed Casement's book about that war in his Bibliography. But he did not even give his readers an account of Casement's argument about the War in what was Casement's only published book. What is the point of that kind of history? It is the most abysmal level of propaganda.

The Unionists brought the gun into politics against the Home Rule Bill and were right to do so, because they "*could only lose once*" (p418). They would otherwise have been exterminated under a minor degree of Irish self-government, not only within the Empire, but within the UK, and under Westminster sovereignty!

The Liberal Home Rule gentry who brought guns to Howth in their yacht for the Volunteers who supported the Home Rule Bill—

"bear a certain similarity to a later period and are perhaps thereby more explicable. Many non-communists, particularly notable nuclear scientists, either conscientiously or because of the manipulation of agents and fellow-travellers, betrayed the West's nuclear



secrets to the Soviet Union. They argued that it was vitally necessary to maintain a balance of power in the arms race..." (p183).

That's what the man says about the arming of the Home Rule Volunteers, by supporters of the Government, after the Ulster Volunteers had been formed, drilled and armed by opponents of the Government and of Parliament. Those Home Rule gentry are compared to agents of a foreign power in a situation of profound conflict between their own state and that foreign power!

The Foreign power early in 1914 was Germany. It was the Ulsterish who were in communication with that foreign power, and who declared that, if a minor measure of Irish Home Rule within the United Kingdom was enacted, they would transfer their allegiance to the Kaiser. And the chief Home Rule gun-runner was a defender of the British Empire in its outrageous war on the Boer Republics, and a propagandist for war on Germany. When the Committee of Imperial Defence had twice been asked to investigate the possibility of a German invasion of England, and had twice reported in detail on why a German invasion was impossible, it was Erskine Childers—the moderniser of the Army of the Empire—who imagined a stratagem by which an invasion might be carried out, and gave it publicity in a best-selling novel, *The Riddle Of The Sands*.

Of course comparisons can never be complete, but in order to be sensible they require a degree of similarity. And what similarity is there between those Liberal supporters of the Government, and of the Home Rule Bill which had been passed twice and was awaiting a certain third adoption by the Commons in order to be an Act, and the atom spies who passed scientific information to the Soviet Union as the unprincipled British alliance with the Soviets was becoming a principled antagonism with the defeat of Germany?

Many of those atom scientists had taken part with a will in the invention of the atomic bomb while it was thought that Germany was on the way to developing it. Germany surrendered in May 1945, but work on the bomb continued in the context of the war with Japan. It was found that Germany had not been making the bomb. There was no suspicion that Japan was making it. Nevertheless, work on the bomb continued, and two bombs were dropped on Japan in cold blood at a moment when the defeat of Japan was a certainty. The bombs were dropped in order to accelerate the Japanese surrender by killing

swathes of the civilian population.

The possibility then existed of using the bomb to destroy the state that had destroyed Nazi Germany, and some very respected and respectable people advocated just that. However, not everybody could callously switch off the enthusiasm of the "*Anti-Fascist War*" and set about destroying the Ally that had defeated the Nazis, like Churchill and Bertrand Russell could.

I suppose a similarity between this and the Liberal gun-running in support of the Home Rule Bill could be constructed, but I cannot help the reader to construct it.

John Mitchel, the Ulster Protestant who wrote an account of English rule in Ireland and supported the ending of it, was "*pathological*". But—

"Mitchel's writings... indicate not a man who was selling out his own people but one who perhaps naively believed he could risk them not following him where he led: "The Anglo-Irish and Scottish Ulstermen have now far too old a title to be questioned: they are a hardy race and fought stoutly for the pleasant valleys they dwell in". In 1846, in a famous Dublin speech, he told the audience, "I am one of the Saxon Irishmen of the North, and you want that race of Irishmen in your ranks more than any other. Drive the Ulster Protestants away from your movement by groundless tests and you perpetuate the degradation of both yourselves and them". He risked and they did not follow. His successor Protestant nationalists played out the consequences. The price his people paid was for Irish nationalism to be enabled to don and keep the non-sectarian mantle..." (p183).

I know little about Mitchel, apart from having read a couple of his books when I was young. He was too much of a hectic revolutionist and too little concerned with the details of doing it for my taste, and too much of a doctrinaire Carlylean. Duffy did not preach revolution but he might have made one. I don't think Mitchel could have practised what he preached. He was a preacher.

I assume the quotations given by Dudgeon were directed at the O'Connellites. They make little sense in any other connection. Dudgeon's argument seems to be that, in urging the Repealers not to repel the Ulster Protestants, he was taking the risk of having the Ulster Protestants join the Repealers. The paragraph suggests that, while Mitchel was a Repealer himself, and urged the Southerners not to repulse the Northerners, he did not want the Northerners to follow him into the Repeal movement but risked causing them to do

so. It is a strange idea.

He does not say why it would have been dreadful if they had become Repealers. Is it that they would have lost themselves amidst the vast Catholic population of those times?

O'Connell certainly repulsed the Ulster Presbyterians, while issuing token appeals to the Protestant gentry. But O'Connell was in decline when Mitchel arrived, and Young Ireland had a very different attitude. Supposing the Ulster Presbyterians had responded to the call of Davis and Duffy and joined the movement to which Duffy (organiser of the North/South tenant right campaign) was giving direction, I think it is pretty clear from *The Nation* that they would have become the leading stratum of the nation. The Young Irelanders, unlike O'Connell, were not flatterers of the populace that had been degraded by six or seven generations of Protestant Ascendancy Penal Laws. They were dedicated civilisers, committed to progress of the 19th century kind, and stimulated by Carlyle's unsentimental philosophy of hard-headed self-help in a world that held whinging in contempt. If the Ulster Presbyterians had joined the Young Ireland movement, how could they have failed to dominate it and shape the nationalist development it fostered?

The concern that they would have lost themselves if they had done so is very ethnicist indeed.

If proper ethnicity requires that the Ulster Presbyterians be just what they are, then they are just what they are. And they made themselves just what they are by doing just what they have done during the last century and a quarter. And what they have done can be summed up in the slogan "*Ulster Says No!*". The author of the slogan, who is not a Humanist frozen into ethnicity, stopped saying No some years ago, leaving the Nay Saying to the moderates.

About thirty years ago I noticed the jibe MOPE being thrown at the nationalist community by Lord Bew. I found the letters stood for Most Oppressed People Ever. I thought it odd that the nationalists should be scorned as whingers at the moment when what they were doing was dealing with their situation by fighting a war. But in recent years those letters, MOPE, come to mind irresistibly when I notice what Unionist liberalism is saying.

Dudgeon reflects on another page:

"If the Protestant community were ever to be obliterated in Northern Ireland it could rest happy genetically, knowing it had successfully replicated itself, under

another name, across the Atlantic" (p21).

I find this preoccupation with genes and ethnicity very odd, so I had better not comment. There was no trace of it in Slieve Luacra, which was aware of itself as a place to which people had come from all quarters and mixed.

Parnell: "*Not being a Catholic, he could not afford to display any weakness to northern Protestants. He became a messiah, a Bonaparte figure to his followers*" (p20). Another "*guilty Protestant*"! The "*guilty Protestant*" seems to be Dudgeon's explanation of all that went wrong. Whatever about that, a Messiah, a Bonaparte, is what Parnell was not to his followers. He seems to have thought that that is what he was, but he found it was what he wasn't when he tried to act the part. When British Protestant fundamentalist Liberalism issued the ultimatum against him, after the Divorce Court hearings, the Home Rule Party supported him, but when he refused to take a back seat for a while in order to maintain the Home Rule alliance, and set out to overrule the party when it would not follow him blindly in this, the party rejected him; as did the electorate when he tried to raise the country against the party. Tim Healy said that his lieutenants, whom he had imagined to be his disciples, were actually his creators. He was their work of art, but what they had made of him went to his head, and he came to grief. And that is certainly much nearer the mark, if one judges by the facts of the affair, than Dudgeon's description, which is a mere inference from the standard Unionist view of the natives.

When the Liberals returned to office in 1905, with the possibility of Home Rule coming back on the agenda, the Home Rule Party was more tightly organised than it had ever been under Parnell, and there was no semblance of personality cult about it. Parnell was made an icon of the party, but he was not the Lost Leader. There was now a representative leadership with a triumvirate at the top and no shortage of able leaders beneath. And the British party system was skilfully manipulated.

The Redmond/Dillon/Devlin leadership was no more inclined to concede to the Ulster Unionists, even at the point of a bayonet, than the "*guilty Protestant*" Parnell had been. But it lost itself in the War To End War, as did its Liberal allies, and ultimately even its Unionist enemies.

"An almost mystical alliance of Catholicism and separatism laced with Gaelic revival, was to overthrow its own

nationally minded Home Rule elite through the blood sacrifice of 1916... It had taken power because of substantive but failed coup, made hegemonic by the execution of its leaders... An English Catholic state emerged, but one that was, and wanted to be, anti-British... The new Irish state did not just start a new future, it first obliterated the past, especially the recent past. Out went the Home Rule party—overnight, both personnel and politics. The returning veterans of the Great War were immediately overwritten, departing Irish history for 80 years. The inevitable post-revolution civil war created a two-party system in the Free State... Ironically this Catholic state lasted only 50 years, at least in its ultra-puritan and inward looking form..." (p519).

Was 1916 a "*blood-sacrifice*" or a "*substantive coup*"? I don't think they're quite the same thing.

It would be useful if "*blood-sacrifice*" was defined by those who do not use it in its Biblical sense. Isaac lay down to be a blood sacrifice to placate the God of Abraham. Iphigenia lay down to be an actual blood-sacrifice to placate the Gods of Greece.

On 1st July 1916 tens of thousands of men climbed out of the trenches to walk slowly into German machine-gun fire. After the first wave was mown down the later waves must have felt sacrificed as they went over the top. But, if they did not go over the top, they would have been killed by their own officers. How should that situation be described?

The word "*sacrifice*" was used lavishly in the propaganda that motivated men in the British Army to engage in those killing matches. I suppose the word was also used by the French, and even by the Germans. But it seems least applicable to the German military method. The Germans did not have a superabundance of men of military age. They shepherded those they had. After the initial spurt of mobile warfare in 1914, they fought mainly on the defensive in carefully-prepared positions and sold their lives dear, as the saying goes. The *Entente*, with its much bigger population, sold lives cheap in wild offensives that were persisted in even when it was clear they had failed, reckoning that, even with a kill ratio in favour of the Germans, the *Entente* would still have viable populations when the German population was used up.

But, assuming the *coup* to have been mere suicide, what's the sense in saying it was directed against the Home Rule Party? The Home Rule Party had an Act making it the devolved Government in Ireland on the Statute Book, but the Ulster rebellion

against Parliament had caused that Act to be set aside, though not repealed, in the very moment of its enactment. The suspended Home Rule Act did not establish any actual Home Rule authority in Dublin Castle. Nor was Redmond negotiated with, in the conduct of government, as Prime Minister-In-Waiting. And that was a fact that contributed to the erosion of his influence.

Professor Foster, Dudgeon's nominator, said that the 1916 *coup* was, or should have been, directed against the Ulster Protestants. It wasn't, and it shouldn't. Revolutionary acts are directed against States, and the State in Ireland was the British State with its centre in Whitehall. The fact that the attempted *coup* was condemned by the Home Rule leaders and the Ulster Unionist leaders does not mean that it was directed against them. One might speculate that, if the *coup* had succeeded, there might have been conflict with the Home Rulers or the Ulster Unionists, but that speculation does not conjure away the fact that it was the British State that was made war upon in 1916.

Why is the alliance of Catholicism and separatism mystical? And was there such an alliance?

Catholicism is an abstract noun. The concrete noun is the Church Hierarchy. There certainly was not an alliance between the Hierarchy and the separatists—nor even between the Christian Brothers and the separatists. The Christian Brothers were Redmondites, and as far as I know so was the Hierarchy.

Most, but not all, of the separatists were Catholics, but so were most Home Rulers. And most Catholics were Home Rulers and not separatists until the Ulster Volunteers but a stop to Home Rule and Redmond recruited cannonfodder after failing to get Home Rule, and even after the Unionists entered the Government.

And what was mystical in the fact that Catholics, by and large, were very discontented with British rule—that they were "*pathologically anti-English*", to put it in Dudgeon's language?

Ireland was Gaelic, and was Catholic after its fashion, when England decided that it should cease to be both, and set about compelling it by means of a destructive administrative system based on naked conquest. Gaelic and Catholic was just what the Irish were for a good many centuries. They were Gaelic from the era before Christ, and Catholic from the fifth century AD, and it is not usual to question the socio-cultural structure of peoples emerging from pre-history as if that

structure had been established by a political movement in recent times. In history something must always be accepted as given. And what must be given with regard to the Irish is that they were Gaelic and Catholic from time immemorial. England tried to re-make them into something else, starting by knocking the stuffing out of them, but failed.

I have always considered myself English-speaking, but at the age of 12 I was effectively bilingual, and might easily become so again. And, after I left Slieve Luacra, I found that what I took to be English was shot through with Irish. And Jack Lane, with whom I undertook to make a case for the Ulster Protestants in 1969 in the face of nationalist Ireland, has said that the feminine ideals of his youth were not the stars of stage and screen but the *speir bheans*\* of Eoghan Ruadh's *Aislings*.

The character of Irish Catholicism changed in some ways after the English State adopted Protestantism as the ideology of its new status as a (self-proclaimed) Empire, went fanatical about it, and then destroyed the Stuart monarchy under which the Irish had been content to be oppressed. The Irish met the modernising, progressive oppression of the Glorious Revolution (both Williamite and Hanoverian) by developing through its Catholic aspect, the Gaelic proving to be inadequate to requirements. I see nothing mystical in their later attachment to the component of their traditional life that enabled them to outlast the long totalitarian era of the Glorious Revolution.

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P.S. O'Hegarty —

"asked a key question for revolutionaries and for those governments who enter wars swiftly and casually: 'We adopted political assassination as a principle' we turned the thoughts and passions of a generation upon blood and revenge; we placed gunmen, mostly half educated and totally inexperienced, as dictators with power of life and death over large areas. We derided the moral law and said there was no law but the law of force, and the moral law answered us. Every devilish thing we did against the British went full circle, and boomeranged and smote us tenfold; and the cumulating effect of the whole of it was a general cynicism and a disbelief in either virtue or decency, in goodness or uprightness or honour"... (Dudgeon's *Casement*, p17).

It seems that Dudgeon picked up this purple passage, not from O'Hegarty's book, *The Victory Of Sinn Fein*, but from the memoirs of Lady Glenavy, *Today We Will*

\* Women from the sky.

*Only Gossip*, where it is quoted.

This quotation, without explanation of who O'Hegarty was, is characteristic of the tit-bit historical method established by Dudgeon's old school companion, Professor the Lord Bew.

O'Hegarty was a Free State Civil Servant with a big job when he published this book in 1924. Ten years earlier he had been a member of the Supreme Council of the IRB conspiracy. Like many who were revolutionaries before the event, he did not participate in the event because it did not meet the ideal. His book is profoundly incoherent, with alternating outbursts of enthusiasm and denunciation. Though closely associated with Collins before 1916, he kept his distance after 1916 and then got a plum job with the Free State.

His alternative to defending the electoral victory of 1918 by force of arms seems to have been passive resistance, to which, he suggests, Britain would have surrendered.

When I was young Gandhi's victory over the Empire by means of peaceful resistance was much in the news. It was a tale told by the Empire, to show what a marvellous Empire it was. I later discovered that the Empire had been undermined by the Japanese invasions. Britain had ended its Treaty with Japan in the early 1920s on the insistence of the United States, and in 1941 it had backed a US ultimatum to Japan which would have wrecked the Japanese economy if complied with. Japan responded by attacking the British Empire and the USA — almost entirely the British Empire. The British collapse and the spirit of independence developed in Asian peoples by the Japanese put it out of the question that the Empire might be restored in Asia after 1945. So Britain made a disorderly withdrawal from India after a couple of centuries of governing it, leaving the antagonisms it had fostered to work themselves out at the cost of a million lives, with the last Viceroy, Mountbatten, looking on.

O'Hegarty did not make a moral evaluation of the democratic merit of the response of the British Parliament to the Election result in Ireland. Nor does Dudgeon.

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Liberal Unionism failed entirely in its political sphere to do anything worthwhile to realise "*amidst the bulks of actual things*" a practical implementation of its claim of Britishness. It merely asserts an aetherial "*identity*". But what is "*identity*" if it is not part of what one does? And what Liberal Unionism does can be seen at every turn to be different in kind from what the authentic British do. It is only a

kind of hanger-on.

The British propaganda of the 1914 War made great play with an observation by Holderlin a century earlier that the Germans lacked identity and had only occupations. When I came across it I was puzzled by it. I was therefore interested when, a few years ago, British television advertised a game-show called *Identity*, compered by Donny Osmond. So I watched it in search of enlightenment: only to find that it treated identity as occupation. The contestant was faced with six people and given a list of their occupations and had to match them. The tag-line was: Person No. 3, Hairdresser, is that your identity?

While that might have been an oversimplification, it is certainly the case that Being and Doing are intimately related, and that Being separated from Doing evaporates. And what was done in Northern Ireland — which is what it was possible to do in it — was certainly not conducive to the sense of confused multinational identity that is a distinctive thing about British life.

The asserted Britishness of Liberal Unionism was the impotent gesture of a comfortable enclave, detached from the state in everything that made the state functional. Ulsterish Liberalism opted *de facto* for the politics of communal attrition. Now, as if in compensation for its failure in the North, it contributes its ha'porth to the British revisionism in the South.

Meanwhile in the North the Nationalist community has proved more effective than the Unionist community in the medium of political conflict chosen by the Unionists, and it is increasingly impressing its ownership on localities and institutions that seemed well out of its reach in 1969.

**Brendan Clifford**

## **RICHARD HOLBROOKE**

In his hands he held an unsigned contract while on his shoulder perched a Stealth Bomber. At Dayton, Ohio, not a murmur as jigsaw Yugoslavia retracts. 1963 and the Foreign Service, an accomplice to murder in Vietnam with John Negroponte. (ad nauseam) And with 'Blowtorch' Bob Komer auspicious. Wanted war in Afghanistan to stop. (put up your hands and march to the stockade) He tangled the strings in a Karzai strop. President's hit-man, topped up stock-in-trade. Built monuments to war but no Cheop. Imploded during a switchblade accolade.

**Wilson John Haire**  
16th December, 2010

## Seeing Clearly.....

Desmond Fennell takes issue with my claim that classical liberalism was not "*the basic political ideology of Catholic Ireland*".

He says:

"But I am sure that Jack recognises that the right to liberation of a nation dominated by another nation was a principle of classical liberalism since the French Revolution. And he surely recognises that government by the people, freedom of expression, the right to private property, legal separation of Church and State and equality before the law were also principles of classical liberalism throughout Europe. What I was saying was that all these principles remained tenets of Irish Catholic nationalism after O'Connell. And not surprisingly, therefore, they were represented, along with principles of Catholic provenance, in the two Irish Constitutions after Independence, especially in that of 1937" (*Irish Political Review*, September 2011).

This is true; these were *tenets* of Irish nationalism but not its essence before or after O'Connell. Its essence was the demand and the efforts to be free, to have the right to exercise the very first, and the most important, of these tenets, the "*liberation of a nation dominated by another nation*". Without that right being realised, by whatever means, all the others are mere pious hopes and promises.

But Ireland was in Europe and, if these fine principles "*were also principles of classical liberalism throughout Europe*", how come the Irish did not actually experience them? How come that every single one of these principles were denied with a vengeance in Ireland following the Glorious Revolution? And that Revolution is the acclaimed originator of modern classical liberalism. In view of that experience Irish nationalism could hardly be simply a follower and admirer of classical liberalism when that liberalism was experienced in practice as the Penal Laws and all that they entailed.

And that Revolution and its liberalism came before and inspired the French Revolution—the latter was a follow up. But that latter Revolution's greatest immediate enemy was the inheritors of the Glorious Revolution. A situation then of two classically liberal nations at war with each other—what then of classical liberalism itself! The Irish experience of one of these liberalisms was what Burke famously described as "*a machine as well*

*fitted for the oppression, impoverishment and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man*".

In view of all this it seems to me that the response of Irish nationalism to classical liberalism would be that of Gandhi when asked what he thought of Western civilisation—"*I think it would be a very good idea*."

Irish nationalism was influenced by the French Revolution but it was a very specific aspect of it, that represented by the lifelong revolutionary Louis Blanqui, which inspired James Stephens and the Fenians—and Blanqui was not a liberal in any shape or form. He saw the completion of the French Revolution as needing a dictatorship to ensure the elimination of monarchical and Church power. The liberal inheritors of the Revolution came to be at one with British liberals, Lamartine, Guizot, etc., as regards Ireland—and most other things. And the Fenians, chiefly O'Donovan Rossa, made the relationship of these liberals with Ireland's freedom very clear: it was hostile.

I find it odd that Desmond puts the Free State Constitution on a par with the 1937 Constitution, when the former specifically denied the first principle of classical liberalism—"*the right to liberation of a nation dominated by another nation*"—by insisting on Dominion status for Ireland and an Oath of Allegiance to the Monarch of another nation. Those classic Liberals, Lloyd George and Churchill, instigated a 'civil' war in Ireland to ensure the point was fully understood. That was more classical liberalism in action—following the sending by these gentlemen's of the Black and Tans to deny us the clear-cut outcome of a General Election! It looks like classic liberalism was a very elastic concept.

Desmond says that the issue of classical liberalism and Irish nationalism was "*a historical aside, not part of my main theme*". But I think it is central because, if the history of Ireland and Irish nationalism is seen through the prism of a nation with classical liberal demands and which was obviously in long-term conflict, including war, with another nation also based on classic liberal principals, then

most of Irish history disappears from sight or becomes meaningless—a conundrum. It should not have happened!

As regards American influence post-WWII. It was experienced as a takeover in those very European countries that had invited in America to 'pull their irons out of the fire' they themselves had lit in two World Wars. In Ireland it was experienced as a continuation of the influence that America had always had since the time of the Fenians—which was as much an American phenomenon as an Irish one. America does not automatically and instinctively seek to discredit and undermine Irish national aims or culture or rewrite its history. It was always a case of adding value while having to ignore the oceans of Paddywhackery that went with it. This is the case, despite the fact that now America does the opposite as a matter of course elsewhere but obvious enough in situations originally created by the classic liberals of Europe, Britain and France. That is no accident.

Desmond concludes:

"But the overthrow of European civilisation in the West—Russia performed it for a time in the East, Germany at the centre tried and was prevented—was finally carried out by the American empire of the West which emerged from Hiroshima onward."

This is an interpretation that does not tally with what actually happened. Fascism was a movement that saw itself as very consciously preserving European civilisation against the threat from Bolshevism—the self-proclaimed destroyer of the West and all it stood for. This was fully accepted by, among others, Winston Churchill who went to Rome to congratulate Mussolini on his success against Bolshevism and tried to meet Hitler to do the same. He wrote that he hoped Britain would produce a Hitler if it proved necessary to do the same in Britain.

Then he did a *volte face* and went into alliance with those who sought to destroy the West *against* those who saw themselves as preserving it! The ensuing conflict, WWII, is what finished off whatever was then left of Western Civilisation. America had no responsibility for that debacle; it was isolationist while all this was being set up. It just picked up the pieces. Who wouldn't?

Jack Lane

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## es ahora \*

**"Mistrust all in whom the desire to punish is imperative."**

Goethe.

### PURITANISM AND THE MODERN STATE (CONTINUED)

In last month's *Irish Political Review*, I looked at the kind of capitalism that was destroying the USA and now virtually the Western world. And I found out that a 'new' curious ideology was being embedded deep in the minds of the ruling elites and perhaps the most astonishing thing of all was that it too was spreading like a virus in the American population itself. Last week by a kind of symbiosis I was reading a fictional book by Val McDermid, the formidable Scottish writer. While the book, *A Darker Domain*, was of the thriller genre, McDermid incorporated the whole misery of the 1984 Miners' Strike and evoked the kind of poverty wrought by the ideology of a right-wing Thatcher Government, very like that of her friend President Ronald Reagan.. By the time Thatcher was done, the pits closed, the families and communities broken, marriages destroyed, children and parents scarred beyond healing with domestic abuse and especially male suicides spiralling—really a new way of doing things was installed, one that did not bode well for "society". The famous remark of Thatcher was "there is no such thing as society". She thought "Individuality" was now the thing and "it" and "sectional interests" broke the back of a more whole stable society of the past. There was now a new way of doing politics and business and the cult of money and later consumerism began their inexorable rise aided by an ideology that insisted on 'having it all' was 'good'. So the rich got richer and the poor got poorer and tax through various finessing fell more on the latter than the former, who could avail of the tax-havens which the State was complicit in setting up and before long, the free-marketeers were the ones making all the running.

In a *Guardian* article, 9th November 2004, George Monbiot wrote about "Bush's ideology having its roots in 17th century preaching that the world exists to be conquered". The article was titled "Puritanism of the rich". We can now see that the ideology went back much further than Bush Snr. or Bush Jnr. In fact Reagan

was already under the command of the Market people and they used him to promote this ideology. But what about the link between Capital (money) and Puritanism? Monbiot of course hits the nail in the head when he states that this so-called new Puritanism is really a re-run of the old 17th century ideology with some bells on. According to Monbiot's analysis, Puritanism "is perhaps the least understood of any political movement in European history" and most of all it "was the product of an economic transformation". He quoted R.H. Tawney's book, *Religion And The Rise of Capitalism* (1926):

"Charles 1 sought to nationalise industries, control foreign exchange and prosecute lords who evicted peasants from the land, employers who refused to pay the full wage, and magistrates who failed to give relief to the poor".

But, over the preceding 150 years, "the rise of commercial companies, no longer local, but international" led in England to "a concentration of financial power on a scale unknown before". Monbiot continues, the economy was—

"swept forward by an immense expansion of commerce and finance, rather than of industry. This new money power began to make moves that would serve them rather than the old style but for that a sweeping away was needed and a new construct had to be found. It was no accident that the dissolution of the monasteries had catalysed a massive seizure of wealth by a new commercial class."

They began by grabbing ("enclosing") the land and kicking off its inhabitants—here Monbiot uses a rather fraught and telling phrase—the new landlords, after grabbing the enclosures, started "shaking out its inhabitants". I think that as the poor people fled and were put to the sword, the remnants who made it were left to die of starvation and disease with the remaining few left to seek out an existence on croppy scraps of brush land, begging and trying to work where they could before the authorities caught up with them.

It is easy to see why Monbiot uses as a source the great novel, *Havoc In Its Third Year*, by the great Irish writer Ronan Bennett. Written in 2004 and described by many as a "masterpiece", it is easy to see that the research for this book was seriously obvious (Bennett obtained his PhD for the work this book is based on) and as Bennett himself wrote at the end of the book's Acknowledgments: "Which brings me, lastly, to the acknowledgment every novelist working with history must make: that when conflicts arise between historical fact and the demands of the novel we tend to settle them in favour of the latter."

Therefore Puritanism was—

"primarily the religion of the new commercial classes. It attracted traders, money lenders, bankers and industrialists. Calvin had given them what the old order could not: a theological justification of commerce. Capitalism, in his teachings, was not unchristian, but could be used for the glorification of God. From his doctrine of individual purification, the late Puritans forged a new theology. At its heart was an "idealisation of personal responsibility" before God. This rapidly turned into "a theory of individual rights" in which "the traditional scheme of Christian virtues was almost exactly reversed". By mid-17th century, most English Puritans saw in poverty "not a misfortune to be pitied and relieved, but a moral failing to be condemned, and in riches, not an object of suspicion... but the blessing which rewards the triumph of energy and will"..."

So if the Christian life, as idealised by both Calvin and Luther, was to concentrate on the direct contact of the individual soul with God, then society, of the kind perceived and protected by the medieval Church, becomes redundant.

"Individualism in religion led... to an individualist morality to a disparagement of the significance of the social fabric". To this the late Puritans added another concept. They conflated their religious calling with their commercial one. "Next to the saving of his soul" the preacher Richard Steele wrote in 1684, "the tradesman's care and business is to serve God in his calling and to drive it as far as it will go". Success in business became a sign of spiritual grace: providing proof to the entrepreneur, in Steel's words that "God has blessed his trade".

The Puritan Minister Joseph Lee anticipated Adam Smith's "invisible hand" by more than a century, when he claimed that "the advancement of private persons will be the advantage of the public". By private persons, of course, he meant the men of property, who were busily destroying the advancement of everyone else. Tawney himself characterised these Puritans as early converts to "administrative nihilism", the doctrine we now call "the minimal state". Businessmen should be left to settle business affairs "unhampered by the intrusions of an antiquated morality". They owed nothing to anyone. Indeed, they formulated a radical new theory of social obligation, which maintained that helping the poor created idleness and spiritual dissolution, divorcing them from God. Tawney saw these people as seeing the world existing not to be enjoyed but to

be conquered. And the conquerors were God's Christian people. As the Protestant Revolution spread, all others were violently suppressed especially the Papists.

In Bennett's book the "war on terror" was a sequel to the war on adulterers and sodomites which provided an ideal distraction for the increasingly impoverished lower classes. Monbiot is arrested by the vision created by Bennett where the pursuit of moral deviance of those already *outside the protection of the law*—the poor especially, and the Irish papist poor even more especially—is enforced with a viciousness and *righteousness* which surely appals most decent people. Monbiot finishes his article by declaring that, if we want to understand today's USA (the Free West), "we must look not to the 1930s, but to the 1630s".

But one cannot but see the parallels to not just to the so-called Free West but to Ireland especially. The rich walk away not just scot-free in Ireland—they are actually paid by the tax-payer to the tune of some €200,000 per annum for *co-operating* with the authorities and NAMA in trying to disentangle their webs of financial deceit and lies. The new Government is the same as the old one. It just keeps taxing the poor and the working middle-class—but not God forbid—the public sector. Of course the politicians are public sector employees and therein lies the rub.

The Taoiseach Edna Kenny, TD and leader of Fine Gael, gave a rabble-rousing speech in Dail Eireann about the culpability of the Vatican (echoes of times past!!) and the media hunt begins all over again. The Catholic Church or papists gets kicked, abused and literally in some cases beaten, but Taoiseach Kenny dares not say anything about how the contemporary State is doing with our children. They are nobodys after all and when they die, it's with needles sticking from their arms or knives in their hearts. We would do well to remember that Puritanism "was always conceived in relation to official Church of England doctrine, and that the difference between the two was often hard to discern. Many ideas once considered definitively Puritan (predestination, anti-Catholicism, justification by faith alone) were shared by all mainstream Protestants."

It's not so strange then that the Protestant Church of Ireland doesn't have to answer questions because once again it's their ideology that is the reigning power in Ireland.

Julianne Herlihy ©

## The Presidency—real choices

Any candidate for the Presidency should have one basic requirement to qualify. He/she should have achieved something tangible for the benefit of the society he/she is to be President of. The first President, Douglas Hyde, established an admirable precedent in this regard.

There are now just two candidates that can be taken seriously on that criterion, Michael D. Higgins and Martin McGuinness. Higgins established TG4 and that is a great tribute to him. McGuinness has helped ensure that the Northern nationalists and Catholics now have a guaranteed 'place in the sun' which will not be taken away whatever the future of the Northern Ireland set-up might be.

It is worth noting, in passing, that even the *Irish Times* now sees the essence of the current arrangement when it editorialized recently on the situation in Belgium—which has found forming a Government problematic—because:

"The political logjam there is guaranteed by provisions, like those in the Northern Ireland Assembly, which require governments to be artificial coalitions of parties representing majorities in each community, and which reward and promote sectarian and separatist politics" (Editorial, 14 September) (Emphasis added).

This equality of treatment in Northern Ireland took a quarter of a century of war to achieve and it would not have been happened otherwise. McGuinness was at the cutting edge of that as an IRA Commander. That achievement gives him a clear lead over Higgins in terms of qualification. He has other assets. Our wonderful media cannot ambush him with something from his/her past, one of their favourite games. McGuinness has had nothing but attempted ambushes and abuse from the media for about 40 years. He is now in the position that the more his past is drawn attention to the more it will benefit him.

Of course, one would-be candidate had a greater achievement but in the negative sense—Pat Cox. As President of the European Parliament he helped destroy the central authority of the EU, the Commission, which has inevitably led to the incoherence in that organization which helped cause, and is prolonging, the current Euro problem. The EU institutions are dying on their feet, thanks to the demise of the Commission from its central role.

Celia Larkin appears to be one of the few members of Fianna Fail to have survived its wreckage and retained some sense of orientation. In commenting on Micheál Martin's disastrous manoeuvring over the Presidency:

"As it is, Sinn Féin is whipping his ass, and looks likely to do so again having nominated Martin McGuinness for the presidency. Let's face it; with a good political candidate, as Mr McGuinness is, it will Hoover up disenchanted republican Fianna Fail voters. Gerry Adams may have played cute about past participation in the IRA, McGuinness has faced up to, and faced down, all criticism in relation to the same. He makes no bones about having been a senior member of the IRA in Derry. In fact, having been an active member of the IRA and gone on to successfully negotiate peace and participate in power sharing in the North, his past may well be an asset rather than a liability. With the DUP and UUP accepting his past it will be very difficult for his opponents to make a convincing argument against him on those grounds. It's a very clever move on Sinn Féin's part. A masterstroke in cross-border manoeuvring, playing perfectly into the republican vote. But, like all elections, it's never over until the votes are counted; anything can happen. Politics is a tough game and a presidential campaign is the toughest of all electoral jousts" (Sunday Independent, 18 September).

This is all to the point. However, she makes one comment on Martin that she should look at more closely: "*Martin is more than a politician. He's a political historian. He should have foreseen problems for the party.*"

I suspect she has not read the one book he has written—or was it his wife? That book has been reviewed in this magazine and the gist of it is that Martin cannot explain his party's past, even in his native Cork. That's no surprise, as his acknowledged authority in the book for the political history of Cork is Peter Hart! According to the latter's perspective now enunciated most regularly by Eoghan Harris, such a party should never have been set up—at best—and it was a criminal conspiracy to do so. That is the logic of their position.

No wonder that with such an intellectual background he is finding it difficult to lead his party. As the old cliché has it—if you don't know where you have come from you are not likely to know where you are going.

Jack Lane

## Naval Warfare

The *Hague Conventions* of 1899 and 1907 involved some refining of the *Declaration of Paris* with regard to naval warfare. Vice-Admiral (later First Sea Lord, 1904–10 and 1914–15) John Arbuthnot 'Jackie' Fisher was chosen by Lord Salisbury as the British naval delegate to the First Convention. For Fisher, Britain's position at the Hague could be summarized as follows: England's world position depended upon its navy, the navy was seen as sufficiently powerful to overcome any combination of other navies, and England reserved the right to employ its fleet in any way it chose—despite signing up to the Declaration of Paris.

In a letter to Lord Esher, written in May 1912, Jackie Fisher explained his approach at the Conference:

"When I was a Delegate at the Hague Conference of 1899... I had very animated conversations, which, however, to my lasting regret it was deemed inexpedient to place on record (on account of their violence, I believe!), regarding 'Trading with the Enemy, I stated the primordial fact that 'The Essence of War is Violence; Moderation in War is Imbecility'. And then in my remarks I went on to observe, as is stated by Mr. Norman Angell in the 'Great Illusion', where he holds me up as a Terror! And as misguided—perhaps I went a little too far when I said I would boil the prisoners in oil and murder the innocent in cold blood, &c., &c., &c. ... But it's quite silly not to make War damnable to the whole mass of your enemy's population, which of course is the secret of maintaining the right of Capture of Private Property at Sea. As you say, it must be proclaimed in the most public and most authoritative manner that direct and indirect trade between Great Britain, including every part of the British Empire, and Germany must cease in time of war... When war does come 'Might is Right!' and the Admiralty will know what to do. Nevertheless, it is a most serious drawback not making public to the world beforehand what we mean by War!" (*Memories*, p.210.)

Jackie Fisher was always forthright in his opinions and maintained that, if the politicians and diplomats he encountered had been as upfront with Germany as he was, there would have either been no war in 1914—or only a very quick one.

Fisher's autobiographical writings show him to have had a better relationship with the Liberal administration than the Tories—who annoyed him by using the naval

scare to get at the Asquith Government by bemoaning the 'decline of the fleet' and exaggerating German strength. Fisher, who knew that the Royal Navy was immensely stronger than the German fleet could ever be, viewed the Tory scaremongering as dangerous political nonsense.

Fisher understood that Germany was caught in a bind over the Royal Navy dreadnought building programme. For one thing the naval escalation embarked upon by England was extremely expensive. But also, to facilitate the building of dreadnoughts for themselves (in order to protect their merchant marine against the British dreadnoughts), the Germans had to dredge the faster route from Germany into the North Sea, the Kiel Canal. The widening of the canal undertaken from 1907 would allow the passage of German Dreadnoughts from their bases in the Baltic Sea to the North Sea without having to go around Denmark. But that then presented the Royal Navy with a window of opportunity to sail through the Kiel Canal and "*Copenhagen the German Fleet a la Nelson*".

Fisher, as First Sea Lord, urged this preventative strike policy on the King and Ministers of Crown in 1908, at the point when the Kiel Canal was open and before the German Fleet became more powerful. And when the politicians balked at his suggestion Fisher complained that England "*no longer possessed a Pitt to give the order*".

However, Fisher's vocal annunciation of this intention, without the political will to carry it out, had the effect itself of scaring the Germans into increased naval construction. On more than one occasion the belief that "*Fisher is coming*" spread panic in Germany and encouraged strenuous efforts to make the German Fleet more effective in response.

One thing that is apparent from Fisher's writings is that he had no time for the Liberal "*war for civilisation*" propaganda and its consequent demonising of Germany over the use of submarine warfare to break the British blockade. He had warned the Admiralty about the potential danger of submarine warfare to the British Fleet before the War, and had urged the mining of the German approaches to the North Sea with thousands of devices. On the dismissal of Admiral of the Fleet von Tirpitz in March 1916 Fisher wrote him a

letter: "*Dear Old Tirps... You're the one German sailor who understands War. Kill your enemy without being killed yourself. I don't blame you for the submarine business. I'd have done the same myself, only our idiots in England wouldn't believe it when I told them*" (*Memories*, p.17).

Tirpitz had subscribed to a form of "*risk theory*"—believing that if the German Navy reached a certain level of strength relative to the British Navy, the British would think again about a war to crush Germany. Tirpitz reasoned that a strong German Navy would prevent a British attack because, if it was feared the German Fleet could inflict enough damage on the British, then the Royal Navy ran the risk of losing its naval dominance in the world. Because Britain relied on its navy to maintain world dominance, Tirpitz felt that it would have to choose to maintain naval supremacy in order to safeguard the Empire, rather than risk losing all by attacking Germany.

Von Tirpitz's naval programme, begun in 1900, envisaged a German Fleet that could defend Germany against Royal Navy blockade in 17 years but the war came in 14.

Admiral Fisher's book *Records*, published at the close of the war on Germany, contained a damning indictment on the waging of the Great War in its *Preface*:

"Napoleon at St. Helena told us what all Englishmen have ever instinctively felt—that we should remain a purely maritime Power; instead, we became in this War a Conscript Nation, sending Armies of Millions to the Continent. If we stuck to the Sea, said Napoleon, we could dictate to the World... Again, Napoleon praised our Blockades... If our Blockade had been permitted by the Diplomats to have been effective, it would have finished the War at once... We 'kow-towed' to the French when they rebuffed our request for the English Army to be on the Sea Flank and to advance along the Belgian Coast, supported by the British Fleet; and then there would have been no German Submarine War. At the very beginning of the War we deceived the German Ambassador in London and the German Nation by our vacillating Diplomacy. We wrecked the Russian Revolution and turned it into Bolshevism. I mention these matters to prove the effete, apathetic, indecisive, vacillating Conduct of the War—the War eventually being won by an effective Blockade." (*Preface, Records*)

Fisher was candid in his view that: "*At the very beginning of the War we deceived the German Ambassador in London and the German Nation by our vacillating Diplomacy*". That sentence refers to the

mixed messages Sir Edward Grey gave to the Germans about British intentions regarding a European War that lured them into Belgium. If Grey had decided to make Britain's position clear, that it intended fighting Germany in any war with France, the Germans would never have risked war with England. But Grey refused to announce his position to ally and enemy alike in the crucial week before the European War—a strategy that Fisher saw as encouraging the war.

Fisher saw that as disastrous incompetence but it could equally have represented diplomatic competence if the intention on Grey's part differed to that which Fisher assumed.

In Fisher's book, *Records*, he revealed that he had warned about how the secret diplomacy and military arrangements being made by the Liberal Imperialists with the French would end in victory, but would also bring catastrophe:

"On December the 3rd, 1908, when I was First Sea Lord of the Admiralty, I hazarded a prophecy (but, of course, I was only doing the obvious!) that should we be led by our anti-Democratic tendencies in High Places, and by Secret Treaties and by Compromising Attendants of Great Military Officers at the French Manoeuvres at Nancy, into a sort of tacit pledge to France to land a British Army in France in a war against Germany, then would come the biggest blow to England she would ever have experienced—not a defeat, because we never succumb—but a deadly blow to our economic resources and by the relegation of the British Navy into a 'Subsidiary Service'..." (*Records*, p.227).

Fisher bemoaned the fact that the secret planning and waging of the Great War on Germany had already relegated the 'Senior Service' to the status of "*a Subsidiary Service*." Fisher put this down to the incompetence of politicians and diplomats but he did not analyse deeper. It had become 'Subsidiary' because the Balance of Power war had been turned into a moral imperative war and had fatally led to a never-ending commitment to Continental warfare.

The Liberal Imperialist War plan was based on the understanding that the Allies would make short work of Germany—and some even imagined that the War would be all over by Christmas. The Liberal Imperialist coterie of Asquith, Grey, Haldane, and Churchill—which secretly planned the war—probably had a view of it as a limited intervention based on the usual naval operations—with a small expeditionary force to keep the French happy. The War Minister over the preceding decade, Haldane, had built up an

Expeditionary Force of over 100,000 to fight on the French left wing. And it was imagined that this minimum force, coupled with the main contribution of the Royal Navy on the seas, would be enough to see off Germany, by keeping the Allies engaged, and with the "*Russian steamroller*" coming at Berlin from the East.

England had not fought a continental war since the time it organized a grand alliance against Napoleon and much of the understanding of the Liberal Imperialists was based on this experience. The Napoleonic Wars conformed to the principles of England's aristocratic wars. Britain fought in Continental wars to preserve the Balance of Power in Europe and obtain overseas territory while the Continental Powers were occupied. It did so by letting its Allies do most of the fighting on land whilst the Royal Navy controlled the seas around Europe. English military interventions were thereafter conducted around the edges of conflict by small armies which never got bogged down in a long war in Europe. In the Napoleonic Wars the Royal Navy had quickly seen off the French Navy, and Britain then used its war chest to pay its allies to do the fighting on land. The war chest had been increased by the naval blockade of France which stopped the French Republic's trade and increased Britain's revenue. French forces were engaged by amphibious pinpricks at the fringes, most notably in the Iberian Peninsula. And Napoleon was drawn into a war with Russia which sapped French strength through the weight of numbers and vast territorial battlegrounds that confronted his armies.

One Liberal writer, Laurie Magnus, described the War of 1914 as another round with 'absolutism' in Europe in a book entitled *The Third Great War*. (The First Great War was that of the Grand Alliance against Louis XIV. The Second was against Napoleon, a century later. And the Third was a century after that.) And Winston Churchill, the descendant of Marlborough, announced the naval blockade on Germany in Napoleonic terms on February 15th 1915: "*We shall bring the full force of naval pressure to bear on the enemy. It may be enough without war on land to secure victory over the foe*" (*Daily News*, 16th February 1915). The Liberals still had the notion that the old limited warfare of their Whig ancestors would be enough to see off the Hun as it had the French. (I was looking for an equivalent word to 'Hun' used by England to demonise the French but could not find one. And that says a lot about the different

characters of the two wars.)

England's war strategy had always been based on the principle that, if things went wrong, she could cut her losses quickly without any great effects on her fighting power or martial spirit. And it was imagined that the European War of 1914 would follow a similar pattern to that between 1793 and 1815. That is how Fisher imagined it, in any case, and why he advised a coastal strategy—not merely for offensive purposes but also for a quick flight organised by his navy if things went wrong and then a reliance on blockade to continue the conflict with further allies recruited.

In 1793 Edmund Burke had called for something like an unlimited war to be waged on the French Revolution but William Pitt, whilst utilizing Burke's polemics against the Republic, was careful to limit the war to a Balance of Power contest. But in 1914 the Liberals turned the Balance of Power war into an unlimited commitment by waging it as a war of Good over Evil that could never be called off until the Evil had been vanquished. And the military commitments made to the French as a consequence of their secret planning of the War, behind the backs of their backbenchers, ensured an entanglement that it was not easy to escape from.

Haldane's institution of a British Expeditionary Force was undoubtedly an innovation in military strategy that had unforeseen consequences. It committed England to a large-scale continental engagement that it had carefully avoided for a century. But, in itself, this innovation might not have had the catastrophic effect it subsequently did. The Expeditionary Force might have been used up, stalemate might have ensued and the War might have been called off in some way—either by a general peace settlement or through letting the French and Russians stew in their own juices. What happened in 1940 is illustrative in this aspect.

Fisher had a conception of the Great War that closely resembled the campaign fought against Napoleon a hundred years previously, in which the Royal Navy played the primary role and the British Army was used largely as a peripheral force in the British campaign. He believed that before the war Britain should have devoted itself to supplying the Russian Army with British munitions so that it could, like England's continental allies in the war on Republican France, do the bulk of the fighting against the Germans. For Fisher this would have been much more preferable than conscripting millions of



men from Britain to do the fighting and dying in land war—something that was never England's speciality.

Fisher thought Britain should have refused a position on the centre-left of the French lines and instead conducted its own coastal assault, backed by the Navy, against Germany. He believed that the Royal Navy should have launched the British Expeditionary Force of 160,000 at Antwerp on the outbreak of war and conducted co-ordinated but largely independent operations from there.

Fisher thought Britain could treat France

as she did Prussia in previous Balance of Power wars. And there is some evidence, in Grey's refusal to be pinned down until the last moment, to suggest that this policy had not been altogether discarded.

But the war propaganda produced in conjunction with the waging of the Great War, which was seen as essential in bringing the Liberal backbenchers and the Irish along with the War, turned what might have been a limited commitment into an unlimited struggle to the death.

Naval warfare began—but not as Fisher knew it.

Pat Walsh

## From Sing Sing to Sing And Sing *The 1934 Larkin Affidavit*

Did Roger Casement wage war on a neutral USA? Can he be further indicted for fostering the antagonisms that led to the USA's formal entry, not only into the First World War, but into the Second World War as well? And was it some supposed hindsight—if not foresight—of this character that compelled US President Wilson to refuse to appeal to Britain to commute Casement's death sentence in 1916? Readers may well wonder what exactly they are meant to conclude from the following narrative penned by Jeffrey Dudgeon in his 2002 magnum opus, *Roger Casement—The Black Diaries—with a study of his background, sexuality and Irish political life* (p430):

"As America was to enter the war in 1917, despite much Irish-American opposition, and Germany was to lose it, the results of Casement's alliances were doubly diluted. If any country was able to put effective pressure on London, it was America. And Casement, by his alliance with Berlin, not to mention his willingness to assist in sabotage within the US (and indirectly to encourage Mexican *revanchism* over their lost territories), all before America's entry to the war, ensured that pressure from that quarter would be muted... On 6 January 1915, Richard Meyer, Casement's long-suffering (German) Foreign Ministry interpreter recorded: *'The Admiralty Staff requests to instigate Irish in America, through intercession of Sir Roger Casement, to far-reaching sabotage in the United States and Canada.'* Meyer was a Jew personally turned down for citizenship by Hitler in 1936; interestingly German-American Jews were another group targeted by Berlin in 1914. Taking the matter further, the Wilhelmstrasse Foreign Ministry advised von Papen on 26 January of people *'indicated by Sir Roger Casement'*

from whom the names of *'persons suitable for carrying on sabotage in the United States and Canada'* could be obtained... The deciphered message concluded by advising: *'In the United States sabotage can be carried out on every kind of factory for supplying munitions of war. Railway embankments and bridges and bridges must not be touched. Embassy must in no circumstances be compromised.'* **This message may have also become Casement's death warrant, perhaps being of greater significance than the Black Diaries in President Wilson's failure to respond to pleas from Capitol Hill concerning a reprieve.** {My emphasis—MOR.}

"*It would be inexcusable to touch this*", Woodrow Wilson told his Irish secretary in July, adding: *'It would involve serious international embarrassment'*. His coolness on the matter was put down by many to his Ulster Presbyterian origins. But he would also have been well aware of intelligence that put Casement and the German embassy at the centre of a web of intrigue opposed to his country's best interest. For the next twenty years the process of trying to obtain reparations from Berlin through the Mixed Claims Commission for the damage caused by sabotage, not least in the January 1917 Black Tom railway freight yard explosion in New York, would keep lawyers busy and the issue militating against *rap-prochement* between the two nations. **In that sense, Casement's overblown, indeed careless, pro-Germanism was to have unforeseen effects on German-American relations for a generation—through to another war"**

{my emphasis —MOR}.

I have underlined two basic *non sequiturs*, but as I do not hold Casement in any way responsible for the antagonisms that resulted in the Second World War, I will confine my remarks to Dudgeon's

Wilsonian *apologia* in respect of the First World War. I should, however, first take account of what, on the other hand, I might designate as some *sequiturs*—conclusions that can be drawn from Dudgeon's very own text, almost in spite of himself:

(1) Sabotage in the USA was neither a Fenian plot initiated by Casement, nor a Jewish plot initiated by Meyer; (2) The USA was only formally neutral, while in reality up to its neck in Britain's bloody war, through the manufacture and supply of the latter's munitions of war; (3) It was the German authorities themselves who proposed the sabotage of such Anglo-American war activities—seeking to avoid any loss of civilian life by specifically excluding railway embankments and bridges—which actions Casement and groupings of Irish-Americans and German-American Jews agreed to support.

What most surprises me here, however, is Jeffrey Dudgeon's attempt to minimise Woodrow Wilson's wholehearted embrace of the Ulster Presbyterian prejudice to *"Save Ulster (and the World) from Sodomy!"*, upon which prejudice, embodied in Northern Ireland law, Dudgeon himself would inflict such a historic defeat at the European Court of Human Rights in 1980. For there is not the slightest evidence that Wilson had any awareness in 1916 of Casement's name cropping up in association with German sabotage operations. True, as pointed out by Dudgeon, *"telegraphic messages to and from the German embassy in Washington were being intercepted"* and *"in the 1921 government Bluebook, Documents Relative to the Sinn Féin Movement, many of these intercepts were published"* (p428). Indeed, as early as February 1916, Berlin learned from its Washington Embassy that the date for the Irish Rising had been set for Easter (p 459). Since this message was intercepted at the time, why, then was the British Government still caught on the hop? Because all such communications were in code!

Jeffrey Dudgeon's narrative of these issues does not tie up his own loose ends, but it is now necessary for me to do so. Surely his own passing statement that *"it is unclear from the (1921) Bluebook when these messages were decrypted"* (p429) should have led him to doubt his own flamboyant claim on the following page that Wilson's refusal to intervene on behalf of Casement's life, on the grounds that *"it would be inexcusable to touch this"*, was primarily due to knowledge of the contents of intercepts that had yet to be decoded.

That it was President Wilson's raw nerve of pure-and-simple Ulster Presbyterian homophobia that had been touched in July 1916 should be obvious when, more than 100 pages later (p534), Dudgeon's own narrative returns to the same time-frame:

"But the intention was brutally clear, especially in the US, as a secret telegram (dated 29 June 1916) to the (UK) naval attaché in Washington, Captain Guy Grant, indicates: *'Photographic facsimile & transcript of Casement's diary, of which you have, no doubt, already heard, is being sent to America by today's mail... which throw an appalling light on Casement's past life, and which when known will make it quite impossible for any self-respecting person to champion his cause.'* ... Walter Page, the US ambassador in London, had early on been informed of the diaries and he was keen to advise Washington to have nothing to do with Casement *'even indirectly'*, as he was of an *'unspeakably filthy character'*..."

But, what has any of this to do with Larkin? What, indeed, since Jeffrey Dudgeon makes not a single mention of Larkin in his hullabaloo about the twenty-year-long Mixed Claims Commission that supposedly links Casement to the Second World War. Yet the intercepted German communications, as quoted by Dudgeon and published in the 1921 Bluebook, had made little or no impact on the Commission over the next decade and a half. What would change US fortunes in that regard, however, was the materialising in 1934 of a star witness who would sing and sing on its behalf—none other than Big Jim Larkin.

In my *Irish Political Review* series on the M15 smear campaign against the late Jack Jones (see the issues of July, August, October and December 2010 and January 2011) I referred to it as the British Intelligence Show Trial of Jack James Larkin Jones, and how it was a case of history repeating itself as farce. The original historical event had been *The American Trial of Big Jim Larkin*, April 1920, which I edited for publication by Athol Books back in 1976. I have, however, also referred to the fact that there were at least two candidates for such history repeating itself as tragedy. Hence, my article on the 1952 trial of Solomon Lozovsky, Larkin's old sparring partner in the Prointern—the Red International of Labour Unions. But this, at least, was a tragedy with a heroic component—Lozovsky's own courageous behaviour throughout. The second candidate for the 1920 trial of a heroic Big Jim repeating itself in the form of tragedy is, however, anything but heroic. For it involved that self-same Larkin letting himself down completely in 1934, not

only by as good as voluntarily putting himself on trial yet again at the request of the USA that had imprisoned him fourteen years previously, but—far worse—by also proceeding to *"name names"* during the course of a most unconscionable performance. It is, indeed, impossible to avoid using that term of opprobrium: *"informer"*!

In 1997, in order to mark the 50th anniversary of Larkin's death, RTE produced a series of fifteen Thomas Davis radio lectures on Larkin, which were brought together the following year in a 550 page volume, edited by Donal Nevin and entitled *James Larkin—Lion Of The Fold*. The radio lectures comprised just 120 pages of that book—the bulk consisting of a mine of biographical material researched by Nevin himself, including the publication in full of a unique document dubbed *"The Larkin Affidavit"*, which was introduced by Nevin as follows:

"After the First World War, the United States government lodged claims against the German government involving some \$40 million for damages for alleged German sabotage during the war. The case came before the Mixed Claims Commission in 1936. At the request of John J. McCloy, representing the United States, James Larkin made an affidavit in January 1934. The affidavit, which has never been published, is given in full in the pages following. Prof. Emmet Larkin had sight of the affidavit when preparing his biography of Larkin, published in 1965. The manuscript was in the Record of Boundary and Claims Commissions and Arbitrations in the National Archives, Washington. He considered that the affidavit, an account of Larkin's associations with German agents in the United States and Mexico between 1914 and the end of 1917, was corroborated by what independent evidence was available and that it was generally accurate, considering the interval of sixteen years. The copy of the affidavit reproduced here was secured by SIPTU in 1997 through the good offices of the US ambassador to Ireland, Jean Kennedy Smith {a sister of President John F. Kennedy—MOR}. The lawyer, John J. McCloy, who visited Dublin to secure Larkin's affidavit, was to become president of the World Bank in 1947 and two years later US Military Governor and High Commissioner in Germany, which position he held until 1952" (p298).

Why have all those who read that affidavit when it was first published in 1998, and all who have commented on Larkin ever since, including myself, paid no attention before now to what its full unfolding actually tells us about him? This may be partly due to the fact that so much of it had already been used by Emmet Larkin (no relation) in his 1965 biography—simply entitled *James Larkin—Irish*

*Labour Leader*—in order to fill in the details of Big Jim's activities in the USA from 1914 to 1917. With sight of that affidavit as his source, he had related:

"Still, the grounds for the pro-German label were better than even the Socialists knew. Not only did Larkin associate and speak from the same platform with prominent German-Americans and well-known German agents in the country, but he was acquainted on an intimate level with the negotiations going on between the Imperial German Government and Sir Roger Casement on behalf of the Irish Republic, 'now virtually established'. Larkin and Devoy were at Judge Daniel F. Cohalan's house the night Professor Kuno Meyer, the noted German Celtic scholar, arrived from Germany with Casement's initial message. Moreover, at the Manchester Martyrs meeting in Philadelphia in late November 1914, when Irish and German-Americans spoke from the same platform, Larkin was introduced to the German and Austrian consuls. Immediately on his return to New York he was contacted by Captains von Papen and Boy-Ed, military attachés assigned to the German Embassy..."

"In the late spring or early summer of 1915 when he had been in serious financial difficulties, Larkin, through John Devoy {leader of the Irish-American Fenian organisation Clan-na-Gael—MOR}, had contacted the Germans. Devoy described the interview years later in a private letter to a friend: *'Later on he made arrangements with other people and they insisted that I must be the medium of transmitting the money to him. I did not want this, but I was forced to let it stand, and I gave him the money according as I got it. It was not possible to keep records, and I cannot go into the matter now. All I had to do with the matter was to introduce him to a certain man who could only transmit his offer (which came from himself) to the chief parties and could make no decisions himself. He asked Jim how much he thought the work would cost and he said ten or twelve thousand dollars. The man said, 'I think that is a reasonable amount.'* L. from time on insisted that was a bargain that I was a party to it ...' (John Devoy to Frank Robbins of the ITGWU, 14 June 1923)".

"Why did Larkin ask Devoy to arrange a meeting that he could have easily arranged himself? Larkin was shrewd enough in this instance to protect himself. He wanted a witness, and one that was incapable of being refuted, as to exactly what kind of a deal he was trying to making with the Germans. It seems obvious that Larkin was trying to avoid being committed to sabotage, while accepting German money for helping to frustrate efforts to aid the Allies in this country through the organising of labour troubles..."

"In 1916, a few weeks after the Chicago meeting, Larkin left for San Francisco where he had an interview with the

German Consul, von Bopp, who asked him how his work was proceeding. While in San Francisco Larkin was 'visited nearly every day by Tom Mooney', who would be soon tried, convicted, and sentenced to be executed for the San Francisco Preparedness Day Parade Bomb Plot of July 16, 1916, in which a number of people were killed. Von Bopp later told Larkin that Mooney had been 'railroaded', though he did admit that Mooney had been active along the same lines as Larkin in strikes and stoppages to slow up the American effort to aid the allies..."

"Larkin arrived in Mexico City about the middle of October, 1917 where he was interviewed the German Minister, von Eckhardt and his staff. Von Eckhardt explained that the military situation was becoming desperate. If the Allies were not halted Germany must soon negotiate for peace. The situation in Mexico was also awkward, for President Carranza had sold the Germans out and gone pro-British. Their greatest need, von Eckhardt explained, was trustworthy and loyal men. The Germans then brought out maps, on which Larkin noted 'was marked every oil field, railway junction, and to my knowledge, the majority of ammunition and steel plants in the United States' and port terminals. They claimed that the 'Black Tom' explosion had been their greatest success, and then asked Larkin to undertake sabotage for them in the United States. When he refused, their hitherto friendly demeanour changed and the interview was quickly brought to a close. The next day his wallet was stolen and the following day his suitcase was gone. He was then presented with a substantial hotel bill and with his last few pesos he wired both San Francisco and New York for money. After much delay the money arrived and Larkin made his way back to New York, his adventurous career as a German agent coming to an abrupt end" (pp192-218).

Since this narrative by Professor Larkin of Big Jim's activities in the USA had been placed in the years in which those activities had occurred, little thought was given to the context and date of the affidavit itself, as distinct from the light it shed on the activities themselves of two decades previously. There was nothing in the Professor's narrative to detract from the heroic character of Larkin's 1920 trial, which I had revisited in my own 1997 radio lecture entitled *"Larkin in America: The Road to Sing Sing"*, and which was also later published in Nevin's *Lion Of The Fold*. (Sing Sing is the name of the New York prison where Larkin was incarcerated) In that lecture I had related:

"Larkin finally came to trial on 7 April 1920, and the proceedings continued until the 27th. The transcript of the trial was to take up 924 printed pages. Since Larkin

conducted his own defence, he had to state his case by posing questions to himself, as well as answering the interjections of Judge Weeks and the cross-examination of the Assistant District Attorney, Alexander Rorke. Larkin's final contribution was to be a three and a half hour summation to the jury..."

"Larkin was also audacious enough to prick the bubble of America's own xenophobic chauvinism: *'America will be the greatest nation on earth when it absorbs the present element within her borders. But it is not a nation now. You have no cultural expression. You are confined to few great men like Twain and Emerson and Whitman. But America shows a parochial mind. The defendant thinks that some of the best that American's possesses by way of men and women, and their mental expression in applied knowledge, has come from the alien within the borders.'* But, as Larkin pointed out, Aryan New York was still discriminating against what it regarded as alien New York: *'I am a comrade of Gitlow. He is a Jew and I am a Gentile. Did you notice, gentlemen, that every Jew who got in that box was dismissed by peremptory challenge, but not be the defendant? And yet the Jews have given something in the way of service to America, and why they were debarred from sitting in judgement upon this man who is tried for trying to overcome the Constitution, I fail to understand. And yet they tell you that this is a country, homogenous in itself, where everybody has a right to free expression and all the responsibilities both of citizenship and of service.'* ... Larkin nonetheless insisted that he in fact was adhering to the best of America's own radical traditions: *'How did I get the love of comrades, only by reading Whitman? How did I get this love of humanity except by understanding men like Thoreau and Emerson and the greatest man of all next to Emerson—Mark Twain? Those are the men I have lived with, the real Americans—not the Americans of the mart and the exchange who would sell their souls for money and well the country too.'*

"Larkin went on to invoke Abraham Lincoln's words: *'Listen to what one of the great citizens of the world that was honoured by you says: "If by mere force of numbers a majority should deprive a minority of any clearly written constitutional right, it might be a moral point of view justify revolution"'—an address delivered by President Lincoln, a man that has been a world force, who speaks out as the First Citizen and a man who is admitted to have saved this Union. "This country", says he, "with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing Government they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember and overthrow it."* That is Lincoln... The defendant says that he was trying to infuse

*a new spirit and understanding of real socialism, revolutionary socialism. Of course you are all fearful of that term, and yet there is a man, Lincoln, who is not fearful of it.'* Larkin maintained that what was at stake in his trial was in fact freedom of thought itself:

*"Einstein and men like him would not be allowed to function, would not be allowed to think"* ... Larkin was found guilty. On 3 May 1920 Judge Weeks sentenced him to a term of five to ten years' imprisonment, whereupon he was promptly despatched to Sing Sing Prison" (pp69-71).

When, however, one now takes a closer look at Nevin's reproduction of the 1934 Larkin affidavit, both in its entirety and in its contemporary context, it brings home the fact that Larkin was not just talking about himself, he was also incriminating others:

*"What we want", Captain Boy-Ed continued, 'are men of extreme views. We are prepared to give you and the movement you represent, official recognition. We want men of serious and extreme view to undertake what we realise will be a dangerous but essential and vital work.'* ... Captain Boy-Ed then undertook that two hundred dollars (\$200.00) per week would be paid to me, thorough any person or avenue I would designate. I refused to accept any monies or to have any official connection.... Around Christmas week, by arrangement of Captain Boy-Ed, we met again in Moquin's restaurant, somewhere about 28th Street and 6th Avenue. I believe von Papen was also present. Paul Koenig, the North-German Lloyd or Hamburg Amerika Steamship Companies' labour agent, was also present. Koenig was their chief and their paymaster. After dinner we adjourned to another German restaurant, I believe at 29th and 6th Avenue, where we sat until a late hour in the morning. Captain Boy-Ed and myself drove to my lodgings and during the course of the night Captain Boy-Ed told me what the German organisation had been doing and what they hoped to do, in connection with sabotage, such as stopping munitions supplies. He asked me to undertake to organise a group of men, non-Germans, to work along the waterfront, as the Germans were under too strict a surveillance... I told him that I would have nothing to do with such an organisation or such methods, that I was working in cooperation with my own people upon lines agreed upon and in accordance with my own views of life; that I had no regard for the German Government as such, nor was I desirous of its success in the World War except that it might result in forcing England to accept Irish independence. My object was to see a deadlock arrived at, hoping that the workers would revolt in the several countries. I was quite aware of the promises held out as to recognition, but I did not wish Ireland to be in any way



subject to the German Empire, any more than to the British Empire; that I thought it more important to get recognition and protection from and within the United States from whom we had nothing to fear..."

"It was about this time, the latter end of February 1916, I came into close contact with von Igel... He appealed to me to cooperate with him apart from my interest in the Irish organisation and help him to interfere directly with the shipment of munitions. At this particular meeting von Igel assured me, as had been explained to me previously, that there was no personal danger in carrying out the work. He arranged that we should cross to Hoboken so that his staff could show me by actual demonstrations the means that were being used... They explained the technical terms of the elements contained in these devices which brought about the explosions or fires. There was a chemist present who explained the formulae. No notes, however, were allowed to be taken. (I saw this same chemist in Mexico City in 1917. He was a red-bearded man of Jewish extraction). The effect of the demonstration further strengthened my conviction of having nothing to do with this method of sabotage. The liquid fire, it was stated, was mostly to be used for factory operations..."

"On the night of what is now known as the 'Black Tom' explosion I was in lower Broadway at about 2 a.m. I had gotten off at Fulton Street. I was somewhere about Trinity Church when a tremendous detonation was felt and glass fell down from the windows of the office buildings. There were very few people about and I proceeded to my apartments in Milligan Place, 10th Avenue. I read of the explosion in the early issues of the morning papers, realised my own danger in connection with it and made a record of the places I had been to, and the persons I had been with. That record is either in the hands of the police authorities or among my papers in New York City. I was not arrested however and there was no need for me to explain my presence at any place or time. I notified my friends in case I was picked up and gave them a copy of my statement as to my whereabouts previous to the explosion..."

"In the summer of 1917 an emissary came to me direct from San Francisco and urged me to proceed to Mexico City because of complications arising out of the military situation. This man came from von Bopp or his organisation. I left New York about the latter end of August and was met in San Antonio by two German officials who told me it was very difficult to cross the border since their machinery and line of communication had been destroyed. Their fake passport bureau had been discovered and a number of their agents were under surveillance. They said that, though they could give me no assistance, they been told to urge me to get through. They gave me seven

letters to deliver, one which I distinctly recall was written in Hebrew, others were in code..."

"During the course of my association with the Germans I, of course, came into contact with many of their active agents. Of these I definitely recall, in addition to those I have made mention of in this affidavit, Carl Rodiger, Tauscher, Becker, Gratz (seaman), Rasmussen, Witzke, and many others whose names I cannot recall at the moment. I feel that if I had a list of agents before me I could identify many others. Witzke I recall as a young man whom I think I met in Los Angeles in October, 1917. These and other matters of which I have knowledge I am prepared to submit, under oath, for examination and cross-examination before any tribunal. I make this affidavit in the interests of truth, having no other ulterior motive in view whatsoever and having received no consideration or promise of consideration whatever therefor... This affidavit has been hurriedly prepared without having any time for preparation or for reference to any records because of the urgent need of forwarding to the United States. **James J. Larkin**. Sworn to before me this 2nd Day of January, 1934, at 12.30 AM. Henry H. Balch, Consul General of the United States of America, Dublin, Ireland" (pp300-312).

So ended Larkin's midnight affidavit, sworn just after New Year's Day 1934 had drawn to a close. Why, subsequent to the publication of its full text in 1998, has nobody been moved to critically evaluate it before now? I must put my own hand up first and acknowledge that, while feeling uneasy about it, I had other priorities to write about rather than look more deeply in to it at the time. On the face of it, as introduced by Nevin, it was a 1934 affidavit for a US case to be pursued against Nazi Germany in 1936. Yet, I was also keenly aware that it remained a First World War grievance that had nothing to do with the Nazi character of Germany in 1934. And I was further well aware that *Irish Political Review* writers, including myself, were the exception to the 'rule'—prevailing in both academia and the media—that systematically conflated both World Wars, as well as treating Kaiser Germany and Nazi Germany as effectively being the father and son of each other. There was, of course, one of Larkin's "named names" who had prominently straddled both Wars, Franz von Papen. But buried in the body of Larkin's affidavit was also evidence of one fundamental difference between the two World Wars—that in Kaiser Germany its Jewish citizens had enthusiastically supported the war effort of their Fatherland. Larkin described the German chemist responsible for manufacturing the explosives for sabotage operations—whom he had met both in Hoboken, New Jersey, in 1916 and in Mexico City in 1917—as "*a red-bearded man of Jewish extraction*".

And when, on the latter visit, he had been asked to transmit messages to German agents, he observed: "*One which I distinctly recall was written in Hebrew*". (The language of the message was more likely to have been Yiddish, the primarily German-based *lingua franca*—but written with Hebrew characters—of the Jewish communities of Central and Eastern Europe—MOR)

When Roger Casement arrived in Europe from the USA in October 1914 he was also to have one constant German associate:

"From Christiania (Oslo) to Berlin he was accompanied by Richard Meyer, a representative of the German Foreign Office. Meyer was to become one of the most important German functionaries entrusted with attending to Casement and Irish matters. Among other things, he served as interpreter during Casement's often trying negotiations with civilian and military Germany Government officials... Contrary to available published information, Richard Meyer was not a brother of Kuno Meyer, the Celtic specialist. He was one of the very few Jews working in the Berlin Foreign Office. In 1936 Adolf Hitler rejected Meyer's application to be allowed to keep citizen's rights. Evidently recalling his many years of service, the Nazi Government in 1939 permitted him to leave for Sweden" (Reinhard Doerries, *Prelude to the Easter Rising: Sir Roger Casement in Imperial Germany*, 2000, pp7,26-27).

Robert Briscoe, the Dublin Jewish IRA agent during the War of Independence, and subsequently a Fianna Fáil TD and twice Lord Mayor of Dublin, had also been an enthusiastic supporter of Kaiser Germany, where he had been living and working during the years 1912-14, until after the outbreak of the First World War. Briscoe was on to recall:

"In December, 1914, I sailed for America in the steerage of the White Star liner *Baltic*. In those old ships, built to carry emigrants packed like cattle, the steerage on a winter crossing was no bed of roses. But I enjoyed myself. This was mainly due to an Irish girl—with whom I fell in love for the voyage. Her name was Norah Connolly, daughter of the Irish patriot who was later killed in the Easter Rising of 1916, which was the beginning of our fight for freedom. Norah's spirits were as high as the colour of her cheeks; she acted as carefree as a cricket. And she seemed to like me. One night when we were standing near the stern, shivering in the icy wind, but not wanting to leave a lovely moon, she gave me a sealed envelope saying with simple trust, 'Please take care of this for me. I'm so scatter-brained I'm fearful of losing it'. Highly flattered by her confidence I put it in my breast pocket and thought of it no more. On the windy dock in New York, when



we had passed the immigration officials, she was met by James Larkin, whom I recognised as one of the great leaders of the Irish workers seething beneath the crust of British rule. She asked me, then, for the envelope, and handed it to him. I realised that I had been her courier, but did not mind the risk she had put on me. Much later I learned that the papers I had carried into America were dispatches from James Connolly to German Ambassador Count von Bernstorff. They were the beginning of what was known as the 'German Plot', the attempt of Irish patriots to enlist German aid and German arms in Ireland's fight for liberation. I claim no credit for the service rendered. It was done in all innocence out of what I thought any young man should do for a lady. But had I known what it was, I would still have done it gladly" (Robert Briscoe, *For The Life Of Me*, pp35-36).

(to be continued)

**Manus O'Riordan**

## DRONING ON

What a site/sight on YouTube,  
in your lair, the trailer,  
the high-backed easy chair,  
the giant satellite dish outside,  
heard you talking,  
how with sensors it's decided  
about the (human) hotspots  
in houses, transport, walking,  
the joystick as vox pop,  
your rights, their terrorist wiles,  
which you must stop,  
the girl-captain smiles:  
get the picture, chant the rap,  
it's not mere Play Station conjecture,  
our game has presidential style,  
she's cool, maybe a Chanel addict  
under her West Point camouflage,  
to stifle her part in that ménage  
that makes war her domicile,  
maybe you did have a good day  
after that call from Langley,  
Virginia,  
did the screen turn red,  
reflecting the colour  
of pyromania,  
or of blood instead,  
did you give a loud whoop,  
high-fives all round,  
do you know how many lives  
you took,  
the suspect was late,  
they heard the whine of a drone,  
his family of eight,  
as the roof displayed their fate  
with cross-hairs,  
he watched, (soon to be alone)  
as the missile declared  
and an intense white light shone...  
thank you for logging on.

**Wilson John Haire**  
26th April, 2011

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The following letter, sent to the *Sunday Independent* on 2nd June, was not published

## Scotland And Independence

In regards to a letter in last week's Sunday Independent, 29 May, 2011. The writer of that letter, an anonymous Scotsman then working as a representative of the Electricity Supply Industry of Northern Ireland, recounts his experiences at a meeting with a representative of the ESB from the South. In response to a remark from the man from the ESB along the lines that he was proud to represent a nation that began the break-up of the British Empire, the author replied "One day Scotland may very well get independence and become a republic, too, but there will not be a shot fired nor a single life lost. Could that not have happened here?" There are a few observations that may assist your anonymous Scotsman to better understand the reality of the Scottish Assembly and Ireland's relationship with a peaceful road to independence:

(1) Scotland is not yet independent and under the terms of the legislation establishing a devolved assembly for Scotland any referendum for independence held under the auspices of that assembly is considered invalid unless the holding of such a referendum is approved by the Westminster government.

(2) In the event that Scotland voted for independence in an unapproved referendum (as Ireland did in the 1918 General Election) such a result will not be recognized by the Westminster Government (as it was not in Ireland in 1918).

(3) If Ireland could have gained independence from Britain by peaceful means it would have happened in the aftermath of the 1918 General Election. That it did not was entirely due to a decision made by the Westminster Government.

I will finish with my own rhetorical question. Unless you believe that the Irish are genetically predisposed to violence why would they not have accepted a peaceful road to independence if such a thing was ever on offer? The above, by the way, is a question that Ruth Dudley Edwards, the subject of the eulogy of the anonymous Scotsman's letter, has also never fully answered.

**Eamon Dyas**

This was submitted to the *Irish Independent* on 30th May

## John Redmond

Niall Ginty (Irish Independent 31-5-11) would like us to believe John Redmond was a pacifist constitutionalist. Is this the cap Redmond was wearing when he exhorted nearly 200,000 Irishmen to fight on behalf of the foreign power that had occupied this country by military force for centuries? Is this what Redmond was when he sent 200,000 Irishmen off—50,000 of them to their deaths—in the killing fields of France? Is this what Redmond was when those same Irishmen—wearing the uniform of the British Army—left thousands upon thousands of German corpses and as many grieving German widows, parents, children, sons and daughters in their wake? And all so Britain could become the dominant European power and expand its empire by a few more thousand square kilometres. All so Redmond could achieve his political aim of Home Rule—an aim which eluded him despite all the blood he caused to be spilled over it. Redmond—a 'patriotic constitutionalist'. Redmond—'eschewed violence for political aims'. Redmond—fairy tales for revisionists.

**Nick Folley**

## WALKING BACKWARDS FOR JUSTICE

She suggests the justice of the victors  
but her land is the land of fantasy,  
colonial mindset in hypocrisy,  
arrogance delivering the dicta.  
Amnesty International rides high,  
delivering conditions for future talks.  
(peace a bloodied dove nesting with the hawk?)  
Meanwhile a swarm of drones glower in the sky.

Agony Aunt scolds the Taliban,  
sings her dirge to their blood-soaked native  
soil.  
(do those fish swim the waters of England?)  
Her ilk poisons the water, creates spoil,  
must unravel her contingency plan.  
Among the inept she is their royal.

**Wilson John Haire**  
7th June, 2011

Does  
It  
Up

Stack  
?

#### FREE-MARKETS, THE EURO AND SPECULATORS

Why can't the politicians separate the economy of the State and the stock-market? We are being taken in by the poisonous propaganda that the latter is the real economy and we are moving towards an incredibly dangerous situation. The markets see blood on the Euro and won't stop till real damage is done. When one sees the likes of George Soros, in the Irish *Daily Mail*, 16th August 2011, demanding the exit of Greece and Portugal from the Eurozone, one better have a life-raft ready because why stop there? Soros, a currency speculator of all things—how ironic is that—now demands the exit of these two countries to "help save the Euro". He also backed "the idea of a euro bond, in which debt would be issued jointly by all eurozone member states". He also stated:

"Countries sharing the currency must be able to refinance a large part of their debt under the same conditions. Such a bond would allow Europe's poorer countries to raise money cheaply, because French and German financial muscle would act as a guarantee."

However Soros—known as the man who "broke the Bank of England" after making £1 billion betting against the pound in 1992—said the "best way forward at present might be an orderly exit" from the euro for Greece and Portugal. Just say that word again: Refinance. It really is time to get these vultures off our back but have the politicians the will?

#### MARY ROBINSON

As if the faces of starving children and their parents and grandparents aren't enough to guilt-trip us into giving to charities for their "relief", we also get to see famous faces from the past peering out from our TV screens making emotive pleas for our money. As the whole 'aid' concept is now entering *finally* into a debate about complex issues that will hopefully see a reliance shifting back onto the Governments responsible for their own people, it is to be hoped that for those in the charity business (and make no mistake it is a *big business*) will finally see their time in Africa running out. John O Shea of Goal gets over €120,000, Fergus Finlay of Barnardos got €125,000 and they have other staff getting what to us, the ordinary punter, are huge salaries. Dambisa Moya of the book *Dead Aid* gave the game away and there is no going back.

The great Indian writer Arundati Roy also awoke our consciences to the damage

of the World Bank and the IMF and other organisations like the UN. At the last count there were 16,000 people working for the World Bank in Washington and paid from all our coffers and of course spending our money in America. Mary Robinson has some kind of outfit in New York calling itself *The Ethical Globalization Initiative*. Dublin-based *Phoenix* magazine has done everything possible to extract some information about its aims and policies and has yet emerged with nothing. But Mary Robinson has other avenues of accruing wealth. According to the Irish *Daily Mail*, 30th May 2011,

"she has been hired to give talks and mingle with well-heeled guests on a cruise ship. Passengers pay up to €13,000 each to cruise the world meeting legendary political figures such as Mikhail Gorbachev and Polish Solidarity founder Lech Walesa. Lindblad Expeditions, along with *National Geographic*, are paying the one-time UN human rights commissioner to join its British and Irish Isles tour this year. Mrs Robinson went on one of the company's ships last week but she has also agreed to join tours next year. Voyages on the 148-passenger *National Geographic Explorer* are being marketed as a chance to travel with 'Mary Robinson, the first woman president of Ireland' and hear her perspective on modern Ireland. Guests have the 'opportunity to travel and explore with world-class personalities, as fellow guests'. How much Mrs. Robinson will be paid is a closely guarded secret. One-off speaking engagements for former US presidents earn them between €70,000 €300,000 and former Taoiseach Bertie Ahern was understood to charge around €30,000 per engagement. 'Mrs. Robinson was aboard the *Explorer* last week and disembarked yesterday in the Norwegian city of Bergen. During the trip she gave two presentations on Ireland after which she held a question and answers session with guests'..."

#### JOSEPH CONNELLY. RECENT READING

The memoir of Senator Joseph Connelly, *A Founder Of Modern Ireland*, is edited by J. Anthony Gaughan. It was published in 1996 by the Irish Academic Press and was reprinted again in 1998. We owe the memoir to a friend of Senator Connelly—F.X. Martin OSA, who encouraged the former to write it.

It is a shock to see that the Senator was a founder of Modern Ireland as he seems so little known if indeed he is known at all. Senator Joseph Connelly 1885-1961 was that rare breed—an honest politician who made his comments known. Fr. Anthony Gaughan has done Joseph Connelly's memoirs proud and there are 481 pages which are indeed a treasure trove of information and references covering the period from 1911 when young Joseph Connelly co-founded the first Freedom

Club to spread the Sinn Féin message in Belfast, where he was born, up to his retirement in 1950 as Chairman of the Commissioners of Public Works.

In between 1911 and 1950 he had taken part in the Easter Rising, had been imprisoned, was on the Commission of the First Dail, acted as Consul-General to the USA for the Irish Republic 1921-22, and backed DeValera in forming the anti-treatyites into Fianna Fáil. He was a Senator from 1928-1936, a Director of the *Irish Press*, Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, Controller of Censorship 1939-1941, and eventually Chairman of the Office of Public Works. He was a great administrator and was well acknowledged for hard work. There is a good index and Anthony Gaughan's extensive footnotes are a history of fine detail in themselves.

This book is well worth reading. From the beginning I was engaged with its story and wondered why I hadn't heard more about Senator Joseph Connelly? It will emerge if you read the book. As I already stated he was not afraid to confront people and he was quite honest about it—so much different to what counts for politics these days.

Michael Stack ©

## DEMOCRACY concluded

The Swiss President is chairman of a seven-member committee that alternates once a year.

The Supreme Court is comprised of some four dozen judges, many of them without a law degree, who have no authority to discard federal laws, even if they deem them unconstitutional.

The Swiss judicial system does not give judges, the power to tell the people what the law shall be. Instead, the law of the land becomes what has been voted for, not judges' edicts.

Switzerland is a democracy, pure and simple. The people have the final say on legislation since they've not allowed politicians to usurp their power.

This means that Swiss voters decide at referendums whether or not their country enters international treaties.

Irish citizens are denied this sort of choice. As a result, we suffer from a proliferation of extra laws, because Dublin has signed EU, United Nations and other conventions and treaties devised in the main by overseas diplomatic staff and well-paid bureaucrats housed in distant Brussels, Manhattan or Geneva.

Looking at this 150-year history, the most important characteristic is probably something one does not see. There does not appear to have been a single *crise de régime* caused by the initiative or referendum policy. This is saying a great deal, because one can certainly point to cases where the device helped defuse or prevent a crisis.

That having been said, Switzerland, with its citizens as pivotal players, has shown a rare capacity to take decisive action in areas where elected politicians in other countries have often fumbled.

## DEMOCRACY continued

majority supports a proposal then the entire canton supports the proposal.

This cantonal vote means that small cantons are represented equally with the larger ones. For example, Basel-Country as a canton has about 256,000 inhabitants, but has only half a cantonal vote (the other "half canton" being Basel-City). On the other hand, the canton of Uri has a full cantonal vote, but only 35,000 inhabitants.

More than 550 referendums have occurred since the constitution of 1848 (legislative or constitutional).

Every village, town or city has a deliberative assembly—in some villages, it is the town meeting, where all adult citizens may vote by show of hands. At such meetings the citizen can also present oral or written proposals which are voted on at the next meeting. In larger towns, elected assemblies take the place of the town meetings.

Municipal government is always elected by the citizens, mostly in a majority voting with some exceptions. Those municipal councils have about five to nine members. Loosely one can say, the smaller the town, the lesser party members are in the council. The leader of the council is mostly also voted by the citizens in a majority voting.

The municipal assemblies vote on changes to the "town statutes" (*Gemeindereglement*), governing such matters as the use of public space, on financial commitments exceeding the competence of the executive branch, and on naturalisations.

### VOTING QUALIFICATIONS

Switzerland currently has about 7.5 million inhabitants; 5.6 million are Swiss citizens who have the right to vote although some cantons (states) and municipalities have granted foreigners the right to vote if they have lived a certain number of years in Switzerland.

All Swiss citizens aged 18 years or more are allowed to vote. In addition, Swiss citizens living outside of the country who are older than 18 are also allowed to vote.

### FOREIGN NATIONALS

In general, the municipal Parliament decides about naturalisations. However, in some towns, naturalisations are subject to a popular vote. The Supreme Court decided in 2003 that naturalisations were an administrative act and thus must obey the prohibition of arbitrariness, which rules out democratic votes on naturalisations.

There are ongoing discussions about changing the rules: one proposal consists of automatically naturalising foreigners if they fulfil the formal criteria, and citizens can propose non-naturalisation if they give a reason for the proposal. The proposal would be voted on, and if the foreigner doesn't accept the outcome of the vote, he can order the court to verify the objectivity of the reasons. Some politicians have started an initiative to change the Swiss Constitution in order to make votes on naturalisations legal, but it reached a referendum and was soundly rejected.

### "BALLOTOCRACIES"

Countries such as Ireland, which we're

told is a democracy, would be more accurately described as ballotocracies, meaning that voters elect politicians who, after each election or ballot, thereupon exercise monopoly power over the entire legislative process.

Voters in mere ballotocracies are constitutionally excluded from a say on what will or won't become law, meaning that once a bill is enacted, all must thereafter obey it.

The word democracy derives from Greek roots: *demos* (people) and *kratos* (power). And Switzerland applies the word consistently by putting people above politicians.

The Swiss wisely never bequeathed their politicians total power. All bills passed by their Parliaments must be put "on ice" for 100 days to give citizens an opportunity, should they wish, to organise, sign and table petitions to bring on a binding referendum.

Among other things, such citizen-initiated referendums force politicians to consult widely on proposed legislation since they dislike their bills being challenged at referendums.

Switzerland's unique citizen power formula—called the *facultative referendum*—comes into play whenever 50,000 electors, or eight of its 26 cantons (i.e., member states of the federal state of Switzerland), petition for a referendum within 100 days of a bill passing Parliament. The referendum, not Parliament, decides the bill's fate.

However, if no referendum is held, or voters ratify Parliament's version, it becomes law.

Because of Switzerland's unique direct democratic arrangements, the country's politicians are the citizens' servants, not their masters, as in Ireland.

### AUSTRALIA AND SWITZERLAND

The present writer learned many years ago that one-time South Australian premier and ardent democrat, Charles Cameron Kingston (1850-1908), in his 1890 draft constitution that he presented to Australia's first colonial federation convention, moved for the inclusion of a clause which would have made the envisaged Commonwealth of Australia another Switzerland.

But a majority of colonial politicians present deleted Kingston's democratic clause and it never re-surfaced at later conventions.

Even more interesting: the Australian Labor Party (ALP), which came into being in 1900, included in its platforms pledges to transform their states into Swiss-style democracies.

A version of the policy lingered on in the constitution of the ALP, from 1900 to 1963, although Labor powerbrokers ensured that the idea never got onto the statute books.

In most Western democracies, the people make only a small number of decisions about economic or social policies themselves. Instead we hire experts and elect representatives to make many of these decisions for us.

Every now and then—every four or five years—we hold another election to

review the last 10,000 or so decisions by those leaders, and vote for one or two alternatives who will handle the next cluster of thousands of decisions.

But not the people of Switzerland? They use some of these devices. The Swiss have competitive political parties, elections, cabinet government and often hung Parliaments.

But they have more than this—much more. They don't allow their parties, cabinets and Parliament, to lock out the people from making laws.

In the final analysis, because of Swiss peoples' power to call referendums over legislation, it is they, not politicians, who are the bosses of their land.

To a much greater extent than other democracies the voters make dozens, and even hundreds, of particular decisions themselves.

Through referendums called by the people themselves—not by their Parliaments (i.e., politicians)—the Swiss have the power to reject bills or initiate their own laws.

The Swiss have a highly devolved system of federalism in which many decisions that would be made by the federal or 'state' governments in other countries are made by cantons (some with fewer than 100,000 in populations) or communities (of which the average is about 3,000 persons).

### SUBSIDIARITY

Here it is worth noting that Switzerland, (where Protestants form about half the population), crafted grassroots self-governance close to the people long before Pope Leo XIII adopted the principle of subsidiarity in his greatest encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* (1891).

Subsidiarity, which promotes devolved governance, was subsequently reaffirmed by Pope Pius XI in his famous encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), with important input from the 20th-century German Catholic theologian Oswald von Nell-Breuning.

The Swiss, with their unique constitutional arrangements, embody the principle of subsidiarity and thereby deprive political parties, politicians and bureaucrats of the power to lord it over people.

Subsidiarity was an original cornerstone of the European Union.

The lynchpin of Switzerland's system of governance, is the power of citizens to block legislation within 100 days of its passage through Parliament and to be able to initiate nationwide referendums for democratic adjudication.

Where the Swiss do employ professional politicians, both their pay and their power pale against the clout and compensation of a typical Dail legislator, or even city council member, in much of our Republic.

The Swiss federal Parliament meets about 12 weeks a year, its members earn perhaps €30,000 in compensation, and they have virtually no full-time staff—not even offices.

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## DEMOCRACY continued

practices direct democracy (also called half-direct democracy), in which any citizen may challenge any law at any time. In addition, in most cantons all votes are cast using paper ballots that are manually counted.

Approximately four times a year, voting occurs over various issues; these include both Referendums, where policies are directly voted on by people, and elections, where the populace votes for officials. Federal, cantonal and municipal issues are polled simultaneously, and the majority of people cast their votes by mail.

Only 25% to 45% of all eligible citizens typically cast their votes, but controversial proposals (such as EU membership or abolishing the army) have seen voter turnouts of about 60%.

Voting can be done through hand counts, mail-in ballots, visits to polling booths, or, more recently, Internet votes.

Until several years ago, some cantons punished citizens for not voting (with a fine equivalent to \$3). In the canton of Schaffhausen, voting is still compulsory. This is the reason for the turnout which is usually a little higher than in the rest of the country.

There are no voting machines in Switzerland; all votes are counted by hand. Every municipality randomly recruits a number of citizens who have the duty of counting the ballots, but penalties for disobeying this duty have become rare. However, after people sort the ballots (e.g. "yes" and "no"), then the total number of "yes" and "no" votes are counted either manually or, in bigger cities, by an automatic counter (like the ones used in banks to count banknotes); or the ballots are weighed by a precision balance. Vote counting is usually accomplished within five or six hours, but votes for Parliamentary elections from the citizens of large cities (Zurich or Geneva for example) may take much longer.

In Referendum ballot one can answer either "yes" or "no" in the box. As Switzerland has four official languages, the ballots are distributed in four versions.

Voters are not required to register before elections in Switzerland. Since every person living in the country (both Swiss nationals and foreigners) must register with the municipality within two weeks of moving to a new place, all citizens are already registered and do not have to re-register if they wish to vote. The municipalities know the addresses of their citizens, and approximately two months before the polling date they send voters a letter containing an envelope with the word "*Ballots*" on it, a small booklet informing them about the proposed changes in the law and, finally, the ballots themselves. Once the voter has filled out his/her ballot these are put into in a anonymous return envelope provided in the package. This first anonymous envelope and a signed transmission card that identifies the voter are then put into the return envelope then sent back to the municipality. The return envelope is in fact the shipping envelope with a special opening strip that allows it to be reused to send back the vote. A lot of voters, especially in villages and small cities, put the return envelope directly into the municipality mailbox. Others return it using postal service

which requires an additional postal stamp to be put on the top of the envelope.

Once received at the municipality, the transmission card is checked to verify the right of the voter, then the anonymous return envelope is put into the polling booths with all the others votes, now in an anonymous way.

### CASTING YOUR VOTE

Swiss citizens may cast their vote directly in polling booths. At polling booths voters take the ballots that they have previously received in the mail and drop them off at the booth. However, after the introduction of postal voting not many Swiss citizens choose to utilise this service. Apparently an advantage for the voters (they don't have to visit the polling booth on Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning when the votes are to be counted on Sunday), it is, on the other hand, a disadvantage for organisations which were collecting signatures for an initiative near the polling station. This is so because the actual voters are interested in politics, so asking them for a signature yields far better results than randomly asking for signatures on a city square.

Several cantons (Geneva, Neuchâtel and Zürich) have developed test projects to allow citizens to vote via the Internet.

There are three primary election types. The first two, Parliamentary elections and executive elections, allow Swiss citizens to vote for candidates to represent them in the Government. Parliamentary elections are organised around a proportional multi-party voting system and executive elections are organised around a popular vote directly for individuals, where the individual with the most votes wins. The third type of election, referendums, concern policy issues.

### PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Parliamentary elections decide the members of the Council of States and the National Council. If candidates are running for a Parliamentary position, the voter is sent several ballots, each corresponding to a different political party. Every party makes up its own voting list, but the voter can either make a list of his or her own or they can make some changes to party-proposed lists.

If candidates are running for the Federal Assembly of Switzerland, the ballot displays as many lines as there are posts to fill. The voter then votes for the candidates that they wish to fill the Parliament seats. Each candidate can be voted for up to two times. Each time a candidate's name appears on the list, a vote is counted for the particular candidate. The voter can delete a candidate's name and replace it with another name if they wish or they can leave the line blank. Although the voter is provided with a party list the voter can substitute a member of a different party and prepare their own list. For example, one can remove a candidate from the Social Democratic Party of Switzerland list and replace him with one from the Liberal Party of Switzerland. If a voter uses a ready-made party list, additionally a party vote is cast for the specific party. A voter can also use a free list with no party affiliation; casting a free list with self-chosen candidate's names doesn't result in a party vote.

The Parliament is elected through two different procedures.

### THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

The National Council is elected through a procedure called proportional representation ("*Proporzwahl*" in German), because each party gets a number of Parliament seats proportional to the number of party votes it receives. This determines the number of seats that the party is given, but the individual candidates still aren't elected—this is determined by the candidate vote. If according to the party votes the Liberals get 5 seats, the five liberal candidates with the highest candidate vote counts are elected.

Members of the Council of States are elected through different systems as decided by the cantons, because the body represents Switzerland's cantons (member states). However, there is a uniform mode of election taking place on the same date as the nationwide National Council elections. This procedure is the plurality voting system. In the canton of Zug and the canton of Appenzell Innerrhoden, the elections take place before the other cantons according to *Majorzwahl*. The only exception to *Majorzwahl* is the canton of Jura, where the two councillors are elected according to *Proporzwahl*.

### CANTONAL ELECTIONS

The voters can also vote for the government of each canton. The ballot has only one line where the voter can place the full name of any mature citizen that lives in the said canton, i.e. a write-in candidate. There are no party votes, only candidate votes (so this procedure is called "*Majorzwahl*"), where the candidate with the most votes wins, otherwise known as simple majority elections. All Cantons have a single chamber Parliament mostly elected by proportional representation. Most of them have several electoral districts of different size and some varieties in the formulas to calculate the seats per party. Graubünden and both Appenzell elect their Parliament in majority system.

### REFERENDUMS

Citizens can call constitutional and legislative referendums, but only on laws passed by the legislature; they cannot initiate legislation of their own crafting. For each proposal there is a box on the ballot which the voter has to fill with either a "Yes" or a "No". If there are proposals that contradict each other, there is also a tie-break question: "If both proposals are adopted by the people, which proposal do you favour?" (the so-called "subsidiary question" introduced in 1987).

### CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUMS

Modifications to the constitution are subject to obligatory vote and require a double majority both of the votes and of the States. Such votes are called when the Parliament proposes a constitutional modification, or when 100,000 citizens sign a "popular initiative" that clearly states a proposed constitutional change.

The double majority is not only required of the citizens, but of the cantons as well: Each full canton has one vote, but so-called half-cantons (because they were so historically split centuries ago) only have a half vote each. The cantonal vote is determined by a popular vote among the people of that canton; if the

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## DEMOCRACY continued

in Ireland at the moment. The problem is the multiple-member seats arrangement that was imposed on the new state in 1922 with the "Treaty of Surrender".

It was deliberately included to destabilise the political administration of the new State and to ensure that the Anti-Treaty forces could not attain a majority on their own—it is to the credit of both sides that this situation was not allowed to prevail and the State settled down.

However, the multiple-member seat system is a cop-out. It does nothing for the development of political progress or thought—you go into the ballot box, but for your vote to be effective you end up voting for parties whose politics are diametrically opposite to your own political allegiance.

In a single seat constituency, you're compelled to give your No. 1 to your own party—the voter is compelled to make a single deliberate choice—is it Labour, Fianna Fail, Fine Gael or Sinn Féin, there's only the one seat—similar to what we do in every By-Election and Presidential contest, whereas, in a multi-member set-up people vote for all three parties—"spread it around" as they say or a 'bob-each-way' politics. What a cop-out!

### 'FIRST-PAST-THE-POST'

Prior to reading the *Irish Times* editorial above, I always believed that Micheál Martin favoured the single-seat arrangement based on PR/STV. He appears now to favour 'First-past-the-Post'. Eamon de Valera attempted this reform in two Referendums and failed each time.

Contrary to the academic poll above, I don't accept that people are opposed to electoral change! What people are reacting to is this complete undermining of local democracy over the years and the almost autocratic status of County and City Managers. The *coup de grace* for local democracy was Jack Lynch's 1977 decision to abolish Domestic Rates—surely one of the most irresponsible financial decisions in the history of the state and a major reason for the disastrous property boom of the 90s.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Indeed, many of the most strident advocates of local democracy do little credit to their cause.

Dave McCarthy, a popular Independent Cork city councillor died last April.

Under the rules governing Cork City Council, political parties nominate a replacement if one of their members steps down or dies.

However, when an Independent resigns or dies, the seat goes to the highest polling unelected candidate from the previous election.

In this case, the former Labour Left zealot, Cllr. Joe O'Callaghan, now a Fine Gael member, was the unelected member and took Dave McCarthy's seat.

The local *Evening Echo* political commentator, Mary Smithwick wrote:

"For TDs who resign or pass away, a by-election is held. This would not be practical for city or county councillors" (30.4.2011).

Bunkum! In the 'Black North' local by-elections were held regularly, why not here? Is our democratic system so fickle it couldn't stand a local by-election?

In the Donegal North-East constituency, a young Letterkenny solicitor, Dessie Shiels, won a legal challenge in the High Court last July. The court granted a judicial review challenging the legality of Cllr. Michael McBride replacing recently elected Senator, Jimmy Harte of the Labour Party on Donegal County Council.

Harte is the son of former Fine Gael TD Paddy Harte. He was elected to Donegal County Council as an Independent in 2009 but on the road from Lifford last January he was struck by a vision of the new socialist Jerusalem and stood for Labour in the February General Election.

Michael McBride was an unsuccessful Fianna Fail candidate in the local elections of 2009. Though replacing the Labour Senator on Donegal County Council, McBride is not even a member of the party.

### 'CITIZENS'?

The recently convened "*We The Citizens*", made up of academics and Europhiles and purporting to advance the cause of democracy, will not have much bearing on serious constitutional reform.

Without the financial backing of philanthropic billionaire Chuck Feeney I doubt if this quango would have seen the light of day. They are not native to the soil!

Perhaps members of the Constitutional Convention could take a serious look at the electoral system in Switzerland?

### SWITZERLAND

The Swiss Confederation has a long history of neutrality—it has not been in a state of war internationally since 1815—and did not join the United Nations until 2002. It pursues, however, an active foreign policy and is frequently involved in peace-building processes around the world.

Switzerland is also the birthplace of the Red Cross and home to a large number of international organisations, including the second largest UN office. On the European level, it is a founding member of the European Free Trade Association and is part of the Schengen Area—although it is notably not a member of the European Union, nor the European Economic Area.

In nominal terms, Switzerland is one of the richest countries in the world by per capita gross domestic product, with a nominal per capita GDP of \$75,835. In 2010, Switzerland had the highest wealth per adult of any country in the world (with \$372,692 for each person). Switzerland also has one of the world's largest account balances as a percentage of GDP, only placing behind a few oil-producing countries. Zurich and Geneva have respectively been ranked as the cities with the second and third highest quality of life in the world. In 2010 the World Economic Forum ranked Switzerland as the most competitive country in the world, while ranked by the European Union as Europe's most innovative country by far.

Landlocked amid the mountains of central Europe, Switzerland is a nation the people of

which have no unity of ethnic heritage nor of language or religion and the land of which is splintered by barriers of rock and river; but it is a nation that nonetheless is united and prosperous. Officially known as *Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft*, or Swiss Confederation, Switzerland is a republican federation of 26 Cantons or States, three of which are divided in half-Cantons. Berne is the most powerful Canton.

Switzerland's small area of 15,941 square miles, about half the size of the island of Ireland and population of 7.25 million (2006), give no indication of the country's character or significance on the international scene. Switzerland's geographically imposed role as guardian of Europe's natural trans-Alpine routes has been both a reason for and basic tenet of its existence—a role expressed in its traditional neutrality in time of war that was sanctioned by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 and confirmed in 1815 in Vienna, by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, and again in 1920 when the Council of the League of Nations acknowledged it as "*conditioned by a centuries-old tradition explicitly incorporated in international law*". The tradition was upheld even while war raged around Switzerland's borders during 1939–1945.

Switzerland owes its existence, however, no less to the will of its inhabitants than to the exigencies of geography. With one-quarter of its area comprising high Alps, lakes, and barren rock and with no seaboard and few natural resources other than waterpower, Switzerland has managed to impose unity on diverse races, religions, and languages: for almost 700 years it has maintained the world's oldest and the European mainland's most virile democracy, achieving an almost unrivalled standard of living.

### SWISS PEOPLE

Etruscans, Raetians, Celts, Romans, and Germans have left their mark on Switzerland in the course of its historical evolution. To survive as a cohesive unit, the disparate elements of the Swiss people have had to learn a mutual co-operation to protect the neutrality that has been their safeguard. Their outlook has been shaped largely by economic and political necessity, which has made them realistic, cautious, and prudent in accepting innovation and ingenious in the use of what resources they have. Their lives exhibit acumen, discipline, and thrift and a somewhat Germanic love of order and thoroughness allied with a Latin independence of spirit and an admiration for quality and craftsmanship that makes their products highly valued throughout the world.

### SWISS ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Voting in Switzerland is the process by which Swiss citizens make decisions about governance and elect officials. Voting takes place over the weekend, with emphasis being put on the Sunday. At noon on that day ("*Abstimmungssonntag*" in German), voting ends.

Switzerland's voting system is unique among modern democratic nations in that Switzerland  
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**LABOUR**

# Comment

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## A Model Democracy?

**Imagine a country where the outcome of every election is a hung Parliament. Try imagining one where the people, not the politicians, bring on referendums to amend the constitution and can overturn bills passed by Parliament.**

Try imagining a country where the Cabinet consists of only seven members, and is chosen by a hung Parliament, and where the head-of-state is one of those seven, each of whom serves in that position for just one year on a rotating basis.

Try imagining a country where the High Court has 54 judges, each serving for only six years, though terms can be extended by Parliament.

And try also imagining how, when foreigners living in that country seek citizenship, that can be approved only by ballots cast by local residents at town-hall meetings.

If that's all too difficult to grasp, envisage a country where all adult males must serve in the defence reserve, a requirement that has been endorsed by national referendum and you take your weapons home.

To *Irish citizens*, such an unfamiliar scenario might prompt a response that such a country could feature only in a fairy-tale or perhaps Disneyworld's Tomorrow Land. Not so! It exists, and is among the world's most prosperous and politically stable.

The country is Switzerland, and it lies at the heart of long-time warring Europe, bordering France, Germany, Italy, Austria and the tiny principality of Liechtenstein.

Switzerland is the world's only true democracy because no legislation can be enacted by its Parliaments without voters having the opportunity to call a referendum to decide whether it becomes law. (See *Irish Political Review*, February, 2011, p.28).

### CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

It is six months since Taoiseach Enda Kenny spoke of establishing a constitu-

tional convention to review — among other things — the electoral system. The convention will be asked to report within a year.

In the Dail on Tuesday, 20th September 2011, in reply to a question from Ann Ferris (Wicklow, Labour TD) on the proposed Constitutional Convention, the Taoiseach Enda Kenny replied:

"Work has commenced on the preparation of proposals for the establishment of the Constitutional Convention and, when ready, these will be considered by the Government."

The proposals, which will address matters such as the structure, composition and working methods of the Convention, will be announced after they have been agreed by the Government.

Based on an opinion poll that was conducted during the February 2011 General Election campaign, an academic study conducted by Professor Michael Marsh and other political scientists found that while voters favoured a smaller Dáil and wanted more women and young people as TDs, they were opposed to changing the electoral system.

"In addition, they wanted Dáil representatives to concentrate even more on

local issues. The dominance of parish pump politics, leading to local demands trumping the national interest, has been almost as damaging to the common good and the economy as the last government's preferment of builders, bankers and other vested interests. Despite that — perhaps because local councils have such limited power — voters want their TDs to devote more of their time to local, rather than national issues. Outside Dublin, people regard service to the constituency as being of particular importance.

"In view of the collapse of Fianna Fáil and the gains made by Fine Gael and Labour in the election, it is hardly a coincidence that voter views tended to reflect party viewpoints. Fianna Fáil favoured the abolition of multi-seat constituencies, as did the Green Party. Micheál Martin advocated the German model with first-past-the-post single-seat constituencies and a list system involving proportional representation. Fine Gael and Labour supported a reduced number of TDs and a better gender balance. But they postponed the tricky issue of electoral change for further consideration..." (*IT*, 17.9.2011, emphasis added). (See also: "Constituency Commission" advertisement in daily papers on 22.9.2011 relating to election of Dail and Euro Parliament members. Submissions close on 10.1.2012.)

With a 113 seats out of a total of 166 you can be sure the Government has little inclination to tackle "*the tricky issue of electoral change*" to a system which has given them such a whooping majority.

Yes, all politicians are dedicated to the democratic process; the voice of the people must prevail — but the last thing most Parliamentarians want is an election, anything but that.

### MULTI-SEATS

The Irish voter can only look in awe at the Swiss electoral system and the power it confers on its citizens.

There is absolutely no fault with the Proportional Representation/Single Transferable Vote (PR./STV) that we have

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