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Gaza

Israel invaded Gaza on July 17th. The front page of the *Irish Times* on July 18th was about a passenger plane that came down in the Ukrainian battleground.

Maybe the *Irish Times* Editor got it right. What Jewish nationalism does to Palestine Arabs is not news.

An Israeli Cabinet Minister once described the Palestinians as "*cockroaches*"—a nuisance which you might find it next to impossible to get rid of, but you've got to keep on trying.

The Jewish problem in the Middle East is the problem of an incomplete conquest. The conquest can neither be called off nor completed. Calling it off and stabilising the situation on the basis of the territory in which Jewish rule has been consolidated and put beyond practical questioning would make nonsense of the Zionist project because the heartland of the Jewish *irredenta* still lies outside the consolidated territory. Completing the conquest is not possible just now because the European states on which Israel depends need to deceive themselves about the process they have set in motion in the Middle East and their sensitivities must be humoured.

1948 was the *annus mirabilis* of Jewish nationalism. In 1947 the UN General Assembly awarded it a piece of Palestine to be a Jewish State, and the Imperial Power, Britain, was withdrawing in response to Jewish terrorism, washing its hands piously of the situation of utter confusion which it had brought about. The Jewish nationalist forces were highly prepared, militarily and politically, to take advantage of that state of affairs.

The territory awarded by the UN to be a Jewish State still had only a tiny Jewish majority, despite the immigration that had been going on for a quarter of a century. The construction of a Jewish State in a territory that was about 48% Palestinian was not practical—not if it was to be Jewish in the full sense, which was the intention. The Jewish nationalist forces therefore undertook an extensive campaign of ethnic cleansing in that territory, unhindered by the United Nations. And, while the going was good, they

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The Ukraine

Europe appears to be intent on war with Russia, but to be in doubt about its ability to tolerate the economic consequences.

The destiny it conceived for Russia at the end of the Cold War was to be a large, politically empty, space for the extension of the European market and European military power in the form of NATO. It is disturbed by the reconstruction of a Russian State which has curbed the capitalist anarchy of the oligarchs and raised a quest-

ion over the further expansion of NATO without a serious risk of war.

Europe feels that it has shrunk because an anticipated expansion is not happening. This is understandable at a time when the distinction between the virtual and the actual has become blurred.

Six or seven months ago a Ukrainian Government, whose democratic credentials were not questioned at the time of its election, decided not to go through with a deal it had been negotiating with the EU. That deal would probably have resulted in

War Waffle

History Ireland followed the fashion of day in devoting its July/August issue to the 1st World War. Its lead article on the subject, by Edward Madigan, is called "*A seamless robe of Irish experience: the First World War, the Irish Revolution and centenary commemoration.*"

Madigan begins "*The First World War was the most pivotal event in modern Irish history*", and this is the theme that is maintained throughout. This was so because it was, essentially, so big, so many people were involved, so many were killed and so many traumatised etc. that it was inevitably the "*pivotal event*". In this instance size mattered most of all. The event was so big that it must explain everything.

We are told that:

"Moreover, although we still tend to lose sight of this, the post-war paramilitary violence and political turmoil that defined life on the island in the three years after the Armistice resulted directly from the events that occurred and the attitudes that evolved during the world war. To put it mildly, then, the impact of the First World War on Irish political,

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the destruction of the industries in the Eastern Ukraine by competition in the European market. It would also, by extending the EU up to the Russian border, have led to the raising of Russian tariffs against Ukrainian trade, and to the ending of the supply of Russian energy to the Ukraine at below world market prices. The Ukrainian Government therefore decided to do a deal with Russia instead of the EU.

The EU then discovered that it had been mistaken in thinking that the Kiev Government had been democratically

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undertook a conquest of the Palestinian territory awarded to the Palestinians.

The conquest was stopped, not by the UN which had started it, but by the military intervention of a couple of Arab states, chiefly Jordan, which was still run effectively by Britain. A Ceasefire was arranged. That Ceasefire line, which included a substantial tract of Palestinian territory which the UN had awarded to the Palestinians, became the *de facto* border of Israel for the 'international community'. It is known as the *1947 Border*. The *de facto* conquest of 1049 was accepted without being mentioned, as was the ethnic cleansing.

In 1956 Israel conspired with Britain and France to provide an excuse for the invasion of Egypt, which had fallen under Egyptian control. But the USA, still in anti-Imperialist mode, compelled all three to return home by threatening a financial destruction of Britain.

In 1967 Israel conquered the whole of Palestine in a "*pre-emptive war*"—i.e. a war of defence against an attack that never happened. The West went along with the "*pre-emptive*" pretence but it could not legitimate the conquest at the UN because the Soviet Union—which had given crucial

support to Israel in 1948—wouldn't allow it, and (giving it the benefit of the doubt) partly because it had some scruples about compensation for what it did to the Jews by enabling the Jews to do the same thing to the Palestinians.

(Only one European leader has spoken out boldly in support of a "*final solution*" solution of the Palestinian problem—the leader of the Czech velvet revolution. He urged Israel to follow the precedent set by the Czech ethnic cleansing of Germans in 1945.)

The present situation is that the Jewish nationalist regime in the conquered territories of 1967 cannot be legitimised, but neither can it be rolled back—the American Veto ensures that. And it is now being said that the attempt to roll it back would be anti-Semitic and a resumption of Hitler's Jew-free policy.

The conquered territory cannot become part of the recognised Israeli state. But a Jewish nationalist regime has been established across the conquered territory, which is criss-crossed with Jewish nationalist motorways closed to Palestinians, facilitating Jewish colonisation. And the Israeli state, as recognised by the UN,

refuses to define the borders as being limited by the 1948 conquest and Ceasefire. No Israeli party which said the national territory of Israel was the territory governed between 1948 and 1967, and that this Israel wishes for secure borders and peaceful relations with all that lies beyond those borders, would have a hope of winning an election. And in fact such a policy would be treason to the Zionist cause.

The Zionist project is ongoing. A settlement is therefore impossible in the nature of the case. The Palestinians have the choice between giving up the ghost, and resisting, however ineffectually, to show that they are alive.

Other peoples in comparable circumstances have given up the ghost, but the Palestinians haven't got it in them to conclude that they are unworthy to live.

The journal concluded about forty years ago, on the strength of convincing evidence, that Jewish nationalism as a popular culture was absolutely committed to the conquest of Zion, and that it held the Palestinians who stood between it and its object in racial contempt; and that the Palestinians would not give up the ghost no matter what the Jews did to them. And we know of no principle which imposes an obligation of national suicide on natives in the face of a conquest.

That such a principle lurks in the Western mind we cannot doubt. Western conduct in the world is hardly explicable without it. But we don't know what it is. We are, after all, as Connolly said, "*the aliens of the West*". And The West does not articulate that principle clearly these days.

In mid-July democratic Egypt—Egypt which extended its election day for a further two days because enough people had not voted for General Sisi's *coup* Government, and imposed an incentive to vote during the two extra election days in the form of penalties on those who neglected their public duty as citizens—this Egypt, which is profoundly anti-Palestinian, negotiated a Gaza Ceasefire with Israel which Gazans heard about in the news. The Gazans were condemned for not heeding it.

Hamas has offered a ten-year Ceasefire, conditional on Israel lifting the siege of the Gaza Strip—which only lets through concentration camp rations—and allowing Gazan access to the outside world by sea and air. The offer will of course be rejected. It is not through stabilisation that the Zionist project will be realised. ■

The War On Gaza: *Some Facts*

Palestinian casualties:

By 24th July 700 Palestinians killed, 6,000 wounded, almost the entire civil infrastructure of Gaza reduced to rubble.

80% are civilians and 20%+ are children (indicating extermination of family homes with the families in them).

Thus, total Palestinian civilian casualties from Jewish Army ordinance: approximately 560 dead, 5,000 wounded

Jewish casualties:

32 killed, unknown number wounded, and a few bus shelters knocked over.

But: 29 of these are soldiers killed by the heroic resistance in close combat, and the wounded are entirely military.

Of the three others killed, one is a Bedouin (regarded by Israelis as a "cockroach", and hence not an "Israeli civilian"), one other was a volunteer enthusiast functioning as a water carrier for Jewish Army operatives, and hence not a civilian. No civilians have been wounded by rocket fire.

Thus, total Israel civilian casualties from Hamas rocket fire: 1 dead, 0 wounded.

UN:

UN wants an investigation of Jewish Army war crimes. The liberal world, US and the Jewish Lobby have ensured that any inquiry will also cover Hamas "war crimes".

So the UN are to investigate:

- Jewish war crimes resulting in 560 Palestinian civilian dead, 5,000 wounded and the reduction to rubble of an entire city.

- Palestinian war crimes resulting in 1 Israeli civilian dead, 0 wounded and two bus shelters knocked over.

Good news:

1. The heroic resistance fighters of Hamas, who by going into ground battle against the terminators of the Jewish Army face almost certain death, have killed 32 Jewish robot killers in close combat. If they keep this up, even Israel's Jews will start to whinge.

2. The Palestinian unity agreement is holding up well, despite what must be massive and brutal US-Jewish behind the scenes bullying of the Abbas people. On Channel.4 two days ago the impressive PLO negotiator Hanna Ashrawi refused point blank to criticise Hamas in any way and announced the full support of the PLO for Hamas's ceasefire conditions (ending

Raoul Wallenberg And Count Bernadotte

Cruel times produce villains and heroes. Sweden, neutral in the Great Wars which ravaged Europe between 1914 and 1945, produced two men of outstanding courage and compassion who saved thousands of Jews from destruction by Nazis and other Fascists, whose memories deserve veneration by all humanity. Both served as Swedish diplomats.

One of them, Raoul Wallenberg was posthumously awarded honorary citizenship of Australia, Canada, Hungary, the USA, and Israel.

Australia and the USA have issued Postage Stamps in his Honour. Two Operas bear his names, the one called "Wallenberg" and the other called "Raoul". The Irish singer Andy Irvine has recorded a song about him.

Buenos Aires and London, Melbourne and Moscow, St Petersburg, Stockholm, Sydney and Vancouver have monuments to commemorate him.

Young Douglas Murray, a protégé of Michael Gove, the late British Secretary for Education, has written a play about him, and the most recent biography—"The Hero of Budapest, the Triumph and Tragedy of Raoul Wallenberg" by Bengt Jangfeldt is reviewed in the August 2014 issue of *History Today*.

Raoul Wallenberg was detained by the Red Army during the siege of Budapest in January 1945 and it's believed he was shot by the KGB in Moscow in 1947.

Count Folke Bernadotte, played a similar heroic and humanitarian role to that of Wallenberg. He was appointed as the United Nation's Mediator in Palestine in May 1948. His funeral that September was attended by UN Secretary General Trygve Lie, Canadian Prime Minister William McKenzie King, US Secretary of State George Marshall, French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman and British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin. He was killed by what the UN Security Council categorised as—

"a cowardly act which appears to have been committed by a criminal gang of terrorists in Jerusalem while the United Nations Representative in Jerusalem was fulfilling his peace-keeping mission in the Holy Land".

The killing was ordered by Yitzhak Shamir, later a Prime Minister of Israel, whose "Lehi" organisation admitted responsibility in 1977, six years after the Statute of Limitations for murder ran out.

Though the UN Security Council, with no dissenters, and 'the Great and the Good' of the Western World honoured Count Bernadotte, he appears little honoured today, in the offices occupied by George Marshall, Ernest Bevin, or William McKenzie King. The current occupiers appear to be struck dumb as the successors of the murderers of Bernadotte carry on their grisly business in Gaza, when not actually cheering them on.

Mr. Gordon Brown a few years back published a book on courage, praising eight heroes it took no courage to praise, including, you guessed it, Raoul Wallenberg. He hadn't the balls to praise Count Folke Bernadotte.

D. Alcassian

of the starvation blockade of Gaza). This position was repeated 23rd July by Abbas himself.

EU/Eire:

The EU response to Gaza is a Council of Foreign Ministers' statement calling for a ceasefire (on Jewish terms) and denouncing "anti-Semitism" in pro-Palestinian demonstrations in European cities. Ireland's new Foreign Minister, Charlie "Honorary Israeli" Flanagan, the son of a holocaust enthusiast, lead Ireland's slavish abstention in the UN vote.

"...Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams accused the Government of "political

cowardice" in abstaining in the vote to set up an international Commission of Inquiry into allegations of war crimes."

Averil Poer also laid into the Government on Morning Ireland (24.7.14) is also a Republican—a popular working class Dublin Northside Fianna Fáil Councillor.

Philip O'Connor

UWNRA Says

Chris Gunness, UNWRA, BBC Today, 17 July 2014, on Israel's Blockade of Gaza:

"95% of the water is undrinkable. You

turn on a tap in Gaza and salt water comes out it. Millions of litres of raw sewage flow into the sea from Gaza every single day. We have a situation where the number of people coming to UNWRA for food assistance—it was 80,000 in 2000, it is now 800,000, that is, more than half of the people of Gaza have been made aid dependent as a result of man made policies. That is quite unacceptable. That is the reality of life in Gaza today. And on top of that, for example, because of this latest upsurge in violence, we have a situation where we have 25,000 children in deep trauma and need psychosocial support. That is quite unacceptable."

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0499j2c>

This letter was in *Irish News* of 23rd July

No Rights For Palestinians

Bernard J Mulholland (Letters, July 1) writes that "the goal should surely be to work to ensure that the rights of all citizens of the West Bank are upheld". That is a noble ambition and one that Israel, as the occupying power, is in a position to bring

about at a stroke.

However, the outstanding characteristic of Israel's half century occupation of the West Bank has been one of trampling over the rights of the indigenous Palestinian population while granting privileges to the Jewish settlers it has illegally transferred into the West Bank from Israel.

For example, the 500, 000+ settlers who live in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) have the right to vote in elections to the Israeli parliament (the Knesset) and participate in Israel's system of government. But Palestinians have no such right and have no say whatsoever in how they are governed by Israel. This is akin to the voting arrangements that operated in apartheid South Africa, where black people were excluded from the franchise.

Also, two systems of justice exist in the West Bank. Jewish settlers are tried in Israeli civil courts under Israeli law. By contrast, Palestinians, including Palestinian children, are tried in Israeli military courts and the law applied to them is mostly based on the 2,000 or so military orders enacted by Israel since the occupation began in 1967.

Jewish settlers also have privileged

access to services. The settlements are located in Area C, which incorporates about 61% of the land area of the West Bank. Settlements are always connected to water, electricity and other services, whereas Palestinian villages located in Area C often are not.

It is next to impossible for Palestinians in Area C to get building permits for domestic or commercial purposes and any structure built without a permit is liable to be demolished by the Israeli military. By contrast, permits for construction in Jewish settlements in Area C are freely available.

In addition, Israel maintains severe restrictions on Palestinian access to Area C for most kinds of economic activity. This has strangled Palestinian economic development. According to a World Bank report published in October last year, if these restrictions were lifted, it could have an enormous impact on the Palestinian economy, raising GDP by around \$3.4 billion, that is, by about 35%, and providing \$0.8 billion extra in revenue to the Palestinian Authority, thereby reducing its fiscal deficit by half.

Israel is in a position to end all this injustice to Palestinians.

Dr David Morrison

Gaza: Some Reality

I'm fucking angry at the unabated Zionist bloodlust, I'm angry that there's little I can do about it, and I'm angry at those who appear to be bending over backwards to accommodate the arse-licking Irish Government's moral degeneracy. I have watched night after night the barbarism that is Israeli behaviour. I have seen how it has impacted on a family who have had one of those "roof-knocking" bombs dropped on them and who as a result have fled from their home.

This is a family of three generations who have had to leave everything behind, all their family mementoes, photographs, furniture—the things that constitute the normal stuff that define every family. They have had to leave that behind and flee in terror with what they could carry by way of clothing and no way of knowing if what was left of the building they called home (the upper floor was completely destroyed by the "roof-knocking" missile) will still be there if they survive their current ordeal and manage to return.

There are families who have had to flee from towns twice and sometimes three times. We have no idea of the terror that is involved in this displacement and it is far worse than Operation Cast Lead.

The BBC reported on 23rd July:

"The UN relief agency UNRWA said more than 118,300 Palestinians have now taken refuge in its shelters. It says 43% of Gaza has been affected by evacuation warnings or declared no-go zones."

The full implication of this fact is only apparent when one remembers that the population of Gaza is nearly 1.8 million people living in an area of 139 sq miles. On that basis it was one of the most densely populated areas of the world. Now Israel has declared 43% of its area to be evacuated or a war zone and effectively a killing zone.

This means that the area of Gaza that is now relatively safe (and I emphasise the word "relatively") is 57% of the pre-invasion area. In other words less than 80 sq. miles, a quarter of the size of Louth, Ireland's smallest County at 319 sq. miles. So what the Israelis have done, without any condemnation from the international community, is to use their weapons of terror to compress a population of 1.8 million people into an area of less than 80 square miles within a matter of days! The population has effectively been herded into an ever smaller corral, where there is unsustainable pressure on the infrastructure, hospital and medical facilities, and civic amenities. And all the time the Israelis continue to submit them to their ever-present weapons of death, maiming and terror.

Modern war technology enables the aggressor to perpetuate a level of terror on the civilian population that is unprecedented. Not only are people running in terror from missiles that appear to come from nowhere and you don't hear them until it's too late but also Israeli Defence Force snipers who are sometimes located a mile away out of sight.

Aside from that there are drones constantly circling overhead defining the next target for some operative, filled with hatred against Palestinians, sitting at a control panel deciding who will be killed next. This is not barbaric warfare without boundaries as we have come to know it. None of the Imperial countries and the US have ever allowed considerations for civilian casualties to get in the way of their defined war aims in the past, but the level of terror that they could inflict was limited by the technology. They did not possess the kind of weaponry that now constitutes the main terror tools of the oppressor and it has plummeted to new levels of inhumanity. Although I have no doubt that the West will in time utilise such weapons against civilian targets, the current situation constitutes a watershed and it is up to everyone who is conscious of it not to allow politicians to prevaricate about what it actually represents: a war crime and a crime against humanity.

Eamon Dyas

Gaza Agreement?

Who said this?

"This agreement is intended to give the Palestinian people freedom to move, to trade, to live ordinary lives.

"First, for the first time since 1967, Palestinians will gain control over entry and exit from their territory. This will be through an international crossing at Rafah, whose target opening date is November 25th.

"Second, Israel and the Palestinians will upgrade and expand other crossings for people and cargo between Israel,

Gaza and the West Bank. This is especially important now because Israel has committed itself to allow the urgent export of this season's agricultural produce from Gaza.

"Third, Palestinians will be able to move between Gaza and the West Bank; specifically, bus convoys are to begin about a month from now and truck convoys are to start a month after that.

"Fourth, the parties will reduce obstacles to movement within the West Bank. It has been agreed that by the end of the year the United States and Israel will complete work to lift these obstacles and develop a plan to reduce them.

"Fifth, construction of a Palestinian seaport can begin. The Rafah model will provide a basis for planned operations.

"Sixth, the parties agree on the importance of the airport. Israel recognizes that the Palestinian Authority will want to resume construction on the airport. I am encouraging Israel to consider allowing construction to resume as this agreement is successfully implemented—construction that could, for instance, be limited to non-aviation elements."

Find the answer and the truth behind Operation Cast Lead and Operation Protective Edge in **David Morrison's** forensic analysis of Israel's operations against Gaza at

www.david-morrison.org.uk

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War Waffle

continued

social and cultural life was profound and long lasting, and the legacy of the 'war to end all wars' is still very much with us today."

But what exactly does this mean? How did one War by itself lead to a further three year war in Ireland? The argument seems to be that, because one followed the other, the first caused the second or was a continuation of the first. But this does not explain anything. Was it the case that people could not stop fighting in Ireland?

We are further told that, without comprehending the War—

"we cannot properly comprehend the British response to the Rising, the subsequent rise in republicanism, the success of the Sinn Féin party in 1918, the First Dáil, partition and the War of Independence. These events, these phenomena, gave birth to modern Ireland and they were all either part of or inextricably linked to the First World War."

But again what does this explain? It explains nothing. And it explains nothing because it very conveniently leaves out the one event that *did* lay the basis for the Irish War of Independence, that did "*give birth to modern Ireland*". This was not simply the "*success of the Sinn Fein*", but the refusal of the British Government and the Mother of Parliaments to accept the overwhelming result of the 1918 Election in Ireland.

Did the War cause this refusal? Did the War turn the British Government of the day into some sort of zombies who forgot about how to react to an election?

This is one event that is totally ignored in the decade of centenaries. There is no commemoration at all planned to remember this seminal event. There should be a wreath laying at Downing St. at least.

This is the elephant in the room of the decade of commemorations. And without acknowledging this elephant all subsequent events become absurd. Instead we are given this type of waffle that is an insult to anyone's intelligence.

Mr. Madigan is concerned that there has been "*divided commemoration*" about WWI and the Irish War of Independence and this is very regrettable. He says:

"In terms of commemoration, the traditional tendency has been to remember either the Irishmen who served in the British armed forces on the Western Front and elsewhere or their compatriots who fought in the Easter Rising and in the post-war guerrilla campaign. Which groups we identified with usually depended on which community we came from, or our political understanding of the past and present. The implication of all of this divided commemoration was that the men and women who struggled for Irish independence really had nothing to do with those who supported the British war effort. One group was invariably commemorated at the expense of the other."

He seems to think that the winners and the losers of a War can have a common commemoration. This makes the War in question a meaningless, stupid event. The winners and losers of any football match will have a very different idea of what they are commemorating and will do so differently.

He says that this common commemoration should have been possible because of the "*common experience of familial grief is one of the ways in which the world war and the Irish Revolution are closely connected, and it is also something that potentially binds disparate communities together. A small number of examples illustrate this point quite well.*"

He goes on to give a few examples of brothers who fought on opposite sides and some who changed sides. The implications

"LABOUR Comment" magazine, CORK

PUBLIC MEETING

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THE GREAT FRAUD"**

1914-1918

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"Britain's Great War : Pope Benedict's Lost
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is that this '*connects*' these wars. This is another meaningless idea. The two sides in both wars did not change sides because some individual changed sides. It only confirms that there was a real war being fought. This article is another pathetic and transparent effort to explain away the whole point of both Wars. Whatever it is, it is not history and it says a lot about a 'history' magazine that publishes it as such.

Jack Lane

Ukraine

continued

elected. The White House declared authoritatively that President Yanukovitch had stolen that election, and would steal the next election if left in place. The US and EU therefore took part in a demonstration in the main square in Kiev against the change of policy, and they turned the main square in Kiev into a fortification, so that the Government was prevented from governing.

When it was demonstrated that the Yanukovitch Government could not continue, the EU undertook to arrange a deal between it and manageable elements of the street Opposition. But President Obama said "*Fuck the EU*". The EU deal was swept aside and overnight a change of Government was enacted by *coup* by means of the less manageable elements of the street Opposition.

The *coup* Government was comprehensively anti-Russian. It was directed against both the Russian state and the substantial Russian population of the Ukraine. A process of Ukrainianisation of Russians in the Ukraine was announced.

Russia responded by annexing the Crimea, which had capriciously been made part of the Ukraine when the Soviet Union was being broken up, though with the provision that the Russian fleet should continue to be based there. The annexation was done with the prior consent of the Ukrainian population as expressed in a referendum.

The West declared that the Crimeans had voted for unity with Russia at the point of Russian guns, but even those who said this most emphatically somehow conveyed the impression that they did not believe what they were saying.

Another Western view was that it didn't matter whether the Crimeans voted under duress or not, because the referendum was illegal and the Crimeans did not have the right to transfer themselves from the

Ukrainian to the Russian State. Citizens of the Ukraine were absolutely subject to the Ukrainian State and might only take part in a referendum in which they chose between the Ukraine and Russia if the Ukrainian Government asked them to.

This issue of national rights in contemporary Europe had come up with regard to Spain and Scotland before the *coup* in the Ukraine. The EU backed the position of the Spanish Government that the Catalonians did not have the right to hold a referendum on the issue of secession from the Spanish state and act on its result.

In the case of Scotland, where the referendum is to be held on Westminster authority, the EU said that, if the Scots voted to leave the UK, they would be expelled from the EU and would have to apply for admission as a foreign country. Scotland is now an integral part of the EU and is more content with it than England is. But, if it decides to leave the English state—because that is what the UK has always been in essence—the EU will decide that it has left the EU, with England have a veto on its admission.

We have not heard from EU VIPs what the position would be if an English vote carried the UK out of the EU with the Scots wishing to remain part of it.

In the 1990s, when the EU was fomenting war in order to destroy a federal Communist state which had been independent of the Moscow system and did not fall with it, it was very creative with the discovery of national rights. But, now that Yugoslavia has been disposed of, and there are no secessions from Russia in the offing, the EU has become very anti-national in its stance.

The present Kiev Government is a Government chosen by President Obama and installed by *coup*. The election held in part of the country by the *coup* Government confirmed the American choice. President Poroshenko has declared that the Crimea is part of the sacred national territory and that it will never accept the fact of its alienation. The EU backs him in this determination. This means an EU war against Russia sooner or later for the restoration of the Ukrainian *irredenta*—or that is what it would mean if the EU knew what it was saying and was doing anything more than echoing Washington.

The EU has applied economic sanctions against Russia specifically on the ground that Moscow is slow in recognising the anti-Russian *coup* Government in Kiev as legitimate. This establishes a new principle in international relations.

The way the Ukrainian *coup* was enacted puts an end to the mythology of the 2nd World War. The vanguard element in this Ukrainian development is fascist, and it has pulled down World War 2 memorials.

The populations in Eastern Ukraine which are at war with the *coup* Government in Kiev are described on Radio Eireann as "*pro-Russian separatists*". What they are is *Russian separatists*, some of whom want to join the Russian state and others who want to form their own Government. But, whatever their policy, the fact of nationality is that they are Russian, and not pro-Russian.

The Ukraine was a multi-national state while it was part of the Soviet Union and it remained a multi-national state after separating from the Soviet Union. That fact of life was not denied until an American Government—a Government whose personnel were chosen by the White House—was installed by *coup* in Kiev. Russian was an official language of the state. The first acts of the *coup* Government were to abolish the official status of Russian, and to treat what was hitherto regarded as the liberation of the Ukraine from Nazi conquest and tyranny as its subjugation to Russian conquest and tyranny. Ukrainian was declared to be the sole language of the state, and the anti-Nazi symbols were torn down. These acts naturally had consequences.

With regard to nationality, one definition of it is simply membership of a state. It is a definition to be found in United Nations documents. The *coup* Government in Kiev, applying that definition rigorously, with the support of the EU, denies that there are Russians in the Ukraine. It says that there are only "*pro-Russian terrorists*", infiltrated in by Russia. There is no Russian problem within the Ukraine, there is only the problem of interference by the Russian State.

Kiev did not make war on Russian populations. It only engaged in police action against pro-Russians infiltrated in from the Russian state. But somehow this police action was done with tanks and bombing planes.

The fall of the Malaysian plane, however brought about, shed a flood of light on the situation on the ground in the "*pro-Russian*" region. The pro-Russians proved to be so thick on the ground where actual Russians had been defined out of existence, that the Kiev Government, whose official business it was to investigate the incident, could not get access to

the site. And international bodies were only allowed limited access under strict supervision by the "pro-Russians" who put on a very convincing appearance of being actual Russians—Russians by nationality in the ordinary meaning of the word, as distinct from the transcendent UN definition.

The West has used either definition according to how it sees its interests in particular situations—to assert the absolute authority of a State over all the inhabitants of its territory, or to subvert the authority of a State.

In destroying the Yugoslav State it applied the ordinary meaning of nationality against the UN meaning to the extent of encouraging a war of one against the other. By this means, supplemented by a strong dose of ethnic cleansing, it brought a relatively homogeneous Croat state into being. But then, in extreme defiance of the ordinary meaning of nationality, it recognised Bosnia as a national state. But Bosnia consisted of three mutually hostile nationalities, therefore the UN definition was applied. It was like Cinderella's sisters and the shoe. The British Foreign Secretary, David Owen, declared that the Bosnian peoples must be crammed into the national state that was made for them, and mutilated in whatever way was necessary to make them fit. Seeing that this approach was directed primarily against the Serbs, the Croats and Muslims put up with it. But then the EU reverted to an extreme application of the ordinary meaning of nationality in order to carve out an Albanian state from within the Serbian state.

In the case of the Ukraine, the EU has opted for an extreme application of the authoritarian definition of nationality, as set for them by the USA.

With regard to the desecration of the mythology of World War 2, that is entirely understandable. The West, reduced to Britain in 1940-41, could only hope to end up on the winning side of the War it had launched recklessly and conducted cravenly, if Russia could be got into a relationship of war with Germany. It was in two minds in 1939-40 about whether it wanted to fight Germany, on which it had declared war, or Russia, against which it tried to go to war in Finland. While it was trying to regroup after a failed Scandinavian adventure in the Spring of 1940, Germany responded to the declaration of war and struck it between its two minds. Having lost its war, Britain refused to make a settlement when France did, hoping for rescue in the form of a German/Russian War. When that came about in June 1941,

the British Empire became for four years an instrument of Soviet propaganda. The fantasy of those four years was deeply ingrained in British culture. It was too much part of British political culture to be discardable when the Cold War set in. Post-War British histories of the War were, therefore, profoundly evasive. They were obliged to avert their minds from indisputable features of the War in order to maintain the ideological fantasy that, whatever might have been the case with Britain's many wars before 1939, its 2nd World War was unquestionably a *good war*.

When Western pressure on the Soviet Union—exerted in great part by proxy wars—finally succeeded in bringing about its disintegration, the nationalist movements that sprang into being in Eastern Europe were mostly Fascist in ideology.

Fascism was the political system that arose after 1918 to counter the fundamentalist class politics of Communism that came to power when the Tsarist State collapsed under the stress of European war into which it had been led by Britain. Communism was spreading into the chaos of post-War Europe. It was, as Winston Churchill acknowledged frankly, the saviour of capitalist civilisation.

The Soviet system consolidated itself throughout most of the area of the Tsarist State, including the Ukraine. It extended itself still further after Britain decided to make war on the saviour of capitalist civilisation, made a mess of it, and looked to Communist Russia to save it from its saviour.

When Soviet Russia was brought on stage in June 1941 Nazi Germany quickly pushed it back almost to the gates of Moscow. That Nazi advance was experienced in contradictory ways by different elements of the population. It was experienced as liberation on the whole by ambitious, individualistic, nationalist elements in the Ukraine as in many other countries. The Soviet system was designed to improve the conditions of life for the relatively unambitious mass, rather than to facilitate the ambitions of vigorous elites. Therefore the Nazis were welcomed as liberators by important elements of the Ukrainian population. There was extensive Ukrainian/German collaboration. And Ukrainians were being prosecuted for Nazi war crimes right down to this year's American-organised Ukrainian nationalist revolution/*coup d'etat*.

The Irish media liberals should know these things. It is only a few years since they worked up a cult of the late Hubert

Butler. Butler was an anti-Catholic writer who, when contesting a local election in Kilkenny, asserted the genetic superiority in political affairs of Protestants over Catholics. His main anti-Catholic writing was not about Ireland but about Croatia, which welcomed Hitler as a liberator and took an enthusiastic part in exterminating the Serbs who opposed Hitler. The Serbs were Orthodox in religion, the Croats Catholic, and Butler attached great significance to this.

When the media liberals organised a centenary celebration of Butler's birth in Kilkenny Castle, the Croats had re-emerged nationalistically under the auspices of the EU, and under the chequered flag of 1941 which had flown over their slaughter of Serbs and others. The media liberals averted their minds from current affairs in Croatia and they looked firmly backward to the early 1940s, when the Croats engaged in genocide under a Nazi protectorate because they were Catholic. Such is the Liberal mind—fragmented and inconsequential.

The Baltic countries to re-emerged into independent national statehood under the flags of their Nazi liberation in 1941, under which many of them had participated in the extermination of Jews as a public sport that was even more one-sided than the contests of Christians and lions in the Colosseum.

The countries where the fascist flags of 1941 have been brought out of the cupboard have, as far as we know, been slotting themselves into a capitalist way of life more easily than countries that had never been liberated from Communism by Nazism. This accords with Churchill's view that Fascism was a form of defence of capitalist civilisation against Communism.

Isaiah Berlin has the reputation of being a philosopher, and his biography is written by a philosopher who became a politician, as Plato advised, Michael Ignatiev. Berlin was born to a wealthy family of Jewish merchants in Riga, when Latvia was part of the Tsarist Empire and life was free. His father was one of the elite, a Merchant of the First Guild, and he was made an honorary citizen of the Empire:

"once a year Mendel Berlin journeyed to Lubavich, a small village in the Smolensk *gubernia* of western Russia, to consult the rabbi on business matters and seek his blessing... the oracle in question... was the leader of one of the most important sects of Hassidic Jews in Eastern Europe, known as Lubavich. Established in the 1780s by Rabbi Schnev Zalman Schneerson, the Lubevicher were among the most mystical and devout of

the Hassidic sects... The Lubeviches and other Hassidim were fiercely resented within traditional Jewish Orthodoxy for their focus on an individual's personal relationship with God and his fellow men rather than on the intricacies of Jewish law..." (*Isaiah Berlin*, 2000, p14).

During the War Mendel went to Petrograd to conduct his business. He stayed on for a couple of years after the Bolshevik revolution as a supplier of timber to the nationalised railways. In 1920 the Berlins returned to Riga. During their absence Britain announced the project of forming a Jewish state in Palestine as part of the British Empire, and Latvia had become an independent republic. They were met at the borders with anti-Semitic measures, which flowered abundantly twenty years later under Nazi liberation, and they decided to re-locate to the branch of the business in England.

In 1920 Ireland was denied national recognition by the Peace Conference of the victorious Powers, even though it had a national movement which had developed consistently over ninety years, and had voted for independence, despite harassment by the Empire. Elsewhere, independent states were the products of acts of God as far as their populations were concerned—creations of the victorious Empires. Their nationalism began with the state, rather than producing it. The Jews, as people of the fallen Empire, stood in the way of it. More than that, the Jews in the Bolshevised Tsarist State were disproportionately represented in the Communist regime.

There was therefore sufficient reason in the circumstances of the case why the nationalisms that emerged with the collapse of the Soviet Union tended to be Fascist and anti-Semitic. But the liberal West, which is programmed to find both of these things not only abhorrent but groundless and inexplicable, had to grin and bear it while pretending not to see it. It had worked hard to undermine the Soviet Union by encouraging nationalisms, and those were the antecedents of the actual nationalisms that were available.

These new nationalist states, unabashed about where they had come from and what they were, fitted easily, for the most part, into EU Europe, which had grown so politically correct that it was in denial about its own historical origins and purpose—having had to abort an attempt to write a history of itself—and they facilitated Britain in the disorienting of the old EU.

The belated appearance centre stage of Ukrainian fascism as a carefully-directed instrument of US policy against Russia

makes its development more problematical.

The ethnic cleansing of the Serbs out of Croatia was done with a good conscience by the Croats, resuming the business of 1941, and with the blessing of the EU (meaning Germany) as in 1941. There was a widespread feeling that Civilisation needed the last stronghold of Socialism to be crushed and that considerations of law should be set aside for the purpose. The Serbs were demonised. They were depicted as the Communist die-hards with whom there was only one way to deal.

The fact that the Serbs were a stable, conservative, Royalist people who resisted Hitler (when the volatile Croats welcomed him), delaying his invasion of Russia by six weeks that were possibly crucial in the drive for Moscow, was studiously forgotten. So was the fact that the Communist regime was imposed on Serbia with British arms in 1944. The ethnic cleansing of the Serbs out of Croatia was not done secretly. There was never any difficulty in finding out what was going on. But a special state of mind was applied to it.

The Kiev campaign against the Russians in the Eastern Ukraine is not being done that way. The *coup* Government is denying that its difficulty is with Russian populations responding to an overtly anti-Russian revolution. Denying the existence of populations which you are bombing can only be understood as a sign of an intention to get rid of them.

The Croats could drive out the Serbs and nobody was bothered. Jewish nationalists—citizens of the only democracy in the Middle East—can ask the Palestinians why they keep on hanging around where they're not wanted, why don't they just go away?, and television interviewers are not shocked.

But battering the Russians in the Ukraine as the Palestinians are battered, or driving them out as the Serbs were driven out, risks very serious consequences for Europe.

Russia had been reduced to a geographical expression when the Serbs were being dealt with. It has now restored itself as a State.

It annexed the Crimea following a Crimean referendum brought about by the anti-Russian *coup* in the state. The EU says that was illegal because the *coup* Government in Kiev did not authorise the referendum.

This brings us back to Black and Tan territory. The Irish voted for independence and Britain made war on them. A Trinity revisionist, writing in *History Ireland*,

Joost Augusteijn, says the elected Irish Government was illegitimate because it was not recognised internationally. At the time the Governments of the world were assembled at Versailles in a Conference to make arrangements for the world and Britain vetoed consideration of the Irish vote for independence. Applying Augusteijn's standard leads to the conclusion that Irish independence was not legally possible—was illegal.

A *coup* in Kiev is directed against both the Russian state and the Russian population of the Ukraine state, but in the EU view, there is nothing either the Russian state or the Russians in the Ukraine can do about it. and the EU imposed sanctions against Russia because it did not instantly recognise the legitimacy of the anti-Russian Government in Kiev installed by *coup*. (We disregard the subsequent election, which only passed muster in Western eyes because it was serving a Western interest.)

Michael Ignatiev, philosopher turned statesman, is sad that Russia is no longer democratic and co-operative. The West, he says, was enthusiastic about Putin, but he let it down:

"We have gone from having someone we thought was a partner and we've now got an adversary. That means that we've got to give some pretty clear unequivocal guarantees to NATO members who border Russia. If you're in the Baltic you're scared and anxious. We've got to reassure them. We've got to make sure that the Ukrainian transition to democracy gets sustained with some serious economic help. and, if we do that, and we adopt a cool judicious temperament that makes it clear that Russia cannot proceed a step further, I think we're going to be OK. I think it really is one of the first moments in the new world that's begun with 2014" (BBC, *Newsnight*, 24 March).

When philosophers become politicians it seems that they cease to be philosophical and become plain silly. From the moment Putin began to restore a functional State in Russia in place of the oligarchic anarchy that put the Russian economy at the mercy of the West, his efforts have been denounced as Fascist by the popular Western media. When he formed a strong party, and it made headway against the scores of parties that made meaningful democratic elections impossible, comparisons were made with the Nuremberg Rallies.

Democracy in Russia, from the Western viewpoint, was Yeltsin's system of government by Presidential Decree, after he freed himself from any semblance of representative government by shelling the Parli-

ament building to the acclaim of the *Financial Times*.

Also appearing on the programme was Alex Pravda of St. Anthony's College, Oxford (which specialises in foreign policy), who made the interesting statement that it is "*unhelpful though not inaccurate to use zero sum language*". He also did not think that there had been a system of accepted rules which Putin had broken. and he reminded that "*Russia, is, like it or not, part of the greater Europe*".

Ignatieff (who was for some years leader of the Canadian Liberal Party, but is now back in Harvard, having made a mess of it), didn't like this idea at all. And he seemed to remember that we had not actually treated Putin as a partner at all. He said: "*I think it was a mistake all along to think that a KGB Russia could really be a partner here*".

So the Cold War against Russia continues, and the great question is whether it would be safer to precipitate war with it now that it is no longer Communist, than it was when it did not participate in the capitalist system.

The British Foreign Secretary has condemned Russia for engaging in a "*sponsored war*" in Ukraine. In the old days the term was "*proxy war*" or "*covert war*" and was thought to be better than all-out direct war between the principals.

The characterisation of the war between the *coup* Government in Kiev, instigated and supported by the West, and the Donyetsk Peoples Republic established by referendum, as a "*sponsored war*" depends on acceptance of the Kiev propaganda assertion that the Donyetsk Republic is a fabrication of the Russian State operated by "*pro-Russians*", rather than the authentic response of an actual Russian population to the anti-Russian action of the Kiev revolution.

In Libya the West recognised a chaotic miscellany of Islamic fundamentalists as the virtually democratic representative of the people of Libya and misused a Security Council resolution to bring it to power. In power, those Western-sponsored virtually democratic representatives of the people of Libya made a shambles of the Libyan state.

Then the West recognised a similar miscellany in Syria as the legitimate authority in the Syrian state, and supported it covertly, providing a base area for ISIS—which seems to be given structure by a survival of Saddam Hussein's State apparatus which has discarded the Western liberal orientation which it gave Iraq before the liberal West invaded and destroyed

the State.

In Donyetsk it seems that a Russian population was provoked by the anti-Russian stance of the *coup* Government into electing its own Government, which it seems able to operate on the conventional lines of European democracy. But the EU—a lost soul in the wilderness which America generates around itself—finds itself in the grip of an imperative to bomb it to pieces.

*

The First World War happened because fifty German petty kingdoms united into a German state in the 19th century. It would not have happened if Germany had not united. The European Powers found it difficult to come to terms with the fact that Germany was no longer their battleground but had become a Power like themselves.

There was clearly a Western assumption in the Cold War that, if they could get rid of the Communist system, Russia would be at their feet. Reluctance to come to terms with the fact that it isn't has the makings of a war in it.

*

And regarding the sacredness of borders: the most sacred border of all to liberal, secular Europe should be the border of the Jewish State laid down by the General Assembly of the UN, to which authority had been transferred by the Security Council for the purpose. The Jewish nationalist movement immediately over-ran the UN Border in 1948 and added a large chunk of the territory awarded by the UN to the Palestinians to the state of Israel. The UN did nothing about that. Then in 1967 Israel took the rest of Palestine and has been colonising it. The EU recently made a feeble effort to discriminate between what Israel did within the 1948 borders and what it did beyond them. But President Netanyahu made it clear that he would not tolerate such interference: "*We will not accept any external dictates regarding our borders*" (*Jerusalem Post*, 30.7.2013). He would not allow discrimination against "*hundreds of thousands of Israelis living in Judea, Samaria, the Golan Heights and our united capital, Jerusalem*." Judea and Samaria and Jerusalem are on the sacred soil of Zion and the detail that the UN placed them outside the borders of the Jewish State will not deter Israel from treating them as its own. And the attempt by the EU "*to force on Israel the final borders through economic pressure*" was wrong and "*it causes Israel to lose confidence in the impartiality of Europe*".

Israel will decide where its borders are to lie in its own good time.

Ukraine Propaganda

Regarding the bringing down of the Malaysian plane in Eastern Ukraine—over half of whose passengers were Dutch, RTE's *Morning Ireland* (23rd July) featured a British journalist wondering why the Dutch Government was so soft on Russia and didn't "*man up*". It seems that the Brits are annoyed that the Dutch families want answers about what the plane was doing in a war-zone whereas the Brits' only interest is in connecting the shooting down to Putin, and all the British media are instinctively engaged in the Putin-hunt.

Similarly, the *Irish Times* on the same day led with the story, "*Rebels Damaging Crash Site, Claim OSCE Inspectors*". The reality is otherwise. Reuters reported on the same day:

"Peter van Vliet, whose team went through the wagons dressed in surgical masks and rubber gloves, said he was impressed by the work the recovery crews had done, given the heat and the scale of the crash site». Vliet told Reuters: 'I think they did a hell of a job in a hell of a place'.

"The OSCE team confirmed to media on Saturday—less than 48 hours after the airliner was downed—that they had gained full access to the crash site, facilitated by the local self-defence militia, even though Kiev forces were conducting intimidating flyovers with warplanes."

The whole episode is a subject of a propaganda offensive against Russia and the Ukrainian Cossacks.

Several widely circulated propaganda clips have also since been discredited:

1. One is the photo that was all over the British sewer press of a Russian resistance fighter holding up a child's toy with accompanying headlines you can imagine. Russia Today has shown the clip the still was taken from. The soldier holds up the toy for the press photographer, then replaces it on the ground, removes his cap and blesses himself in the Orthodox fashion.

2. Another clip, showing a BUK missile launcher allegedly "*withdrawing towards the Russian border*" when looked at closely reveals a signpost which is in a town in Ukrainian regime controlled territory. These ex-Soviet BUK systems are also held by the regime.

3. The tape recordings of "Russian separatists" seemed very plausible. But it emerges that they consist of snippets from different conversations spliced together.

All talk of the "Major from Soviet intelligence" seems since to have disappeared from the "discourse".

The Australian PM, who has taken a militant Zionist line on the Middle East, is making statements which amount to a call for NATO to be "secure" the site of the accident.

So far Kiev has killed over 500 civilians in an attempt to regain control of the territory. ■

Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

GERMANY AND BRAZIL

The victory of Germany in the World Cup was hardly a surprise, but the humiliation of Brazil in the semi-final by a 7 to 1 scoreline was astonishing. No one could have predicted that before the tournament, but the signs were there as the competition progressed. The crude long-ball game of the Brazilians was no match for the subtle, attacking flair of the Germans.

Brazil is no longer the repository of the beautiful game. It is a victim of globalisation. The sublime skill of the 1970 team is a distant memory. Its greatest player Pelé played for the Brazilian club Santos until he was nearly 34. This would be inconceivable today. The Brazilian public refers to the current players of their national team as "imposters" because from their teenage years they have played their club football in Europe. The problem also affects Argentina. That country's best player, Lionel Messi, joined Barcelona at a young age. He has never played professional football in his native country.

The domestic leagues wither as young talent is exported. But it is also true that the phenomenon adversely affects the game in Europe. The economics of the English Premier League give no incentive to nurture young domestic talent since it can be bought in relatively cheaply from abroad.

But the Germans believe that football is too important to be left to the vagaries of the market. The German Football Association invests enormous amounts on youth development. Recent UEFA figures show the resources put in by Germany compared to England. Germany has 28,400 coaches with a B licence (England, 1,759); 5,500 with the A licence (England, 895); and 1,070 with the Professional licence, the highest qualification, (England, 115).

GERMAN PROPERTY

Maybe we can learn from the Germans and not just their football.

As has been pointed out in this column, the Germans have a productive approach to their economy. They consider a non-productive asset such as a house as a place to live; and not a speculative investment.

The concept of negative equity is unknown. By the same token most Germans don't expect capital gains on their houses. Many pension funds invest in residential property on the basis that the returns (rents) are low but reliable. Only 40% of German dwellings are owner-occupied compared to over 70% for other European countries including Ireland.

Ireland's excess of investment in property means that investment in productive enterprises is foregone. There is a reason why businesses in Ireland are being denied credit. It's not because bank managers have a vendetta against business; the credit just isn't available because of past property investment mistakes.

SINN FÉIN ON PROPERTY TAX

Gerry Adams announced on *Morning Ireland* that Sinn Féin would make the abolition of the Property Tax a precondition for participating in government. This looks like a mistake, unless the Party's strategy is not to go into government after the next election. But why place the Party in such a strait-jacket? Will the electorate reward such abstinence?

The property tax is an accomplished fact. There is no coherent economic argument for its abolition.

THE LEFT AND PROPERTY TAX

Local Councils have the option of varying the amount of the property tax by plus or minus 15%. The annual property tax at roughly 0.18% of the value of the house is very low. In some other European countries the rate is 2 or 3 times this level. Nevertheless some Councils in Dublin have taken the opportunity to reduce the property tax by 15%.

In Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown a motion to this effect from Fine Gael and Labour was supported unanimously by the other parties. The ex-Fianna Fáil Minister, Mary Hanafin, rather limply hoped that commercial rates, which are penal in this country, will not increase as a consequence. The *People Before Profit* councillor Melissa Halpin accused Fine Gael and Labour of being hypocritical but nevertheless voted for the motion.

The owners of mansions in that Local Government area, such as Bono of U2, will not exactly be 'quaking in their boots' at the electoral gains of the Trotskyists and Sinn Féin! It is quite remarkable that the Left not only does not dissent from the low tax consensus, but is to the forefront in sowing the illusion that good quality public services can be provided without having to pay for them.

It is particularly disappointing that the

Labour Party has gone along with the lazy, populist consensus. By doing so it is disabling itself from criticising Sinn Féin.

BIN CHARGES

In his article of 8th July in the *Irish Times*, Fintan O'Toole regretted the passing of publicly provided bin services. Up until January 2012 he paid 100 euro a year. Since privatisation the cost has increased to 282 euro and the service has diminished.

This prompted responses in the letters page from Labour Councillor Dermot Lacey and the new Super Junior Minister Gerard Nash to the effect that the "populist" left campaigned for the abolition of the 100 euro charge. But be careful what you wish for! The Council decided that it could no longer finance the bin service and outsourced it to the private sector.

The populist left think such services should be funded from general taxation. But it is difficult to see how Local Government can be effective if it is dependent on central government by not having the ability to impose its own taxes.

RUAIRÍ QUINN

The enforced (?) retirement of Ruairí Quinn from the Cabinet prompted an assessment of his legacy. It was noted that he has the distinction of being the only ever Labour Minister for Finance. There is a widespread belief that he was a very good Finance Minister. The Long Fellow would not greatly dissent from that view. At the very least, it can be said he didn't do any harm.

Quinn's time in Finance (1994 to 1997) coincided with the beginning of what became known as the Celtic Tiger. Employment was rising, growth rates were high and he was able to give significant tax concessions while still bringing in budget surpluses.

He continued the trend begun by Fianna Fáil Governments after 1987 of giving tax relief to the low paid, but he was extremely cautious. For example, it was left to his successor Charlie McCreevy to replace the regressive system of tax allowances with tax credits. Most of Quinn's reforms were tweaking around the edges. He seemed overly anxious to prove that a Social Democratic Finance Minister could be 'responsible'. Towards the end of his tenure he talked about pension reform but never had the opportunity to follow through on this because Labour was out of office for almost 14 years during a period of massive economic expansion. It's a great pity that Labour spurned the opportunity to participate in significant social

reforms during this period because of an apolitical animosity to Fianna Fáil.

JOAN BURTON

Joan Burton has made a good start as Labour Party leader by clearing the decks. The Party's electoral problems relate less to what it has done in government than the expectations it raised at the last General Election. For this reason the politicians most associated with that Election campaign had to go: Gilmore ("*Labour's way or Frankfurt's way*"); Quinn (signing a pledge to Third Level Students, which he couldn't keep); and Rabbitte's evisceration of Pat Carey, which with the passing of time seems like so much hot air.

At least it can be said of Burton that she does not exude the world weary cynicism of the other three (two of whom are ex Workers Party).

Burton appears more reflective than other Labour Party leaders. She has made interesting speeches on the German apprenticeship model. We as a society have much to learn from the Germans. Burton must articulate a vision of Irish society that is separate and distinct from the other parties. Mere welfarism or "*mitigating the policies of Fine Gael*" will not be enough if Labour is to carve out a place for itself in the future.

South and they were willing to subvert the Northern system in the attempt.

Both party leaders went out of their way to commend Lord Bew's scheme as a valuable service to history, even after it had ended in disgrace, with Boston College regretting that it had let itself be talked into it.

A scheme to record reminiscences which would be locked away for half a century, and not drip fed into politics in the meantime, would possibly have been a service to history. (Though whether these memoirs could have been kept safe from Intelligence penetration remains doubtful.) But to record evidence against Gerry Adams by people who hated him for the part he played in ending the War, on a guarantee that it would not be made public until they themselves died—and some of them did not think they had long to live—and would then be publicised with the object of damaging Adams: that's something entirely different. But it seems to be the only thing that happened in the North recently that has been of interest to Kenny and Martin.

Northern Ireland

Power Sharing ?

Peter Robinson arranged for the Twelfth to pass off peacefully to demonstrate that the post-Paisley DUP has effective control of the Unionist mass, which it can use in the "*graduated response*" to failing to get its way in whatever the issue happens to be. Just now the issue is minor curbs put on Orange marches to reduce their aggravating influence on nationalists.

The basic issue, behind all the concocted issues, is that there is no democracy in Northern Ireland. Of course the system isn't democratic. It never has been. But the present system, with a kind of double-democracy, is less undemocratic than the one that preceded it, which led to war. Each community gets something for itself in it—a piece of the devolved apparatus of government. But since, under the old undemocratic system, the Protestant community got everything there was there to be got, the fact that the nationalist community gets some of it is experienced as the loss of democracy.

Peter Robinson has increased his influence in his pseudo-democracy by discreet threats to bring the system down if he doesn't get his way on some minor issue. He has generated a standing threat to the system as a medium of devolved politics, as Lord Trimble did with expert advice from Lord Bew in the years after 1998. His problem is to calculate how bringing down the system—the state, as Lord Bew would have it—would play in the larger political game.

The DUP had been distancing itself from Paisleyite populism and remaking itself on Tory lines in the hope of becoming a very minor partner in the Government of

the state in the event of a hung Parliament at the next election.

But it is a long time between now and the General Election—"a week is a long time in politics"—and Cameron is not likely to be pleased if Robinson presents him with a Northern Ireland mess between now and then.

David Ford, leader of the remnant of the Alliance Party, has been stirring the pot. Whitehall made special arrangements so that Justice could be partly devolved to him in the Stormont Government, so he can be taken to be a Whitehall nominee. And he has been making noises about scrapping the present system and returning to a variant of the old system—the 1974 Power-Sharing Majority Rule variant that lasted for less than five months and fell in the midst of the General Strike which it provoked.

Ford calls his suggestion "*re-booting*". But re-booting is renewing what exists, and his proposal is to destroy what exists and try to make a restoration of the old system functional with the participation of token nationalists. But it is doubtful that the SDLP is yet sufficiently atrophied to agree to being a token nationalist presence in Ford's Unionist restoration.

Dublin demanded over many years that it should have a right of oversight jointly with Whitehall. When it got that right it didn't know what to do with it. It is ignorant about the North and does not want to inform itself. The chief concern of both Fine Gael and Fianna Fail was to make use of Lord Bew's Boston Tapes operation to damage Sinn Fein in the

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Frank Aiken:

MI5-TCD character assassination debunked

Trinity College Dublin is soon to be "re-branded" as "Trinity College, the University of Dublin". While this might seem a little arrogant, apparently the name change is in part to facilitate "international students" seeking foreign study options on Google! Whatever its branding strategy, its Bank of Ireland Professor of Contemporary Irish History, member of its Board until 2012 and, among other things, joint editor—with Prof. Kennedy, Dr. Crowe (National Archive) *et al*—of the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy* series, Eunan O'Halpin, is a man of prodigious output with everything going for him as a leading historian of modern Ireland. A meticulous Professor with unparalleled and often privileged access to State and private papers, he has published a range of extensively researched books, most notably, *Spying on Ireland. British Intelligence and Irish Neutrality during the Second World War* (Oxford, 2008).

Spying on Ireland contains some quite sensational revelations of more than purely passing historical interest. But these are often left hanging in the air without proper explanation or context in a manner that one must suspect is done with a purpose.

THE LENIHAN YARN

One example is the story of Joseph Lenihan (*Spying*, pp. 179-83), an uncle of former Minister Mary O'Rourke and grand uncle of the late Minister of Finance Brian Lenihan. This story was widely used in the media at the time of publication of *Spying on Ireland* to boost sales. It appears that Lenihan was an IRA man who became involved with the German Abwehr in the late 1930s and was dropped as an agent into Ireland at the start of the Imperialist War of 1939-41. However, in 1941, after 18 months or so undertaking this mission, he abruptly "changed sides", handing himself over, not to the authorities of the Free State but to British Military Intelligence in the North, and serving thereafter in the field of British counter-intelligence against Germany, a role he terminated abruptly on the conclusion of the War. We are given no explanation for this behaviour, and O'Halpin's telling of it leaves the impression of a charlatan—erratic, unprincipled and unreliable (he titles this section of the book "Basket Case").

A historian without agendas would of

course try to make sense of such a story. But then this Professor seems to be rarely without some kind of agenda or other. Readers of the *Irish Political Review* will remember Niall Meehan's account of O'Halpin's State-funded foray a few years ago with a JCB (via the State organ RTE), in which he had himself filmed digging up a field in Co. Cork to find the corpses of "murdered victims" of the IRA in 1921-22. Although he found nothing, he didn't allow this get in the way of his far-fetched yarn.

As regards the actions of Joe Lenihan, these would make perfect sense to anyone acquainted with the politics of the Communist movement of the time, with which Lenihan seems to have been connected, though, not having the extraordinary access of the Professor to British Intelligence sources, I can only conjecture that this was the case from the selected facts presented by him. If so, then Lenihan's actions were entirely consistent with the Comintern view of the War, which saw it quite correctly in its early (1939-41) phase as a playing out of military Imperial rivalries. British war plans in 1939-41 had nothing to do with "anti-fascist" concerns. Indeed, in late 1939, after Britain and France had declared war on Germany ostensibly in defence of Polish independence and then undertaken no action to effect their "Guarantee" to Poland, they moved to northern Finland with the aim of expanding offensive operations to the USSR. Britain's frantic efforts at the time to get fascist Italy and semi-fascist Romania on side as allies were in full swing, as were its efforts to implement a trade blockade of Germany, Russia and neutral Ireland, expand the War as far as possible, especially to Scandinavian and Balkan countries, sabre rattle and threaten the Irish Free State with invasion, and, after June 1940, attack the French Empire in the Middle East and Africa. In this context of ruthless Imperialist war Lenihan's conduct makes absolute sense, as did his abandonment of this line of action after the German invasion of Russia in 1941, which transformed the nature of the War into an anti-fascist war against Germany, prosecuted for the most part by the Soviet Union. But none of this context appears in O'Halpin's book, as presumably it would contradict the neat Churchillian yarn of the War as a conflict between the "demo-

cracies" and "totalitarianism", between Good and Evil, a storyline which O'Halpin is meticulously careful not to stray from. In such a scenario, Lenihan is reduced in the Professor's book to a "basket case".

BRITAIN'S IMPERIALIST

SABOTAGE FORCES IN WARTIME IRELAND

Another interesting revelation in *Spying on Ireland*, whose full importance is left hanging and unclarified, is the story of the networks of spies and saboteurs "revived" by the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS, also known as MI6) in the Free State in late 1939. These networks involved several hundred mostly Irish citizens of mainly, though not exclusively, Protestant and/or Anglo-Irish background, and mostly also former British military personnel, who regarded their oaths of loyalty to that organisation as superseding any 'loyalty' they might owe to the obviously despised State of their citizenship. O'Halpin asserts—without providing any sources for the assertion—that no such network had been maintained between 1922 and 1939. He does however concede escalated British Intelligence/subversion activity in Ireland in 1932-33 at a time when, in O'Halpin's silken words, Britain "was influenced by a longing to see the back of {de Valera} and to facilitate the return to power of the supposedly more malleable Cosgrave" (*Spying*, p. 119).

"Supposedly"!! Indeed, when, a few years ago, Manus O'Riordan, in this journal, revealed convincing evidence of comprehensive plans for an Italian-fascist-style *coup* to oust the de Valera Government involving British Government agencies, Cumann na nGaedhal circles, the Army Comrades and even the Irish "High Commissioner" in London, Sir John Dulanty, this writer has it on good authority that this revelation was pooh-poohed by the Professor.

He nevertheless relates (*Spying*, p. 74) how SIS's main man recruited to oversee operations in Ireland in 1940, Sir Charles Tegart, the son of a Church of Ireland clergyman, had worked with British Intelligence against India in World War One "probing links between Indian separatists and Germany", had then undertaken a "review" of RIC/Black-and-Tan Intelligence efforts in Ireland in 1920 on behalf of MI5, thereafter returning to "Indian Political Intelligence" and running its London office until being posted to "advise" British counter-insurgency forces suppressing the Arabs of Palestine in 1938. And throughout all those years, O'Halpin tells us, there were no MI5 operations in Ireland, though Tegart "maintained con-

tact with Ireland, returning on holidays whenever he could"! How naive and/or blind is our Bank of Ireland Professor!?

The "revived" (or yet another?) SIS network was headed from June 1940 by Captain C.S. Collinson, "a career SIS officer" who operated under the cover of head of the "newly established British Travel Permit Office" (*Spying*, p. 113). His major collaborator was Albert Podesta, manager of the Dublin Stubbs office and "a Cork Protestant and first world war veteran ... passionately loyal to Britain". The Stubbs operation provided Collinson with a vast amount of information on sometimes compromised individuals through its army of credit "enquiry agents" and Collinson's web rapidly expanded to a mass of "networks of informants in Dublin and other major towns and along the southern and western coastlines", including diverse individuals with old military connections, typically Captain W.M. Reidy, an ex-British officer who was a "well known Mason" and secretary of a Golf Club in Cork as well as "former members of the defunct Dublin Metropolitan Police and of the Garda", with "pro-British sentiment ... reinforced in some cases with modest regular payments" (*Spying*, p. 114). One Stubbs employee in the network, however, was a certain Moore, an anti-Treaty Republican, who, having "no intention of spying for Britain", immediately alerted Dan Bryan, head of Irish Military Intelligence (G2) to Collinson's networks and communications systems. Instead of rolling up the British spy/sabotage network, and without MI5 or SIS ever discovering its penetration by the Irish, G2 simply kept tabs on it for the remainder of the War, making use of the copious information that came through it intended for British eyes only.

O'Halpin provides some detail on this network, and also on radio communications officers located around Ireland by SIS and MI5 to operate allegedly in the event of a German invasion, at a time when Britain continued to refuse such equipment or arms to the Irish Government, despite repeated requests. In his eagerness to emphasise and absurdly exaggerate the extent of Irish-British "security cooperation" in World War Two, it is only in a throw-away remark that O'Halpin mentions that, throughout the War and at Churchill's explicit command, Britain implemented a ruthless economic blockade of Eire aimed at "starving Ireland into the war" (*Spying*, p. 213). It also maintained a strict ban on the sale of military equipment of any kind, thus limiting the country's ability to defend itself and, in the

event of actual military action against Ireland by the other side, maximising potential Irish dependence on the British Army:

"The prime minister believed that to give the Irish arms would only encourage them in their intransigence, and thought it more likely that that such weapons would be used against Britain than against a German invader" (*Spying*, p. 135-6).

Yet hand in hand with this approach, Churchill's force for creating "stay behind groups" as a terrorist/sabotage force behind German lines—the Special Operations Executive (SOE)—created yet a further network of agents and saboteurs in the Free State from late 1940:

"Plans were made for the destruction of Irish fuel stocks to prevent them falling into German hands. Fuel imports and storage were largely in the hands of British firms, and in December {1940} the JIC {Joint Intelligence Committee—POC} were reassured to learn that 'an arrangement had been made ... with the three principal companies ... that the stocks there ... should be kept down'. Plan 'Vista', for the destruction of the fuel stocks of BOAC at Foynes by an employee named Monroe, who might 'even consent to stay behind after the Germans overrun the area', was agreed in June 1941 ... As was disclosed to the Admiralty in December 1942, the Irish themselves made extensive plans for the destruction of key port facilities and airfields, although shortages of explosives and other materials {due to the British blockade and armament sales ban to Ireland—POC} made the likely effectiveness of these dispositions problematic, and from a British point of view there was always the consideration that the Irish might just as likely put them into effect to hamper a British invasion as a German one" (*Spying*, pp. 131-2).

These plans were to be implemented without any connection with Irish forces:

"The SOE plan did not envisage preparatory measures such as suborning of local officials or covert subsidy of Irish opposition groups, methods which were features of British schemes in other parts of the world at the time" (*Spying*, pp. 132).

A special relationship indeed! On 31st March 1941 the British Chiefs of Staff ordered SOE, in collaboration with the British Army in Northern Ireland, to activate an "organisation to undertake subversive warfare ... in the event of Germany occupying part of Ireland". Major Colin Gubbins, one of the chiefs of SOE who—although O'Halpin doesn't tell us this—had been involved in "anti-guerrilla" operations in Ireland during the War of Independence (see my article, 'British war

strategy, the SOE and the IRA', in *Irish Foreign Affairs* No. 6, April 2010), was insistent that any stay-behind sabotage force be firmly controlled by SOE. Irish involvement should be limited to Irish military circles who were willing to collaborate, to the exclusion of the "Eire Government" of whose Ministers only "one or two, but no more, may be trustworthy" (p. 134).

These 1941 SIS-SOE plots for military action in the Free State, first in support of a British invasion and then against a German invasion, were thus to be effected to the exclusion of other than collaborationist Irish military circles left over from the "Civil War". From Autumn 1940 such plans focused mostly on the eventuality of a German invasion only, though nothing of substance changed in the British action to be taken. This shift of emphasis occurred when planning a direct British invasion were dropped, thanks in large parts to Churchill's accepting the analyses of his chief spy in Ireland, Elizabeth Bowen, operating under the cover of a "novelist" and "travel writer" (as first exposed by Aubane Historical Society in this journal, and now grudgingly and here finally admitted by O'Halpin, *Spying*, pp. 119, 139).

With Hitler's invasion of Russia in June 1941 these plans too appear to have been put on the back-burner. O'Halpin does not give us details (yet alone many names) of this British terror/insurgency force in Ireland, though it is difficult to imagine it did not overlap with the several hundred strong loyalist SIS force, whose identities the Professor knows but chooses not to divulge. That there was no shortage of such loyal circles had been made clear in the thousands of applications made to the London-based "Irish Grants Committee" in the 1920s by people resident in southern Ireland who claimed to have "suffered" at the hands of the Irish as a result of their "active loyalty" to Crown Forces during the War of Independence (the vast majority of the claims were rejected as bogus, but what a database!).

The War of Independence Truce, negotiated by de Valera to enable negotiations on a final settlement to take place, began in July 1921, and in the Autumn the British Army implemented very visible and provocative preparations for the "immediate and terrible war" on the Boer War model with which Britain had begun to threaten the Republic's negotiators. These preparations included the registration of "active loyalists" and their concentration and arming at centres where troop concentrations were being assembled.

Plans were drafted for troops to bring in these civilians and their families to clear the way for the "energetic action" planned against the "rebel population". (see my article, "Immediate and Terrible War"—Some British Army plans, Irish Political Review, July 2012).

Collinson's networks, according to O'Halpin, were "in the main ... not directed against Irish interests"(!) (*Spying*, p. ix) and were "wound up" in 1945 shortly before the end of the War. However, though not mentioned in *Spying*, this was not the end of the matter, as an earlier book by O'Halpin himself relates:

"SIS's Irish networks were formally wound up on 31 March 1945, but orders were given in November 1945 to reinstate a skeletal organisation in case relations between Ireland and Britain soured. (It is said that the British, unaware that SIS's wartime networks had been compromised, then made the basic error of going back to some of their former Irish operatives)." (*MI5 and Ireland 1939-1945. The Official History*. Edited and introduced by Eunan O'Halpin, 2003, p. 5.)

The History Departments of Irish Universities have never produced a credible account of organised British subversion, counter-insurgency, terror and propaganda activities during the Irish War of Independence or the succeeding decades of the Irish Free State and Republic. The nearest we get to an account of it in the War of Independence from University circles is a reproduction of British Intelligence's own velvet 'history' of itself, lovingly "edited" and introduced by two of O'Halpin's then fellow TCD operatives—*British Intelligence in Ireland, 1920-21. The Final Report*, edited by Peter Hart, Series Editor: David Fitzpatrick. On some of the unsavoury editing undertaken, see Brian P. Murphy and Niall Meehan, *Troubled History—A 10th anniversary critique of Peter Hart's The IRA and its Enemies* (Aubane Historical Society, 2008).

To this day, the only comprehensive account of the actual axis of propaganda, terror, counter-insurgency and spin operated from Dublin Castle during those years is that by Dr Brian P. Murphy, again published outside a university, by the despised Athol Books (*The Origins & Organisation of British Propaganda in Ireland 1920*, Aubane-Spinwatch, 2006). Perhaps TCD could free up one member of the battalions of Ph.D. students of the Bank of Ireland History Department producing theses tilting at Catholic and nationalist windmills, writing up the minutiae of the case for Britain's 'just' Great War or inventing new theatres of operation for TCD's "School of War

Studies", to compare the lists from the Irish Grants Committee with O'Halpin's secretive lists of Collinson's SIS operatives and the SOE's putative "stay behind" teams to produce some interesting research results. Though on second thoughts . . .

THE AIKEN SLUR

O'Halpin, for all his fastidious research, cannot restrain the deep anti-Republican reflex required of a TCD Professor of History, even if a Bank of Ireland one. Whether or not he is a believer in biological racism we cannot say, but he has a disturbing habit of constantly reminding his readers or listeners of his distant relationship (grand nephew, and hence, in racist terminology, sharing about 1/16 of his blood) to Kevin Barry, the IRA volunteer hanged by the British in 1920. It is as if he is trying to say that many Volunteers of that period were not really Republicans at all—look at me after all!

One of the unedifying aspects of *Spying on Ireland* is the sprinkling throughout it of sometimes open and sometimes more veiled tarring of various Republicans or Fianna Fáil Ministers as "pro-Nazi". A good academic Editor might have pulled him up on this and asked him to produce something more than opinions inherited from MI5 reports. But then the book, after all, is produced by Oxford University Press, which has a long track record in these matters. Indeed his cosiness throughout with MI5 is merely a mirror image of his slurs on the historical reputations of many Republicans. A previous book of his, *MI5 and Ireland 1939-1945. The Official History*, was graced with an effusive forward by Christopher Andrew, the "official" historian of MI6, for which O'Halpin expresses his gratitude. Andrew lavishes praise on the Irish-British Intelligence "collaboration" in World War Two, a pudding which O'Halpin considerably over-ices. But also, for good measure, and possibly to reassert just who, in that particular relationship, is on top at the end of the day, Andrew closes his Preface with a veiled threat:

"Just as the demand for intelligence during the Second World War produced an unprecedented amount of intelligence collaboration, so 11 September 2001 has made necessary an even wider collaboration in order to identify and monitor the activities of al-Qaeda cells in over fifty countries. That collaboration will sometimes necessarily involve intelligence exchange with states such as Sudan and Libya with which Washington and London have in the past maintained less than cordial relations. And, as in the case of Ireland during the Second World War, intelligence exchange will not preclude

the continuance of covert operations on the territory of those countries with which the exchange takes place."

In his unsurpassed analysis of the actual workings of the system of propaganda, terror, counter-insurgency and spin operated by British Intelligence from Dublin Castle during the War of Independence, *The Origins and Organisation of British Propaganda in Ireland 1920* (Aubane-Spinwatch, 2006), Dr Brian P. Murphy showed that doctoring and distorting the historical record ("poisoning the well") through an astute management of its own files is one of the high arts employed by this most ingenious of intelligence services. Part of this was the doctrine of "verisimilitude" which, as enunciated by the chief propagandist at the Castle, and one of the masters of early 20th century British intelligence propaganda, Basil Clarke, meant "having the air of truth", an assembly of apparently plausible facts which give the air of truth to an essential lie. O'Halpin's Foreword writer, Andrew, in his own *MI6: The History of the Secret Intelligence Service 1909-1949*, relates two things of importance. The first is to tell the reader that, to be entrusted with the files of that organisation and write an acceptable history of it, he had had to take the oath which all members of MI6 take. The second important matter he relates is a regurgitation of the MI6 character assassination of the late Jack Jones, TGWU and TUC leader and Spanish Civil War volunteer, as a "Soviet agent" when he was close to British Government affairs. While the former demonstrates that Christopher Andrew became a member of MI6 to be allowed write an acceptable history of it, the latter illustrates his loyalty to that oath in regurgitating the lies of its "poisoned well", lies which have since been comprehensively demolished by Manus O'Riordan (*The Vindication Of Jack Jones*, Athol Books, 2012).

Whatever Professor O'Halpin's relationship with MI5, he is certainly not in his MI6 Foreword writer's shadow when it comes to regurgitating useful lies from the "poisoned well". He reprints without comment or correction the outrageous view of the terrorist spook, Major Gubbins of SOE, that "some of the Eireann Ministers are almost self-confessedly pro-German, others are indiscreet, and one or two, but no more, may be trustworthy" (from an MI5 point of view) (*Spying*, p. 134). O'Halpin also relates that the SIS traitors' network in Ireland filed reports on various people, including "pro-Nazi Irishmen such as the one-time IRA man and solicitor, Con Lehane, and Seán

McBride" (p. 119—note the ingenious comma) and elsewhere boldly states that "*McBride and {Francis} Stuart were strong admirers of Nazi Germany*" (p. 42). While this is true of Stuart, it is demonstrably untrue of McBride, a fact of which O'Halpin should be well aware since the appearance of the excellent biography by Elizabeth Keane (*Seán MacBride. A Life*) published three years before O'Halpin's *Spying*. Many other similar instances could be mentioned, leading to the unavoidable conclusion that the Professor is engaging in his own little campaign of well-poisoning.

But it is in the case of Frank Aiken, a senior figure in the Treaty War IRA, De Valera's wartime Minister for Coordination of Defensive Measures and probably Ireland's outstanding post-WW2 Minister for Foreign Affairs, that O'Halpin's exercise in verisimilitude goes a file too far. He regurgitates MI5 reports to the British Cabinet which classified Aiken as "*an extremist (left)*", and portrayed him as "*virulently pro-German*" (p. 37). O'Halpin does not tell the reader what to think of these charges. The Professor mentions once, in passing, buried deep in dense type, that Aiken was "*determinedly pro-neutrality, not pro-German*", but quickly adds a doubt with the comment that he was nevertheless "*always suspect in British eyes*" (p. 47). These reports were spread in US circles to discredit Aiken when he went on a mission there in 1941 to try to secure US support to arm Irish neutrality:

"The imperturbable and taciturn Aiken, described by Bill Donovan {head of the OSS, precursor of the CIA—POC} as 'of the extreme Left Wing' but nevertheless a man whom the President should see, was believed, *correctly or not*, to be among the most pro-German of Irish politicians" (*Spying*, p. 144, emphasis added).

Why does O'Halpin throw in "*correctly or not*"? Does this Professor of Irish History, with unparalleled access to papers private, public and secret, and co-Editor of the RIA's *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy 1941-1945*, really not know the answer? Not to mention that Aiken's extensive private papers have long been easily accessible in UCD Archive. As if to compound his insinuations, the Professor gratuitously adds that Sir John Dulanty's portrayal of Aiken as "*an anti-British bogeyman*" on orders from Dublin during the Anglo-Irish negotiations of 1938 "*may go some way to explain why the {pro-German} label stuck throughout the war (during which Aiken was elevated to the high-sounding role of minister for the*

coordination of defensive measures, a job which placed him at a remove from direct control over military matters and contact with G2)" (*Spying*, p. 38).

O'Halpin's verisimilitude and sly, un-commented and dishonest use of quotations from MI5 sources, with his own ugly hints that the Irish Government shared MI5's assessment added in for good measure, can leave the reader in little doubt as to what s/he should think of Aiken—a Nazi.

THE SLUR REBUTTED

Bryce Evans—a lecturer at Liverpool University and a provocative historian who has been a thorn in the side of the Irish revisionist Establishment since the appearance in 2011 of his iconoclastic biography of Lemass (*Seán Lemass. Democratic Dictator*)—has recently co-edited with Stephen Kelly a biography of Aiken, *Frank Aiken: Nationalist and Internationalist* (2014). In the section on Aiken and the Second World War (pp. 133-157), Evans seeks to establish whether there is any basis for the MI5/O'Halpin character assassination and is left bewildered that it should even be a matter of debate.

But first back to the TCD Professor. Although allegedly a book on both "*British Intelligence and Irish Neutrality during the Second World War*", O'Halpin's *Spying* reduces to a single paragraph (in a book of 335 pages) one of the great stories of Irish neutrality—the key ancillary role in De Valera's army of resistance played by the IRA. O'Halpin relates:

"{SIS/MI5} activities certainly contributed to a partial rapprochement between republicans and the state in the Munster area. The Irish army southern command intelligence officer, Florence O'Donoghue had, like Bryan and Archer, specialized in intelligence during the War of Independence ... The fact of British clandestine activity along the southern coastline ... and the possibility of a British attack to seize the southern ports ..., enabled him in 1940 to persuade republicans to form the 'Supplementary Intelligence Service' ... organized on the old war of independence IRA battalion areas. {I}SIS was designed as a surveillance organisation, channelling information from localities to O'Donoghue, and carrying out local investigations on request. It was also to have a 'stay behind' intelligence role in the event of areas coming under foreign military occupation. At the time of its creation the obvious problem for investigation was clandestine British activity; over time, however, the organization was to prove useful in respect both of American and, most crucially, of German-related intrigue. It gave G2 the capability to

collect good local intelligence independently of the Garda, and it also provided O'Donoghue with a good line into the Munster IRA. So secret was {I}SIS, and so delicate was the fact that committed republicans cooperated with the army which had defeated them in the civil war, that its existence was never publicly acknowledged. Five years after the end of the second world war, however, the government approved the secret distribution to {I}SIS members of the 'Emergency Medal' awarded to those who had served in the defence forces between 1939 and 1945" (*Spying*, pp. 73-4. The 'I' before 'SIS' which, although not in the original, was inserted by O'Halpin for 'Irish', to distinguish this force from the "real", British, SIS, has been placed by the present writer in curly brackets).

The Professor, of course, does not mention whether Aiken had any connection with these events. But it is not credible that he was not involved. He had retained close links with the IRA while, as Evans quotes him, believing firmly that the 1937 Constitution had restored the anti-Treaty position, making the southern IRA irrelevant. Nevertheless, he met with hunger-striking IRA prisoners in Arbour Hill Prison in early 1940 and "*offered the IRA an amnesty and incorporation into the Army. The deal however was refused*" (Evans, p. 135). Despite this rejection of a formal arrangement, the cooperation of the IRA in its Munster base, and in other activities brought to light by Manus O'Riordan in recent articles in the *Irish Political Review*, was no doubt facilitated by Aiken's role. As minister for coordination of defence, Aiken had also led the creation of the Local Defence Force which, Evans reports, numbered over 180,000 by late 1941. Many local republicans joined this force which, in the event of an invasion by either side, was intended to form the mass base of a guerrilla resistance movement officered by the full time soldiers of the Army (of 41,000 men). But of course there is no mention of any of this in O'Halpin's dense book.

What basis is there for the MI5 slurs of Aiken as "*pro-German*", or even "*pro-Nazi*", so slyly repeated for modern consumption by Bank of Ireland Professor O'Halpin? Having sifted through all the available evidence, Evans can find none. Indeed the militantly anti-de Valera US envoy, David Gray, stated bluntly in a memo to Roosevelt on 28th June 1940: "*Aiken, as I wrote to you, has been a suspect as a fifth columnist {the charge widely circulated in US circles by MI5—POC}, but on the best authority I can get, this is untrue*" (Evans, p. 135). Aiken also

abhorred the Nazi treatment of the Jews and the censorship system which he supervised ruthlessly excluded anti-Semitic content of any kind from wartime newspapers (Evans, p. 149). Aiken never expressed any admiration of any kind for Nazi Germany and his liberal treatment of infringements of the censorship regulations and benign toleration of the antics of the pro-British editor of *The Irish Times*, R.M. Smyllie, is well documented by Evans.

That Aiken retained a strong hostility to Britain is beyond dispute, telling the head of the US State Department in 1941 that "*there was no point talking to the Irish people about a potential aggressor when they were facing an active aggressor*". But, despite his role in Collins' devious and disastrous "*invasion*" of 'Northern Ireland' in 1922 (see Pat Walsh, *Catastrophe and Resurgence: The Catholic Predicament in 'Northern Ireland'*, Athol, 2014), he was no die-hard anti-partitionist. Evans shows how in 1940 he rejected notions of using the War to carry out incursions into the North, and that "*rumours*" (by guess who) that he favoured cooperation with a German invasion so as to "*re-take*" the North had no substance whatsoever. In his meeting with Roosevelt himself, Aiken categorically rejected the British claims that he had said that Ireland had nothing to fear from a German invasion. When asked in a hostile US press interview by Denis Johnston about Churchill's "*offer*" of unity in return for Ireland joining their war, he replied: "*Most certainly not. We want union and sovereignty, not union and slavery*". Evans also shows that his famous meeting with the fanatically pro-British Roosevelt in early 1941 and tour of the US were far from a failure or a "*disaster*" as O'Halpin termed it. He firmly stood his ground with Roosevelt, insisting—to the outrage of the Anglophile President—on US support for Ireland to resist aggression from *either* Britain *or* Germany, but nevertheless succeeded in securing large quantities of fuel and coal, and two merchant ships, which contributed considerably to blunting the impact of Britain's brutal economic blockade of Ireland.

WHY DOES HE DO IT?

Bryce Evans, to paraphrase the awful Eamon Dunphy, is a good historian, not a great historian. All the sources he uses to establish the real record of Frank Aiken in WW2 were readily available to the TCD Professor, O'Halpin, and some of them are even in the *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy 1941-1945*, co-edited by the Professor himself. Evans brings some new

evidence to bear in relation to Aiken's visit to the US and his meeting with Roosevelt in 1941, but otherwise what he writes was readily available to the Professor. But O'Halpin prefers instead to cast slurs and employ innuendo and MI5-style verisimilitude to spread a Nazi cloud over Aiken's historical reputation. Why does he do it? While the Professor's visceral hostility to Republicans generally—something of a requirement for a TCD Professor, let alone a privileged MI5 historian—can be taken as given, his particular *animus* for Aiken is something less immediately explicable. One factor might well be the extraordinary affinity that has developed between Irish revisionists and the cause of Zionism, first championed by Conor Cruise O'Brien. For Aiken was to

emerge in the post-War world as a substantial politician on the world stage, and nowhere more so than in his championing of the victims of the Zionist state building/expansion project in the 1960s and 1970s. That issue will be returned to in a future article.

Philip O'Connor

The Origins and the Organisation of British Propaganda in Ireland 1920

by Brian P. Murphy *osb*. Foreword: Prof. David Miller. €10, £8 postfree

Troubled History: A 10th Anniversary Critique Of *The IRA & Its Enemies* by Brian Murphy *osb* and Niall Meehan. Introduction Ruan O'Donnell. €10, £8 postfree in Ireland and Britain

Centenary Commemoration Of A Redmondite Racist Rampage

We are now into the official C"decade of centenaries" with a vengeance. Are we merely commemorating—or are we actually being encouraged to **celebrate**—the 1914-1918 Imperialist War? That Great War—How Great Thou Art! In 2008 RTÉ and the Royal Irish Academy (the RIA—certainly not to be confused with the IRA!) got their retaliation in first against those of us who decry any such celebration, by marking the 90th anniversary of the victorious end of that War, victorious for Britain, that is. The RTÉ-RIA Thomas Davis Lecture series (poor Davis, what sins have been committed in thy name!) was edited by Trinity College History Department's John Horne, and given the title of *Our War—Ireland and the Great War*. "A HERO WE WROTE OUT OF HISTORY" was the heading in the "*Our War*" vein that the *Irish Mail on Sunday* gave this past 13th April to a preview of the transmission by RTÉ on the following evening of the Gay Byrne documentary "*My Father's War*". The *Irish Times* preview on 5th April reported:

"Byrne says he remains angry that his father's experience and that of the other 200,000 Irishmen who fought in the First World War were written out of Irish history after it ended. His father was one of eight Byrne brothers who fought in the war. *I can safely say that in Synge Street in the Christian Brothers (where he went to school), we heard all about 1916 and about Pearse and Connolly, but not one single mention ever was there of the Great War. It was as if it never happened. It never existed, not a single mention of it*', the broadcaster says... Byrne also reveals

that his father referred to the 1916 Rising '*disdainfully*' as '*that local skirmish in Dublin*'. He added: '*Most of the men who fought in the First World War resented it. They would have regarded the 1916 people as somehow traitors.*'"

Byrne was born in 1934 and grew up at the Rialto end of Dublin's South Circular Road, while I was born in 1949 and grew up off the SC Road's Portobello end. I remember, throughout my 1960s youth, the Poppy sellers on the Road, outside St Kevin's Anglican Church, and British Army veterans in the neighbourhood, both Catholic and Protestant, proudly wearing their medals on Remembrance Sunday. I remember one such neighbour, a fellow Catholic parishioner, living off the Road in Upper Clanbrassil Street, being particularly celebrated in the media as one of the last survivors of Britain's War against the South African Boers. I knew two First World War widows—one a neighbour; the other, the veteran Dublin Protestant Communist Esther McGregor, whose son Liam would be killed in action in September 1938 in the last International Brigade engagement of the Spanish Anti-Fascist War. Although Liam McGregor's father had perished while serving in the British Army during World War One, neither he nor his mother Esther—whom I had the honour of knowing throughout the 1970s and up to her death in the 1980s—ever wore Poppies or participated in British Legion commemorations. Esther knew that the twin personal tragedies in her life resulted from the deaths of both her husband and her son in two very different

wars. She fully concurred with Frank Ryan's statement from Spain: "*Our 50,000 who died in the Great War were sacrificed uselessly; no life here is given in vain*".

Given the 15 years age difference between Gay Byrne and myself, there was, of course, no overlap between our school years in Synge Street, although we did have teachers in common. Yet I find Byrne's claim of a "*Great Silence*" about the Great War in 'Synger' quite incredible. Byrne left that school in 1952. I was in the primary school 1957-61 and in the secondary school 1961-66. There was, indeed, a silence about the Irish Civil War. Not so about the Spanish Civil War. We had a (lay) teacher of Spanish who regularly enthused about Franco's victory in that war, in full knowledge that my father had fought against Franco's Fascists. I just gritted my teeth and got on with it.

In those years one of Byrne's regular guest panellists on the "*Late, Late Show*", Matt Doolan, was an O'Duffy Blueshirt who had served on the Fascist side in Spain. An Anti-Fascist War would have been beyond Byrne's comprehension, as distinct from the Imperialist War about which he has become so elegantly wistful. But I myself experienced no "*Great Silence*" in 'Synger' about Byrne's own "*Father's War*". Quite the contrary. Unlike my father's war, that of Byrne's father was spoken of with respect. In 1959, the official Irish history textbook we studied told us that in 1914 the Irish Volunteers had split, with the overwhelming majority following Redmond in support of Britain's War, and with only a minority of the Volunteers disagreeing with him. By 1963, as part of the State's compulsory English curriculum for the Intermediate Cert exam the following year, the Yeats poem we were obliged to learn was not "*Easter 1916*", but "*An Irish Airman Foresees His Death*"—Yeats's tribute to Lady Gregory's son Robert, the Connaught Rangers / Royal Flying Corps volunteer who met his death in January 1918. I find it quite impossible to believe that such curriculum components had materialised overnight and did not have some continuity with Gay Byrne's own years in 'Synger'.

I have no problem with commemorating the Irish dead of Britain's Imperialist War. I recall my own visit to Dublin's Islandbridge War Memorial to inspect the British Legion's Book of Remembrance, and the emotion I felt on reading the name of a relative. Two years after the murderous Battle of the Somme, it was still a Front being fought over. It was on that Somme Front that John Sheehy of Clonakilty, Co

Cork, a first cousin of my maternal grandfather, perished on 15th February 1918. There was, indeed, hardly a family in Ireland left untouched by the War that Britain had launched on Germany in August 1914. But John Sheehy's sister, Máire Ní Shíthe, a native Irish speaker and translator into Irish of French (including Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*) and German literature (and also a Yiddish speaker to boot!), who proudly described herself as a "*Gaelic authoress*" in the 1901 Census, had always held a far different view than her brother concerning the wearing of British Army uniforms.

A colleague and collaborator of Padraig Pearse in *An Claidheamh Soluis*, writing under the *nom-de-plume* of "*Dul Amú*", a founder of the Gaelic League in the Clonakilty area and the Irish-language Editor of the *Cork Sun*, Máire was responsible for organising the very successful *Feiseanna* in the early years of the twentieth century that for a time were held in conjunction with the Clonakilty Agricultural Show. That is, until the year the Show organisers also invited a British Army band to provide additional entertainment. In the *Cork Evening Echo* of 1st August 1971 my maternal aunt and godmother, Máire Keohane Bean Uí Shíocháin, completed the story of our cousin's stand:

"When the Feis committee arrived at the venue they found the then army of occupation, the Redcoats, had taken up positions in the Fair field. Máire Ní Shíthe refused to go in until the Redcoats came out. They refused to do so and the result was that no Feis was held."

My late mother recalled for me the heartbreak and sorrow that had been experienced by John Sheehy's family, not least because he had died as British cannon fodder. Others felt the same way, including one of the icons of Fine Gael and a founding father of the Irish Free State, Kevin O'Higgins, whose own brother had been killed in action while fighting for Britain in that same War. Notwithstanding such a personal loss, as Minister for Home Affairs O'Higgins unequivocally declared himself opposed to a proposed Merrion Square memorial to the Irish World War dead. O'Higgins told the Dáil on 29th March 1927:

"You have a Square here, confronting the seat of the Government of the country... I say that any intelligent visitor not particularly versed in the history of this country would be entitled to conclude that the origins of this State were connected... with the lives that were lost in the Great War in France, Belgium, Gallipoli, and so on. This is not the position. The State had other origins, and

because it had other origins I do not wish it suggested, in stone or otherwise, that it has that origin."

In an interview with the *Financial Times* this past 23rd May, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, President of France from 1974 to 1981, observed with commendable candour: "*I can't understand why we are commemorating the First World War. What is there to commemorate? It was a war with no purpose that ended in an abominable massacre. I won't commemorate it. I will reflect, remember, but not commemorate.*" But Giscard was quite mistaken, at least as far as Britain was concerned, for whom the Great War had a very definite purpose. With his own declaration of war at Woodenbridge, John Redmond also committed Ireland to that same purpose. Well, if we are now going to have centenary commemorations of the Great War, then in this article we should mark the centenary of the night of 15th August 1914, Hibernian Day, that Redmondite night of outrage, the love of which dare not speak its name. Contrary to Gay Byrne's assertions, the supposed "*Great Silence*" about that War is a Great Myth, and if it is due to amnesia in Byrne's case, in the hands of others it has become a Great Lie.

If the concept of "*Our War*" makes Ireland its subject, what was its object? James Connolly had no doubt. In the *Irish Worker* on 29th August 1914 Connolly named it as it was, "*The War Upon The German Nation*". And if there has never been any Great Silence about the War itself, there had most certainly been a Great Silence about what happened on the streets of Dublin a hundred years ago as a direct consequence of "*Our War*". When Gay Byrne used to make his way to school down the South Circular Road and cross the Leonard's Corner intersection with Clanbrassil Street, the first shop he would have met would have been one of a chain of Eastman butcher shops. He had no reason to speculate about its prior history, and neither had I, until I began researching a lecture I was to deliver, entitled "*James Connolly Re-assessed*", at the Strokestown Famine Museum, Co Roscommon, on 21st July 2001 as part of *Comhdháil an Chraoibhín*, the Dr Douglas Hyde Conference held to honour the memory of the first President of Ireland, *Uachtarán na hÉireann*. (This lecture was subsequently published in pamphlet form by the Aubane Historical Society in 2006).

Knowing that Hyde's wife was German, I was anxious to explore more deeply from contemporary newspaper records the atmosphere she might have felt in the

Ireland of 1914. I was shocked at what I found, an outbreak of vicious mob violence that had hitherto been ignored by academic historians (although I have since been quoted by some as a source on same). In my Douglas Hyde lecture I ended the *Great Silence* on that squalid episode:

"UCD Professor of Economics and Redmondite MP Tom Kettle launched his war propaganda on behalf of Britain with an article entitled 'Europe Against The Barbarians' (*Daily News*, 10 August 1914): 'And now that the lightnings have been released, what is the stake for which we are playing? It is as simple as it is colossal. It is Europe against the barbarians ... The 'big blonde brute' has stepped from the pages of Nietzsche out on to the plains about Liege.' ... When James Connolly categorised British policy in August 1914 as 'The War Upon The German Nation', it was also a war upon any German national who could be found. It is a remarkable fact that all of the historians and journalists, who have sought to re-create and celebrate Irish involvement in England's Imperialist War, have either overlooked or studiously ignored one very dramatic event during the first fortnight of that War—the Dublin (would-be) pogrom of 15 August 1914. Between 11 and 11.30 that night a wave of mob attacks on German pork butcher shops occurred across Dublin. The most serious were on the premises of Frederick Lang in Wexford Street and George Reitz at Leonard's Corner on South Circular Road, Portobello. These attacks were particularly frightening because they were conducted by the same mob making its way from one premises to the other, requiring a walk of at least twenty minutes (although augmented at Leonard's Corner by a more middle class mob). All the more sinister was the fact that this mob, hell-bent on destruction and pillage, was led by a newly-enlisted soldier who had answered John Redmond's and Tom Kettle's call to arms and who first wished to fight the 'barbarians' in our midst before embarking for the War on the Continent. Not only were both shop premises totally wrecked, but the upstairs living quarters of Lang and his family and staff had also been invaded and their furniture smashed up and thrown out the window. Lang himself was arrested and interned, and his family impoverished..."

"The pogromist attack on George Reitz's shop at Leonard's Corner rang particular alarm bells for Dublin's Jewish community, since Leonard's Corner was where the Lower Clanbrassil Street thoroughfare of kosher and other Jewish shops commenced. (As a continuing centre of immigration—this time Muslim—it is now, in 2014, a thoroughfare of Halal shops). Had that particular mob not been fully sated and exhausted by attacking in succession two widely separated German shops, there can be little

doubt that the Jewish shops adjacent to Reitz's would have been treated as the next sitting targets. Anti-Semitic outbursts would not have been a novel feature for a Redmondite mob. At the February 1909 Convention of the United Irish League, where John Redmond had denied free speech to William O'Brien MP and had driven him out of the Party, the great cry of Redmond's Hibernian bully-boys had been 'Down with the Russian Jewess!'—with reference to O'Brien's wife, Sophie Raffalovich. Moreover, in the two days prior to the anti-German riots in Dublin, the press had made it clear that the xenophobia against aliens that British war hysteria was now whipping up would make little distinction between German and Jew. The headline in the *Irish Independent* of 13 August ran: 'Germans in Ireland—Looking for the Spies—Wholesale Arrests in Dublin—Russian Jews Arrested'. It was reported that two Russian Jewish peddlars had been arrested in Mullingar and another Russian Jew in Fermoy, one of the three continuing to be held in detention. On 14 August the *Irish Independent* also described another arrested Jew as a Russian Pole when, under the heading of "Suspected of Espionage—Thurles Anti-German Feeling", it reported: 'Included in the arrests reported yesterday was a Russian Pole named Marcus ... On being arrested at Thurles, where he had been 3 years, Ernest Krantz, a jeweller, was booed and jeered at, amidst loud cries of 'Down with Germany', and the police had difficulty in saving him from being mobbed.'"

The anti-Semitic hysteria of British war propaganda had its greatest impact in Ulster. In *Jews in Twentieth Century Ireland* (1998), Dermot Keogh brought to light the fact that Sir Otto Jaffe, Belfast's only Jewish Lord Mayor, who had held that office in both 1899 and 1904, was compelled to resign his seat on Belfast City Council and flee Ulster, along with his family, in 1916. Despite the fact that this Life-President of the Belfast Jewish Congregation had lived in Ulster for over sixty years, that he had funded the establishment of a physiology laboratory in Queen's University Belfast, and that he had both a son and a nephew serving in the British Army that was waging war on Germany, his own German birth now made Jaffe a marked man among his fellow-Unionists. As Keogh recounted, Russian-born but Newry-reared Leonard Abrahamson observed in 1914 that "the virus of anti-Semitic feeling, born of ignorance and fostered by unrelenting prejudice, still courses in the veins of numerous—if not the majority—of Britishers." And Leonard's own father became the target of such anti-Semitism. Never in his life had this Yiddish speaking Jewish refugee from

Tsarist Russia the remotest connection with Germany. But this mere fact was not to spare David Abrahamson from being subjected to the "anti-German" insults and threats of physical assault from Ulster's Empire Loyalists in both Newry and Bessbrook. Leonard Abrahamson further observed:

"Since the outbreak of the war, the belief generally rampant that all Jews are Germans, has given rise to many unpleasant and reprehensible occurrences. Not only has this erroneous notion gained ground amongst the uneducated but it has been fostered by the repeated linking in several journals—amongst others, the 'Times'—of the term Jew and German".

Such experiences only served to accelerate Leonard Abrahamson's own development as an Irish Nationalist. As honorary librarian of Trinity College Dublin's Gaelic Society, and signing himself Mac Abram, he was to be disciplined in November 1914 by the University's Provost John Pentland Mahaffy for daring to invite "a man called Pearse" to speak from its platform, to whom Mahaffy particularly objected because "he was a declared supporter of the anti-recruiting agitation" against Britain's War-effort. The occasion was to have been a Thomas Davis Centenary lecture by W.B. Yeats, with Tom Kettle requested to propose the vote of thanks and Patrick Pearse to second it. Barred from Trinity, Abrahamson and his colleagues were determined to retain Pearse as a speaker, and so they reconvened the meeting with a new venue in the Antient Concert Rooms on 20th November.

British army recruiting officer Kettle arrived in uniform at the meeting quite drunk, and was booed both for his recruiting activities and his drunkenness. Pearse sang the praises of John Mitchel as well as Davis. And Yeats, while criticising both the Unionism of Mahaffy and the pro-Germanism of Pearse, also went on to take a stand against Kettle's hate-campaign against German culture. In replying to the vote of thanks Yeats quoted from Nietzsche, whom he described as "the great German idealist and philosopher" (*Irish Independent*, 23 November 1914). He stated that he was doing so on purpose. For fear that he would never again hear Nietzsche applauded by a Dublin audience, he wished to hear him applauded once. (*Freeman's Journal*, 21 November 1914). Yeats accordingly called on the meeting to give "Three cheers for Nietzsche!"

But there was also a living German cultural figure to be attacked in Redmondite Ireland's Great War hysteria.

In 1903 Kuno Meyer, a close associate of the Gaelic League founder and later President of Ireland Douglas Hyde, had established the School of Irish Learning as the precursor of the School of Celtic Studies. As a close associate of Roger Casement, Meyer had also supported the latter's work on behalf of the Irish Colleges. Indeed Casement's own donation towards the foundation of Coláiste na Mumhan in the West Cork Gaeltacht village of Ballingearry had been prompted by his outrage at the London *Morning Post* sneering at the Irish Revival as being akin to the teaching of "*Kitchen Kaffir*".

One of Meyer's staff members, Osborn Bergin (Ó hAimhirgín) would also teach in Ballingearry. At a special meeting of Dublin Corporation on 18th July 1911 a motion to confer the Freedom on the City on Kuno Meyer was proposed by Seán T O'Kelly, a future President of Ireland, and seconded by William T Cosgrave, a future President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State, and both of them Sinn Féin Councillors. The ceremony took place on 23rd April 1912 where the honour was also conferred on Canon Peadar Ó Laoghaire of Carraig an Ime, Co. Cork, the greatest modern Irish writer of his day. And Ó Laoghaire's own speech went on to express his appreciation of Meyer and his indebtedness to him for his translations from Old Irish which had unlocked for him for the treasures of the early language.

Cork followed suit with a ceremony that also conferred the Freedom of that City on both men. As Ó Laoghaire proudly noted in his 1915 autobiography *Mo Scéal Féin*, that ceremony took place on 25th September 1912, the feast day of the City's patron saint, St. Finbarr of Gougane Barra.

The British anti-German racism that engulfed both Dublin and Cork on the outbreak of the First World War was, however, to result in the Corporations of both cities striking out the honour they had given to Meyer such a short time previously. In vain had Cosgrave protested on 1st March 1915:

"The proposal now before the Council is to remove the name of this eminent Celtic scholar from the roll of honorary freemen. To negative a life work of Celtic erudition. No Continental upheaval can affect the everlasting debt of gratitude owed to German Celtic scholars. Zeiss, Windisch, Thurneyson, Zimmer and Kuno Meyer have laboured in the vineyard of Celtic study, and the labourers are worthy of their hire. No exponent of jurisprudence, however profound, can alter the truth of this scholarly industry, and generations yet unborn shall benefit by their work. No denunciatory sophistry

can affect what they have accomplished, and every honest-minded citizen shall applaud the effort to prevent the stain upon the fair fame of Ireland's municipality".

But to no avail. The expunction of Meyer's name was carried out in Dublin on 15th March 1915, and Cork later followed suit. When the War of Independence had at last effected a sea-change in Irish public opinion away from such *shoneenism*, Dublin Corporation voted once more on 19th April 1920—this time to rescind the infamous resolution of March 1915, and Cork Corporation also rescinded its equally infamous resolution. But it was too late for Kuno Meyer. He had died on 11th October 1919.

The anti-German racism of the British state had further visited Cork in a particular way in 1916 when it struck at the family of the Dachau-born but Cork-reared six-year old Aloys Fleischmann, described by his life-long friend and fellow-Corkman Gerald Goldberg as "*the only child born to Herr Aloys and Frau Tilly Fleischmann, the one a choir master, the other a consummate pianist, and later teacher, who in her youth had been a pupil of a pupil of Liszt*". Tilly Swertz had been born to Bavarian parents in Cork, where her father held the position of organist at the Catholic Cathedral since the 1870s, and she in turn married another Bavarian—from the town of Dachau, outside Munich—Aloys Fleischmann Snr, who also went on to become organist and choirmaster at the North Cathedral.

During the first two years of the Imperialist War the Fleischmanns had been successfully shielded by their Cork Republican friends from British state racism. In 1916, however, Aloys Snr was arrested as an "*enemy alien*" and transported to an Internment Camp in England, while Tilly was compelled to close the family home. Their real crime was how patriotically Irish these Germans had actually become. It was in fact in the Fleischmann home that the future Republican Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Cork, Terence and Muriel MacSwiney, had first met each other in 1915.

Both the Abrahamson and the Fleischmann families would recover from the British wartime anti-Jewish and anti-German racism they had experienced. Leonard Abrahamson went on to become Professor of Pharmacology at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. Leonard's grandson and namesake is the world renowned Irish filmmaker, Lenny Abrahamson. The German internee's son, Aloys

Fleischmann Jnr, went on to become Professor of Music at University College Cork, founder of the Cork Symphony Orchestra, co-founder of the Cork Ballet Company and founder of the Cork International Choral Festival.

In later years Cork City, led by Gerald Goldberg, would at long last repay its debt. It was the generous Goldberg sponsorship which made it possible for Fleischmann to bring the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra to Cork in 1956, while in 1962 Sheila and Gerald Goldberg also inaugurated the lunchtime recitals dedicated to the memory of Tilly and Aloys Fleischmann Snr. And it was as Lord Mayor of Cork in 1978 that Gerald Goldberg himself proposed and conferred the Freedom of the City on Aloys Fleischmann Jnr, in the words of his daughter Ruth, "*a musician of German ancestry whose people had emigrated to Cork in the 1870s and whose life was dedicated to promoting a culture of music in Ireland*". Finally, at the Requiem Mass for Aloys Fleischmann in Cork's Cathedral in July 1992, it was his life-long Jewish friend Gerald Goldberg who read from the Book of Deuteronomy on the death of Moses.

Other families, however, were not as fortunate as the Abrahamsons and Fleischmanns. Which brings me back to tell the story of what happened to the Lang and Reitz families in Dublin on the night of 15th April 1914, the Feast of the Assumption, the traditional marching day of that mirror image of the Orange Order, the Redmondite-Devlinite Ancient Order of Hibernians. But what occurred on that night in Dublin in 1914 was not a march, but a Redmondite racist rampage. Under the heading of "*German Pork Shops Raided by Dublin Crowds*", the *Irish Independent* reported on 17th August, with such a sensationalist, hearsay spin as to suggest that the victims had only themselves to blame:

"German pork shops on the South side of Dublin City had a rough time on Saturday night. Between 11 and 11.30 Lang's shop in Wexford Street was completely wrecked. A jeering crowd of youths, it appears, had become aggressive towards the manager, and it is stated {by whom?—MO'R} that a figure appeared at an upper window after the place was closed pouring hot water and throwing missiles on the crowd of men and women, and children. {No such sensationalist charges against Frederick Lang were ever subsequently advanced, either in court or otherwise—MO'R}. The plate glass window of the shop was thereupon smashed, the stock thrown out and seized by the crowd, the carcass of an animal

being also borne off. Everything breakable in the place was smashed, and the shop left a wreck. Next the upper rooms, of which the occupants included two Dublin girl assistants, were attacked, furniture being thrown out and smashed. When the police reached the scene it was found impossible to effect arrests, as the active participants in the raid had vanished, as had also the man who was alleged to have poured water on the people. Mr G Cretz's {sic} pork shop at Leonard's Corner, SCR, and Seezer's, Thomas Street, also had windows smashed."

On 18th August the *Irish Independent* did publish the following letter of protest from the poet Padraic Colum:

"Sir, I hope there are few Irish men or women who have read without deep indignation the account of unprovoked attacks upon German shops in our capital and in other towns in Ireland. What have these defenceless traders done to the citizens of Dublin that their means and substance should be destroyed? What has Germany done to Ireland that she should be insulted by mean attacks? Have we not sufficient sense of national calamity that we can watch with mere spite the spectacle of a great nation being beset by Russia, France and Great Britain, being resisted by Belgium and looted by Japan? If that nation was as remote from us as the kingdom of Prester John, we should have some sympathy for its struggle. But the nation is Germany, the motherland of Zimmer, Windisch and Kuno Meyer. I remember when the Anglo-Irish and the English universities mocked Irish civilisation, saying there was nothing in our literature that was not silly or indecent, it was from the German universities that the word went forth that made our culture respected..."

It is interesting to note that, notwithstanding the arrest in Trieste of Stanislaus Joyce and his internment in Austria from 1915 until 1918—Stanislaus being a British subject with openly expressed anti-Austrian sympathies towards that Italian irredentism which would bring Italy into the War on Britain's side—Colum's friend and Stanislaus's brother, James Joyce, rejected British War propaganda and expressed his continuing affection for the Austrian Empire, and the multi-national and multi-cultural character of Trieste within that Empire. As John McCourt wrote in 2000:

"With the passing of years Joyce's affection for 'old Auster and Hungrig' (*Finnegan's Wake*) grew, and he would later remember his time spent in its dominions with fondness, writing: *I cannot begin to give you the flavour of the old Austrian Empire. It was a ramshackle affair but it was charming, gay and I experienced more kindnesses*

in Trieste than ever before or since in my life... Times past cannot return but I wish they were back.' To Mary Colum (the wife of Padraic Colum) he confirmed this, saying (in a post-War letter, as reproduced in Mary Colum, *Life and Dreams*, 1947): *'They called the Austrian Empire a ramshackle empire... I wish to God there were more such empires.'* ..." (*The Years of Bloom—James Joyce in Trieste, 1904-1920*, p 96).

But back to 15th August 1914. The most vivid account of the attack on the Reitz family's premises was written by Aran Islander Michael Mullen for the *Irish Worker* of Larkin and Connolly. "Micheál Ó Maoláin as Árainn", as he described himself, was an Irish Transport & General Workers' Union, Irish Citizen Army and Gaelic League activist—twice jailed for labour activities, in 1911 and 1913, along with Big Jim Larkin. Residing in a tenement on Dublin's Mountjoy Square, he took in Seán O'Casey as a roommate in 1920, which tenement would become the setting for O'Casey's play *The Shadow of a Gunman*. That play's character Seumas Shields was loosely based on Ó Maoláin, but the characterisation, verging on caricature, did not do justice to such a highly cultured Man of Aran. In the *Irish Worker* on 22nd August 1914, under the heading of "*German Baiting—The Police Cowardice*", Ó Maoláin reported on Hibernian Day's night of shame:

"I was an eyewitness of the final scenes in the destruction of the shop of a German named Reitz on South Circular Road... It shamed me to witness the degradation of the people of Dublin... I have lived through a good few political ferments but never through anything so despicable, cowardly and mean as the exhibition of Saturday night. Of one thing I am confident—had such scenes occurred during the recent labour troubles {the 1913 Dublin Lockout—MO'R} the strikers would have paid dearly for it in broken heads and ruined homes. On this occasion the crowd consisted of a more or less 'respectable' element of young men; the true working classes and the hooligans proper were noticeably absent... A distance off I saw two policemen, each of them engaged flirting with a group of girls. One of them, opposite the Wellington Barracks, was quizzed by one of the girls about going to the rescue of the shop; he laughed and shook his head, 'I'm better off here', he said... A few yards off I met a boy (a respectably dressed lad), bearing a pair of scales... The windows had been shattered, and a continual shower of stones brought down huge sheets of hanging glass and, just as I got to the crowd, a stone brought down the lamp. This seemed to give the crowd fresh courage, for the shower of stones grew thicker..."

Later on as I returned I found the crowd gathered on the other side of the road and two policemen busy smoking outside the shop... I understand the owner had been removed under arrest previous to the outbreak. Why had the police left no guard for the premises?... I know that in the straits they are in at present it would be useless to ask the bulk of your readers to attempt to look after the families of these German guests of ours in any financial sense; but I am confident that an appeal from you to the men of the Transport Union and of the Citizen Army to act as a guard for their houses would not fail to produce good results."

That same issue of the *Irish Worker* also carried a letter from Ó Maoláin that had been refused publication by the *Dublin Evening Telegraph*, for fear, as he himself put it, that it might "*ruffle the pro-British feelings of the Freeman's Journal staff*" (the Redmondite parent paper of the *Telegraph*). Ó Maoláin had protested:

"After the scenes which were witnessed in the streets of Dublin on Saturday night when the shops of respectable citizens of German extraction were besieged and looted, one cannot help thinking that the Irish people who degraded themselves by participating in such outrages are lost to all sense of decency... One of the most distinguished gentlemen upon whom the Freedom of this City was recently conferred was a German—Dr Kuno Meyer. On the occasion of the ceremony much platitudes were indulged in by all and sundry concerning Dr Meyer's work in the saving of the Irish language. He was then acclaimed as a public benefactor, but now it seems that were he found on our streets he would be apprehended, and perhaps his residence looted by the King's Irishry."

Colum and Ó Maoláin never expected Dublin's further disgrace, followed by Cork, in expunging Meyer's Freedom of the City!

In his 2011/2012 book, *A City in Wartime: Dublin 1914-18*, Padraig Yeates credited me with bringing to light those attacks on German pork butchers' shops, as well as reproducing Micheál Ó Maoláin's *Irish Worker* account of same. But he added a strange twist: "*Of greater concern to the wider public was the rapid rise in food prices.*" Sugar had quadrupled in price, the price of butter was up by a half, flour by a fifth and bacon by a quarter. Yeates went on to surmise:

"When newspapers questioned the price increases, retailers blamed the wholesalers, who in turn blamed the creameries, the farmers and cross channel suppliers... The sudden price increases may have been a factor in attacks on several German pork butchers' shops."

(pp 28-29).

But no non-German shops had been stormed and sacked in order to loot sugar, butter or flour. It would be like saying that hunger may have been a factor in the 1938 *Kristallnacht* anti-Jewish pogroms in Germany, which would be a diversion from recognising the unmitigated racism at work. Yeates continued:

"The only full account of this pogrom (in Dublin city on 15 August 1914) appeared in the following issue of the *Irish Worker*. It reported that the DMP stood 'idly by'. This was not quite true, for at least some of the looters were arrested and were subsequently charged. They were mainly teenage boys and girls. Several of their mothers also appeared in court for receiving stolen goods, most of it meat and sausages. The Lord Mayor and members of Dublin Corporation's committee on foodstuffs when it met the following Monday unanimously condemned the looting."

This, however, was to miss the whole point of Ó Maoláin's eyewitness account. The police **had** stood idly by outside Reitz's shop at Leonard's Corner and arrests were **not** made there. Arrests came subsequent to the riots, and **none** of them included any of the neighbouring "*respectable*" South Circular Road citizenry who had predominated at that stage of the rioting. Those arrested came from the side streets off the Camden Street / Wexford Street artery, and had first attacked Lang's Wexford Street home and shop, before most of them next proceeded on foot, for a journey of at least twenty minutes, attacking no other "*innocent*" shops *en route*, in order to mount their second attack, this time on Reitz's premises—a purposeful anti-German Hibernian Day march if ever there was one!

Under the heading of "*German Shops Raided—Prisoners in Police Courts*", the *Irish Independent* reported on 18th August:

"Six youths were charged with being in a riotous mob, and with maliciously raiding the German-owned pork shops, 61 South Circular Road (Reitz's) and 39 Wexford Street (Lang's). The accused, who were remanded for a week, were: John O'Neill, Cuffe Street; John Odlam, Pleasants Street; Martin O'Grady, Pleasants Street; John Stebling, Cuffe Lane; Ed Lambert, no fixed residence; and Robert Hegarty, Charlotte Street. {Note: In a subsequent *Independent* report on 17 October, 'Stebling' was rendered as 'Stevings', and again as 'Skebbins'—MOR.} Inspector Williamson said all the prisoners were implicated in the destruction of property. In one case the damage was £170 and in the other over £100. Constables 37B and 77A proved the arrest of the prisoners (except O'Neill)

in their beds early yesterday morning. The accused made statements to the effect that they all took part in the raids, and that the meat was sold to women in the streets for nominal sums. Hegarty, whose father was said to be a respectable hardworking man, was allowed bail. O'Neill said he had joined the Army last Thursday (13 August), and asked to be discharged. Mr Mahony said he had no power to do this. The Lord Mayor, in a statement issued, regrets the wrecking of Dublin shops owned by Germans. He points out that such episodes do not reflect credit on the Dublin people, and are un-Irish."

Under the heading of "*Raid on German Pork Shops—Wexford Street Saturnalia*", the criminal court proceedings of two months later were reported as follows in the *Irish Independent* of 17th October:

"Mr Seymour Bushe KC, prosecuting the parties who were charged with the recent raid on German pork shops, said the crowd scattered about the pork in Mr Lang's shop, Wexford Street, 'the meat being distributed in small portions amongst the deserving poor of Dublin'. Wexford Street on August 15 was given up to a Saturnalia, in which the law perished altogether, and everybody did as they liked. The prisoners in connection with the Lang episode were charged with unlawful and riotous assembly. Their names were: Martin O'Grady, John Stevings, Edward Lambert, Robert Hegarty, Teresa Johnston, Edward Tutty, Peter Evans, John Gibbons and Daniel Kershaw... The Recorder remarked that whether a man was a German or an Austrian, if he was in this country for some time he was entitled to protection. Mr Bushe said he was glad to hear that pronouncement; the object of the prosecution was to have such a statement made. His Lordship then ordered Lambert's discharge as no evidence whatever had been given against him. A soldier named O'Neill—who enlisted since the occurrence—gave evidence for the defence. He admitted being at the scene and carrying away the side of a pig; he saw none of the prisoners there. Charging the jury, his Lordship said though Mr Lang was an alien, people in the neighbourhood were willing to see justice done by giving evidence. The jury found O'Grady, Stevings and Hegarty guilty {and only those three—MOR}... They recommended the prisoners found guilty to mercy on account of the excitement that prevailed. The Recorder postponed sentence. John Skebbins, Martin O'Grady, Robert Hegarty, Eliza Hawkins, Christina Deane and Eliza O'Neill were indicted for having formed portion of a riotous crowd who looted the pork shop of Mr George Reitz, SC Road. Deane and O'Neill pleaded guilty... The prisoners were convicted, the jury recommended them to mercy under the existing condition of affairs. The Recorder said he would bind each of the accused in both

cases towards both these traders, but he would reserve his sentence and hold them over until 19th November."

No punishments were to follow. The Castle Catholic Recorder, Thomas Lopdell O'Shaughnessy, and the Redmondite and Hibernian Lord Mayor, Lorcan Sherlock, were indeed anxious to see "*Law and Order*" restored on the streets of Dublin, but their cant about alien Germans also being entitled to the protection of the law had been demonstrably shown to be nothing but contemptible hypocrisy a fortnight prior to the trial of the rioting foot soldiers. Both Sherlock's Dublin Corporation and Recorder O'Shaughnessy demonstrated how there was more than one way of skinning a cat and ensuring the economic ruination of the Lang and Reitz families: Under the heading of "*Raid on German Shops—Dublin Recorder's Decision*", the *Irish Independent* had already reported on 2nd October:

"The Right Hon the Recorder of Dublin heard claims made by German traders for injuries done to their premises during the disturbances on the night of August 15... Frederick Lang, pork butcher, 39 Wexford Street, claimed £117 13s 5d under the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1893, for injuries done his property by a mob. Mr TF Burke (for Dublin Corporation) held that Mr Lang was an alien enemy and not entitled to sue in these courts while war existed between Great Britain and Germany. Mr K Dockrell for the applicant, said Mr Lang was twenty-three years a ratepayer in Ireland, had married an Irish girl, had children and intended remaining here. He had acquired a British domicile by long residence and was not subject to the rules relating to enemy aliens. Mr Burke said Mr Lang had had the ordinary means of becoming a British subject but had not availed of them. Claimant produced a document he got before leaving Germany, and said his possession of it made him practically not a German subject. If, remarked his Lordship, Mr Lang went to Germany he would get a uniform and be put into the *Landsturm* {the German national military reserve—MOR}. His Lordship, having heard evidence and a statement by the claimant that he had registered as a German subject, regretted that the attack had taken place. But there was a good deal of feeling and what occurred was very mild compared with what occurred in Berlin—even with regard to what occurred to the British Ambassador there before a shot was fired in the war. The applicant had been protected since, and was able to carry on his business. The case was quite unsustainable and should be dismissed with costs. In similar applications made by Mr George Reitz, a German, claiming £223 for the destruction of his shop at 61 SC Road, and Mr C Seezer, claiming £7 19s for

damage done to 40 Thomas Street ... Mr Hanna KC, who appeared for the applicant, said the Corporation, by raising the point as to alienship, were taking a reprisal for things done abroad. His Lordship, during the discussion, said very few Englishmen had been allowed to do business in Germany. If these claimants had any right to sue, it was suspended during the War."

Under the heading of *"The Mob Attacks—Compensation Claims—Recorder Rules Them Unsustainable"*, the *Evening Telegraph* had given a fuller account on 1st October regarding the Reitz application:

"Mr Reitz stated that he had been nine years in business at the South Circular Road and twenty-six years resident in the United Kingdom. Mr Hanna: 'Mirrors, scales and a cash register had been broken, and, in fact, there was a list of forty-five items.' The Recorder: 'I am sorry to see that there was any following of the example set by his countrymen in the injury to non-combatants.' ... Mr Hanna said that the Corporation, by raising the point, were taking some reprisal for anything done abroad... British subjects residing in Germany had not been deprived of their rights to sue in the Kaiser's courts."

George Reitz was most probably arrested and interned shortly afterwards, as well as being financially ruined. Frederick Lang certainly was. How do I know? For a period after my Douglas Hyde Conference lecture, it had been placed on the SIPTU website. One very special person took the trouble to read my paper on that website as far back as 2001 itself. Freddie Lang was a retired meat processing worker and a member of one of SIPTU's predecessor Unions, Larkin's own Workers' Union of Ireland. Freddie was the grandson and namesake of the German-born Frederick Lang whose pork butcher's shop had been destroyed during that 1914 *"Wexford Street Saturnalia"*. Instead of his assailants, it was Freddie's grandfather who had been imprisoned for the War's duration, and whose wife and children had been sentenced to an impoverishment from which they would never recover. It was therefore heartwarming that, one day out of the blue, I received a phone call from Freddie. He introduced himself to me as a veteran Trade Unionist and thanked me for remembering the Lang family and what they had suffered at the hands of that hate-filled racist Redmondite mob.

Freddie Lang had not, however, told me the full horrors of his family's sufferings. He had not only been named after his grandfather, but also after an uncle. *"Come here to me!"*—available online at <http://comeheretome.com/>—is a

wonderful website of Dublin social history. This past 18th March, Dónal Fallon placed a posting on that site under the heading: *When Dublin mobs attacked German pork butchers, August 1914*. He began:

"War can bring out the worst in people, and not only those on the front-lines of battle. In 1914 there were a number of attacks in Dublin carried out against businesses owned by German nationals, with particular attention being paid to pork butchers in the city. Much of this violence occurred on a single night, with a number of premises attacked in Dublin on 15 August 1914."

He detailed the newspaper reports of the attacks and the subsequent denial of compensation, and he also provided an online link to an updated version of my Douglas Hyde Conference paper which I had delivered as a May Day lecture to the Cork Council of Trade Unions in 2006. But then Dónal Fallon brought to light another aspect of the outrage of which I had been hitherto oblivious:

"Highlighting the moronic and politically clueless nature of the attack on Lang's premises was a report in newspapers on 20 October of that same year, detailing the fact his son Frederick Lang, aged 16, had died in the war effort in the service of British forces. His other son, Augustine, also served in the war effort with the Royal Marines at Antwerp."

Fallon reproduced those newspaper reports, carrying photographs of both of Lang's sons in British military uniform, which related:

"Mr Lang, pork butcher, Wexford Street, Dublin, yesterday received official notification of the death of his son, Frederick, aged 16, of *HMS Impregnable*. His other son, Augustine, was with the Royal Marines at Antwerp. Mr Lang, who is of German nationality, but a resident in Dublin for many years, had his shop wrecked and looted by a crowd a few weeks ago."

Lang's shop had, in fact been wrecked two months previously, but the press reports of his son's death appeared just three weeks after the Redmondite Dublin Corporation had denounced him in court as *"an alien enemy"*. The fact of his son's death in Britain's cause would not, however, make a blind bit of difference to Lang's imprisonment and ruination. For, *indeed, it truly had been, as Connolly accurately described it, "a war upon the German nation" in every possible sense.*

Manus O'Riordan

Remembering Gallipoli, President McAleese's Great War Crusade by *Dr. Pat Walsh*. 28pp. **€6, £5 postfree**

Statement of Polish Foreign Policy:

No more blow-jobs for the USA!

Despite a public stance as a hard line, no compromise, anti-Russian Cold Warrior, Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski in private apparently thinks that America treats the Poles as their useful "niggers" and that Poland should cop itself on—or, to use his own colourful expression—stop thinking *"that everything is super because we gave the Americans a blow job"*. A tape recording of a private conversation with Jacek Rostowski has come to light and created something of a sensation. Rostowski is a senior Polish politician, former Finance Minister and one time operative of the British Foreign Office. According to a transcript of excerpts of the conversation published by *Wprost* on its website, Sikorski told Rostowski:

"You know that the Polish-U.S. alliance isn't worth anything... It is downright harmful because it creates a false sense of security ... Complete bullshit. We'll get in conflict with the Germans, Russians and we'll think that everything is super because we gave the Americans a blow job. {The Poles are} Losers. Complete losers." (See www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/174386.Tape-scandal-PolishAmerican-alliance-worthless-says-foreign-minister and <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/06/22/uk-poland-tapes-sikorski-idUKKBN0EX00920140622>)

Sikorski is a relative of a namesake who, as Minister in the *"Polish Government in Exile"*, was killed in a plane crash in 1943 in circumstances that have never been clarified. That particular Polish Government existed in London during 1939-45 following the utter failure of Britain and France to do anything to effect their "Guarantee" of May 1939 to defend Poland come what may, a Guarantee that led the Poles to precipitate a World War with Germany over the relatively minor issue of the City of Danzig. Sikorski the younger was a pal of David Cameron at Oxford University and subsequently rose to the position of Foreign Minister back in Poland.

Sikorski became a man of consequence in Europe when, at the height of the British-induced *"Euro Crisis"* in 2011, he outraged Eurosceptic opinion (which is increasingly marshalled by Britain these days) by telling a Berlin audience that included Chancellor Merkel that what *"Poland feared more*

than German power was German inaction". This is generally regarded as having given the green light for the radical German-led solution of the "Euro crisis" through the fusion of the Eurozone which has since achieved its purpose.

It seems that the Poles have been following a secret Euro-integrationist course, while loudly trumpeting an attachment to anti-Russian Atlanticist militarism for popular consumption. Fair play to them!

Philip O'Connor

Editorial Note:

The Poles are angry about Cameron's plans to restrict free movement and the payment of welfare benefits to migrants from Eastern Europe. Sikorski, a deputy leader of the ruling centre-right Civic Platform, is quoted as follows:

"It's either a very badly thought through move, or, not for the first time, a kind of incompetence in European affairs. Remember? He f***ed up the fiscal pact. He f***ed it up. Simple as that. He is not interested, he does not get it, he believes in the stupid propaganda, he stupidly tries to play the system."

Rostowski, who resigned as Finance Minister in November 2013, agrees, saying that Cameron's problem is that *"that isn't his objective, just a short-term propaganda effect"*. Sikorski then appears to make a reference to Euro-sceptics, either Ukip or within the Conservative Party:

"You know, his whole strategy of feeding them scraps in order to satisfy them is just as I predicted, turning against him; he should have said, f*** off, tried to convince people and isolate (the Euro-sceptics). But he ceded the field to those that are now embarrassing him."

Both Sikorski and Rostowski are supposedly Anglophiles who were educated in Britain, Sikorski at Oxford, (where he was a fellow Bullingdon Club member with Cameron) with Johnson, Cameron and George Osborne.

In another transcript, this time recording Pawl Gras, a spokesman for Poland's Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, Gras brags that:

"Tusk f***ed him up good" when Cameron brought up the subject of curbing benefits for migrants. The spokesman tells Polish oil company boss Jacek Krawiec: "Donald called him at once to discuss it, he had such a go at him, I mean, f***, it's a shame we didn't record it, he f***ed him up good, had such a proper f***ing go at him."

Fifty Shades Of Grey : Britain's Diplomacy of Duplicity in the early 20th century.

"Speech is silver, silence is golden: but to say first one thing and then another is Britannia metal." - Otto Von Bismarck

Many British historians like to depict the outbreak of the First World War as an 'avoidable accident' that somehow Britain sleep walked into war with Germany in 1914. This ignores the available facts that war with Germany was the inevitable and intentional outcome of policies pursued by Britain since at least 1895. Most of the active preparations for war, particularly on the Western Front, took place during the term of office of Foreign Secretary Edward Grey. In 1906 he gave approval to begin detailed military preparations for a war with Germany. The diplomatic encirclement of Germany had begun in 1904 with the secret alliance with France and continued in 1907 with Britain's alliance with Russia.

By early 1915 it was clear to both sides that their plans for a short decisive war were becoming bogged down in a morass of slaughter. Each side sought to tip the scales of war in their favour by enticing new allies to join them. The Central Powers won over Bulgaria while the Allies persuaded Romania to their side with the promise of annexing the province of Transylvania. (However, According to historian John Keegan, the Allies secretly agreed that they would never honour this promise even before Romania entered the War.) The Allies eventually seduced Italy to change sides by offering her the Adriatic coast of Croatia and the south Tyrol in the Alps in secret clauses of the Treaty of London of April 1915.

However, none of these smaller allies were to play a decisive role: to win a major Power would either have to be knocked out or a new major Power join one side. The British failed to knock the Turks out of the War by using T.E. Lawrence's Arab uprising, while the Germans successfully knocked the Russians out of the War by smuggling Lenin and 30 other revolutionaries into Russia through Germany and Sweden in a sealed train in April 1917. General Ludendorff said *"it is as right to attack Russia with Lenin as with poison gas"*.

Even this proved to be indecisive the course of the War and one great Power gradually came to be regarded by both sides as vital to the outcome of the War.

America had since 1870 grown into a major financial and industrial world power. America more than doubled her population from 40 to 98 million between 1870 and 1914, while her steel production increased from 1.3 million tonnes in 1880 to 32 million tonnes in 1914. Being neutral, America was willing to sell her arms to both sides but Britain's naval blockade of Germany cut off this market from her. If she could be persuaded to commit her vast resources of money, industry and men to the Allied side, this would be decisive and if she could be persuaded to cut off her loans and arms supplies from the Allies this could decide the War in Germany's favour.

To find virtue in the world of early 20th century international diplomacy is as fruitless a search as to seek for a virgin in a bordello. Germany's actions helped to escalate a regional conflict between Austria and Serbia into a European War but Britain's actions escalated a European War into a World War. It is inconceivable that without Britain's intervention lives would be lost on battlefields as far afield as Namibia, China, the Falklands and Iraq. One of the principal architects of this 'Global war' to smash Germany economic and military power for a generation was a British liberal politician, Edward Grey.

Sir Edward Grey (1862-1937) was Britain's longest serving Foreign Secretary (1905-16), during his period in Office the foundations of what would become known as World War One were laid: an event which would determine the course of world history for at least the next century.

As Grey himself prophetically predicted on the outbreak of World War in 1914, *"The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall no see them lit again in our lifetime"*.

Born into a privileged landed background, his family estate at 8.1km was four times the size of the Principality of Monaco. He was related to a former British Prime-Minister, Earl Grey, and a future Prime Minister, Anthony Eden and a Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax. After an uninspiring education at Oxford, where he was deemed to be lazy, he became Liberal MP for Berwick on Tweed at the

age of 23. His attitude to German diplomacy was soured by their assertive offer to recognise the British annexation of Egypt in 1882 in exchange economic concessions in the Ottoman Empire.

Under Kaiser William II Germany sought to move away from her traditional alliance with Russia and towards an alliance with Britain. In 1890 Germany traded her colonial island possession Zanzibar off the coast of Tanzania with Britain in return for the island of Heligoland in the North Sea. By 1894 France had stepped into Germany's place and formed an alliance with Russia when Germany allowed her Re-Insurance Treaty lapse.

With the prospect of Germany facing war on two Fronts, the first foundation stone of the 'Great War' was laid. Germany's prospect of an alliance with Britain took a blow with the discovery of gold in the Boer Republic of Transvaal in South Africa in 1886, which produced a quarter of the world's gold supply. Britain feared that the new wealth of the Boer Republic could lead to a unified South Africa under Boer leadership which could become an ally of Germany which in 1884 had set up a colony in nearby Namibia.

If Germany were to dominate the Cape, this would endanger one of Britain's vital trade links with India and Australia. Britain's domination of southern Africa was now becoming a vital strategic interest. In December 1895 arch British Imperialist Cecil Rhodes launched his abortive Jameson Raid against the Transvaal which was quickly defeated by the Boers. Germany, like many other nations, saw thousands of her nationals flock to the gold rush in Transvaal to work as miners. Believing them to be under threat by the unprovoked British invasion, the Kaiser considered sending troops to the Transvaal and making the state a German protectorate. Instead the Kaiser merely sent a telegram to President Kruger congratulating him on repelling the British invasion. This 'interference' by Germany led to a marked chill in Anglo German relations as well as anti-German riots in London, with mobs attacking German shops.

This potential German intervention led to the first British plan to cripple the German economy by imposing a naval blockade on the German coast in 1897. By 1905 under Admiral Fisher this plan had become the central plank of Britain's war strategy towards Germany. To counteract this British strategy of blockade and to promote its own global trade and military influence, Germany embarked on a naval race with Britain in 1898. Just as Britain

claimed to want a 'balance of powers' in Europe, Germany hoped to establish a 'balance of power at sea'. However Germany faced a monumental task. In 1896 Britain had 33 battleships and 130 heavy cruisers, while Germany had only 4 battleships and 4 heavy cruisers. By the outbreak of war in 1914 Germany had failed to bridge the gap of British Naval supremacy, as Britain possessed 49 battleships and Germany only 29.

Britain embarked on a diplomatic policy of encirclement of Germany. Britain entered into an alliance with Japan in 1902, an *entente cordiale* with France in 1904, which settled various African colonial disputes and laid the foundations for any future partition of Thailand, and finally and most shockingly in 1907 Britain entered into an alliance with Russia the 'mother of despotism'. France had earlier formed an alliance with Russia in 1894. The threat of a possible invasion from both east and west outweighed Germany's fear of British blockade and starvation and she switched her military budget away from building up the navy to reinforcing the army. Britain introduced a new type of Battleship, the 'Dreadnought', and by 1906 by Germany was forced to admit defeat in the naval race. In 1914 Britain was the world's pre-eminent Superpower and the Royal Navy was the equivalent of her nuclear arsenal. In total she had 648 ships and 709,000 sailors who could be deployed anywhere in the world at a few weeks' notice, Germany by comparison had a mere 79,000 sailors and 280 ships.

Britain and Germany had flirted with each other over the possibility of an alliance for some time: in 1898, 1899 and 1901 Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain had proposed an alliance with Germany. From 1898 to the outbreak of war in July 1914 Britain and Germany had been engaged in secret negotiations over the possible partition of the colonial possessions of Britain's oldest ally, Portugal, particularly her colony of Angola. In 1901 with Lord Lansdowne and in 1912 with Lord Haldane Germany engaged in fruitless negotiations with Britain to bring to an end their hostile rivalry. In the latter Haldane mission, Germany offered to end the naval race and accept British naval supremacy in exchange for British neutrality in any European War in which Germany was not the aggressor. This offer was rejected by Britain as it did not propose any advantage which Britain did not already possess.

But, although on the surface diplomatic relations between Britain and Germany

seemed to be improving, behind the scenes Britain was devising ulterior plans. In 1906 Germany tried to split apart Britain and France's new *entente cordiale* by opposing French colonial expansion in Morocco at the Algeciras Conference in Spain. This policy backfired when Britain backed France's claims and Foreign Secretary Grey gave the green light to secret Anglo French military cooperation. Britain was terrified by the rapid rise of German Economic power. In many sectors Germany either had, or was poised to, overtake Britain and relegate what was once 'the workshop of the world' into the 'dustbin of history'. In 1871 Germany produced 1.5 million tons of pig iron while Britain produced 6.5 million tons but by 1910 Germany produced 14.8 million tons and Britain only 10.2 million tons.

'SIR HENRY WILSON'S WAR'

One of the central figures in the Anglo French military cooperation and one of the chief architects of the infernal quagmire of slaughter that would become the Western Front was from Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford, Field Marshal, Sir Henry Hughes Wilson (1864-1922). '*Ugly Wilson*' earned his nickname and reputation as the '*ugliest man in the British army*' after he was wounded in the face in the 3rd Burma War, a colonial conquest fought in 1885-6 where Britain engaged in '*collective punishment*' of rebellious natives, such as mass executions and burning villages. An inveterate careerist and gossip, Wilson ingratiated himself to and alienated himself from most of the political and military elite of the period. It was claimed that merely being in the presence of senior politicians would bring him to full sexual arousal. In 1906 he became a General, owing his promotion to friends in the Liberal Party Establishment.

By 1908 he was sent to France to make preparations for any future war with Germany. He surveyed what would in years to come be the battlefields of Flanders. In July 1909 he and the Committee of Imperial Defence planned to send a British Expeditionary Force of 150,000 to France as soon as war broke out. He also lobbied for the introduction of conscription before the war broke out. Unusually for a senior British officer of this period, he was an ardent Francophile, spoke good French and was a friend of French General Foch.

From 1910-1914 he was commander of Camberley Staff College. In 1911 he made preparations for any invasion of Belgium. In October 1913 he visited

Constantinople and the future battlefields of Gallipoli: he was completely unimpressed by the Turkish Army and military preparations and remained a firm 'westerner', believing that any future war would be won or lost on the Western Front. He would strongly oppose the Gallipoli landings of 1915, falling out with Churchill over this: he openly hoped that the campaign would be a fiasco and that Churchill should be tried for murder. On his return in November 1913 he was promoted to Major General.

His preparations for the '*Great war for civilisation*' were distracted by events closer to home. Wilson played a central role in the 'Curragh mutiny' of March 1914. He split with the Liberal Party political Establishment over their plans to introduce Home Rule for Ireland and began to dine daily with the Conservative leader Bonar Law, to whom he leaked information on the refusal of senior army officers in Ireland to take any action against loyalist opposition to Home Rule. Sixty senior British officers threatened to resign their commissions rather than obey an order to move against Ulster loyalists. The Conservatives promised to re-instate any officer who resigned over Ulster. Wilson also leaked military plans to the UVF which, on 24th April 1914, smuggled 20,000 rifles and 4 millions rounds of ammunition from Germany to Larne. These acts of treachery embittered the political Establishment of the Liberal Party to Wilson, but they were already exposed as men of straw.

Turning his attention back to preparations for the '*Great War*', Wilson, by now director of Military Operations, from January to May 1914 visited France four times to finalise British war preparations. Wilson's careerist intrigues alienated him from Kitchener and Archibald Murray, the new Chief of Staff. But, when Britain finally declared war on Germany in August 1914, Kitchener was proved right in his belief that Wilson had underestimated the size of the German force and it was only the French 'Miracle at the Marne' in September 1914 which stopped the victory of the German Schlieffen Plan. The only option now for Germany was to prevent more British men and supplies reaching the Front by seizing the channel ports. But this German advance was halted by the combined efforts of Belgium, Britain and France in the first Battle of the Ypres from 14th October- 20th November 1914. Of Britain's 'contemptible' little expeditionary force of 80,000, this one battle cost her 60,000 casualties—of which 8000 were

killed. By comparison, Britain's largest conflict of the 19th century, the Crimean War of 1855, had cost Britain 60,000 casualties. With the German plan of a swift victory over the French now off the rails, some German Generals admitted that the War was lost as they ordered trenches to be dug from the Channel to the Alps.

Britain had two immediate military objectives in World War One, firstly to stop the Germans defeating the French in the first few months of the War, and secondly to use their overwhelming naval superiority to slowly strangle the German economy and starve Germany's civilian population into abject submission. The British elite was divided between 'Easterners' who wanted to attack the Turkish Empire, steal her oil rich colonial possessions and help resupply their Russian Allies via the Black Sea and 'Westerners' like Wilson, who wanted crush the German Empire beyond recovery by bleeding her white on the Western Front and starving her at home.

While Wilson intrigued to undermine his colleagues like Haig and Robertson, and urged Bonar Law to bring down the Government in December 1915, he was considered for the role of suppressing the 1916 Rising. He fell out with Lloyd George at Versailles but his career continued to prosper: he was promoted to Lieutenant General, knighted in 1915, appointed to be Britain's representative to the Supreme Allied War Council In November 1917 and in February 1918 was appointed Chief of Staff.

He retired as a Field Marshall and was elected as a Unionist MP for North Down. Although World War One was a bad career move for Britain's 702,000 dead and 1,670,000 wounded, it certainly was 'great' for Henry Wilson. However, the War was to have an unexpected sting in its tail for Wilson. After the War Wilson promoted himself as Britain's would be *Führer* and saviour of the Empire. He virulently opposed Irish Independence and advocated draconian repression of all dissent, believing it to be Bolshevik inspired; he was even appointed as Stormont's military adviser. But on 22nd June 1922, having returned from a War Commemoration, Wilson was gunned down on his doorstep by two IRA volunteers, Reggie Dunne and Joseph O Sullivan. Both were ex-servicemen, and O Sullivan had lost a leg at the battle of Ypres. Wilson was the first British MP to be assassinated since Spencer Percival in 1812 and the last until Airey Neave in 1979. The men were

captured and beaten by an angry mob, sentenced to death and executed on 16th August. Even in death Wilson would contribute to more misery in Ireland as his killing was one of the principal reasons for Britain's threatened reoccupation of Ireland which prompted the outbreak of the 'Civil War'.

'THE YELLOW PERIL'

Not only had Britain been making detailed and long-standing military plans for the utter destruction of her greatest economic rival, Germany, which had absolutely nothing to do with the violation of Belgian neutrality, she and her allies had detailed plans for the premeditated violation of other countries' neutrality and Sovereignty. In 1902 Britain was more worried by Russian expansionism in Asia than German 'world domination'. She found her Navy spread too thinly around the globe in 1898 and had tried and failed to form an alliance with Russia, then she turned to Germany and was also rebuffed but, in January 1902, Britain entered into an alliance with Japan.

The German Kaiser had a nightmare, which he shared with other European leaders, of an Asiatic conquest of Europe which he named the '*Yellow Peril*'. Japan's plans for Imperialist expansion into China and Korea came into conflict with Russia's plans to do the same. Japan had since 1876 tried to flex her Imperialist muscles. With the reassurance of her new alliance with Britain, on 8th February 1904, the Japanese navy launched an unprovoked attack which wiped out the Russian navy anchored at Port Arthur in China. She then invaded Korea and Manchuria, and in May 1905 a second Russian fleet which had sailed from the Baltic lost 38 out of its 40 ships to the Japanese at Tsushima.

By September 1905 both sides signed a peace treaty in New Hampshire under which both sides withdrew from Manchuria, although Japan was allowed to lease Guangdong and annex southern Sakhalin. Manchuria was divided into spheres of influence, Russian in the north and Japanese in the south. The Japanese 'special position' in independent Korea was recognised which allowed Japan to annex the country in 1910 and impose Japanese as the official language. Britain's reaction to such naked imperialist aggression was very different from what it would be to a similar attack in Pearl Harbour in 1941. In 1904 *The Times* of London reported "*The Japanese have opened the war by an act of daring which is destined to take a place of honour in Naval annals*". In 1904 the pre-emptive strike (like

Britain's own in Copenhagen in 1804) of Britain's ally had been courageous and daring, but the unprovoked aggression in 1941 was condemned as cowardly and dastardly. The head of the British Navy, Sir John Fisher, wanted to copy the Japanese attack against the German navy in the North Sea.

On 16th August 1914, 12 days after Germany's violation of Belgian neutrality, the event caused Britain to declare war on Germany. Britain and her Japanese ally violated Chinese neutrality when 23,000 Japanese and 1,500 British troops marched through China to bombard and besiege the German colony of Tsingtao. Although outnumbered 6:1, the Germans held out for two months but, after the deaths of 199 Germans, 236 Japanese and 12 British, the German colony surrendered on 7th November 1914. The German garrison stood to attention for the Japanese victory parade but turned their backs on the British troops, such was their disgust at their cynicism.

Japan went on to conquer other German possessions in the Pacific, such as Palau, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. The German fleet escaped China to destroy a smaller British squadron at Coronel, off the coast of Chile, before finally being defeated by the British off the coast of the Falkland Islands.

Japan felt herself the victim of the racism of her Western allies. On 4th March 1913, despite Japanese Government protests, California passed a law prohibiting Japanese nationals from owning or leasing land in the state. However, in late January 1917, with America poised to enter the War alongside Japan, and eager to prevent Japan from switching sides following protests by the Japanese Ambassador, the State Department pressurised Idaho and Oregon into withdrawing two similar alien Land Bills in their Legislatures.

At the Versailles peace talks in 1919 Japan proposed a racial equality clause for the Treaty. Japan herself had not demonstrated a great deal of racial equality in Korea and China and in April 1915 she had imposed her humiliating '21 demands' on China, which turned China into a Japanese vassal state. The Japanese intended this racial equality clause to apply only to Japan in effect re-designating them honorary whites. Of course the idea of racial equality was anathema to the Imperialist powers, Australia who had recently adopted its 'white Australia policy' vigorously lobbied Britain to reject the clause. Even American President Wilson, who had championed his 'Fourteen Points',

The following letter of 14th July was not published in the *Irish Times*

1916: A Reply To John A. Murphy

John A Murphy, like any other citizen, is entitled to voice any opinion he likes on contemporary Sinn Fein (Opinion, July 9). But when the the Emeritus Professor of Irish History strays into the domain of Irish history he should take greater care. The "Sinn Fein Rebellion Handbook" published by the "Irish Times" in 1916 was, of course, a misnomer. As it turned out, the Irish electorate did not take too great an offence at that designation when, in December 1918, it elected as its Government a revamped Sinn Fein that had fought the election on a platform of endorsing the 1916 Rising.

When, however, Professor Murphy pronounces with such certitude that "irony of ironies, Sinn Fein played no part at all in Easter 1916!", he must leave those acquainted with the biographies of some of the principal figures in this State's history quite flabbergasted.

William T Cosgrave had been a Sinn Fein Councillor on Dublin Corporation since 1909. Having fought under Eamonn Ceannt at the South Dublin Union, Cosgrave was initially sentenced to death in 1916, before that sentence was commuted. He served the Irish Republic as Minister for Local Government from 1919 to 1922, before going on to become President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State from 1922 to 1932.

Sean T O'Kelly was a founding member of Sinn Fein in 1905, a Sinn Fein Councillor on Dublin Corporation from 1906, and that Party's Honorary Secretary from 1908. From the outset of the 1916 Rising, O'Kelly had been personally chosen by the President of the Republic's Provisional Government, Patrick Pearse, to act as his Staff Officer. O'Kelly served as Ceann Comhairle of Dail Eireann during the War of Independence, and was an Irish Government Minister from 1932 to 1945, becoming Tanaiste in 1937.

O'Kelly, of course, went on to serve as the second President of Ireland from 1945 to 1959. Professor Murphy might care to note that constitutionally correct designation, as acknowledged by the Queen of England during the exchange of State visits, even if he himself might prefer a slightly constitutional, but quite incorrect, designation of President of the Republic of Ireland.

Manus O'Riordan

Irish Citizens In The Great War ??

Last month we reported Philip O'Connor's request to RTE to prevent broadcasters referring to Irish volunteers to the British Army in 1914-18 as "Irish Citizens", as *Today With Sean O'Rourke* did on 25th June. He received the following response from Tom McGuire on 30th June:

Thank you for your note regarding the description of the Irish people who lost their lives in the First World War as "Irish citizens."

Your point is well made and I have forwarded your note to the relevant programmes so as to ensure factual historical accuracy in future reportage.

had to bow to pressure from his own Southern and mid Westerns pro-segregation Democratic voting States and oppose the clause. When a vote was taken at the Paris Conference it was passed 17 votes to 11 but Wilson intervened to assert that a unanimous vote was needed and the proposal was thrown out. Japan was so shocked by this hypocrisy of her allies that when her Alliance with Britain was due to be renewed in 1923 she refused.

Paul McGuill

To Be Continued

DO YOU SMELL GAS?

Is England suffering from war psychosis, celebrating every atrocity from WW2 with pomposity. The Dambuster's March revived. Ferocious, every sewing circle, bake-off, khaki. The old, without remorse, in weak voices, remember well the slaughter and rejoice, boast of their rank in the war-hierarchy. Germany can only squeak like a mouse. (Maybe its citizens deserved to die?) It is time for them to re-read their Faust, the barbs of peace gives them no alibi. Britain feeds off Germany as a louse, its media grunts, squeals, from the pig-sty.

Wilson John Haire

16 May 2013

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

**JOHN MANDEVILLE,
THE SQUARE, MITCHELSTOWN.**

It was not enough for Bloody Balfour that the inquest on John Mandeville's death had determined that he died as a direct result of his prison treatment in Tullamore Gaol in November and December 1887. The inquest was held under Coroner Rice and on 4th August 1888 it was reported in the *Cork Examiner* that Balfour, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, had attacked Coroner Rice in the Imperial Parliament in London, in an attempt to undermine the verdict of the inquest.

During the inquest into John Mandeville's death, the Tullamore Gaol doctor, Dr. James Ridley died at the hotel where he was staying in Fermoy—The Royal Hotel—where else? on the morning of the day he was to give evidence at the Mandeville inquest being held in Mitchelstown. In due course another inquest had to be held into Dr. Ridley's own death and, during the Ridley inquest, contempt was expressed for Coroners' inquests in Ireland in general. The contempt was expressed by Crown witnesses at the Ridley inquest. References were made to Irish inquests in the Imperial Parliament and it became a trend to discredit the verdict of Irish coroners and juries in the English mind.

Members of the public in Ireland were quite aware of what was being attempted by the English (mostly English, as always) Government. For example, at the Irish Exhibition which was at that time in progress in London, the (Cork) Barrack Street Band refused to play 'God Save the Queen' when required to do so. Everyone in Ireland at that time knew where they stood and they were not afraid to say so in public. Boards of Guardians, Town Councils, and County Councils all were divided between Nationalists and Unionists and each spoke out their views and voted accordingly. Meetings were robust and outspoken but rarely unruly. The law and its enforcement were savagely anti-Nationalist. For example, hissing at police in a street was punished by a goal sentence.

On 6th September 1888 it was reported that the Mandeville jury members were under investigation. Detectives visited Mitchelstown for this purpose. Jury members were intimidated and Bloody Balfour spoke of impugning the jury. This went on

all September 1888 and in October it was revealed that a former warden of Tullamore Gaol, who had given evidence of John Mandeville's torture, was to be prosecuted for perjury and a warrant was issued for the arrest of ex-warden Goulding. He had emigrated to England and he voluntarily returned and presented himself at the police barracks—but the police would not accept him. It was part of Balfour's terrifying abuse of the law through the Crimes Act and the Coercion Act. Mr. James Dunne, an 80 year old man suffering from Bronchitis, was evicted. He had always paid his rent in full until 1888, when agricultural prices fell so much that he could not pay in full. He was evicted from his miserably poor cabin and he died the same day in the outhouse with his neighbours trying to ease him. Such cases were not unusual at the time.

THE LAW

A basic principle of law is enshrined in the legal phrase "*ignorantia legis excusat neminem*" which translates as "*ignorance of the law excuses no one*". In France, this principle is honoured by publishing all the laws up to date each year. You want to know about a matter of labour law for example? You just go to your nearest newspaper shop and buy the book on *Code du Travail*. If you have a disagreement with a neighbour, you can buy the *Code Civil* and so on. These are in book form or in CD-Rom and the prices are reasonable. Everyone has access to the law. In Ireland, you must go to a lawyer because there is no one place to find the law. The Acts and Regulations are rarely consolidated into one Act and even then, on these rare occasions, you will find that the Act may be consolidated but the Regulations are not. It is a nightmare and even the most skilled lawyers find it very difficult to know the law without hours or even days of research. But the Irish Courts still blunder on with insisting that "*ignorantia legis excusat neminem*".

This approach by the Courts was challenged in recent cases connected with Anglo-Irish Bank where a defence was put up that the defendants did not know they were breaking the laws even after taking legal advice. Substantially, it must be said they got away with it, even though the laws which were broken were so obviously broken and were so obviously known to be broken. So perhaps the *ignorantia legis* etc maxim applies only to minor matters which come before the lower courts and so applies mostly only to those defendants who cannot afford expensive lawyers. If a person is had up before the

courts for not having a light on the person's bicycle after dark—it is of no avail to plead ignorance of the law on the matter of lights on bicycles after dark. But, if a person who is very well paid to be an expert Company Director of a bank and happens to be involved actively in losing €34 billion euros of the taxpayer's money, then this person can successfully plead ignorance of the law or at least plead ignorance so successfully as to get a minuscule penalty—a mere slap on the wrist.

Likewise, if you start selling lottery tickets to willing buyers on the street without a licence to do so, you will be had up in Court for it and you will be found guilty. You may get a week or a month in gaol if you plead ignorance of law. But if you were to sell 400,000 tickets to a concert in Croke Park knowing you had to have Planning Permission and knowing you had **not** got it well . . . that is a different matter—is it not? Did the Gardaí step in and arrest anyone? Did they what? And yet money, a lot of money was taken from the public—€400,000 of it according to the data given out—all on false pretences. It was falsely pretended that the concerts were to take place. The public were lead to believe that the concerts were legitimately taking place and the promoters knew that they had **not** got Planning Permission. The promoters and the owners of the venue had hoped, it appears, that by engaging in what was an illegal activity on a huge enough scale that the activity would get the nod and wink treatment and be allowed to take place. It will happen again unless the law is changed so as to make it a specific criminal offence to engage in any selling of tickets for an event requiring Planning Permission or Licensing until the Permission or Licence is first obtained and the penalty for contravention should be sufficiently large to deter the promoters and the persons involved. Otherwise, it will become obvious that this is cowboy country.

SIR DOMINIC CHILCOTT

Where would we be without the English's Queen's Ambassador to Ireland? He pops up here, there and everywhere giving us his advice—and all for nothing. Aren't we the lucky people to have his likes to guide us, to impress us and indeed, on the odd occasion, to chide us. On July 20th 2014, he was at the opening of the MacGill Summer School and Arts Week in Glenties, Co. Donegal. According to the headline in the *Irish Daily Mail*, 21st July 2014, 'Ambassador warns of immigrants 'shopping around' EU for

benefits'. It appears that "welfare tourism across the EU is a growing menace", according to the Ambassador. Sir Dominic stated that, while he was all for "the principle of freedom of movement for workers we should not allow abuse of welfare benefits". He went on to say:

"We must take steps to prevent immigrants shopping around the member states to obtain more generous welfare benefits. In the longer term we would like a wider discussion in the EU about the conditions under which the principle of the free movement of workers would apply to new member states. But no one should be under any misconception—the British Government does not question the fundamental movement of workers in any way"

Sir Dominic also spoke about the poll on Scottish independence and the impact it could have on politics in the North.

"Even if the 'better together' campaign (for Scotland to remain part of the United Kingdom) wins, as the British government fervently wish and the polls suggest, it is very likely that the Scottish Government will anyway get greater powers", Sir Chilcott said.

"We can expect greater devolution in Scotland to prompt calls for the transfer of more powers to the devolved governments of Wales and Ireland", he said.

Was that last country mentioned a slip of the tongue by this most polished of Her Majesty's servants? As far as I know he hasn't been asked to explain himself to our dear Taoiseach Enda Kenny—but that is hardly surprising giving the times we now live in.

Michael Stack

President Juncker's Political Guidelines

On 15th July, Jean-Claude Juncker was elected President of the European Commission by a strong majority of 422 votes in the European Parliament plenary session.

Speaking ahead of the vote, he presented his political guidelines for the next European Commission as set out in a document entitled *A new start for Europe: My agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change*. Here are some key points from Jean-Claude Juncker's presentation.

A new start for Europe: My agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change.

1. **A new boost for jobs, growth and investment**—with a key promise of 300 Bn

Euro additional public and private investment from EIB in R+D, infrastructure, education and innovation, and also youth guarantee.

2. **A connected Digital Single Market**—taking legislative steps to ensure a connected digital market, including stopping excessive roaming charges on mobiles.
3. **A resilient Energy Union with a forward-looking climate change policy**—developing a new European Energy Union, switching suppliers for cheaper energy, prioritizing renewable energies, energy efficiency in buildings with a binding target.
4. **A deeper and fairer internal market with a strengthened industrial base**—increasing controls on banks, boosting industrial development, free movement of workers. The fairness part is combating tax evasion and fraud and support for a common corporate tax base and EU FTT.
5. **A deeper and fairer Economic and Monetary Union**—follow up on the Commission's blueprint for a Deep and Genuine Economic and Monetary Union—but bearing the social dimension in mind. This is seen primarily through replacing the Troika with a more legitimate structure, proposing ex-ante social impact assessment of structural reforms with more public debate. He confirms "the fight against poverty must be a priority" and an emphasis on social market economy not market alone, but without concrete measures.
6. **A reasonable and balanced free trade agreement with the US**—he backs the US free trade agreement, (TTIP) but says he won't "sacrifice EU safety, health, social and data protection standards or our cultural diversity on the altar of free trade". He calls for increased transparency and involvement of EP.
7. **An area of Justice and Fundamental Rights based on mutual trust**—he makes an important reference to a Union of shared values, based on the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the need for joint European action. He wants a Commissioner with specific responsibility for the Charter and rule of law. He will maintain the proposal for a Directive.
8. **Towards a new policy on migration**—he highlights the need for a common asylum policy and to promote a new European policy on legal migration with a special Commissioner. However he confirms priorities on securing Europe's borders ie with FRONTEX and Border Guard teams "in the spirit of solidarity", whilst calling for strong EU rules to penalize human trafficking.
9. **A stronger global actor**—with a stronger role for the new High Representative, with more common work on security and defence. No further enlargement will take place over the next 5 years.
10. **A union of democratic change** – a stronger commitment to political dialogue and partnership with the European Parliament and to increase transparency with stakeholders and lobbyists. He wants to improve the interaction with national parliament.

GUILDS concluded

never know. If something of the chill and gloom of earlier traditions doubtless still clung to them, it was gradually yielding to the warmth of Christian charity and the light of Christian truth. The world was slowly being prepared for its first concept of the full scope of Christian Democracy.

"Frith gilds" in fine were not limited to the Saxons in England, but were common likewise upon the continent. The same conditions called forth the same remedy. In France they were organised by the bishops. "Each diocese", writes Unwin, "became the centre of a large association which embraced all classes, peasant and noble, cleric and lay, town and country". They were known as *La Paix*, or *La Commune de la Paix*, a name identical in meaning with the Saxon "frith gilds" which we have here described. *Democratic Industry-A practical study in Social History*-Joseph Husslein, S.J.-New York-P. J. Kennedy & Sons-1919)

(To be continued)

1. *Judicia Civitatis Lundoniae*, Athelstan V. Thorpe, 1, p.230
2. Dr. Stubbs.
3. Schmid, "Gesetze," p.589.
4. John Mitchell Kemble, "The Saxons of England" 1, p.252.
5. *Ibid.*, p.p. 1, 251, 274. Eadm. Sec. Leg., Section 1. Thorpe, 1, p.246.
6. Henry Charles Coote, F.S.A. "Transactions of London and Middlesex Archeological Society," IV, p.12.
7. *Ibid.*

Press Release

"NO JUNK MAIL SIGNS"

Deputy Finian McGrath TD has called for a re-think and a balanced review of all "No Junk Mail" signs on private houses as its costing us all jobs.

It is estimated that 45% of houses in Dublin have "No Junk Mail" signs on their letterboxes.

Every 5 signs lead to one lost job in the printing industry: we can all help by taking these signs down.

Allied to the printing workforce are the thousands employed in the manufacture of printing inks and printing machines. Here in Ireland, the general printing industry has been decimated over the last 20 years or so by the relentless progress of computerisation.

However, there are many thousands of people still involved in artwork, plate making, printing, folding, binding, distribution etc.

If we all do this, the whole process starts all over again, helping to keep Irish jobs going and, perhaps in some small way, we will kick start the economy again.

GUILDS continued

such other sums as passed from hand to hand during the process of an Anglo-Saxon suit." (4).

The object, therefore, of these Guilds or tithings was to maintain public peace; to preserve "*the life, honour and property*" of individuals; to bring the guilty to justice and provide defenders for the injured and the innocent, at a time when the power of government was insufficient for these purposes. The power possessed by the Guilds was legally delegated, and their retributive action did not therefore correspond to the modern lynch law, which presumes to take justice into its own hands without any legal sanction.

Private warfare, however, had been considered an inalienable right of the Germanic freeman in his pagan state. With his conversion every attempt was made to set legal limits to its continuance until it could be entirely abolished. Only where the existence of the family seemed to require it did the laws of Alfred tolerate such warfare, or where the offender made peaceful settlement impossible, in which case the injured party would have the support of the State. So again Edmund, toward the middle of the 10th century, deliberated with the counsel of his Witan:

"First, how I might best promote Christianity. Then seemed it to us first most needful that we should most firmly preserve peace and harmony among ourselves, throughout all my dominion. Both I and all of us hold in horror the unrighteous and manifold fightings that exist among ourselves." (5)

It must not, however, be supposed that the payment of the *wergild* necessarily implied that human life had been taken. It included every peaceful settlement of feuds by means of money and all the fines that might be exacted for any injury, personal or domestic, or even for the aspersion of a man's good name.

The complete statutes, however, of the "*frith gilds*" under Athelstan, from which we have already quoted, open for us a much wider view. We there come upon institutions of great economic, as well as legal, importance. They were not only the police departments of their day, free from all suspicion of graft, but the insurance companies, mutual benefit associations, purgatorial societies, and even to a certain degree the courts of justice—all in one—for the happy Guildsman. Though imposed

from without, they already contain much of the spirit of the free Guilds which were now soon to arise.

One of the chief purposes was the recovery of stolen property. Where this was not possible compensation was made to the loser from the Guild funds, or by a *pro rata* tax upon the brethren. A limit, however, was clearly set for the maximum amount to be paid for the unrecovered article. The pursuit of the thief was undertaken in common. If caught, summary justice was executed upon him. A reward of twelve shillings, in fact, was set upon the open killing of a thief by any of the brethren. The utterly unprotected condition of the citizens, which laid them open to pillage and robbery, led to such severity. The property that could be stolen consisted mainly in live stock and slaves. If the latter "*stole themselves*", i.e., ran away, they met the fate of a thief when caught. To compensate the owner each guildsman who possessed a slave contributed one penny or half a penny. In particular legislations we can see the efforts made by the Church to shield offenders, especially if young and amenable to correction, while the institution of slavery, as well as the savage right of feud, was fast disappearing under her influence. She was doing what lay in her power to protect the unfortunate and promote Christian charity, advancing the great work of Christian Democracy.

The patience required to change certain immemorial customs and traditions, originally conceived in the spirit of a religion that had worshipped in the name of Thor and Wodan, and to substitute in their place the practices of a faith which meekly bowed the neck of the fierce warrior beneath the sweet yoke of Christ, is often but little understood by the historian and critic.

The "*frith gilds*" in the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries were as far removed from paganism as the dawn from the darkness, but the full day had not yet broken. Religion, charity and brotherhood were already strong and dominant principles in their statutes. And yet we cannot be surprised that something of a pagan hardness should still remain over from a time which was not as yet so far removed. Governments, moreover, while unable to protect the individual, believed themselves forced to countenance stringent measures and regulations that the country might not fall a prey to marauding bands of robbers.

Referring to the material aspect of the London ordinances, H. F. Coote writes:

"The regulations and provisions of this gild command our unqualified respect. They are irrefutable evidence of a high state of civilisation. We have in them a scheme of mutual assurance, with all the appliances of carrying it out, combined with thorough comprehension of the true principle upon which such schemes are founded, and can alone be supported. For the gild not only satisfied itself that the claim is honest, but repudiates payment of it whenever the claimant has shown himself to have been contributory by his negligence to the loss of which he affects to complain. And, lastly, the gild, to secure the society against claims of unlimited and overwhelming amount, established a maximum rate of compensation. (6).

The religious element, however, was not forgotten:

"And we have also ordained", wrote the drafter of the London statutes, "respecting every man who gives his pledge in our gildship, that should he die, each gild-brother (*gegylða*) shall give a *gesufel-loaf* for his soul (a loaf of bread offered to the poor in alms for the repose of the departed soul) and sing fifty (psalms) or cause the same to be sung within thirty days." (7).

The offering of Masses for this purpose was of course, most common, as we find in the statutes of the true voluntary Gyilds which were now to come into existence. It may be noted that in one instance the singing of Psalter or the offering of a Mass is left to the choice of the Guildsman.

Charity, too, although it began at home, did not remain there. The poor and afflicted were the objects of special consideration, and pilgrims were helped upon their way to accomplish their pious vows or to satisfy their devotion by kneeling at the tomb of our Lord or praying at the sites of His sacred passion and death in distant Palestine. It was evident that under these Christian influences the remnants of pagan harshness were soon to melt away like the last drifts of Winter's snow beneath the genial sun of the new springtime of Catholic charity.

From the earliest origin indeed of the mediaeval Gilds, a Catholic spirit was already breathing through them. Even in the most primitive days it was felt like a waft of Spring through the misty forests, awakening the newly organised institutions to a newness of freedom and a fullness of life and beauty which paganism could

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LABOUR

Comment

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MONDRAGON Part 32

Peace Guilds

We have studied the position of the unfree or partially freed labourer. Going back again to the first centuries of the Middle Ages we can now in turn view the condition of the freemen of that early period as we behold them leagued together in the *frith* (peace) guilds of Europe, more than a 1,000 years ago.

In the laws of King Ine, about the year 690, we first meet with the word *gegyldan*. We find it again in the laws of King Alfred enacted two centuries later. The meaning of that word seems now to be fairly clear.

The *gegyldan* were comrades mutually responsible for each other before the law, and leagued together for self-protection as well as for the preservation of peace and order. The name *Frith* (*Frieden* in modern German) or "peace" Guilds, is therefore often given to these institutions. They were guilds only in the wide sense of the word since they were not voluntary organisations. The freemen of the early Saxon towns were divided into groups of ten, known as *tithings*. Ten such groups in turn formed a hundred. The statutes regulating them were made the law of the land, and in the time of Athelstan we find them drawn up by the ecclesiastical and civil authorities.

"This is the ordinance", begins the official document, "which the bishops and reeves of London have ordained and confirmed among our *frith* guilds, both of thanes and of churls... Be it resolved that we count every ten men together, and the chief one to direct the nine in each of those duties which we have all ordained; and afterwards the hundreds (*hyndens*) of them together, and done one hundred-man (*hynden-man*, centurian) who shall admonish the ten for the common benefit." (1)

The eleven officers were to hold and disburse the money, *gild* or *geld*, from which it is argued by some that the *gild*

was named. We can readily, therefore, reconcile the two translations of *gegyldan* as *gild-brethren* (2) or *pay-brethren*. (3).

Although the question of labour does not enter here, except very indirectly, the "*frith* guilds" are of great interest from a civic and economic point of view, no less than in their cultural and historic aspect.

The earliest Saxon Guild legislation which we possess in the laws of Ine and Alfred is concerned with the payment of the *wergild*, or blood money, which was to be paid in those primitive times when one man had killed another. Such laws were common among all the Germanic tribes. We find them among the Saxons, the Bavarians, the Alamanni, the Frisians, the Visigoths, the Salian Franks and others. A definite price was set upon every head, from king to freedman. Among the Saxons, it is thought that the *wergild* to be paid for a noble who had been killed was 1,440 shillings; for a freeman, 240; and for a freedman who had once been in bondage, 120. Money values, of course, cannot even remotely be compared with those of the present day. A slave, according to the

London statutes, was to be compensated for at the maximum rate of half a pound, or less, "*according to his value*".

Since in many cases the man who had committed the deed could not pay his penalty, the relatives and the gildsmen were held responsible for a share. Thus, according to King Alfred's laws, if the man was without paternal relatives, but had relatives on his mother's side, the latter were to pay one-third of the blood money; his *gegyldan*, one-third and he himself the remaining portion. If he was without any relatives, the payment was to be made in equal shared by the *gegyldan* and himself. Without entering into the intricacies of this law, it is evident at once that the *gild* implied a solidarity almost as close as a family bond. This conclusion is important since it gives a true insight into the nature of Guild life.

In studying these conditions, we realise at the same time the difficulties encountered by the Church throughout the European world in "*taming and, humanizing the countless petty chieftains and evolving Christian chivalry out of violence and brutality*". The first mention of the *gegyldan*, it should be noted, is coincident with the victory of Catholicity over paganism. The earliest Guilds, though far from perfect, were already in many way a great power for good. Kemble says:

"If a crime were committed, the *gyld* were to hold the criminal to his answer; to clear him, if they could conscientiously do so, by making oath in his favour, to aid him in paying his fine if found guilty. If flying from justice he admitted his crime, they were to purge themselves on oath from all guilty knowledge or the act, and all participation in his flight, failing which they were themselves to suffer mulct in proportion to his offence. On the other hand they were to receive at least a portion of the compensation for his death, or of

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