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Brexit

Britain Takes The Plunge

On the morning of the British referendum result (24th June), Peter Sutherland, former EU Commissioner and former head of the World Trade Organisation, was interviewed on Radio Eireann about it. He said, in effect: *Good riddance of bad rubbish!* He said that, from the moment it joined the EU (or whatever it was called in 1972), Britain had been an obstacle to its development. It had been a negative element within it all the way through. (And that was indisputably the case within a couple of years of its inveigling its way in—with Ireland in tow.)

If Britain had voted to remain within the EU, Sutherland would not have breathed a word in criticism of it, but his positive response to its exit was so heartfelt and well-informed that there could be no question of it being just a matter of sour grapes. Britain was bad for the EU but, while it was there as its controlling member, the truth could not be blurted out.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was reinstated in the referendum campaign against Brexit. The Irish Government officially took part in it in Britain. In practice, however, Irish participation in the campaign was scaled down by the British Government as being counter-productive. Irish engagement in an internal British conflict could only damage the cause it supported. Irish political history, if such a thing existed, would have told them that.

The rehabilitation of Redmondism during the past decade should have told them. It would have told them, if their revived Redmondism had been anything more than glib superficiality, that Redmond's active involvement in an internal British conflict in 1910-11 (to pass a contentious Budget and curb the Lords veto) aroused a resentment which ensured that the Home Rule Bill passed by Parliament as a reward to him by the Liberal Party came to nothing and that the fortunes of the Unionist Party revived.

Sutherland saw the failure of the British Government to make the populace vote the right way in the referendum as a collapse of leadership, if not a collapse of democracy.

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Brexit—reality bites

It seems that just about everyone got it wrong on Brexit. The Government, media pollsters, the financial markets with all their analysts, resources and private pollsters, and even in the end the bookies. The latter, we are told, are often more accurate than opinion polls because the people who bet have an actual stake in the outcome and are not just respondents to a questionnaire.

In the run-up to the referendum the bookies' odds were around 2-1 against a Leave vote and odds-on at around 1-2 for

a remain vote (i.e. a bet of £2 would produce winnings of only £1). This story ran almost every day in the press and seemed to confirm the general media narrative, that the nasty racist Brexit campaign, though strong, would ultimately fail as real people were betting against it.

And the financial markets, seeing the improvement in the bookies' odds for Remain in the wake of the Jo Cox murder, promptly took off again in the final week of the campaign. But the bookies' odds can be

Keane, OBE, Raises An Important Issue

"What will you be doing on June 28,2022? It is some way away but the date is worth thinking about. It is an anniversary that denies us the easy collective swoon of 1916. There is unlikely to be any programme of cultural events to celebrate the moment when the artillery opened up to save the newly born Irish Free State... The centennial of the outbreak of the Civil War is every bit as important as that of 1916 or the outbreak of the War of Independence three years after the Rising. I will not indulge in a hierarchy of significance. That truly is an historical exercise.

"The one event could not have happened without the other."

Who says Fergal Keane, OBE, is all pious bullshit?

The Civil War is one of two essential issues over which nationalist Ireland has damaged itself severely by refusing to deal with. The other is 'the North'. The politicians, journalists and salaried historians of the state have all preferred not to deal with either of them. On the North they all condemn, or deplore, "*violence*", as if that was a policy or an analysis, but they prefer not to discuss what Northern

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moved by relatively small bets: a representative of Ladbroke's, speaking on Bloomberg on June 20th, stated that a single bet of £25,000 was enough to shift the odds towards Remain. Since the financial markets resemble a casino, they follow things like betting odds, so this in turn shifted them towards a more optimistic view. It is clear that there is significant potential for both market manipulation by this means and the manipulation of public opinion regarding politics also.

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British Labour Wars

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John Bruton, a genuine Anglomaniac, found himself driven to much the same conclusion within his narrower field of vision.

A Government which cannot deliver the electorate damages democracy! Absurd! And yet not entirely so. Not in Britain—the most stable democracy in Europe—because British democracy was not established through the overthrow of a ruling class by the populace, but by the gradual phasing in of the populace to the electoral system under the direction of the parties established by the ruling class.

A breakdown of mass deference certainly questions the viability of British democracy. The electorate rebelled against the Tory/Labour consensus, and that is certainly something new.

The Labour Party was thoroughly middle-classed under Tony Blair's Evangelical leadership a generation ago. It freed itself from the futile working-class stratum of British life a generation ago and launched a project to ease it out of existence while replacing it with a mass immigration of workers from various foreign regions. But the project is not yet half-completed. And it appears that many of the older immigrants have come under

the spell of the natives, so that only the London region did the bidding of the Tory/Labour consensus.

There is now a severe crisis in the Labour Party because of the rebellion of the discarded working-class against its directive in the referendum, and the election last year of a Party leader who was in sympathy with those discarded social elements.

Corbyn was elected leader because Blairite Labour, charismatically convinced that it had broken old Labourism, threw open the election of Leader to the Party membership and launched a membership campaign. But Blairism without Blair, and with Blair having to be careful about where he went in the world, lest he be arrested for war-crimes, could not deliver the populace.

Corbyn, who had always opposed the New Labour project and had been against the EU, implemented Labour Party policy on the EU. Since he had not had time to change party policy, he had to implement it. He campaigned for *Remain*, but did not do so in the frenzied manner of the Blairites, predicting doom if there was Brexit. He did not wage a sensationalist

campaign. It was up to the Blairite Party majority elected to Parliament last year to do that if they could. But the service that the Labour Party was required to perform for the Tory Prime Minister was to bring out the working class for Remain—and the Blairite majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party had broken off relations with the working class.

Corbyn campaigned extensively but moderately for Remain. But he did not target the working class areas which the Parliamentary Party had treated with contempt (as a hereditary possession) and harass them into coming out and voting for a cause in which they had never believed strongly, and in which they no longer believed at all.

It is unlikely that it would have made any difference if he had done so but, because he hadn't, there was an immediate Blairite cry for his resignation. The cry was led by a South African millionaire, Margaret Oppenheimer Hodge, who had been recklessly vociferous on the other side not very long ago.

The position now is that the Blairites control the Parliamentary Labour Party and are trying to find a way of ousting the Leader who was elected by the system which they themselves introduced, and that they are engaged with the Cameron Tories in trying to find a way of negating the referendum decision of the populace.

They still control the institutional network of the party at branch level, and are using their disorganising skills to prevent the vast new membership, which they themselves sought, from being incorporated into the Party institutions. What they want now is a *de facto* purge.

The Soviet Communist Party in the 1920s and 1930s went through a series of recruitment drives and purges. New members were recruited, and then they were winnowed, and some were incorporated into the substance of the Party. That was something that could be done because the leadership of the Party was motivated by a social purpose. The problem with the Blairites who control the Parliamentary Party and the Party apparatus is that they have no social purpose that unites them with the new mass membership they have got. In fact they have no social purpose, full stop. They just want to remain in place until their turn comes to be the Government. And they see that the way to become the Government is to be an Opposition that is scarcely distinguishable from the Government and wait until the electorate gets tired of seeing the same Party in Office. So they cannot absorb the new membership into their project.

New Labour is convinced that Socialism is a spent force in British politics. It should know. It destroyed it.

When Britain joined the Common Market Labour was against it on the ground that it was an obstacle to socialist development. The position of the Labour majority in Parliament now is that even basic Trade Union rights cannot be maintained in Britain through British politics and that they depend entirely on EU Directives which the British Government must implement.

That position was started in sensational form by Alan Johnson, a Trade Union leader who became a Blairite Minister, when he said that a majority for *Remain* in the referendum would be an event comparable to the landslide victory of Socialist Labour in the 1945 Election.

What use do such people have for the discontented mass that voted for Brexit?

The other question is whether the Corbyn leadership elected by the mass can incorporate the new membership into the structure of the party, give it a practical political purpose, and make it effective.

There is only one Labour figure in Britain who has done something effective during the Blair era, and done it in opposition to Blairism, and that is Ken Livingstone. But he appears to have been negated by a Zionist lobby within the Labour Party because he remarked that there was collaboration between the Zionist Organisation and the Nazi Party during the early years of the Nazi regime.

It was a true statement. It was relevant to the matter under discussion by drawing attention to the fact that the Jewish State in Palestine was brought about by the large-scale movement of Jews from one place to another. And it was substantiated by the current, extreme Zionist, Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, who acknowledged that Hitler's purpose in 1933 was not the extermination of the Jews but their removal from Germany.

But the facts of the matter are deemed to be irrelevant. Mystification was launched within the Labour Party by John Mann, and was taken up by the media. Channel 4's Michael Crick asked: "*Mr. Livingstone, why do you think Hitler is a vote winner in Britain?*", and that clip was broadcast repeatedly. And John Landsman, who is the organiser of the Corbyn movement in the Labour Party has demanded that Livingstone should retire and go away. (If this is considered prudent, then it is what Edmund Burke called "*a reptile prudence*".)

Brexit and Northern Ireland: Result

The UK Referendum on continuing EU membership was held on 23rd June.

England voted 53.38% (15,190,400) to leave, while 46.62% (13,265,002) voted to remain. After Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are included, the result was 51.9% to 48.1% (17,410,742 to 16,141,241 votes). Turnout was 72.2%.

A previous Referendum was held in 1975, when the vote to Remain was 67%.

Northern Ireland voted 55.8% Remain in EU and 44.2% Leave. The DUP campaigned for Leave, while the UUP campaigned for Remain. Sinn Fein and the SDLP both campaigned for Remain. Here are the results by Constituency:

Foyle: 32,064 Remain, 8,905 Leave, 18 spoiled. 78.3% to 21.7%. REMAIN.

Lagan Valley: 22,710 Remain, 25,704 Leave, 11 spoiled. 46.9% to 53.1%. LEAVE.

North Antrim: 18,782 Remain, 30,938 Leave, 20 spoiled. 62.2% to 37.8%. LEAVE.

West Tyrone: 26,765 Remain, 13,274 Leave, 22 spoiled. 66.8% to 33.2%. REMAIN.

Strangford: 18,727 Remain, 23,383, 13 spoiled. 55.5% to 44.5%. LEAVE.

North Down: 23,131 Remain, 21,046 Leave, 34 spoiled. 52.4% to 47.6%. REMAIN.

Belfast West: 23,099 Remain, 8,092 Leave, 18 spoiled. 74.1% to 25.9%. REMAIN.

East Belfast: 20,728 Remain, 21,918 Leave, 19 spoiled. 51.4% to 48.6%. LEAVE.

Belfast North: 20,128 Remain, 19,844 Leave, 26 spoiled. 50.4% to 49.6%. REMAIN.

Belfast South: 30,960 Remain, 13,596 Leave, 27 spoiled. 69.5% to 30.5%.

REMAIN.

East Antrim: 18,616 Remain, 22,929 Leave, 19 spoiled. 44.8% to 55.2%. LEAVE.

South Antrim: 21,498 Remain, 22,055 Leave, 10 votes spoiled. 49.6% to 50.6%. LEAVE.

East Londonderry: 21,098 Remain, 19,455 Leave, 10 spoiled. 52% to 48%. REMAIN.

Upper Bann: 24,550 Remain, 27,262 Leave, 33 spoiled. 47.4% to 52.6%. LEAVE.

Mid Ulster: 25,612 Remain, 16,799 Leave, 20 spoiled. 60.4% to 39.6%. REMAIN.

South Down: 32,076 Remain, 15,625 Leave, 23 spoiled. 67.2% to 32.8%. REMAIN.

Fermanagh and South Tyrone: 28,200 Remain, 19,958 Leave, 29 spoiled. 58.6% to 41.4%. REMAIN.

Newry & Armagh: 31,963 Remain, 18,659 Leave, 22 spoiled. 63.1% to 36.8%. REMAIN.

Gibraltar was also given a vote in this Referendum and voted overwhelmingly to Remain (19,300 to 800). The Channel Isles are not part of the EU, and had no vote in this Referendum.

Britain is the founder of the Jewish state in Palestine. An irredentist Jewish movement claimed Palestine as the ground of a Jewish state by Divine Right after two thousand years of absence. Imperial Britain supported the claim as a war tactic in 1917 and in 1919 it organised mass Jewish migration to Palestine and gave the Jewish Agency priority over the native population in preparation for the formation of a Jewish State. And that Jewish State is still engaged in the business of colonising Palestine at the expense of the Arabs, far beyond the territorial award made to it by the United Nations in 1948, with the support and encouragement of 'the West'.

The project of the Jewish State has involved, and still involves, extensive ethnic cleansing conducted under flimsy pretexts. If the Corbyn movement, under pressure of the ineffectual Blairites who

lost the Election, goes into denial about the historical and contemporary realities of the Jewish State, accepts the ruling of the Chief Rabbi, and defames Livingstone as an anti-Semite because he mentions undoubted facts, all it will do is demonstrate its unfitness for the role in which it has been unexpectedly cast in the politics of the British state.

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There is no pro-EU party in British politics. The case made by the Cameron Tories is that they have effectively damaged the EU, made Britain an entirely independent state within the EU by means of exemptions, and have established a position from which it can further damage the EU.

The Parliamentary Labour majority is entirely in agreement with this Tory position.

It does not even propose to rescind exemptions to European social protection laws which, at the time they were made, were held to be against the interests of British workers. While it says that the rights of British workers now depend on membership of the EU, it does not want Britain to enter into full participation in the system on which the rights of British workers have come to depend. It wants what the Cameron Tories want.

The PLP majority has also gone along with the story of the Cameron Tories about how Britain, through membership of the EU, has prevented the Europeans from making war on each other—a thing which they were always doing until Britain took them in hand.

It is true that there were wars in Europe over the centuries. Europe consisted of a number of large states. It is not unnatural for large states to settle their differences with each other by means of war/. The European states had land borders with each other and therefore had to maintain large standing armies to defend themselves from each other. But Britain, an island state with a Navy that dominated the seas of the world, took an active part in those European wars, even though it was not in danger from any of the European States. And, by its interventions, it prolonged those wars with its policy of adding strength to the weaker side in order to prevent a European system of accommodations being arrived at after trials of strength.

And, while keeping Europe in a state of war, active or latent, it also engaged in a great many other wars.

Britain the Peacelover and Peacemaker? That's the bad joke of the last 500 years.

The peace that there was in Europe from about 1946 to the 1990s was caused by the suppressed Third World War that was the outcome of the reckless Second World War instigated by Britain.

The policy of "*Spreading the War*", adopted by Britain after its defeat of June 1940 led to the defeat of Germany by Communist Russia and to the immediate emergence of a world conflict between the greatly expanded Communist system and Western Capitalism. Europe became small fry in the shadow of that impending world conflict. Anti-fascist leaders in Italy, Germany, France and Benelux (chiefly Christian Democrats) availed of the looming world conflict to establish the structure that became the EU. The purpose of many of those leaders was to exclude British influence from post-War Europe and ensure that it could never again play balance-of-power politics in Europe.

When Britain saw that a European organisation was becoming a going concern without it, it applied to join but was refused admission.

It applied again after the founders had retired. It was, incautiously, admitted, and set about subverting the project from within and shaping it to its own requirement, doing so with considerable success.

The great question now is whether the damage done to the EU by forty years of British membership has destroyed its original dynamic, or whether it can recover and construct a viable political system around the Euro.

The signs are that the Cameron Tories and the Labour PLP majority will try to overcome the Referendum result by delay, and use it as a bargaining counter by demanding even greater exemptions, and that Germany will support the attempt as much as it can.

The most representative British historian of the past generation, Andrew Roberts, has defended the wanton fire-bombing of the undefended city of Dresden by the RAF at the tail-end of the World War in 1945 by explaining that its purpose was to burn into German minds the moral principle that Germany must never again act contrary to British wishes. The immediately post-War German generation, guided by Adenauer's Christian Democratic Party, paid no heed. Adenauer's primary purpose was to negate British influence on the reconstruction of Germany. But the moral lesson of the Dresden and other bombings then kicked in and Germany has been an economically industrious political zombie, frightened of Britain's shadow, ever since. Its Christian Democracy is dead as far as foreign policy is concerned, and its Social Democracy was never weaned off Britain.

Germany is now a headless monster at the heart of the EU—a powerful, mindless economy.

Edmund Burke said he did not see how a people could be guilty. The post-Adenauer German elite does see. It has constituted the entire history of the German state into a collective crime, at Britain's behest. If the respectable parties cannot pull themselves together, re-enter history as a political state (being at present an apolitical state, which is a contradiction in terms), and historicise its past in the realistic context of actual world history (in which British world history has pride of place), then the outlook for the EU is not bright.

And if the respectable parties cannot bring themselves to do this, preferring to luxuriate in the spurious goodness of

perpetual penitence, which excludes them from their political obligations, then some disreputable movement will eventually arise and take the matter in hand.

Fortunately there are other political tendencies at work in Europe and, after the immediate shock of Britain's Brexit vote, these have asserted leadership. There does not seem to be any sign of any attempt to keep Britain within the EU at the cost of core principles. On the contrary, the inclination is to hold Britain to a two-year exit period and to consolidate the position of remaining members. Such an approach was essential if the EU was not to start splintering.

As for Ireland in the Brave New Post-Brexit World, in January of this year we wrote:

"An Opinion Poll published in the *Irish Times* revealed that 74% of the people of Ireland considered that, if Britain left the EU, Ireland should not follow. That is a significant figure and it shows that the Irish sense of destiny survives.

There are fears that Britain leaving will make partition of Ireland permanent. But the contrary is the case. A large segment of Northern Ireland has no wish to be cast adrift from Europe. Britain voting to leave can only hasten a decision on its future.

It is unlikely that Britain will vote in a 2016 Referendum to leave the EU. But, if it did so, that would be a fitting culmination to the centenary of 1916."

Well, the British working class in parts of the country devastated by Tory and Labour de-industrialisation policies, and the favouring of Finance Capital at the expense of manufacturing production, voted overwhelmingly in favour of *Leave*. It saw this as the only way to revive manufacturing and re-establishing meaningful conditions of existence.

Fianna Fail is calling for Scotland to be fast-tracked into the EU, if it votes to separate from Britain.

With Britain outside the EU and Scotland in it, the mood in Northern Ireland would be strongly to remain in Europe. A Border-Poll looks very likely in the course of the next two years. By campaigning strongly for *Remain*, Sinn Fein put itself in a good moral position to call for such a poll—which will be supported by Catholics. And, in those circumstances, it is hard to see large numbers of Protestants voting to isolate themselves from both the EU and Scotland.

The effects of the Brexit decision will be to force Ireland to cut the final strings binding it to Britain. After this, Ireland and Britain will be no more than 'just good friends'!

Keane

continued

Ireland is that it should be possible for a Thirty-year War to be fought in it between the representatives of a third of the Six County population and the Government of the state, which was perhaps the fourth strongest military Power in the world.

On the Civil War all they managed to say for about the last forty years is nothing at all. But now the spokesman of the British Empire tells us that it isn't good enough. And he's right.

Fixing us with a steely gaze, from amidst his curling locks, on a page of the *Sunday Independent* (April 17th), he says: *Confronting Our Blood-Soaked, Vicious Past The Best Tribute To Irish Republic.*

One can hardly disagree with that. But how does one go about confronting it? And what does *confronting* it mean? Does it mean reasoning out what caused it, what its purpose was, what it became once it was set in motion, and what its outcome was in terms of its influence on national life? Or does it mean wallowing in descriptions of its awfulness?

Keane OBE is a holy man. Nobody who heard him on the BBC commenting sanctimoniously on the wickedness of lesser breeds without the law could doubt that he is thoroughly holy, either by affectation or because he can't help it. And no doubt comprehensively holy men must see evil everywhere, and must see it all as being linked because it is all similar in that it is evil. There can be no doubt, therefore, that what he means by "*confronting*" is indulging in endless repetitions of its awfulness. Holy Men do not engage in secular investigation of secular causes. They condemn the wickedness of the world. They do not explain it because explanation would be justification.

A thoroughly holy man would incline towards wholesale condemnation of the world, with a few marvellous exceptions. But a salaried holy man cannot reasonably be expected to do that. He must earn his salary—and the British Empire is not an easy-going task-master.

England could not have been able to employ Keane OBE as a priestly moral propagandist, at a plutocratic salary, to condemn human wickedness, if it had not made itself what it is by fighting many wars—many more than any other state since the days of the Roman Empire—and

European Integration And Brexit

The many commentators who ascribe the outcome of the UK referendum to various forms of disaffection are missing the point. Both sides of the Brexit debate in Britain were resolutely opposed to the idea of European integration.

Whatever about regions like Scotland and Northern Ireland, the position of the UK as a State has been hostile to the primary objectives of the EU since the Thatcher era, and British interventions in the EU since then have frequently been disruptive.

Following Jacques Delors' presidency of the European Commission in the 1980s the UK pressed successfully for a weakening of the Commission, the supra-national institution at the heart of the EU. In the 1990s UK Governments championed enlargement because it placed a brake on EU 'deepening', i.e. closer integration. The UK's decision not to join the Eurozone, once considered as temporary, has long been accepted as permanent and there are clearly conflicting interests between Sterling, a major currency, and the single European currency. In response to the 2008 crisis an unbridgeable gulf opened up between London and Brussels regarding banking regulation.

In short the differences between the EU and the UK cannot be fixed by the exercise of good will; they are irreconcilable. For that reason the separation of the UK State from the European Union, as decided in the referendum, is in the interests of both.

Brexit will not guarantee that the EU moves back from its attachment to free market ideology but it does open up the possibility of a more united Union and a return to the Christian Democratic ideal of 'Social Europe'.

Following the UK referendum, Ireland's national interest clearly requires a consolidation of the Euro currency through further political integration of the Eurozone, pursued as a matter of urgency. Other priorities must be: preventing the British eurosceptics from using their victory to destabilise the EU; and avoiding any moves that would prolong the dislocation and uncertainty that are the unavoidable accompaniments of the British exit.

Dave Alvey

Irish Political Review Group

exterminating many peoples. And naturally it would not have been willing to employ him if it had not seen that his field of moral vision was blinkered.

And, in truth, unblinkered morality is an immensely problematical art. The blinkers was a necessary device invented so that the horse could only see where he was intended to go, and was not distracted by other things and just wandered around. And morality, too, is most effective when blinkered and directed by a master. And where your treasure, there will your eyes see also.

Now making war is perhaps the second most normal human activity. It has always been done—and has been done most dreadfully in the service of moral ideals. There are no reasonable grounds for supposing that we are close to a time when it will no longer be done. And what use in human affairs is an indiscriminate moral vision which sees war as mere awfulness to be condemned every time it is thought of, and that sees the whole range of war that goes on in the world.

Indiscriminate moralising against the awfulness of war is singularly

inappropriate at a moment when Keane's Empire is celebrating the centenary of the Somme. And, be clear about it, the first day of the Somme was celebrated—not condemned. There was pride in the way that the futile sacrifice of 20,000 British lives was remembered.

What did the troops think they were fighting for as they were mown down all day in their slow walk into German machine-gun fire on July 1st 1916? Their song explains:

"We're here, because we're here,
Because we're here, because we're
here" etc.

The celebration commemorates the fact that the British are a people who could lose 20,000 troops in a day with no perceptible military result, and continue the battle for months, all the time without a result, in the conviction that they could keep up that sort of thing longer than the Germans could, in a war which they had launched on a German state which was no danger to them, and whose purpose, realistically considered, can only have been British domination of the world.

Brexit gave point to the celebration by

indicating that Britain hopes to make its way back into that business as a free agent.

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The field of Keane's blinkered vision is signalled by the OBE. But it has now been seen, and drawn attention to, a complex of events regarding which the Irish political, academic and journalistic Establishment are in denial. So let's thank him, and dispose of him.

He does not suggest how it would be appropriate "*to celebrate the moment when the artillery opened up to save the newly born Irish Free State*". He says that it "*is every bit as important... as 1916*", but he does not say what it was about. Nor does he say who the "*newly born Free State*" was saved for by British artillery in Irish hands. It was, in fact, not yet newly born on 2nd June 1922. It was only a foetus. And it was a British foetus planted among the Irish as a parting gift. The Irish had not desired it. It was the fruit of a rape.

It is generally known what 1916 was about. It was an act of war against the British State in Ireland for the purpose of establishing an independent Irish state. That was an object which the British State had made clear that it would not allow to be achieved by peaceful means. Military action was therefore the appropriate means of attempting to achieve it.

Professor Roy Foster in his famous book suggests that the Irish Volunteers attacked the wrong enemy, or attacked an institution that was not an enemy at all. The enemy that should have been attacked was Unionist Ulster because it was Unionist Ulster that stood in the way of what the Irish Volunteers wanted. The British Government wanted to concede the Irish demand but it was prevented from doing so by the Ulster Volunteers:

"It was Ulster that blocked the way in 1912-14, and helped channel nationalist energies into what became Sinn Fein; it was Ulster resistance that should have provided the target for advanced nationalist aggression in 1916..." (*Modern Ireland* p492).

It is a strange argument. Abstracted from the reality of things it might be a debating point relevant to the Home Rule Party, but the 1916 demand was for independence, and war on Ulster Unionism for that object would have been lunatic.

Ulster Unionism did not distinguish between Home Rule and Independence. It raised an illegal, or extra-legal, Army to ensure that it did not become subject to a Home Rule Government, and it was in no way appeased when the Home Rule

Party said that it loved the Empire too.

1916 is unproblematic. It was an act of war for a purpose which, if achievable at all, could only be achieved by war.

The nature of the military conflict that began on 28th June 1922 is very problematic indeed.

Insofar as the participants were Irish there was no conflict of ideals between them. Both sides wanted an independent Irish state.

What other Civil War has there ever been in which both sides wanted the same thing?

As far as I know, no historian has said straightforwardly that the Irish won their freedom from Britain and then fell into conflict over the form it should take. That is not said but it is strongly implied.

If the implication is taken in earnest, it means that there was a Crown & Empire presence in Sinn Fein during the War of Independence. And, if so, it is reasonable to suppose that the Crown & Empire tendency consisted of those who led the Free State war in 1922. And yet, when one looks at the careers of Michael Collins and Sean MacEoin and Richard Mulcahy before December 1921, it is impossible to find any trace in them that what they were fighting for was a better position in the Empire under the Crown than that which Redmond almost got.

They did not fight for the Empire in 1922 because they loved the Empire. They fought for the Empire against the Republic because the Empire threatened that it would mobilise all its resources for a reconquest if the Irish did not accept the position under the Crown and within the Empire that they were being offered.

They reckoned that the Army of the Republic would crumble under the threatened Imperial assault, and therefore they accepted the position of improved subordination insisted on by Whitehall. They accepted, *de facto*, that Britain had the power to do what it threatened.

Keane is of the opinion that Britain had the *right* to do what it threatened. That follows as a matter of course from his enrolment in the *Order of the British Empire*.

The Sinn Fein faction, that signed the Treaty under extreme duress in Whitehall in December 1921, then, in accordance with its terms, set about establishing the subordinate Free State in place of the Republic. And, in drawing up a Constitution for the Free State, they bent ambiguous elements in the Treaty towards the Republican position, and they made an election deal with anti-Treaty Sinn Fein to fight a Coalition election campaign which would,

in effect, reproduce the Dail elected before the Treaty, and also the Executive appointed by the Dail. Under this arrangement, the large anti-Treaty minority of the Dail vote in January would allow the Treaty majority to carry out its Treaty obligations, and the Sinn Fein Party that had resisted British military government for the better part of three years would have remained substantially intact.

Michael Collins, the Strong Man of the Treaty, was summoned to Whitehall and told that he must break the Election Pact because it was undemocratic and was in breach of the Treaty.

Democracy in its modern usage does not have a precise meaning. Whether the Election Pact of 1922 was democratic or not can be argued either way. But it is relevant to mention that the Whitehall Government which condemned it as undemocratic was itself the product of an Election Pact. The Unionist (Tory)/Liberal alliance of 1916—the "*War Coalition*"—won the 1918 Election by a landslide, in what was called the Coupon Election. Lloyd George split the Liberal Party in 1916 in order to become Prime Minister in a tight Coalition with the Unionists, ousting the Liberal Leader, Asquith, from Office. There was also a small Labour element in the 1916 Coalition.

When Germany surrendered unexpectedly in November 1918 the War Coalition rushed into a General Election to take advantage of the euphoria. The Unionists and Lloyd George Liberals shared out the seats between them. Asquith's Liberals were wiped out. The Labour Party, which had fought the Election as a separate party, experienced a mushroom growth. It scarcely existed at the previous election (1910) but in December 1918 it was suddenly the Official Opposition—a small, ineffectual Opposition.

The party-stem, which had given order to the state for two centuries, was disrupted. The post-War Government was a continuation in substance of the 1916 War Coalition. Its leaders became concerned about what would happen to the conduct of the state and of the greatly expanded Empire if there was a reversion to the normal squabbling of party-politics after the next election, and they were giving serious consideration to the formation of some kind of all-embracing state-party to cope with the situation.

This was the Whitehall Government that declared the Collins-De Valera Election Pact to be undemocratic and insisted that the Treaty should be the central issue in the Irish Election.

The apprehension of the War Coalition about what would happen if party-politics was restored in Britain was amply borne out by events. The Coalition fell apart in the Fall of 1922, as the Free State was being delivered in the midst of 'Civil War'. It fell apart under pressure of Turkish nationalist defiance of Imposed Treaty on Turkey. The Empire did not respond to the British call for assistance in a war of Turkish reconquest; Britain balked at fighting it on its own; the Unionist backbenchers pulled the plug on the Coalition and became the Tory Party; an election was held which restored a weak party Government that was incapable of giving positive government to an expanded Empire and, with the Empire neither governed nor dissolved, there was drift towards another world war by the Tory rump of the great Unionist Party, a mere shadow of the great Liberal Party, and a Labour Party that was all at sea.

But, before its political collapse in the face of Turkish defiance, the War Coalition brought about the Irish 'Civil War'. It vetoed Collins's draft Constitution, obliged him to disown the Election Pact (which, however, he only did on polling day), and gave him orders to make war on the Republicans on 22nd June, after Field Marshal Henry Wilson was assassinated in London—probably on his orders.

Collins launched the war by attacking the Four Courts Republicans on June 28th. He had been collaborating with those Republicans in his absurd "*War on Northern Ireland*" up to the moment when he made war on them. (His war in Northern Ireland, which is to say, on Britain, was tolerated by Whitehall for a while, probably in order to help him in manoeuvring against the Republicans. He was allowed some successes against the Ulster Unionist element but, when he went too far, the army of the state in the North—which was never anything but the British state—was deployed against him.)

The war was launched twelve days after the election, and before the new Parliament had met. The Election had not been held on an understanding by the electorate that the Treatyites had repudiated the Pact. The Pact remained intact until polling day. It was only on polling day that Collins made a speech urging electors to vote for whoever they thought was the best candidate rather than for the Pact candidate, and in those times the speech could not be conveyed around the country on the instant.

A large majority of the elected candi-

dates seem to have been elected in accordance with the terms of the Pact, and on the understanding that it was operative.

The Dail/Parliament elected on June 16th was rendered constitutionally meaningless by the circumstances under which it was elected and by the fact that it was not assembled for two months after 'Civil War'; had been launched by Provisional Government on British authority and under British ultimatum.

The 'Civil War' was a British war in Treatyite Ireland. Britain retained the authority under the 'Treaty' to wage war in the 'Treaty' region because the 'Treaty' was not in fact a Treaty at all, although both Collins and Lloyd George agreed to give it that name.

It is not unknown for third parties to play a part in authentic civil wars. The belligerents often seek outside assistance, and the outside assistance sometimes determines the course of the war. But it was not the case that one of the belligerents in the Irish 'Civil War' asked for assistance and was given it. Collins was not Dermot McMurrough. He did not want to make war on the Republicans. He did not seek British assistance to do so. Britain compelled him to make war on the Republicans—or else be faced with the problem of what to do if the British Army went into action.

Britain was not out of order in any of this. It had its rights in Treatyite Ireland under the "Treaty"—which was not a Treaty at all, only an Agreement with a bunch of 'rebels' under which they would be constituted into a state under the Crown and within the Empire if they behaved themselves. (This was not how De Valera planned things to go! But Collins had taken things into his own hands in London on 6th December 1921 when, against the instruction of his Government, he signed the British document called the 'Treaty' on his own authority and intimidated his fellow-delegates into signing it too.)

How Collins got himself into the predicament he faced on June 28th 1922 will be gone into in a future article.

It needs to be emphasised that none of the Irish politicians in 1922 acted with the knowledge, or even the suspicion, that Britain was on the brink of internal political collapse. The Empire had been vastly expanded. The War Constitution was in place. Churchill published an article about how Britain had established itself in magisterial command of the world for several generations.

Brendan Clifford

Brexit—reality bites

continued

Again from Bloomberg on June 21st: "*Rising anticipation that 'Remain' will win the vote is driving the market*", said John Plassard, a senior equity-sales trader at Mirabaud Securities in Geneva. "*Even if polls are close, people are paying more attention to the bookmakers because that was a much better predictor in past referendums.*"

At this point the opinion polls were still neck and neck with leads for both sides in different polls. However, on June 22nd, the day before polling, the same Ladbroke's spokesman explained that the big bets were on Remain, averaging £450, while those for Leave averaged just £75.

Although the number of bets, 62% according to Ladbroke's, was far higher on the Leave side, the amount of money placed on Remain explains why the quoted odds gave a percentage probability for Remain of 75%.

On the day of polling itself a massive volume of bets came in, mainly for the Remain side with one individual bet of £315,000 being recorded. Irish bookie, Paddy Power, lengthened the odds on Leave to 7-1 while the odds on Remain were shortened to 1-12, meaning you would have to bet £12 in order to win £1. Financial markets moved higher as a result and Sterling peaked at just over \$1.50 as the polls closed, the highest figure since last November.

After the polls had closed, YouGov published the results of its on-the-day poll of people it had previously polled, showing a 52% to 48% win for Remain, but this had no effect on the currency. Sterling started leaking lower (Nigel Farage later said that his friends in the City had spent a lot of money on private polling) and by 11.45 pm it was down over 4 cents.

Then it all went pear-shaped. There had been indications that something was amiss earlier in the day when reports surfaced of particularly heavy polling in working class areas in the North of England. The first major result just after midnight was Newcastle which had been expected to be quite solidly Remain, but came in with a Remain majority of only 1.4%. Yet even at this late stage a final Ipsos-Mori on-the-day-poll came in showing Remain on an 8 point lead overall. At 18 minutes past midnight the Sunderland result came in showing 61% for Leave and markets took another lurch.

As the results came in it became clear that the marginalised working class, that New Labour technically represented, but also deeply despised, had come out in their droves to vote against the EU, a pet New Labour project.

New Labour is now trying to depose the leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, for allegedly losing them the referendum. But New Labour bears the primary responsibility for bringing the referendum about, not David Cameron, and they also bear the primary responsibility for the result.

When it came to power in 1997, the Blair Government followed the long-standing Foreign Office policy of expanding the EU to incorporate the countries of Eastern Europe. When the Eastern Europeans finally did accede to the EU in May 2004 only the UK, Sweden and Ireland allowed them completely free movement of labour. All the other existing EU states used restrictions of various kinds, particularly on manual work, to discourage

an immediate surge of cheap labour into their economies, so the full weight of this surge fell on the three countries mentioned and in the UK led to the rise of UKIP.

For the metropolitan elites, the prospect of cheap nannies and builders was delightful. Ditto for buy-to-let landlords and labour intensive business owners; the boom got boomier, as Bertie noted. For the native working class it resulted in stagnant wages, an explosion in housing costs and intense pressure on health, education and social services.

New Labour subsequently lost two General Elections in the UK as the working class failed to turn out to vote for the neo-liberal policies it had imposed on them. And last week that same working class voted itself out of the neo-liberal project that the EU has become under British tutelage. If it can now ditch New Labour and hang on to Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader it might just be able to recover some of the sense of purpose it once had.

Sean Owens

and time ran out on the planning permission. Meanwhile *Save 16* gained momentum and successfully lobbied for Government action. In 2004 a preservation order was placed on number 16 and in 2007 the then Minister for the Environment, Dick Roche (FF), elevated number 16 to the level of National Monument adding numbers 14, 15 and 17. In 2013 Jimmy Deenihan, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in the Fine Gael/Labour coalition, brought the process a step further by getting a commitment to restore numbers 14-17 and build an 1916 interpretative centre agreed with Chartered Land; the Minister had leverage at the time, given that the company was under the control of Nama. A major downside to these successes was that the more the Moore Street site won State recognition, the more the condition of the terrace was allowed to deteriorate.

Having become Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in July 2014, Heather Humphreys received Cabinet approval to proceed with the purchase of the four houses in Moore Street from Nama for roughly 4 million euro in March 2015. Restoration work commenced towards the end of that year and shortly afterwards, in December, a nominee of the 1916 Relatives Association, Colm Moore, applied for a High Court judicial review to halt the building works. His claim was that a number of specified buildings on the route from the GPO to Moore Street as well as specified houses in the Moore Street terrace in addition to numbers 14 to 17 were part of the National Monument. He claimed that the buildings were marked for demolition and were in danger of being permanently lost, and he initiated separate proceedings against the erection of unauthorised signs. On Thursday January 7th about fifteen activists from the Save Moore Street campaign occupied the buildings on Moore Street and brought all building work on the site to a halt.

The Moore Street occupation received support from three political parties and was criticised in an article in the *Irish Times* by Diarmuid Ferriter. Gerry Adams for Sinn Fein castigated the Government for making it necessary in the centenary year for relatives of the 1916 leaders to take legal action in defence of the heritage of the Rising. Mary Lou McDonald supported the occupation by addressing a crowd of people at the site

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS

At this point it is necessary to take a few steps back to describe various commercial

The case for creating a 1916 'battlefield site'

It would suit many in the current Irish elite if the Moore Street terrace of houses occupied by nearly 300 members of the GPO garrison in the last days of the Rising was buried under a shopping centre. What more fitting monument could there be to the aspirations of our Anglophile re-writers of Irish history? Yet the present course of events is favouring those committed to defending the heritage of the Rising.

Following a long campaign by the 1916 relatives (including some councillors on Dublin City Council) and the National Graves Association (NGA), a campaign vindicated by an unexpected High Court victory on 18th March this year, there is a possibility that a relatively elaborate commemorative centre devoted to the story of the Rising will become a major civic attraction in Dublin.

There are a number of different strands to the Moore Street story, a commercial strand encompassing many of the ups and downs of property development in the city in recent decades, a political strand taking in the efforts of groups committed to the defence of the heritage of the Rising, and somewhere lurking beneath the surface a strand linked to the failed Wood Quay campaign of forty years ago that might be summarised as a city in search of a soul.

This article will look at all three strands and conclude by reproducing the arguments for re-constructing Moore Street and the surrounding area as a battlefield site as made by the present director of the National Museum, Seamus Lynam and his predecessor, Pat Wallace. At the time of writing there are grounds for optimism about the battlefield site but the final outcome is far from certain.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

A group of individual site owners, the Carlton Group, was granted planning permission in 1998 to develop an area around the old Carlton cinema on O'Connell Street, Dublin. Much of the area marked for development had been derelict since 1979. The plans included a provision to demolish a terrace of houses, numbers 10-25 on Moore Street; number 16 had been the last headquarters for the leaders of the Rising. In response to this a campaign to defend the part of Moore Street associated with the Rising, 'Save 16', was founded. Key figures involved included James Connolly Heron and Barry Lyons of the 1916 Relatives Association and Matt Dylan of the NGA.

For various reasons the Carlton Group was unable to follow through on its plans

developments in chronological sequence. At some stage in the early 2000s, a high profile developer, Joe O'Reilly, who had played a major role in the development of the Dundrum shopping centre, set the sights of his company, Chartered Land, on the Carlton site. A commercial tussle ensued between Chartered Land and the Carlton Group with Dublin City Council caught in the middle and a constant threat of expensive litigation hanging over the project. By 2005 Chartered Land had succeeded in buying out most of the site. The property crash of 2008 put the project on hold. O'Reilly, a major borrower from Anglo Irish Bank, was one of the 'Maple 10' investors given loans by Anglo to buy shares in the bank to shore up Anglo's share price. In 2010, however, not long after his debt to Anglo Irish Bank was transferred to Nama (National Asset Management Agency), Chartered Land was given planning permission for the Carlton site, now known as 'Dublin Central'. O'Reilly's debt purchased by Nama was mostly linked to the Dundrum shopping centre and amounted to over a billion euro

The scale of the 'Dublin Central' project is sufficient to draw political support away from the Moore Street heritage project, even if anti-1916 sentiment wasn't rampant in the upper echelons of Irish society. It is projected to comprise 4,500 permanent jobs, 98 retail units, 69 residential units, 700 car spaces and 4,500 square metres of restaurant and coffee houses. At the time of receiving planning permission it had already secured the John Lewis Group as an anchor tenant; for Dublin City Council it has appeal as a project that could finally clean up the North end of O'Connell Street, a blight on the cityscape since 1979.

A relatively recent twist in the commercial dealings has been the sale by Nama of Joe O'Reilly's debt to two large international property companies: the UK listed Hammerson group and Allianz Real Estate, an arm of the large German financial services corporation, Allianz. The deal was completed in September 2015 at a sale price of 1.85 billion euro and ranked at the time as NAMA's largest and most commercially successful sale. Financial journalists like Ciaran Hancock of the *Irish Times* have described the sale as a positive development in the Irish property market on several grounds. The acquisition is an equal joint venture between the two companies who have worked together in France, and both already have major involvements in Ireland, North and South. Hammerson have a successful track record

in the UK and France and are expected to actively develop their Irish assets; the group is an investor in Value Retail, the company that owns both the Kildare Village retail centre and Abbey Retail Park outside Belfast. Allianz commenced operations in Ireland in 2002 and currently employs close to 1,500 people here through its insurance operation.

Hancock says of the deal:

"It is understood that the sum paid by Hammerson and Allianz, includes about €350 million for the non-Dundrum pieces of the Chartered Land portfolio. This includes 50 per cent stakes in the Ilac and Pavilions shopping centres in Dublin. A large site bounded by O'Connell Street and Moore Street, called Dublin Central, is also included. This has rich development potential." (IT 29/9/2015)

So Joe O'Reilly is no longer a player in the project he planned through Chartered Land for Dublin's main thoroughfare and an international conglomerate stands to earn major profits from it. The takeover of 'Dublin Central' by Hammerson and Allianz is regarded positively in Dublin commercial circles.

COURT CASE

Judge Barrett's ruling was unexpected in the world of Irish public affairs but for those actively following the case it came as no surprise. The judge made a point of visiting the site and clearly took a keen interest in the heritage angle. His 399-page Judgement is not easy to summarise but some key points can be noted.

The key decision is expressed in paragraph 655 in chapter 73:

"Having regard to the wealth of evidence presented before it, and for all of the reasons stated above, the court concludes, inter alia, and is satisfied to make a declaration that: (1) (a) each and all of the streets and street alignments of [a long list of street locations are listed] comprises and comprise a national monument within the meaning of the National Monuments Acts, which national monument is sometimes referred to as the 'Moore Street Battlefield'; and (2) each of and only [a long list of buildings are listed] comprises (i) a national monument in its own right and also (ii) a part of the national monument that is sometimes referred to as the 'Moore Street Battlefield'".

In short, Justice Barrett has declared the entire area to be a National Monument, not just the four houses previously designated. He has given legal recognition to the Moore Street Battlefield.

On the point of what a National Monument is and how it can be recognised

the Judgement reads:

"Whether or not a monument, or the remains of a monument, is a "national monument" is a question of fact. Provided the facts identified in the above-quoted text present in any one circumstance, the monument or remains of a monument being looked at constitute a "national monument". It is (rightly) accepted by counsel for the Minister that no ministerial designation is required for a monument or the remains of a monument to become a "national monument".

This allows the court to designate a site to be a National Monument notwithstanding a contrary opinion from the Government: a monument is identified by objective criteria, not by Ministerial decree. A section in Chapter 10 gives three reasons why the Moore Street battlefield site is unique as follows:

"First, the Easter Rising was a pivotal event in Irish history. At the very heart of the story of the Rising, steps from the iconic GPO, sits the Moore Street Battle-Site. Second, the Moore Street Battle-Site is the place to which the men and women of the GPO fled, where battle was done and surrender was negotiated, and a site where workers, civilian and combatant, lived and died in what was, to a large extent, a workers' rising. Third, significant physical fragments of the Moore Street Battle-Site landscape and streetscape survive; this is not true of many of the sites of the battles done at Easter 1916."

In answer to a point that a site needs to remain in its historic state before it can qualify as a monument Justice Barrett quotes from Byron's poem, *Isles of Greece*.

"The mountains look on Marathon—
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dream'd that Greece might still be
free..."

He was making a serious point: the site of an important historical event retains significance even if the street surfaces or buildings change, but in the case of Moore Street much of the original fabric remains. Perhaps uniquely in a modern court a learned judge has been able to clobber a Government of philistines with his learning in order to shed light on a matter at issue!

NATIONAL MUSEUM STAFF EVIDENCE

Much in the Moore Street Judgment merits wide circulation but the evidence provided by staff of the National Museum is arguably of most interest. Justice Barrett attached much weight to an affidavit provided to the Court by Eamon Kelly,

former Keeper of Antiquities at the museum. He identified nineteen key points in the affidavit the final one of which states:

"The national historical importance of the national monument and the said battlefield site, buildings and laneways is not principally by reason of its architectural fabric or sub-surface architectural potential but rather its significance as the surviving fragments of a battlefield landscape which is inextricably and inescapably linked to the cultural identity and origins of our republic."

A letter from Dr Pat Wallace, the then director of the National Museum, sent to the then Minister on 21st September 2011 which Justice Barrett described as making for "*informative reading*" was also important in the case. Here are some extracts:

"I honestly believe that the low single and two storey red brick buildings which make up the neighbourhood north of the GPO and east of Moore Street north as far as the laneway where the O'Rahilly fell together constitute a battlefield site of European importance which should be preserved in its entirety. ... My advice is based on 40 years' service in the National Museum of Ireland (23 as Director) including charge of the archaeological excavation of the Wood Quay site with its attendant court cases and delays. I have seen many developments which resulted in costly over runs and compromises. Minister Roche chose not to take my advice about the M3 through Tara; Minister Sile de Valera did similarly when the Book of Kells was sent to Australia. You have the same right, but please consider the fall out—both morally, cultural historical, political and economical. Our heritage and what is best for our national morale cannot surely be subjected to the impositions of another time and its disgraced government and remember please that once you allow the destruction of buildings and their neighbourhood ambience you cannot bring them back..."

Pat Wallace retired as Director in 2011 and his successor, Seamus Lynam, continued to argue the case for recognising Moore Street as a battlefield site. A letter by Lynam to the then Minister dated 25th April 2012 was also produced as evidence before the Court. The following is from that letter:

"It is clear from the Myles Report that nos. 14–17 Moore St are of great historical significance and that their fabric is relatively well preserved by contrast with many of the other surviving buildings. Furthermore they contain graphic visual evidence of the events of 1916 in the repaired holes in the party walls. However, the same can be said of No. 10 Moore St and it is also clear from the

Myles Report that the surviving original building fabric, streetscapes and street surfaces elsewhere within the area are both monumental in form, historic in character and national in importance. Myles remarks that what survives of the period is disappointingly small. However, original building fabric survives in key areas such as the junction of Moore Lane and Henry Place and at No. 10 Moore St and it may be argued that the destruction of so much of the original 1916 landscape makes that which survives all the more important."

In addition to the doggedness of the activists who brought the case, the legal victory of the *Save Moore Street* campaign is due to a principled stand made by senior managers at the National Museum and to the unusual open-mindedness of a

relatively unknown member of the judiciary. Forty years ago the decision to build the Wood Quay office blocks for the City Council on top of an important Viking site signalled that commerce was more important than culture in Dublin. Conceivably and hopefully, bearing in mind Pat Wallace's long commitment to the Wood Quay excavation, and without yet considering the national and international dimensions, the construction of a 1916 commemorative centre within a preserved battlefield site will signal a first fateful move in the direction of a new balance between the historical living culture of the city and the interests of international capital.

Dave Alvey

The Citizen And The Special Criminal Court

The Special Criminal Courts were set up in 1939 under the *Offences Against the State Act*. As the name suggests, the Act was mainly concerned with activity—paramilitary activity in particular—that might subvert Ireland's neutral status during WW2 or afterwards, in international relations. One might be forgiven at the time for thinking this a necessary step, as a state of emergency existed, the fledgling state of Ireland being surrounded by belligerent countries that would have liked to draw her into the conflict. In such circumstances such a reaction against behaviour that threatened the very existence and security of the State might seem reasonable. One of the provisions of the courts set up under this system was their non-jury status, by which means the legislators hoped to avoid the potential for intimidation of jury members and witnesses. This was a real possibility during periods of paramilitary activity.

Against that it must be said from the outset that if paramilitaries were presumed to be in a position to intimidate their fellow citizens, it is reasonable to argue that they could 'reach' public servants as well—state counsels, members of an Garda Síochána, even judges. Apart from their own personal safety, all of these have families and relations and it is difficult to see how the State can guarantee to protect these should it be unable to protect 'ordinary' citizens as well. During the

Troubles around 30 prison officers alone in Northern Ireland have met their deaths at the hands of paramilitaries, so clearly the ability, if not the will, existed for paramilitaries to do the same south of the border should they have wished to.

The Special Courts were much in use during the Troubles in seeking the convictions of actual or suspected paramilitary members. The courts have been heavily criticised by several groups—Amnesty International, the Irish Council for Civil Liberties and the UN Commission on Human Rights among them. Among the criticisms are that it accepts the testimony of senior Gardai as sufficient evidence of an individual's involvement with organised crime or paramilitary activity and that a person under Common Law going back to the Magna Carta of 1215 has the right to a trial by his peers (i.e the origins of juries). One of Ireland's worst miscarriages of justice occurred under the auspices of the Special Criminal courts—the wrongful conviction of Nicky Kelly. It is also argued that the kinds of crimes tried in the special courts could be tried in 'ordinary' criminal courts as has been the case in a number of high profile paramilitary and gang-related trials.

In recent years the remit of the Special Courts has been widened to include organised gang crime of a non-paramilitary type. It is argued that this is necessary because organised gangs are able to

interfere with witnesses and juries in a manner 'ordinary' criminals are not. This has led to further criticisms of the special court system—that, far from being an exceptional system set up to deal with exceptional circumstances (as was the case in 1939) it is instead becoming a normalised part of the Irish judicial system, in which case the term 'Special' ought really be dropped from its name at the least.

This also brings us full circle to the point made at the start of this article. A major problem with having special courts in relation to paramilitary or gang crime is that it implies the State is unable to protect witnesses and law-abiding citizens and that gangs have more power in this regard than the State. _

In turn this leads to the question of armed self defence. A social contract exists between the State and the citizens. ie. I agree not to arm myself with a gun or other weapon and carry it around in self defence (in fact in Ireland a private citizen is not permitted to buy a firearm for self defence, or carry any weapon for the same purpose in a public place). In turn, the State agrees to ensure that I will not have to defend myself with arms against attackers or violence and that if I am the perpetrators will be brought to justice with certainty and I compensated.

In fact this rarely happens. People continue in general not to carry weapons or use firearms to defend themselves, but the police and State are not holding up their end of the bargain because violent attacks occur all the time almost with impunity (or at least that's the perception), houses & farms broken into in aggravated burglaries and even now using a firearm for self defence in such cases is a very gray area.

If the State is unable to maintain its end of the contract, there is logically no reason for citizens to maintain theirs. This is the argument in the USA where people feel they should be in charge of their own self-defence and not rely on the police. True, there are negative consequences to this philosophy as well. The point is that having Special Courts is an admission that the citizen / State contract has broken down.

Nick Folley (C) 2016

Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

ANGLO IRISH BANK AND THE STATE

Anglo Irish Bank, along with Irish Nationwide, left the State (ultimately the tax payer) with a bill of up to 30 billion euro (about one sixth of national income). Someone must be to blame. The people must be given a morality tale in which the guilty are punished. On no account must the system itself be implicated.

The level of resources mobilised by the State in its investigations has led some commentators to describe the trials as "*mini tribunals*". There has been a vast array of documents and tape recordings available and yet, for all its digging, the State has not unearthed any charge that could explain the loss by the State of 30 billion. The State had to resort to highly technical infringements of the law in order to bring any case to trial, never mind securing a conviction.

THE ANGLO TRIAL PART 1

The first trial was for the crime of defending the share price of Anglo Irish Bank. Section 60 of the Companies' Act 1963 forbids a company making loans to individuals buying shares in that company. In over 50 years the provision had not been used.

In 2008 the Bank found that it was exposed to Sean Quinn. He, in effect, "owned" almost 30% of the shares of the bank in the form of *Contracts for Difference* (CFD). If Quinn was unable to close off his position, the shares would have reverted to the CFD providers, many of whom had links to Hedge Funds who had a vested interest in the collapse of the bank's shares. The bank was also exposed to billions of euros worth of loans from the Quinn Group.

Two of the employees of the bank, William McAteer (Financial Director) and Pat Whelan (Director of Lending) were found to have facilitated the off-loading of Quinn's shares by lending to a group of 10 high net worth individuals (the "Maple 10"). Arguably, this was a responsible action.

In the prevailing financial conditions in the World at the time a collapse in the share price could have caused a flight of deposits in the bank. If Anglo collapsed there was a risk that the contagion would spread to the other Irish banks.

Also, convincing evidence emerged that the Financial Regulator's Office gave tacit approval to the actions of McAteer and Whelan, but Judge Martin Nolan ruled that such evidence was inadmissible in determining guilt, but may be taken account of in sentencing. McAteer and Whelan were sentenced to 240 hours of community service. It was difficult to see how a custodial sentence could have been imposed.

THE ANGLO TRIAL PART 2

The second trial involved conspiracy to defraud the Revenue and falsify accounts. Tiarnan O'Mahony (Chief Operations Officer), Bernard Daly (Company Secretary) and Aoife Maguire were found guilty. O'Mahony was sentenced to 3 years and Daly 2 years. These sentences were quashed on the grounds that the State had changed its charges in the course of the trial. In the words of the Appeal Judge Justice Birmingham:

"It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the decision to reformulate the charges, and in effect to recharge, was as a result of the fact that the prosecution discovered that there was a complete defence to the charge that had been presented originally (*The Irish Times*, 15/3/16).

The Judge did not rule out the possibility of a retrial in the case of O'Mahony (but not Daly). However, it is worth noting that O'Mahony left Anglo-Irish Bank in December 2004 (over 4 years before the nationalisation of the bank).

Aoife Maguire, who was a relatively junior employee (Assistant Manager) had her original 18 month sentence reduced to 9 months (with 4 months suspended).

THE ANGLO TRIAL PART 3

It is hard not to come to the conclusion that the considerable labour of the State Prosecution service has barely produced a mouse. The most recent trial involved Willie McAteer again; John Bowe (head of Capital Markets); Denis Casey the Chief Executive of Irish Life and Permanent (ILP); and the Financial Director of ILP Peter Fitzpatrick. All except Fitzpatrick were found guilty of conspiracy to mislead investors.

In September 2008 there was a flight of deposits from Irish banks which was causing a liquidity crisis. We now know that the banks were insolvent, but it is interesting to note that the Senior Executives of the banks (most notably Anglo-Irish bank) behaved as if there was a liquidity problem, which could be solved if the balance sheet was "managed".

The “conspirators” decided that, in advance of Anglo’s financial year end on 30th of September, it would lend ILP 7.2 billion euro. ILP would in turn lend back the 7.2 billion to Anglo through ILP’s subsidiary Irish Life Assurance company. Since Irish Life was not strictly speaking a bank the loan could be accounted for as a “customer deposit” rather than an inter-bank transaction. This inflated the customer deposits in Anglo’s books from 44 to 51 billion giving the impression that there was no flight of deposits from Anglo.

One of the remarkable features of the trial was that it was the longest in Irish criminal history and yet the facts were not disputed. It is perfectly legal for banks to lend to other banks. It is also perfectly legal for Assurance companies to lend to banks. Indeed both types of transactions are common. It appears that actions which in themselves are perfectly legal may be illegal if the *intention* is to deceive.

Normally, when a crime is committed there is a victim, but in this case there was no clearly defined victim. Indeed, the State guarantee to deposit holders and bondholders made the actions of the “conspirators” superfluous since funds flowed into the Irish banking system from all over the world.

THE STATE CONSPIRACY

As with the first Anglo trial, there was overwhelming evidence of tacit approval from the State. On 1st October 2008, Ciaran McArdle, a dealer with Anglo-Irish Bank trading department contacted Claire Taylor—the person responsible for regulating the bank in the Financial Regulator’s Office (FRO)—and said that they were manipulating the balance sheet and had “boosted our customer funding number”, which was “not a real number”. Later in the month John Bowe explained to Mary Elizabeth Donoghue, another official in the FRO, that the transaction was “window dressing” (*The Irish Times*, 10/6/15).

Judge Martin Nolan said in a February ruling that the Chief Financial Regulator Patrick Neary and the Central Bank Governor John Hurley were “very hands on in relation to the green jersey agenda” (*The Irish Times*, 10/6/15).

The Judge considered the question of whether the State was guilty of entrapment by encouraging the defendants to commit a crime. He concluded that this defence was not open to the accused because entrapment can only occur if the State encourages the committing of a crime so that it can prosecute the perpetrator. But in this case the State had no intention of

prosecuting the defendants at the time; it was “only later following a look back exercise by other parties that the idea of prosecution arose”!

It might be wondered if the State, in the form of the Financial Regulator’s Office, did not consider that a crime had been committed, was it reasonable to expect the perpetrators to be aware of their “criminal” acts (without the benefit of a “look back exercise by other parties”)?

THE “GREEN JERSEY”

There is a legal maxim that justice must prevail even if the heavens fall. The Long Fellow doubts very much that the Judiciary

applies that maxim in practice. But, even if it does, is it realistic to expect the State to look on with equanimity as the economy is imploding. While it is predictable that Britain’s newspaper in Ireland should have contempt for what it characterises as the “Green Jersey” approach, no functioning State can stand idly by in such circumstances.

There are more cases due to come before the courts. And it may be that ex Anglo employees will be found guilty of far more serious offences. However, it is certain that the courts will find neither a remedy nor an explanation for the loss of 30 billion. That can only occur within the political sphere.

Report From Feile Duthalla, Kanturk, 23rd April 2016

The Forged Irish Bulletins

The highest compliment possible was paid to the *Irish Bulletin*, the daily newspaper of the Republic at war, by Dublin Castle when it decided to produce forged copies of the paper in an attempt to discredit it. It was an audacious project and is proof of how concerned the British Government had become about the effect of the *Bulletin* on political opinion in Westminster and internationally.

Though the whole effort proved to be a failure and was counterproductive, as its exposure discredited Dublin Castle and added to the reputation of the *Bulletin*, it did cause confusion initially. De Valera himself was deceived by the forged issue number 59, when copied by the Press, where it was claimed that the Dáil was interested in negotiating a settlement. No doubt others were also temporarily disorientated when it first appeared. Childers said that “the forgeries do however cause some confusion for foreign readers” (7.5.1921). Collins admitted to the much decorated Sir William Darling, the main organiser of the forgery (and grand uncle of ex-Chancellor, Alasdair Darling) that they did “a good deal of harm” (2-3 August 1921). But, as the *Bulletin* was not really read in Ireland, the forgeries could have had little effect on the course of the war ‘on the ground’.

When Dublin Castle captured the *Bulletin*’s entire equipment and paperwork on the night of 26th-27th March 1921, Holy Saturday/Easter Sunday morning, they set to work to produce what they assumed would be the next issue, number 56, and dated it Wednesday March 30th.

What they were not to know was that the super efficient publishers of the genuine *Bulletin* immediately began work on the next issue in a new location with improvised equipment on Sunday the 27th. No edition would be published on Monday, the 28th, as it was a Bank Holiday (Easter Monday) and a genuine number 56, dated Tuesday 29th March, was published with a report of the raid on its premises. So the publishing proceeded without a hitch despite the capture of all the equipment. When the *Irish Bulletin* people saw another number 56 appear the day after they immediately recognised that a forging of the *Bulletin* was in progress and others were also suspicious.

Close readers of the *Bulletin* became suspicious because of the content and style of the forged *Bulletin*. The first paragraph of the first forged issue, number 56, referred to “The thousands of murdered men, women and children, the millions of ruined homes, ... Ireland today is a desert”. Later on in the same issue it claimed that “There is less crime in Ireland than in any country in Europe except Bolshevik Russia.” These were absurd contradictory exaggerations and a not too subtle way to discredit the essence of the real *Bulletin*—its factual accuracy. It was noted that reporting what the Director of Propaganda/ Publicity, Desmond Fitzgerald, was doing was a little strange as he was in jail. It was also noted by readers in the UK that the bogus issues were posted in Dublin and arrived in good time. The genuine *Bulletin* was not posted in Dublin for obvious reasons and always arrived late.

Forging a newspaper was nothing new to those in the newspaper world. Sir Basil Thompson of British Intelligence had forged runs of *Pravda* and distributed it in Russia. Sir Basil worked closely with Dublin Castle and had his own spy network there and of course he had been ‘up to his oxters’ in the Casement forgeries in 1916. It is worth noting that making interpolations in Casement’s diaries was a very minor task compared to forging runs of newspapers. And his successors in M15 went on to facilitate the use of the forged ‘Zinoviev Letter’ that helped bring down the first Labour Government in 1924. At the time of the forged *Bulletins* another forgery was circulating, alleging that the Russian Trade Delegation in London was channelling money to the IRA. All in the great tradition of the Piggott forgeries in *The Times* that nearly ruined Parnell and in the even longer tradition going back to the concoction known as *Laudabiliter* whereby Henry II was granted the right to save us from ourselves as penance for the killing of Thomas á Becket. So the forging of the *Irish Bulletin* was in no way unique—though it was a unique failure.

It took the forgers quite a while to get over the initial misdating and to get their dating and numbering in sync with the genuine issues. This readjusting of the numbering may as a result have necessitated the creation of phantom issues that never actually existed. This makes it difficult to know for certain how many forged issues were actually produced.

If we are to believe the numbering of the forged issues that have survived, it would suggest that at least 20 issues were produced between 30 March and 22 April. But this is suspect. For example, if taken at face value it would mean that forged issues numbered 56-60 were published across 3 days, between the 30th March and 1st April—though the forgers misdated Friday 1st April as 31st March, producing two issues with the same date. This production rate is highly unlikely and the *Irish Bulletin* people appear to have had no knowledge of forged issues numbered 57 and 58 and, naturally enough, they followed these publications quite closely and commented on them.

And there might be other examples of ‘short circuiting’ in trying to get the numbering and dating to correspond with the genuine *Bulletin* which was necessary to maximise confusion. The evidence suggests this alignment was not achieved until forged issue number 69, which would indicate that it took the production of 14

issues before that was possible. But there is no evidence for any issue between numbers 62 and 69. The existence of any of the 6 in this intervening period is therefore suspect. It looks as if there were 12 issues published. If any more exist, we will, of course, be pleased to publish them.

In the middle of the muddle created by the forgeries the confusion was added to by the genuine *Bulletin* inadvertently publishing two issues numbered 64 and no issue numbered 66. No doubt this further complicated matters for the forgers in aligning their numbering and dating. The microfilm copy, which does not include the second number 64, gets over this by claiming that number 65 includes number 66. Also, it is stated in many reference sources that the genuine number 56 is not available because the microfilm says so. But it does exist and will be included in Vol. 4 which Aubane Historical Society is preparing for publication..

There are a number of other reasons why we cannot be certain about the actual numbers produced. The people who did the forging were not inclined to boast or leave any records of their handiwork as it proved an embarrassment and a failure—and failure, as we know, is always an orphan. The project would not have appeared on the CVs of the perpetrators. Also, the recipients had no reason to keep them when they realised they were forgeries and would have dumped them as a waste of their time.

Forging did not end with the forged *Bulletins*. A forged document purporting to be from demoralised Republicans was provoked by an interview with Collins by the American journalist Carl Ackerman, published in the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* on 22nd April 1921. Ackerman was acting as an intermediary with Lloyd George. Collins gave a bravado performance on how well the war was going, which was meant for Lloyd George’s ears as an opening gambit in possible negotiations. The forgery referred to Collins “enjoying the charms of his talented Eileen’s society in her luxurious Dublin Flat”, undoubtedly a reference to Eileen McGrane who had an apartment at 21 Dawson Street and Collins had the use of a small room in it. (See BMH, W.S. No. 1,572). For innuendo this would take some beating!

Her flat was known to Dublin Castle and was raided on New Year’s Eve 1921

and they got a cache of very sensitive intelligence material that Collins had accumulated, including some of Sir John French’s personal correspondence. McGrane was arrested, jailed, deported and treated badly. The find created havoc among Collins’s intelligence network nearly wrecking it. But French himself saw a bigger picture.

“The British were astounded to find several letters addressed to Lord French among this haul and dutifully forwarded them to the Lord Lieutenant almost a year after they had been posted. French took this delay in his mail with remarkable sangfroid. Mark Sturgis, who handed the letters to French, recorded in his diary (3 February 1921) that “His Excellency said he always saw a strong likeness between this war and South Africa; that all we now say of Michael Collins they then said of Smuts and look at him now!” (“*Michael Collins: a Life*” by James Mackay)

A forgery produced during June 1921 would indicate that one off forgery efforts may have continued for some time after the abandonment of the forged *Bulletins*. This one tries to foment dissatisfaction by proclaiming that Dáil Éireann would pay unemployment benefit from funds allegedly available from millions of dollars raised in America. It was a ridiculous suggestion that would only be credible to the gullible. And any Government proclamation on such an issue was unlikely to misspell the topic as ‘*enemployment*’ and get its possessive apostrophe wrong in spelling the ‘*Farmer’s Union*.’

Jack Lane

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Guilty Germans!

The Bundestag has passed the *'Remembering and Commemorating Genocide against Armenians and other Christian minorities in the period of 1915-1916' Resolution*.

The vote of the German Parliament is more an indication that there is something rotten in the modern state of Germany than there was in Ottoman Turkey.

Germany had no reason to pass such a resolution. It was under no pressure from any powerful Armenian lobby it wished to placate and it has a sizable Turkish minority of at least 3.5 million with long-standing contribution to the country.

Make no mistake about it this was a purely political statement against Turkey by the members of Parliament. It had nothing to do with scholarship, historical research or the discovery of new facts. The Germans were simply salving their Guilty consciences at Turkey's expense.

Germans don't seem to care for being the Guilty ones of the world, but they have only themselves to blame. And a thorough re-examination of their history and the events that led to the two World Wars is the only thing that could retrieve them from their Guilty disposition. And that is most unlikely at this late stage.

Germany is Guilty because it lost two world wars to England. Catastrophic defeat must have moral consequences for a nation's view of itself. To be beaten so thoroughly must mean that something went wrong somewhere and the logical conclusion to be drawn is that the enemy was right—Germany had gone wrong, twice! There was, of course, also the extermination camps.

The Total War waged on Germany that reduced it to a state of Guilt was a consequence of the British Liberal disposition that sought to salve its own guilty conscience for supporting a catastrophic war after being anti-war for a generation. In the War the German enemy could not be given the credit of having a legitimate, if conflicting, position to Britain, the victor. It had to be evil personified to justify the War, and be outside the range of humanity, for a moral war to be waged upon it by peace loving Liberal England. It needed to be annihilated—or

at least that is what ought to have been done to it.

Well, Evil was defeated in 1918 but the Germans hardly believed they were the guilty ones. The Weimar Republic indeed signed a War Guilt clause in the Treaty imposed upon it through a Royal Navy starvation blockade during 1919. It did so on behalf of the German people at the point of the Royal Navy's guns. But it was a false confession made under duress. And it was an outrageous lie that Germany bore responsibility for the War that few believed. But truth could not overcome might. And that was a lesson not lost on what was subsequently produced in Germany in response to it.

Power is a great moral persuader and the British victory gave it the control over what went for political morality.

In 1918 the British Empire defeated Germany's ally, the Ottoman Empire. But then Turkey suddenly and unexpectedly arose and defeated the British Empire and a conglomeration of Imperialists 4 years later. This was a rather shocking experience for the British Empire and it never quite recovered from the experience.

The moral consequences of this was that Britain was unable to impose its moral judgement on the Turks, who escaped Germany's fate through the Ataturk resurgence.

Britain had a *Blue Book* narrative ready to be imposed on the Turks, saying they had massacred the Armenians. It was prepared by Liberal moralists like James Bryce, who had been anti-Turk for a generation. However, the imposing of a morality on the enemy is very dependent on the appliance of military power and England failed to apply itself, encouraging catspaws instead to do its work for it. The Greek catspaws threw the existence of their Anatolian community into the pot on behalf of Lloyd George and lost, as the Armenian insurrection had.

And so Turkey not only resisted the imposition of a punitive Treaty it emerged with an enhanced national will.

Ataturk's defeat of the British Empire in 1922 meant that Turkey did not accept the 'Crime Against Humanity' prepared for it. And it has resisted it ever since as

any country with concern for its own integrity and well being should do. There have, of course, been some simple-minded individuals who have conceded to moral pressure within their spheres of life. But they were the small patsy minority!

It should be made clear that Germany was made Guilty by losing two World Wars to England, not for being Nazi. In fact, Churchill, who the British like to think was Hitler's nemesis (really Stalin) praised Germany in the 1930s for becoming National Socialist and said he hoped England would choose a man like Hitler if the bit came to the bit, as it had in Germany.

In his book *Great Contemporaries*, written in 1937, between Arthur Balfour and Lord Curzon, Churchill wrote his account of Adolf Hitler. He started his account on the German Fuhrer in the following way:

"It is not possible to form a just judgment of a public figure who has attained the enormous dimensions of Adolf Hitler until his life's work as a whole is before us. Although no subsequent political action can condone wrong deeds, history is replete with examples of men who have risen to power by employing stern, grim, and even frightful methods, but who, nevertheless, when their life is revealed as a whole, have been regarded as great figures whose lives have enriched the story of mankind. So may it be with Hitler" (p.261).

Churchill further speculated that he could not tell at that point,

"Whether Hitler will be the man who will once again let loose upon the world another war in which civilisation will irretrievably succumb, or whether he will go down in history as the man who restored honour and peace of mind to the great Germanic nation and brought it back serene, helpful and strong, to the forefront of the European family circle. It is on this mystery of the future that history will pronounce. It is enough to say that both possibilities are open at the present moment... We must never forget nor cease to hope for the bright alternative" (p.261).

This passage is included in the late 1938 edition of *Great Contemporaries*. It seems that it was a close run thing for Hitler and Nazi Germany whether they constituted, for Churchill, heroes or villains. Things were still in the balance whether Hitler was a great man and saviour of Europe with some rough edges or an enemy of England, and a monstrous evil. And it was not the Nazi Jewish policy that determined the issue. It was whether

Britain determined to make War or not on Germany that praised or damned Hitler.

I think that pretty much shows that Germany's future depended entirely on the attitude taken to Hitler's subsequent actions in England. On that depended Hitler's legacy to history. Which is another way of saying that Britain determines history.

The extermination of the Jews occurred because of the World War Britain declared on Germany and as a consequence of the extension of it eastwards, which was England's only chance of victory after it had bungled its war of 1939-40. The extermination occurred in the course of the War and was not a cause of the War declared on Hitler and Germany by Britain.

After the Second World War defeat, Germany was saved by a remarkable individual, Konrad Adenauer. He was an impeccable anti-Nazi and hostile to Britain due to Adenauer's view of Britain's erratic behaviour that plunged Europe into War for a Second time. The other thing that saved the Germans was the Cold War. However, the realistic grasp of affairs that West Germany had under Adenauer, within the political space the Cold War permitted, began to evaporate with the fall of the Iron Curtain. And Germany fell into Guilt. The logical culmination of this was Baader-Meinhoff, which took the Guilt seriously and waged a campaign of terror against the Guilty.

Also Fritz Fischer wrote an account of WWI according to the British narrative with every sincerity that he was telling the truth. It was, however, illustrative of demoralisation and disorientation and a bad state of health that Germany had sank into.

The Germans, defeated twice by the Power that declared War on them have accepted the verdict of history. And history is written by the victors. So German national development became understood in relation to the moral standard of its victor, Britain. And to purge itself of evil Germany accepted its Guilt and it became a righteous missionary of Guilt, with the zeal of one who was "saved"—rather like notorious serial killers who find God.

It is totally understandable that the Germans should concede to the charge of "Guilty" and the view that the only good German is a Guilty one. It is equally understandable that the Turks do not consent to such a label. And that is quite apart from the respective strengths of the cases put up against them.

What is ridiculous is the notion of Guilty Germans trying to make Guilty Turks. It is

a kind of attempt to drag people down to a their level. And it is a warning to Turks never to concede, lest they end up on the level of Germany.

Pat Walsh

The Armenian Insurrection And The Great War by *Pat Walsh, Garegin Pasdermajian* ("Armen Garo"). 218 pp. **€20, £18**

The Great War And The Forced Migration Of Armenians by *Prof. Dr. Kemal Çiçek*. 280pp. **€24, £20**

Forgotten Aspects Of **Ireland's Great War On Turkey**. 1914-24 by *Dr. Pat Walsh*. 540pp. **€36, £30**

Ireland In The Great War, The Irish Insurrection Of 1916 Set In Its Context Of The World War by *Charles James O'Donnell (1849-1934)*, introduced by *Brendan Clifford*. 116pp. **€10, £8**

The Great Fraud Of 1914-18 by *Pat Walsh*. 52pp (A4). **€12, £9**

Lord Hankey: How We Planned The Great War by *Pat Walsh*. **€6, £5**

That Man Called Pearse

Patrick Pearse's most recent biographer has recounted:

"On 12 November 1914, J.P. Mahaffy, the Vice-Provost of Trinity College Dublin, forbade the 'Dublin University Gaelic Society' from hosting Pearse on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of Thomas Davis. Feigning ignorance, Mahaffy castigated the invitation to 'a man called Pearse' ... owing to his anti-recruitment (for Britain's Imperialist War—MO'R) statements in the *Irish Volunteer* ... having described Pearse's stance as 'traitorous'... An *Irish Times* editorial on 16 November praised Mahaffy for doing the 'right thing', by which time the Gaelic Society had been abolished by the 'Board of Trinity College'... Des Ryan inverted Mahaffy's supercilious disdain when he published *A Man Called Pearse* in 1919." (Ruan O'Donnell, *Patrick Pearse*, O'Brien Press 16 Lives Series, 2016, pp 102-103).

Under the heading of "*Half The Man*", the April issue of *Dublin Review of Books* carried a rather bizarre review of O'Donnell's biography by one Thomas Fitzgerald, who opined:

"One would think that with the abundance of material on Pearse this new biography would highlight hitherto unexplored aspects or a new reading of his life but sadly Ruan O'Donnell brings very little new analysis to the table. He does not even engage with previous studies of his subject... Previous meticulously detailed biographies of Pearse by Ruth Dudley Edwards and Joost Augusteijn are only cited once... Perhaps David Fitzpatrick's biography of Harry Boland, in which the pre-1916 IRB features strongly, might have been of interest to O'Donnell."

One must wonder why Fitzgerald, described as "*an Irish Research Council research fellow at Trinity College Dublin*",

went out of his way to name drop the now-retired Professor Fitzpatrick, doyen of the revisionist output emanating from Trinity College's History Department. Now, I myself reviewed David Fitzpatrick's *Harry Boland's Irish Revolution* in considerable detail for *History Ireland* in Summer 2004. (See www.historyireland.com/20th-century-contemporary-history/harry-bolands-irish-revolution/ and also www.historyireland.com/20th-century-contemporary-history/harry-boland/ and www.historyireland.com/revolutionary-period-1912-23/harry-boland-2/ for my exchanges with Fitzpatrick himself.)

But, for the life of me, I could not remember that he had anything of consequence to say about Pearse. Sure enough, on rechecking his book, Fitzpatrick merely referred pejoratively to Boland "*submitting to an address from Patrick Pearse*" in the GPO (p 41), while in his comments on Boland's poem addressed to Pearse's ghost and penned in Lewes Prison a year later, Fitzpatrick pronounced: "*During the year of Harry's enforced absence, the very success of Pearse's strategy of blood sacrifice seemed to make further such insurrections superfluous*" (p 81). Hardly sufficient to gain Fitzgerald additional Brownie points for his review, even in Trinity.

I will, however, pay more attention to Fitzgerald's complaint that O'Donnell chose not to go down the road of what the reviewer seemed to feel was Ruth Dudley Edwards' most outstanding historical find:

"In relation to Pearse's personal life, O'Donnell writes that he was 'not known' to have any romantic relationships. This is his last word on the subject and ignores the homoerotic aspect of some of his poetry—'Little lad of the tricks' comes to mind. Augusteijn and Dudley Edwards took on this aspect of Pearse's life; why

should O'Donnell not?"

Despite my contempt for the political prejudices poured forth by Edwards in her *Sunday Independent* column, I have always regarded her 1977 biography, *Patrick Pearse: The Triumph of Failure*, as her finest book, in marked contrast with the mediocre quality of her 1974 biography, *James Connolly*. For me, I judge a work to be a fine biography, not on the basis of the political bias of the commentary and conclusions accompanying the narrative, with which I might thoroughly disagree, but on the quality of the research and the honesty of its presentation. In her latest book, however, published for the Rising centenary and entitled *The Seven: The Lives and Legacies of the Founding Fathers of the Irish Republic*, her loathing of Connolly, which Edwards now openly displays, results in character assassination, and underscores how much she would be incapable of writing a decent biography of him, notwithstanding the adulation heaped on her latest tome—as the dust jacket informs us—by the likes of Kevin Myers, Lord Bew, Richard English, Colm Toibin and Andrew Roberts.

Edwards relates that “on 11 May, 1916, the IPP (Irish Parliamentary Party) MP John Dillon made a famous emotional speech about the dead”. ((p 365). In her 1977 Pearse biography she had written of it as follows:

“Dillon, moved to bitterness by the twelve executions and by new details on the murder of Sheehy-Skeffington, made a powerful speech in defence of the rebels. ‘I admit they were wrong; I know they were wrong; but they fought a clean fight, and they fought with superb bravery and skill, and no act of savagery or act against the usual customs of war that I know of has been brought home to any leader or any organised body of insurgents... I declare most solemnly, and I am not ashamed to say it in the House of Commons, that I am proud of these men.’ And perceiving accurately that the electorate would come to make a choice between the constitutional Home Rulers and the revolutionaries, he called for an ‘absolute and final stop’ to the executions.” (p 324).

But he could not save either Mac Dermott or Connolly, described by Edwards as “arguably quite exceptional cases”, because General Maxwell remained “obdurate”, and Prime Minister Asquith refused to intervene to stop their execution on May 12th: “The circumstances of Connolly’s execution particularly outraged public sensibilities; he had

to be carried on a stretcher to the place of execution, and was shot sitting on a chair” (p 325).

But now, in 2016, Edwards indicates no dissent from Maxwell’s obduracy, and proceeds to write as follows:

“So because Maxwell was not prepared to tolerate the anomaly of letting off Connolly and Mac Diarmada, whom he thought ‘the worst of the lot’, to the toxic martyrdom narrative was added the story of the heartless shooting of a handsome young polio victim and a man who had to be carried on a stretcher to the place of execution... The desire to be posthumously famous was regarded as a perfectly good reason to be a revolutionary rather than as dangerous egocentricity and narcissism... The sanctified Seven were the role models and they were very clear in their intransigence, (as) in the statement Connolly had presented at his court-martial... In the 1918 general Election, Sinn Fein won 73 seats out of 105, though less than half the popular vote.... There was little clamour for more violence except from those who had developed a taste for it. Dan Breen was one of those who took the instructions of the dead generations seriously and in January 1919 started a war after a colloquy with a few friends... The main targets in this war were Protestants (being presumed to be unionists) and police. Sporadic murders led in 1920 to the arrival of badly-trained ex-servicemen—Black and Tans and Auxiliaries—and terror being met with counter-terror, violence and an escalation in brutality” (pp 336-8).

It is Edwards’ own 2016 book that constitutes a “toxic narrative”, completely at odds with the historical record. It was not the sporadic ambush here or there, but the refusal of Britain to accept the democratic mandate for independence, and its suppression of the elected Dáil Éireann, that resulted in the need to fight an actual, non-sectarian, War of Independence, as sanctioned by a Dáil that would be elected yet again in 1920. But are there any other reasons for me to view Edwards’ 1977 Pearse biography as an exception to her toxicity? In that biography, even though Edwards already decried the Rising, she held back from a full endorsement of the revisionism of Father Francis Shaw: “In a powerful if intemperate article in 1972, Father Shaw described the damage done by an uncritical acceptance of the policies of the tiny revolutionary cabal.” She elaborated on her reservations:

“In his anger, Father Shaw made the same mistake as the propagandists he was attacking. No doubt intending to

correct the balance, he painted Pearse in dark colours, contrasting starkly with the bright unsullied tints in which he had hitherto appeared: he too forgot the human being. Pearse can only be assessed accurately in the light of his own experiences and attitudes. Desmond Ryan, who loved him, and whose *A Man Called Pearse* (1919), fanned the flames of the man-without-fault legend, wrote in his maturity (in *Remembering Sion*, 1934) a fine evaluation of the man behind the name: ‘The testimony of his friends is unanimous: they all loved him even when his faults stood out before their eyes. Pearse towered over the Ireland of his time, a man who meant what he said and died and lived for it... A man so great that it goes against the grain to have to search for the flaws in him’... Ryan has described (in *The Rising: The Complete Story of Easter Week*, 1949) the rising as ‘the triumph of failure’...” (pp 341-3).

I read Edwards’ biography on its first publication in 1977 itself, and I came to love as well as admire a Pearse. No, not Patrick, but James Pearse, his English radical father, whom Patrick himself loved, and it was Edwards’ detailed portrayal of him that introduced me to such a warm-hearted, broad-minded personality. I had previously come to love as well as admire another father from that era. From my early childhood in the 1950s, before she moved from Dublin to San Francisco, I had known Ina Connolly Heron as a friend and comrade of my father’s, and in her conversations with us she always spoke of James Connolly as “Daddy”. When I stayed with Ina in San Francisco for a few days in August 1970, I learned more of Connolly as a father. The sometimes irresponsible Daddy, as when he punished his misbehaving son Roddy by plonking him fully clothed into a bathtub, only for his wife Lillie to remind him of their poverty: “What am I to do now, since I have no change of clothes for him?” The broken-hearted Daddy, as when he met his family off the liner on their arrival in New York, and asked where was Mona his eldest, and with Lillie too distraught to answer, it was left to Ina to step in “to tell Daddy she was dead”, as a result of her clothes catching fire in a domestic accident just before they sailed. (Ina’s BMH Witness Statement at www.bureauofmilitaryhistory.ie/reels/bmh/BMH.WS0919.pdf contains her own eyewitness account of that tragedy.) And the protective Daddy, as when Connolly arrived home one day to find a terrified Ina being chased round the table in an attempted sexual assault by Cathal O’Shannon, whom he barred from ever again darkening the Connolly home. Yes,

indeed, real flesh and blood Daddy.

But no matter how much I admire Patrick Pearse's own leadership of the 1916 Rising, and no matter how inspirational I find some of his poems—most notably *"The Fool"*, *"The Rebel"*, *"Fornocht do chonac thú"* ("Naked I saw thee") and *"The Wayfarer"*—I nonetheless could never warm to him as a personality in the same way as I did to his father. Yet, reading the sensitivity of her 1977 biography, it was difficult to avoid concluding that Edwards herself had somewhat fallen in love with Pearse, and the tender tones in which she would speak of *"Patrick"* in TV interviews reinforced that impression. A case of *"hating the sin, but loving the sinner"*. Pearse's great *"sin"* for Edwards was, of course, the Easter Rising itself, but her apparent love of Pearse also ensured a non-sensationalist investigation on her part of whether or not there was a further *"sin"* to be investigated.

In her 2016 book Edwards writes that *"unlike in 1977, when my biography caused much outrage by drawing attention to how Pearse's prose sang when he wrote of the physical beauty of boys, the issue of his sexuality is now freely discussed publicly"* (p 139). For the record, I should point out that in 1977 itself, in *Communist Comment*, the fortnightly publication of the Dublin Branch of the British & Irish Communist Organisation, I derided those who objected to Edwards' decision to consider Pearse's sexuality an appropriate subject for investigation. The key issue was the meaning of his poem, *"A Mhic Bhig na gCleas"* (*"Little Lad of the Tricks"*): *"Raise your comely head, Till I kiss your mouth"*. Edwards' 1977 conclusion was:

"Pearse was an innocent, but there can be little doubt about his unconscious inclinations... Thomas MacDonagh and Joseph Plunkett were appalled. They explained to him the ignoble construction which might be placed on the poem, and the harm it could do his school. (Oral recollection of Plunkett's sister Geraldine Plunkett Dillon, as told to Edwards herself.) Pearse was bewildered and hurt; his lifetime quest for purity, chastity, and perfection had blinded him to the instincts reflected in his poetry... It is inconceivable that a man of Pearse's conventional mores and high code of chivalry could have lived with conscious homosexual inclinations" (pp 127-8).

Like the rest of us, Edwards was a product of her times. In 1977 she erred in confusing paedophilia and homosexuality, and was unable to find the right terminology to describe that something

else again she believed Pearse to be. In her 2016 book, a more sophisticated Edwards observes that *"Pearse would not be the first or last brilliant schoolmaster whose ability to understand, inspire and relate to his pupils was rooted in both arrested emotional development and homoeroticism."* She applauds Elaine Sisson's 2004 study for *"helpfully unpacking the layers of confusion caused by ignorance"* and for the precision of her definitions, which she proceeds to quote:

"The homoerotic is a love and desire for the same sex that is primarily filtered through a visual or literary sensibility and is not usually understood to involve sexual acts. Homosexuality is a socio-sexual identity that may or may not be defined in terms of sexual activity with the same sex. Paedophilia is a much more closely defined activity expressed as a sexual interest in, and engagement with, children."

And Edwards adds that *"pederasty is a usually erotic homosexual relationship between an adult male and a pubescent or adolescent male"*, before providing her own most recent conclusions:

"In this, as in so much else, Pearse was complicated and it is certainly wholly anachronistic to try to claim him as gay in the sense in which this is now understood. There is no doubt about his homoerotic tendencies, but I believe they were sublimated..." (pp 139-140).

I find this discussion to be of some interest, but is Fitzgerald then correct in castigating O'Donnell for giving it a miss? It depends on what type of biography one is setting out to write. Edwards set out to write a psychological biography, with her own preoccupations, verging on the obsessive, being summed up in her 2016 declaration that *"this tormented man, who had exceptional gifts and deep flaws, could provide enough material to keep a symposium of psychiatrists arguing for a week"* (p 117). While her 1977 biography did mine Pearse's personal correspondence and diaries, as well as his writings for Irish publications, insightful analysis of his political pragmatism regarding Home Rule as a possible stepping stone to the Republic, had already been informed by the published works of Pearse's secretary and first biographer, Desmond Ryan.

O'Donnell, on the other hand, set out to write a political biography, and one based on original sources, not secondary ones. His highly disciplined 335 page work is so jam-packed with new biographical detail that he could not afford to waste paragraphs where a single sentence would suffice.

Such is the one complained of by Fitzgerald—that Pearse was not known to have had any romantic relationships—which, at the end of the day, or even weeks of psychological analysis, was the only conclusion Edwards herself could come to. A single sentence is also sufficient, instead of a mouthful of vocabulary, in referring to an actor no longer at play on the stage of the actual Rising that would take place: *"The IRB almost certainly knew that Connolly had taken measures in late 1915 to streamline the ICA following the ill-tempered departure of Sean O'Casey"* (p 134). A single sentence, qualified by no more than a sub-clause or even a single adjective, can also be sufficient to scatter-gun so many of the myths about a *"fanatical"* Pearse that have been nurtured by the revisionists.

"Rather than imposing full immersion in the Irish language and insisting that GAA be played to the exclusion of all 'garrison' games, youths (at Pearse's St Enda's School) were to receive lessons in different languages and to participate in sporting codes that reflected the hybrid culture of modern Ireland." (p 35).

"At St Enda's, **adult** (my emphasis—MO'R) members of what had morphed into a republican commune were engaged in 'feverish activity' preparing for revolt." (p 142).

"Captured Connaught Rangers offered to fight with the rebels (in the GPO) but when firmly rebuffed—as much for their own long-term safety as any other consideration—reluctantly agreed to run the field kitchen." (p 201).

These, and the many other more detailed descriptions throughout his narrative, are derived from O'Donnell's talents in forensically combing the Witness Statements of the Bureau of Military History. O'Donnell did not even rest content with the published works of a key witness such as Desmond Ryan, but mined further insights from Ryan's Witness Statement itself. As, for example, when Ryan recounted in the following manner:

"On one occasion Pearse appeared with John Redmond, Joseph Devlin and Professor Kettle on a platform in March 1912, in which he advocated the expediency of a measure of Home Rule as it would give a national centre, and control our education. He was very critical of (Arthur) Griffith, saying he was too bitter and too narrow-minded. And he fearlessly defended the Irish Party as they were in their best times—the time of Davitt, Sexton and Parnell. As a matter of fact, he'd never allow you to criticise the Irish Party at all. He was very friendly with John Dillon and had a great regard for him. Miss Pearse told me that some

one who knew Dillon never saw him in such a towering rage as the day Pearse was executed, and never so downhearted as the day Willie Pearse was executed.”

Edwards’ 2016 treatment of Pearse’s March 1912 Home Rule speech is derived from Ryan’s account in *Remembering Sion* (pp 111-112), who quoted him as follows:

“We are all agreed in this: it is our duty, willy-nilly, to achieve freedom for our race. Some of us would be content to remain under the lordship of the English king, others (and I am with them) have never bent their knees or bowed their head to the King of England, and never shall. But I feel I should betray my people if I had not answered this call today, since it is clear to me that this Home Rule Bill here recommended to us will make for the advantage of the Irish and strengthen them in their struggle. He who is of that mind would be a coward if he withheld his aid.”

Without pausing for breath, Edwards proceeds to pronounce a strange judgement in the very next paragraph:

“Afterwards, Devlin wrote to Pearse to thank him, regretting that he could not understand Irish but hoping for his support in the future. Had he understood Pearse’s peroration with its threat of violence if Ireland was betrayed, he might have been less sanguine.” (p 145).

‘Wee Joe’, Ireland’s non-violent Gandhi! She seemed to have forgotten that, only two chapters previously, she had written:

“The AOH (Ancient Order of Hibernians) was being turned into an instrument of Redmond’s Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) by a brilliant organiser, the charismatic MP ‘Wee Joe’ Devlin. A (Catholic) mirror image of the Protestant Orange Order ... its membership expanded from 10,000 in 1905 to 60,000 four years later, at a period when the IRB (Irish Republican Brotherhood) had around 1,000.” (p 70).

And when the Leitrim IPP MP resigned from both Party and Parliament in order to stand again as an IRB-sponsored Sinn Fein candidate in the February 1908 by-election, and when confronted and defeated by an alternative IPP candidate, “the IPP ... despised what it saw as the forces of ingratitude and irresponsibility” and responded accordingly:

“The deep antagonism between the two camps sometimes ended in fisticuffs, with IPP forces sometimes augmented by tough guys from Belfast sent by Wee Joe Devlin, the party’s ‘enforcer’.” (p 79),

Relying on Pearse’s own English-language version (in the April 5 issue of *An Barr Buadh*) of the speech whose “*threat of violence*” she now feels would have alarmed Devlin, Edwards’ account in her 1977 biography, by way of contrast, had previously provided both detail and context:

“Pearse was a man of great moral courage ... He stuck resolutely to his convictions in his paper, and on a public platform at the great Home Rule Rally in Dublin on 31 March 1912... Pearse’s was a speech unlikely to endear him to any political group in Ireland, but it ended on an uncompromising note: ‘Let us unite and we will wring a good measure from the Gall. I think a good measure can be gained if we have enough courage. But if we are tricked again, there is a band in Ireland, and I am one of them, who will advise the Irish people never again to consult with the Gall, but to answer them with violence and the edge of the sword. Let the English understand that if we are again betrayed there shall be red war throughout Ireland.’ He took up the same theme in a leader in *An Barr Buadh* (April 27)... ‘The person who would refuse the present Bill which is before the British Parliament because that Bill denies the complete supremacy of the Gael in his own territory, or because he did not think the freedom under such an act would be sufficient for us, would in our opinion postpone unnecessarily his own advantage and the advantage of his people. He would deserve the Frenchman’s praise ‘*c’est magnifique, mais ce n’est pas la guerre*’. (‘It’s magnificent, but it’s not the war.’)” (pp 159-160).

Hardly the words of a man in love with war and “*blood sacrifice*” for its own sake. True, in his November 1913 essay “*The Coming Revolution*”, Pearse had also pronounced: “*Bloodshed is a cleansing and a sanctifying thing, and the nation which regards it as the final horror has lost its manhood. There are many things more horrible than bloodshed; and slavery is one of them.*” But notwithstanding the fact that she herself accepted the thrust, if not the language, of British imperialist war propaganda about “*the German threat*” (which had been worked up by the novels of John Buchan and Erskine Childers), the 1977 Edwards had at least been prepared to provide some context for that essay:

“Pearse’s words must be seen in the context of their time. His rhetoric of blood was in keeping with much of contemporary political writing, in republican and socialist papers, whose tone had to compete with the growing hysteria of British army recruitment propaganda in the face of the German

threat... His was a common view. It would take the war in the trenches to teach his generation that war meant filth and squalid death, far removed from the poetry of Rupert Brooke, or the Cuchulainn epic” (p 179).

The pace of events was now developing at hectic speed. O’Donnell relates:

“The IRB judged that the response of Empire loyalists and Irish unionists to the passage of the Home Rule Bill in April 1912 had set the stage for the creation of a mass nationalist movement. When, in January 1913, powerful elements opposed to the devolution of limited power to an elected Dublin forum founded the ‘Ulster Volunteer Force’, the IRB appreciated that no credible moral or enforceable legal proviso could inhibit nationalist emulation.” (pp 61-62).

Yet Trinity’s Fitzgerald comments:

“O’Donnell uses some language that perhaps should be re-examined. For instance, supporters of home rule are described as ‘Empire Loyalists’. Considering the time and effort put in by men like John Dillon to achieve some form of Irish autonomy this seems vindictive and narrow-minded.”

Does this research fellow know even the most elementary details of the historical narrative of that period? O’Donnell was not referring to Home Rulers, but was using the term to describe the British military and Tory political Establishment that threw its weight behind the paramilitary UVF—in opposition to the **Home Rule sought by Dillon**—and ‘*Empire Loyalists*’ was, in fact, their own self-description.

Pearse would speak at the 7,000 strong inaugural meeting of the Irish Volunteers on 25th November 1913. Edwards quoted nothing from that speech, perhaps being unfamiliar with the USA files of John Devoy’s *Gaelic American* newspaper that had reported on it in its December 13th issue. But O’Donnell does quote it as follows:

“For all who loved Ireland there would be a place in the Irish Volunteers... They were all agreed that it was for Ireland herself to say how much freedom she wanted and not for the Empire to tell them how much she should get. Ireland armed would, at any rate, make a better bargain with the Empire than Ireland unarmed” (p 67).

A particularly valuable find by O’Donnell from his researches in USA archives was the hitherto unpublished memoir written by Sam O’Reilly, a participant in the 1916 Rising, along with

his father J.K. O'Reilly (author of the song "*Wrap The Green Flag Around Me, Boys*"), and his four brothers, including Donal, subsequently a Connolly Column volunteer in the Spanish Anti-Fascist War, whom I had the privilege of knowing personally. O'Donnell's meticulous researching of newspaper archives also far surpasses anything previously attempted by others. How on earth could Trinity's Fitzgerald square his pronouncement that "*sadly Ruan O'Donnell brings very little new analysis to the table*" with later grudgingly noting that O'Donnell "*brings a particular focus to bear on Pearse's trip to America in 1914*"? The primary source of that focus was none other than the fact that O'Donnell could quote accounts of Pearse's US tour from issue after issue of the *Gaelic American*. As, for example, the account in the issue of 14th March 1914, of Pearse's address to a Robert Emmet commemoration held in the Brooklyn Academy of Music:

"What one may call the Westminster phase is passing... I cannot speak for the Volunteers; I am not authorised to say when they will use their arms or where or how. I can speak only for myself, and it is strictly a personal perception... I say that before this generation had passed the Volunteers will draw the sword in Ireland" (p 78).

But before a week had passed, so also had the Westminster phase, with the British Army's Curragh Mutiny of 20th March 1914, and the failure of the British Government to face it down. And before five months had passed, Britain's Imperialist War on Germany would fast forward the need to draw the sword in Ireland two years later, long before the passing of a generation. O'Donnell's thoroughgoing research of the *Gaelic American* files provides us with evidence of the evolution of Pearse's position back in Ireland itself, as in the report in its issue of 18th July 1914, of a speech Pearse had given to Tralee Irish Volunteers on June 28th. Pearse proclaimed the Volunteers to be a body that might contain "*Parliamentarians, Sinn Feiners or Total Separatists*", and continued:

"He did not suggest that the Irish Volunteers were going to meet the British army in the field. It would not come to that, please God, but what they meant was that with the Volunteers behind them, they would be able to drive a better bargain with the British nation... Once they got arms they would stick to them and not haul down their colours at the bidding of anyone" (pp 91-92).

In the meantime, Pearse had to guard against the Volunteers being diverted by the agenda of the sectarian Hibernians. O'Donnell makes marvellous use of the BMH Witness Statements of Geraldine Plunkett Dillon and Seamus Ua Caomhanaigh in that regard. Having already recorded that "Joe Devlin, *bête noire* of republicans, virtually had a private army in the guise of the Ancient Order of Hibernians—Board of Erin" (p 58), O'Donnell writes of the role played by Devlin's henchman, Nugent. He introduces him as follows:

"The IPP nominees (on the Irish Volunteers Provisional Committee) contained a strong AOH-BOE group, not least Joe Devlin... J.D. Nugent from Keady, Co. Armagh, was Secretary of the AOH-BOE and wielded considerable influence on the IPP and particular wards of Dublin City Corporation. Joseph Plunkett told his sister Geraldine that 'at one of the meetings of the Provisional Committee Pearse slapped Nugent's face, because he suggested that Pearse had manoeuvred the accounts. Joe was delighted.'" (pp 90-91).

He further relates:

"Ua Caomhanaigh had 'the pleasure of telling off J.D. Nugent' on the day following (the July 26 landing of guns at) Howth: 'The Redmondites were anxious to get control of the guns to send them North where, they said, they would most be needed... I told him what he and his Hibernians wanted was to get the arms away from us so that they would never be used.'" (pp 95).

To be used, indeed, but not too soon. O'Donnell quotes from Ryan's BMH Witness Statement that Pearse had told him "*the only time you can rise is in a time similar to the Boer War when there were few troops in the country and the enemy was otherwise engaged*", while he quotes from Bob Brennan's Witness Statement that, early in 1914, even that later critic of the actual Rising, Bulmer Hobson, had announced that "*war between Germany and England was practically certain and that when it occurred we would certainly have a Rising*". (p 97). With the British declaration of imperialist war on Germany on 18th August 1914, the die was cast. As for the Rising that would actually take place in Easter Week 1916, O'Donnell quotes Sam O'Reilly's account of a conversation in the GPO that Thursday. Pearse said to him:

"O'Reilly, when the uprising started on Monday we hoped and prayed we could establish a Republic for twenty-four hours. And here we are, seventy-

three hours afterwards, and we have accomplished more than we hoped for on Easter Monday" (p 232).

O'Donnell's own assessment of the Rising reads:

"T.M. Healy (formerly one of the leaders of the IPP—MO'R) ... noted on 18 June 1916: 'This has been one of the most successful rebellions in the world, from the standpoint of its authors. It has revolutionised Irish feeling, and I suppose that was what Pearse aimed at.' In 1947, Bulmer Hobson erred in declaring that the Military Council had 'no plans ... which could be called military'... He viewed the Rising as 'locking a body of men up in two or three buildings to stay there until they were shot or burnt out'. It was MacNeill's associates who reduced 1916 to the overwhelmingly urban zones where it took place, contrary to plans laid by the Military Committee. This is significant as Hobson, more than anyone, promoted the falsehood that the Rising was underpinned by a cult of 'Blood Sacrifice', to which his skeletal pastiche image of Pearse seemingly lent credence." (p 278).

But O'Donnell also knows how to bring his Pearse biography to a conclusion:

"The political agenda for which Pearse gave his life and which warranted him a place in history was soon vindicated. When, in the course of 1917, the IRA regrouped organisationally, the republican message of Sinn Fein grew in appeal to the electorate. Obligated to extend the franchise to most men and women in December 1918, the explicit manifesto of an independent, sovereign, Irish Republic was massively endorsed by the first truly democratic elections in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. This mandated the War of Independence in January 1919 when the unrecognised First Dáil incorporated the text of the 1916 Proclamation into its Democratic Programme. Pearse and his comrades had indeed breathed new life into an ancient nation." (p 280).

During the 1916 Rising, Trinity College had been the central base of the British Army's artillery bombardment that demolished the centre of Dublin City. A century later, in 2016, a Trinity College research fellow has attempted to demolish O'Donnell's biography of Pearse. Fitzgerald's ill-informed artillery bombardment, however, falls far short of its target—in fact, it falls flat on its face. As Marx once put it, history repeats itself, the second time as farce.

Manus O'Riordan

A Lordly View

Is there a new book needed on Churchill and Ireland? That springs to mind after reading this. Churchill and Ireland is easy to understand. For him it was a wonderful place as long as it was within the British Empire. But any notions or attempts to become independent and it became a crazy and stupid place and deserving of everything he could manage to throw at it. There is therefore a perfect consistency in all his twists and turns of policy. What is really needed is a book on the views of Professor the Lord Bew on Ireland and how he comes to them and how he seems to have impressed so many Republicans.

Take the rather important matter of the War of Independence—why and how did it happen? He ends the chapter on WW1, 1916 etc with the claim that “*Meanwhile, Ireland was full of young men who, having passed up on their adventure of war abroad, were determined to have it at home*” (p.92). And the next chapter on the war in Ireland begins “*On 21 January 1919 Dan Breen and the IRA colleagues fired the opening shots of what is still called in Ireland the ‘war of independence’, killing two Catholic policemen at Soloheadbeg, County Tipperary*” (p.93). So Dan Breen and his colleagues decided—and were able—to start a war three years after the war—sorry adventure—they had missed out on! Dan must have been a true Superman. This is not history but I cannot think of an adequate word to describe it.

There is the little matter in between the two ‘adventures’ of the 1918 Election that is not mentioned and clearly does not matter to the Professor.

It should be noted that the Lord Bew is Chairman of Committee on Standards in Public Life at Westminster that “*advises the Prime Minister on ethical standards across the whole of public life in the UK. It monitors and reports on issues relating to the standards of conduct of all public office holders.*”

The Lord is probably a busy man in this post but did it ever cross his mind, as a historian, to give a thought to the behaviour of a British Government that ignores and

treats with contempt an overwhelming result in a British General Election? Now, there’s the basis of a book that should be written especially as no such book exists unlike books on Churchill which are almost a monthly occurrence. And the Lord with his historical and ethical hats must surely be the man to write such a unique book.

The Lord’s Republican students might note that writing about sectarian violence in 1922 he says that “*this conflict hit the Catholic minority hardest*” but “*Protestants in Cork were even more vulnerable than Catholics in Belfast*” (p.114). The ethical Lord should write another book to develop this theme and continue the work of the now unmentioned (unmentionable?) Professor Peter Hart.

The Lord goes on to explain that Churchill had a successful policy on Ireland of all-out war, reprisals, hanging etc. and treating the Republicans as “*a miserable gang of cowardly assassins like the human leopards of West Africa*” (p.99) (alleged cannibals) which, combined with the offer of a “*decent compromise*” (p.104), was winning the war and weakening Sinn Fein to enable a Truce in July 1921. But, if Churchill was so right in his approach and was winning the war, why a Truce and why any “*compromise*” with these “*human leopards*”?

Again there is the little matter of an Election that might explain things. The Lord Professor does seem oblivious to them. I suppose such blindness is an occupational hazard for a Lord. There had been a series of local elections during the war that confirmed popular support for the war and this culminated in another General Election in May 1921 with a 100% success for Sinn Fein in the 26 Counties in all contestable seats. This showed unwavering support for the war, despite all Churchill’s efforts at terror and intimidation and it is hardly a coincidence that Lloyd George agreed to a Truce less than two months later with preconditions like decommissioning abandoned. He knew there was more to winning a war than military matters. Such continuing support at home and public opinion abroad, especially in the US were factors that took precedence and had to be catered for.

Hearts and minds were being lost and had to be won back.

The war simply entered another phase after the Truce, as it entered another phase again with the launch of the so-called ‘*civil war*’ on Churchill’s insistence. And the war entered yet another phase again when de Valera came back to power in 1932. This was a defeat for Churchill and the ultimate defeat was the success of neutrality during WWII followed by the Free State formally leaving the Commonwealth in 1948.

The Lord reports on de Valera’s meeting with Churchill in 1953 and that de Valera “*pleased his host by saying he would not have left the Commonwealth in 1948.*” (P.172). De Valera had a sense of humour that the Lord does not seem to appreciate. The great secret of the Commonwealth that can never be acknowledged is that de Valera laid the philosophical basis for it with his proposal for External Association in 1921 and he must have relished the lack of foresight on Churchill’s part at not appreciating this at the time with the consequence of ‘losing’ Ireland completely.

In response to the ignoring of his proposal de Valera played a game with the Commonwealth by not leaving but never attending a meeting and he could never be thrown out as he agreed with the principle. The Commonwealth was put in a quandary it could not resolve. Others did, such as India by becoming a Republic which is what de Valera intended for Ireland. And that is why he is a hero in India—a member of the Commonwealth.

Compared with de Valera, Churchill was a political bull in a China shop. At the end of the day de Valera had gained a Republic and Churchill had lost an Empire and each played the leading part in both achievements.

That was the substance behind the slogan of “*Up Dev!*”

Jack Lane

PS The book is dedicated to “*Patrick Maume who has revolutionised the art of Irish biography.*” From my interest in one of his biographies in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* that is very true. He wrote a biography of D.D. Sheehan MP and based the most important decision Sheehan ever made, to quit Irish politics in 1918, on a complete fiction, i.e., that he was driven out of Cork by persons unknown. It is in the tradition of how Peter Hart ‘*revolutionised*’ history-writing by interviewing the dead.

Newly published book

The Road to Independence: Howth, Sutton and Baldoyle Play Their Part
A microcosm of Irish history 1900-1924

by Philip O'Connor

War Of Independence In Howth

This book tells the dramatic story of the Independence movement in Howth, Sutton and Baldoyle, from the pre-World War Irish Party, Land League, GAA and Gaelic League, to local involvement in the "Great War" that revolutionised Ireland, in the Easter Rising, the Citizen Army, Cumann na mBan and the Irish Volunteers (IRA), and in the great democratic movement for Independence from 1918 to 1922. It also tells the story of the Howth Unionist community, which was as varied in its composition as it was in its reactions to these events, as well as the dramatic impact on the area of the Civil War that followed the 1921 Treaty.

Eugene McEldowney says of this book:

"Philip O'Connor's new book to celebrate the 1916 centenary, *Road to Independence: Howth, Sutton and Baldoyle* is a remarkable achievement. The author has unearthed a veritable treasure-trove of information, much of it new, and has skilfully aligned it with the wider national narrative to produce a highly readable history that is impossible to leave down.

This is a story of ordinary men and women: fishermen, farm-labourers, small business people and their families, all welded together by their common love of their Irish culture and language and a determination to gain independence for their country. It is also the story of the remarkable women of Cumann na mBan, the early Gaelic League enthusiasts and the stalwarts of the GAA.

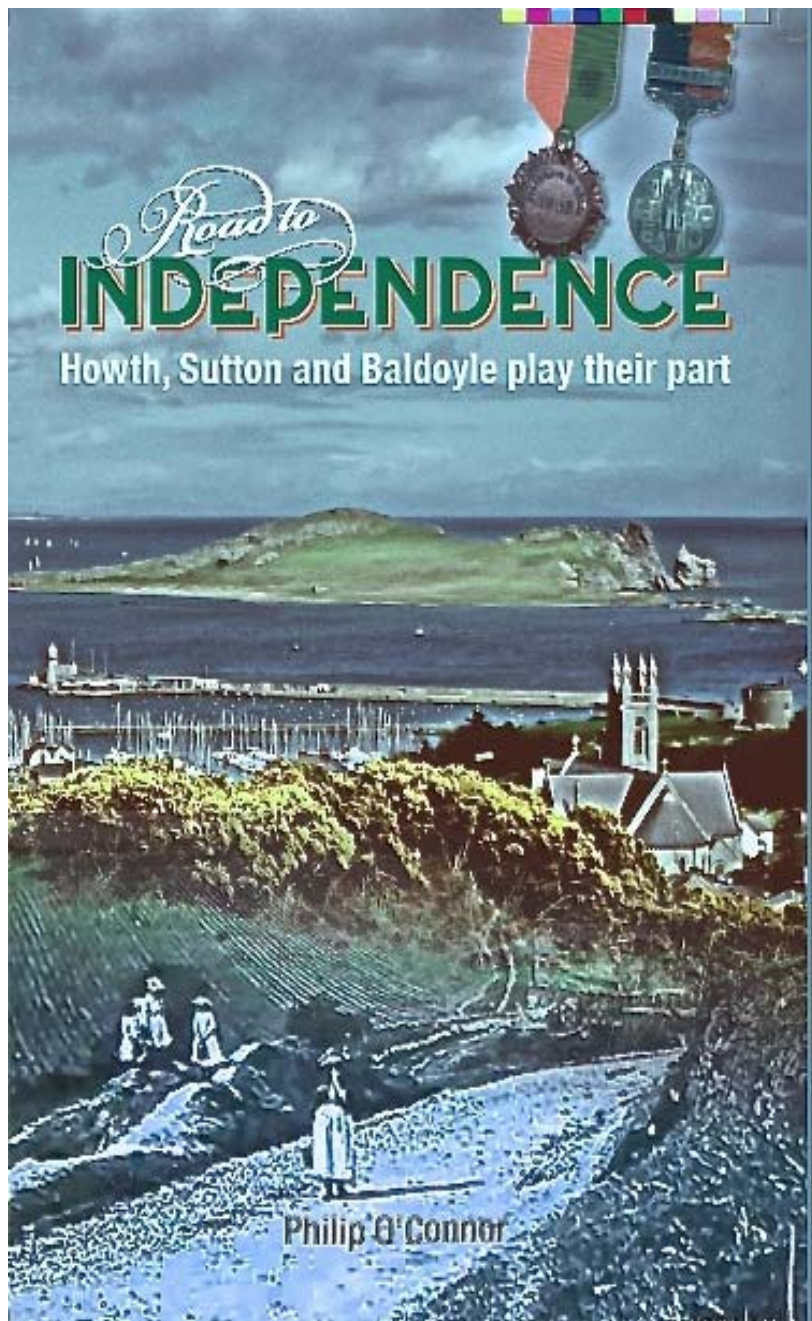
The book is studded with the names of families that still resonate around the Howth-Baldoyle area: the Rickards and McLoughlins, the Bennetts, Bowens and Doyles, the Reids, Harfords and McKennas, the Moores and the Rorkes.

It also contains the names of gentry like the Gaisford St Lawrence family, the Bellinghams and Jamesons and the prosperous Unionist families who opposed independence but later came to accept it in 1923.

This is no dry academic treatise but a vibrant narrative that often reads like an adventure story. Nor is it confined to those who are interested only in local history. It will resonate with everyone who is interested in the birth of Irish nationhood. And it will hold particular appeal to those who have any connection with the Howth, Sutton and Baldoyle areas.

The book contains numerous photographs from private collections, most of them never published before. It also has several appendices and footnotes for anyone who may seek further information about this proud story. Philip O'Connor is to be congratulated on the production on this ground-breaking book."

(PTO)



The Road to Independence: Howth,
Sutton and Baldoyle Play Their Part
A microcosm of Irish history 1900-
1924

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PLAQUE

A plaque has been erected in Howth to commemorate local men who fought in 1916. Philip O'Connor gave the following short address:

On Easter Monday 1916, four men of the Irish Volunteers from Howth-Sutton-Baldoyle set out to participate in the Rising.

Two were involved in the city, BP Bowen and Fergus O'Kelly. O'Kelly, a National University science student, played a key role in establishing the wireless transmission station on Abbey Street which broadcast the declaration of the Republic to the world and other communiques written by Connolly. After having to retreat under sniper and artillery fire from this position, he fought with the GPO garrison until the surrender.

Both Bowen, a science teacher, and O'Kelly were imprisoned and deported.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR · LETTERS TO THE EDITOR · LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In defence of Casement

I beg to differ with the conclusion of Tim O'Sullivan's otherwise informative article, 'Hugh Lane Gallery Marks Casement Centenary', carried in the June 2016 IPR. A concluding paragraph states:

"Our Kind reflects a point of view which challenges the self-satisfied centenary commemorative ethos. This viewpoint holds the passionate ethnic nationalism which Casement's speech was based upon, to be out of date and positively dangerous. It has elements of the old German nationalism of blood and soil. The world has moved on. Ireland, such as it is, is part of a wider political, economic and cultural world. States are blending together. An obsession with Irish history threatens to lead to ethnic tribalism and possibly ethnic violence. The nationalism of Casement's day is passé. Now our political leaders look to the abolition of the Irish state and its absorption within a wider European political entity. In challenging Casement's famed speech from the dock Phelan provokes us to reflect. The exhibitions High Treason and Our Kind will continue at the Hugh Lane Gallery, Parnell Square until October 2nd."

If this paragraph is an expression of Tim O'Sullivan's opinion of the centenary rather than a summary of the viewpoint on which Alan Phelan's exhibition is based, it gives a green light to the misconceived campaign of a section of the Irish State machine to disconnect Irish society from its own history. At a time when Casement's reputation is under renewed attack it throws up a white flag and endorses something very like the British supremacist credo against which Casement rebelled.

Dave Alvey

Two men, Tom Maxwell, a gardening worker, and Paddy Grant, a mechanic, set out with Dick Mulcahy, who was living in digs at Bayview House in Sutton, but as they could not get to the city they carried out the destruction of British communications at Howth Junction and then proceeded to join Thomas Ashe's force in Fingal and fought with distinction throughout the week at Garristown and Ashbourne, were captured at the surrender, imprisoned and deported.

Uniquely outside of Dublin City, a Citizen Army group had been formed in Baldoyle in 1914 following the lockout in which the local ITGWU under Mick Nolan had played a leading role in organising the agricultural labourers of the area. In Easter Week, four men of the Baldoyle ICA—Mick Nolan himself, as well as James McCormack, Joseph McDonagh and James Gough—fought through the week in the city.

All were farm or general labourers, three of them married men with children, living in the workers' cottages around Baldoyle. Nolan was with the Stephen's Green garrison under Malin, McCormack and McDonagh in the GPO garrison, and Gough in the small contingent which occupied Davy's Pub at Portobello and held the Royal Irish Rifles at bay at the bridge while the ICA positions at Stephen's Green were being fortified.

McCormack was killed by a sniper's bullet to the head in Moore Lane on Wednesday. McDonagh, often on patrol building barricades around Abbey Street, was wounded in the GPO. Gough's group pulled back and fought with Malin and Markievicz in the College of Surgeons. All survivors were arrested at the end of the week, imprisoned and deported.

When these internees returned, all played important roles in the revival of the Volunteers, Sinn Fein, the Transport Union and the Citizen Army in the area, and fought through the 1917-23 period.

This Plaque is a tribute to their memory. When it mattered, they were prepared to put their lives on the line for Irish Independence.

Philip O'Connor

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Irish Foreign Affairs

The editorial focuses on the United States.

Feargus O Raghallaigh continues the theme:

“In the end the twentieth century proved to be the ‘American Century’, unquestionably and unquestioned. By the end of the nineteenth century the US had given rise to a new stage of capitalism – based on large, multi-branch, monopolistic companies combining entrepreneurial leadership with an embryonic modern management and drawing on the public capital markets. It had also become an imperial superpower. Neither feature – the economic dynamo and the political superpower – was quite appreciated at home or abroad. Key to the hegemonic rise was the defeat, economic, financial and political, by mid-century of the British Empire.”

This theme is further developed in Domenico Losurdo, translated here for IFA: The international origins of Nazism are fundamentally American.

Also, James Connolly; Frank Ryan; and Pat Walsh on Lord Esher.

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WARMING EARTH
FREEZING HEARTS

There is a world out there
ill at ease
its colourful coat ripped
and with crunchy blackened
bees
half-standing are the trees
without leaves
the wheat fields scorched
birds hop without wings
in the landscape of the
torched
not a sound from the
wrecked houses

the sky is empty
even the stars have been
doused
as if from a cordite deity
the warming-earth warriors
give it a wide berth
while raving about the pollution
of the earth
no black diesel tank
fumes
do they sniff
nor acknowledge

that exploding bomb plume
the soil grows mines
rather than potatoes
yet they remain incognito
measuring the planet
in Imperial
while war becomes just
another
TV serial.

Wilson John Haire
20 May 2016

Unpublished Letter to Irish Times

Casement and A.M. Sullivan

In an otherwise informative discussion on a number of Roger Casement themed exhibitions currently on view in Dublin ("The blank canvas of Roger Casement's life", June 9th) Aidan Doyle loses the plot by taking seriously the odd assertions of over a half a century ago from Casement's defence council, A.M. Sullivan.

Sullivan was born in Bantry, in 1871, into a family distinguished in the law and journalism. He held little sympathy for the radical position of the 1916 rebels. He became Casement's trial barrister because nobody in the profession in Britain would take on the case and his brother-in-law, George Gavan Duffy, who was Casement's main solicitor, had requested that he do so.

Doyle wrote: "he came to grief when he mentioned to a journalist that Casement had confirmed to him his homosexuality... Battered by a storm of outrage in religiously conservative 1950s Ireland, Sullivan retreated."

In response to a request from the Bureau of Military History regarding the Casement trial Sullivan responded on May 23rd 1949. This is publicly available as BMH Witness Statement WS 0253. Here, referring to the 1916 Rising, Sullivan claimed: "The matter had been planned on the assurances of the Germans that it would be supported at whatever risk, by the landing of a large German force in Ireland." Students of the Rising know this not to have been the case.

He went on to claim, regarding the controversial homosexual diary entries: "He (Casement) was very nervous about it, and, in spite of my efforts to avoid the subject, he introduced the observation that the matters recorded in the Diary were inseparable from the manifestation of distinguished genius." Such extravagant egotism, accompanied by such melodramatic expression, was wholly uncharacteristic of Casement.

The Irish Times archives reveal a letter from British journalist René MacColl printed 25th April 1956 which quotes a letter from Sullivan to MacColl dated Jan 12th 1954. In this letter Casement is portrayed as instructing Sullivan to describe homosexual activity to the Jury as "inseparable from genius" and, regarding Casement's demeanour during this encounter that "He was not a bit ashamed." Note the contrast to the quotation from the 1949 letter above where Casement is described as "very nervous about it".

No conclusions regarding Casement can be safely based upon Sullivan's bizarre and contradictory statements.

Tim O'Sullivan

Editorial Note: A.M. Sullivan, who was "*handsomely paid*" for acting in the case, and who only agreed to do so on that condition, was promoted by the British Government in subsequent years. Active in recruiting for the War, he offered a minimal technical defence in the Casement case. During the War of Independence he conducted prosecutions on behalf of the British Government and the outcome of that War baulked him of the Judgeship he might have expected. Sullivan moved to England and practised law there.

In our view any serious examination of the Forgeries issue must begin with the suspicious disappearance of documents circulated privately by the British Government to influential people to prevent appeals for clemency, documents which were comprehensively withdrawn by the State and have never been seen since.

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

WATER CHARGES

"Why do we have to pay for water?" is the catch-cry now in Ireland, as if potable water has been free up to now. People who are otherwise quite sensible have the idea that treated water and sewage disposal were somehow free! Instead of which, like everything else provided by public authorities, water was paid for by the taxpayer. And since everybody who spends has to pay Value Added Tax (VAT)—which is one of the highest taxes—that means everybody pays tax in proportion to their spending of money.

By introducing Water Charges, the State is attempting to get us to pay twice. Several lies and many deceptions are involved in this proposal.

For example, what comes out of the taps is not simply water as in H₂O. No indeed! As a result of negligence and lack of maintenance, the reservoirs and the piping have deteriorated greatly and also the chemical pollution of our rivers and lakes saturated by human and animal waste with their toxic brew of anti-biotic and life-threatening chemicals and then there is agricultural run-off of poisonous pesticides and chemical residues. The mind boggles and most people don't want to think of it and they turn to Soccer etc on the TV.

What comes out of the taps looks like water and that is what the people wanted and that is what the State gives them. Even if to do so involves a range of treatments such as settlement ponds, and the addition of a number of poisonous chemicals, such as chlorine and fluorine, is needed to get the "water" to run clear. That has been the way for generations of people but now there is a new twist. The State has attempted to rid itself of its obligations by transferring the entire water supply process to private enterprise. Water supply is now to become a capitalist business. Secret deals were done, and were not properly done as is usually the case in these circumstances. If the deals had been done openly and in full public view and with an advance explanation of what the deals were and why the change was necessary, the people would probably have willingly accepted the proposals. But it is not in the nature of politicians to be open. They prefer to leave the people in the dark.

"Irish Water" is now owned by a Private Limited Company. The deal has been done. Effectively the Ministers of Government have given away control of it. In addition, the State has committed the taxpayers to fund huge payments to the privatised Irish Water to compensate it for rectifying the run-down condition of the water-works and the pumping stations and the piping. Irish Water, the privatised company, has to have an income. That has been agreed. The income is to come from water meters installed in each home in Ireland, the installation of which will take years. And in the meantime an average charge is being levied on each household. The Government will not come right out and say that all this is cut and dried and agreed. Instead the Government is pretending to have control over the Water Charges—which means that to maintain the mirage the Government has to secretly pay over the taxpayer's money to balance Irish Water's budget. The taxpayer is thus stuck with the water charges one way or the other.

Another Big Lie being told by the Government is that the European Commission has stated that Ireland cannot abolish direct water charges because to do so would be in breach of the Water Framework Directive. This is untrue—the European Commission has never said this! The Water Framework Directive was adopted in October 2000 and was brought into Irish Law in 2003 at a time when the provision of water was covered by general taxation. It was the Irish Government itself, and not the EU which decided to hand over the provision of water to the privately-owned "Irish Water". Surely the Ministers of Government can see that the electorate are tired of the lies and vacillations. The electorate are angry and tried to show their anger at the recent General Election but the politicians have circumvented the electorate by agreeing to tolerate a nominally Fine Gael Government in return for a range of secret deals about appointments to the judiciary, to the Seanad and to various Committees. The political agenda now is not being pursued for the good government of the State but to keep drawing their salaries and their expenses for as long as the voters can tolerate the awful situation.

BIN CHARGES

The collection and disposal of domestic waste was the function of Local Authorities for well over 100 years. It was done efficiently but it did not contribute much to Ireland's GDP and so it was commodified by transferring it to Private Companies which are licensed to charge for their

services. The householders are compelled to pay i.e. the taxpayers are again the people who suffer. Quite a lot of money is now being made by the licensed waste disposal companies. How did they get their contracts? Are they tax-compliant? Probably, but mostly not in Ireland. The majority of the big waste disposal companies are resident abroad and outside the EU in tax havens. How does it come about that non-EU companies can get licences and contracts in Ireland?

The result of the bin-charges is an increase in fly-tipping on country lanes and also an increase in mean people dumping their rubbish into other people's bins. Elderly compliant bin-holders are frequent victims of the latter practice. The whole bin affair is a mess and feelings are running high and it is capable of bringing down the already wobbly Government unless the matter is dealt with effectively.

ABORTION

Incredible as it seems the Government is being urged by the media to allow unborn children to be killed by the deletion of Article 40.3.3 of the Constitution.

This article 40.3.3 was approved by referendum on 7th October 1983 and it states:

"The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and as far as practicable by its laws to defend and vindicate that right."

Women who are mothers have the same right to life of any other women or men and what Article 40.3.3 does is to state the right to life of a baby in the womb of its mother. That right has already been compromised by the (Orwellian named) '*Protection of Life in Pregnancy Act*', which allows for a baby to be killed if the mother has the idea of suicide.

Now the concept of "fatal foetal abnormality" has been invented by pro-abortionists in the USA. There is no such thing medically as "*fatal foetal abnormality*". The medical profession does not recognise such a condition, a baby may be still-born or it may be born alive. A baby born alive may have abnormalities or defects but even so no one is allowed to murder such a baby, so why should any living baby in the womb be killed?

Article 40.3.3 provides for the State to enact laws to specifically make it a crime to advocate the killing of an unborn baby in the same way as persons proposing the killing of any other person.

Michael Stack©

British Labour Wars

1. Rules for the election of Labour Party leader

It has been alleged by Jeremy Corbyn's Blairites opponents, who wish to challenge his leadership, that he has not sufficient parliamentary support to contest this election as the rules indicate that where there is a challenge to a sitting leader, a greater number of MPs must sponsor each candidate. David Morrison examines this proposition below.

The rules for electing a Labour Party leader are set out the Labour Party Rule Book. The latest version I can find is *Rule Book 2015*, which I know was changed at the 2015 Party Conference last autumn.

In Chapter 4 of it (entitled Elections of national officers of the Party and national committees), Section 2 says:

"2. Election of leader and deputy leader
B. Nomination

i. In the case of a vacancy for leader or deputy leader, each nomination must be supported by 15 per cent of the Commons members of the PLP. Nominations not attaining this threshold shall be null and void.

ii. Where there is no vacancy, nominations may be sought by potential challengers each year prior to the annual session of Party conference. In this case any nomination must be supported by 20 per cent of the Commons members of the PLP. Nominations not attaining this threshold shall be null and void."

This leaves no doubt that an incumbent can be challenged, but in that case the threshold for nomination is higher (20% of members of the PLP, rather than 15%).

Note, however, according to John Rentoul, the Labour Party rules were changed at the Labour Party conference last autumn to give Labour MEPs a role in the election of leader and deputy leader. This was not instigated by Jeremy Corbyn—it seems to have been in the works before he was elected.

Rentoul wrote (*The strange story of Labour's leadership election rule changes*, *Independent*, 18 November 2015):

"...the leadership election rules were amended to include Members of the European Parliament in the nominating pool. The rules under which Corbyn's election took place required candidates to be nominated by 15 per cent of Labour MPs, which is 35. The change has the effect of raising the threshold to 38 MPs and MEPs (there are 232 Labour MPs and 20 MEPs). And the threshold for a

challenge to a sitting leader (20 per cent) has been raised from 47 MPs to 51 MPs and MEPs."

So in future to be nominated:

* where there is a vacancy, candidates need the support of 38 Labour MPs or MEPs, but

* to challenge an incumbent, candidates need the support of 51 Labour MPs or MEPs

Note that a process of challenging Corbyn for the leadership cannot start until the party conference in the autumn. Then, there would have to be a campaign lasting a couple of months, so a new leader may not be in place until early next year. I presume a motivation behind this latest push against Corbyn is a desire to have a successor in place in time to face the new Conservative leader in the autumn. For that to happen, Corbyn would have to follow Cameron and resign—soon.

*

Question: does an incumbent have to be nominated by MPs/MEPs? This is a very important question given Jeremy Corbyn's difficulty last year in reaching the then threshold of 35 MPs and having to rely on nominations from MPs who went on to vote for other candidates. It is by no means certain that he would be able to reach the threshold of 38 MPs or MEPs now if he had to.

However, the Labour Party has legal advice that an incumbent doesn't need to be nominated by MPs/MEPs (See *Huffington Post* article *Jeremy Corbyn Automatically On Ballot In Leadership Challenge, Legal Advice Shows*). The Party's own legal advice says rules only "reasonably" apply to challengers, not incumbent.

However, according to the *Huffington Post* article, Corbyn's opponents in the LP have contrary legal advice, so if they challenge for the leadership, the courts may be called upon to decide whether the rules require him to be nominated.

My conclusion is that Corbyn is safe unless the rules are interpreted (probably by the courts) as requiring him to be nominated and he can't manage the required number of MPs or MEPs. I'm not in a position to judge whether he could muster sufficient support for that, if necessary. Maybe he could: I've been surprised at the apparent ease whereby he has been able to find replacements for his shadow cabinet.

I assume that, if he is a candidate, no challenger would be capable of beating him under the current leadership election system.

27 June 2016

2. Jeremy Corbyn: Supporting our elected leader

Extract from John McDonnell talk of 29th June 2016 at a *Stand Up for Labour* event in the George IV pub in Chiswick, West London

When Jeremy got elected last year he got elected on 59.5% of the vote—the highest mandate that any political leader of this country has ever received from their own membership. It was overwhelming in individual members, the affiliated group and also the new supporters. In every category he won.

When we got back to Parliament he tried, in his own quiet way (I've known Jeremy 35/40 years and he's one of the most caring, compassionate people I've met), to work with people, put them together. He created a Shadow Cabinet of left, right and centre, he tried to hold it together. And when he did that he tried to work with the Parliamentary Labour Party all the way through. But there's been a group within the PLP who consistently refused to accept his democratic mandate and consistently undermined him in every way they possibly could. To be frank, I don't know how he's borne it. I'm just so proud of him, to be honest, for what he's done.

We knew at that time, that for some time they were plotting to see if they could have a coup at some stage. We knew that. We knew all the way along. The thing about it is they're not particularly good at it. We had people in meetings where they were discussing who would be the candidate they would run etc. And so we got intelligence on a regular basis.

False arguments about electability

And their first attempt was the Oldham by-election. What they tried to say was "It's not political this, it's not his policies we disagree with, it's the fact that he can't win elections". So the Oldham by-election was the first test. If he had lost the Oldham by-election that might have been the opportunity for some form of coup or to start the first stages. We went to Oldham. Jim McMahan was a fantastic candidate but what we got was the best of both worlds: a good local candidate and the Corbyn supporters enthusiasm. And we has a massive victory in Oldham. So they backed off.

So the next one was going to be the local government elections. That was the excuse for the next plot. We got to the local government elections and they said again "You can't win an election with Corbyn" etc. We won every mayoral

continued on page

CORBYN continued

election we contested, every one. We won the seats in terms of local government, councils we were expected to lose, we won every one.

We reached in our first six months the highest level of support that Ed Miliband got all through his term of office. Now that was not something that we thought was wonderful but it was better than anyone thought possible. And in every Parliamentary by-election that's taken place, we've increased our majorities on every occasion.

When Jeremy took over as leader in September we were fourteen points behind in the opinion polls. We are now ahead of the Tories in the opinion polls this week even post-Brexit. And here's the irony, it's just extraordinary, on Monday the Parliamentary Labour Party meeting was one of the most disgraceful meetings I've ever attended. It was like a lynching without the rope. It was appalling. MP after MP got up calling on Jeremy to resign: "*We can't win elections under you*". And here's the irony, the first item on the agenda was to welcome the new Labour MP for Tooting who had doubled Labour's majority.

I don't accept that this is about Jeremy not being able to win elections. I know how tough it's going to be to defeat the Tories but also we know that we've been building a solid base of support. Why? Because we've changed the political direction of this party within nine months. When we went into the last election we were austerity-lite. We had voted for tuition fees, we had voted for wars in Iraq, and all the rest of it. We transformed ourselves. We're now an anti-austerity party, we're now in favour of scrapping tuition fees, we're in favour of building council houses again, we favour trade union rights and also, in the week before Chilcott is published, under Jeremy Corbyn we are now a party that will never again go on a military adventure that cost 500,000 lives as happened in Iraq under Blair. Never again.

That's why they're coming for Jeremy. This isn't about electability. This is about policy and politics. They told us that it was about the European referendum, because he hadn't done enough.

The referendum campaign

So let me just explain what happened on that because I'm gutted that we lost it. I'm sad that we lost it. But what happened way back in September was that Jeremy

and I met with Angela Eagle and Hilary Benn and they said they wanted to run the European campaign and we said "fine". But at that point in time we said that we need to agree the politics of this. We said that we can't just go out there as simple Europhiles because, to be frank, there was a need for reform in Europe. And at that point in time they were trying to argue that we should unanimously support Cameron's deal in Europe. We refused.

So we said "get on with the campaign and call us in when you need us, we will do all that we can to support". Jeremy toured round this country—the stamina of the man is unbelievable. Thousands of miles, meeting after meeting. Both of us spoke in virtually every major city in the country. But we campaigned on the basis of 'remain but reform'. And that is where most of the British population are. They agree that there needs to be reform. It was no use going out there just arguing that the European Union was perfect. It was remain and reform. We also said, to be frank, as soon as you start appearing on platforms with Tories Farage and Boris Johnson ironically will call you "the establishment". And that's exactly what happened in Scotland and that is exactly what happened in Northern cities in particular across this country. So we believed that the tactics of the campaign were wrong. Nevertheless we worked really hard. But when the result came out they wanted a scapegoat, they wanted to blame Jeremy. They wanted to use this as the excuse for the coup.

The plot unfolds

And what happened I'll briefly tell you. On Saturday night last Jeremy was contacted by a sympathetic journalist. He had been briefed that Hilary Benn was going round the Shadow Cabinet urging people to urge Jeremy to stand down or threaten resignation. When Jeremy contacted him and asked if it was true. Would he be happy for a statement to be put out saying it was an error or that Hilary withdraw from his actions. He refused. What else could he do but ask him to stand down? There was no other option.

What we then discovered, because they just leak like I don't know what, was that there was a plan that what would happen is group after group of individuals, front benchers, would resign, in batches. Because it was to destabilise. It was on the basis that one group resigned, fine we could accommodate that, settle down for a few hours and then another group would resign. It went on like that.

So what Jeremy had to do was to put

together another Shadow Cabinet and that's what we've done. And we've brought in, yes, lots of the new young people into the Shadow Cabinet. I tell you, listening to some of their speeches this week has been thrilling and they are the heroes and heroines of this movement.

(Contributed by Tom Docherty)

3. Corbyn On Referendum Result

After yesterday's European referendum, politicians of all parties must listen to and respect the vote. Millions of voters have rejected a political establishment that has left them behind. Communities that have been hardest hit by government cuts and economic failure have voted against the status quo.

The first task is to come together and heal the divisions. Our country is divided and things need to change. Politicians on all sides must respect the decision of the British people.

Ours is the only party that can meet the challenge we now face. Labour is best placed to re-unite the country. We can do so because we didn't engage in project fear, and because we share people's dissatisfaction with the status quo. That was why we put a case for both remain and reform.

I will be making clear to both Remain and Leave voters that Labour will fight for the exit negotiations to be accountable to an open, transparent parliamentary process. And we'll do everything to secure the best deal for the people of Britain at every stage.

We cannot leave it to the Conservative Party—who have shown time and time again that they can't be trusted to stand up for working people.

The Prime Minister has resigned and the Tories are deeply divided at a time when the country needs to come together and we need stability to head off economic crisis.

I want to thank all our campaigners, from Alan Johnson—who chaired Labour's campaign—to our whole Shadow Cabinet, and to members in constituencies across the whole country, for their tireless campaigning and commitment to social justice.

Labour was created to serve people in their communities and workplaces. We need to put that historic purpose into action now and campaign to protect and represent the people we serve.

(Contributed by Peter Brooke)

LENIN continued

without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie *with all its prejudices*, without a movement of the politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression by the landowners, the church, and the monarchy, against national oppression, etc.—to imagine all this is to *repudiate social revolution*. So one army lines up in one place and says, "We are for socialism", and another, somewhere else and says, "We are for imperialism", and that will be a social revolution! Only those who hold such a ridiculously pedantic view could vilify the Irish rebellion by calling it a "putsch".

Whoever expects a "pure" social revolution will *never* live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is.

The Russian Revolution of 1905 was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It consisted of a series of battles in which *all* the discontented classes, groups and elements of the population participated. Among these there were masses imbued with the crudest *prejudices*, with the vaguest and most fantastic aims of struggle; there were small groups which accepted Japanese money, there were speculators and adventurers, etc. But *objectively*, the mass movement was breaking the back of Zimmerwald and paving the way for democracy; for this reason the class-conscious workers led it.

The socialist revolution in Europe *cannot* be anything other than an outburst of mass struggle on the part of all and sundry oppressed and discontented elements. Inevitably, sections of the petty bourgeoisie and of the backward workers will participate in it—without such participation, *mass struggle is impossible*, without it no revolution is possible—and just as inevitably will they bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors. But *objectively* they will attack *capital*, and the class-conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of a variegated and discordant, motley and outwardly fragmented, mass struggle, will be able to unite and direct it, capture power, seize the banks, expropriate the trusts which all hate (though for different reasons!), and introduce other dictatorial measures which in their totality will amount to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of socialism, which, however, will by no

means immediately "purge" itself of petty-bourgeois slag.

Social-Democracy, we read in the Polish theses (I, 4), "must utilise the struggle of the young colonial bourgeoisie against European imperialism *in order to sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe*". (Authors' italics.)

Is it not clear that it is least of all permissible to contrast Europe to the colonies in *this* respect? The struggle of the oppressed nations *in Europe*, a struggle capable of going all the way to insurrection and street fighting, capable of breaking down the iron discipline of the army and martial law, will "sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe" to an infinitely greater degree than a much more developed rebellion in a remote colony. A blow delivered against the power of the British imperialist bourgeoisie by a rebellion in Ireland is a hundred times more significant politically than a blow of equal force delivered in Asia or in Africa.

The French chauvinist press recently reported the publication in Belgium of the 80th issue of an illegal journal, *Free Belgium*. Of course, the chauvinist press of France very often lies, but this piece of news seems to be true. Whereas chauvinist and Kautskyist*** German Social-Democracy has failed to establish a free press for itself during the two years of war, and has meekly borne the yoke of military censorship (only the Left Radical elements, to their credit be it said, have published pamphlets and manifestos, in spite of the censorship)—an oppressed civilised nation has reacted to a military oppression unparalleled in ferocity by establishing an organ of revolutionary protest! The dialectics of history are such that small nations, powerless as an *independent* factor in the struggle against imperialism, play a *part* as one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, which help the *real* anti-imperialist force, the socialist proletariat, to make its appearance on the scene.

The general staffs in the current war are doing their utmost to utilise any national and revolutionary movement in the enemy camp: the Germans utilise the Irish rebellion, the French—the Czech movement, etc. They are acting quite correctly from their own point of view. A serious war would not be treated seriously if advantage were not taken of the enemy's slightest weakness and if every opportunity that presented itself were not seized upon, the more, so since it is impossible to know beforehand at what moment, who, and with what force some powder magazine

will "explode". We would be very poor revolutionaries if, in the proletariat's great war of Liberation for socialism, we did not know how to utilise *every* popular movement against *every single* disaster *imperialism* brings in order to intensify and extend the crisis. If we were, on the one hand, to repeat in a thousand keys the declaration that we are "opposed" to all national oppression and, on the other, to describe the heroic revolt of the most mobile and enlightened section of certain classes in an oppressed nation against its oppressors as a "putsch", we should be sinking to the same level of stupidity as the Kautskyites.

It is the misfortune of the Irish that they rose prematurely, before the European revolt of the proletariat had *had time* to mature. Capitalism is not so harmoniously built that the various sources of rebellion can immediately merge of their own accord, without reverses and defeats. On the other hand, the very fact that revolts do break out at different times, in different places, and are of different kinds, guarantees wide scope and depth to the general movement; but it is only in premature, individual, sporadic and therefore unsuccessful, revolutionary movements that the masses gain experience, acquire knowledge, gather strength, and get to know their real leaders, the socialist proletarians, and in this way prepare for the general onslaught, just as certain strikes, demonstrations, local and national, mutinies in the army, outbreaks among the peasantry, etc., prepared the way for the general onslaught in 1905.

1 This is Chapter 10 of V.I. Lenin's *The Discussion of Self-Determination Summed Up*.

2 Lenin's *The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination*, written early 1916.

(3) Karl Johann Kautsky (16.10. 1854 – 17.10.1938) was a Czech-Austrian philosopher, journalist, and Marxist theoretician. Kautsky was recognised as among the most authoritative promulgators of Orthodox Marxism after the death of Friedrich Engels in 1895 until the outbreak of World War I in 1914 and was called by some the "Pope of Marxism". Following the War, Kautsky was an outspoken critic of the Bolshevik Revolution and its excesses, engaging in polemics with V.I. Lenin on the nature of the Soviet state.

Written in July, 1916, Vol. 22, pp. 338-42

Published in October 1916 in *Shornik Sotsial*, No.

1. Published according to the *Vorwords* text.

SOURCES: Lenin Collected Works, Moscow, Volume 22, pages 320-360. "Marxists Internet Archive". *Lenin On Ireland* pamphlet: New Books Publications, Dublin (1970)



LABOUR

Comment

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Lenin on the 1916 Rising

The Irish Rebellion of 1916*

Our theses** were written before the outbreak of this rebellion, a rebellion which must serve as material for testing theoretical views.

The views of the opponents of self-determination lead to the conclusion that the vitality of small nations oppressed by imperialism has already been sapped, that they cannot play any role against imperialism, that support of their purely national aspirations will lead to nothing, etc. The imperialist war of 1914-16 has provided *facts* which refute such conclusions.

The war proved to be an epoch of crisis for the West-European nations, and for *imperialism* as a whole. Every crisis discards the conventionalities, tears away the outer wrappings, *sweeps* away the obsolete and reveals the underlying springs and forces. What has it revealed from the standpoint of the movement of oppressed nations! In the colonies there have been a number of *attempts* at rebellion, which the oppressor nations, naturally did all they could to hide by means of a military censorship. Nevertheless, it is known that in Singapore the British brutally suppressed a mutiny among their Indian troops; that there were attempts at rebellion in French Annam {Vietnam} (see *Nashe Slovo*) and in the German Cameroons (see the Junius pamphlet); that in Europe, on the one hand, there was a rebellion in Ireland, which the "freedom-loving" British, who did not dare to extend conscription to Ireland, suppressed by executions, and, on the other, the Austrian Government passed the death sentence on the deputies of the Czech Diet "for treason", and shot whole Czech regiments for the same "crime".

This list is, of course, far from complete. Nevertheless, it proves that, *owing* to the crisis of imperialism, the flames of national revolt have flared up *both* in the colonies and in Europe, and that national sympathies

and antipathies have manifested themselves in spite of the Draconian threats and measures of repression. All this before the crisis of imperialism hit its peak; the power of the imperialist bourgeoisie was yet to be undermined (this may be brought about by a war of "attrition" but has not yet happened) and the proletarian movements in the imperialist countries were still very feeble. What will happen when the war has caused complete exhaustion, or when, in one state at least, the power of the bourgeoisie has been shaken under the blows of proletarian struggle, as that of Tsarism in 1905?

On May 9, 1916, there appeared in *Berner Berner*, the organ of the Berner group, including some of the Leftists, an article on the Irish rebellion entitled "Their Song Is Over" and signed with the initials K.R. It described the Irish rebellion as being nothing more nor less than a "putsch", for, as the author argued, "the Irish question was an agrarian one", the peasants had been pacified by reforms, and the nationalist movement remained only a "purely urban, petty-bourgeois

movement, which, notwithstanding the sensation it caused, had not much social backing".

It is not surprising that this monstrously doctrinaire and pedantic assessment coincided with that of a Russian national-liberal, the Cadet, Mr. A. Tagwacht (*Tagwacht* No. 102, April 15, 1916), who also dubbed the rebellion "the Dublin putsch".

It is to be hoped that, in accordance with the adage, "it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good", many comrades, who were not aware of the morass they were sinking into by repudiating "self-determination" and by treating the national movements of small nations with disdain, will have their eyes opened by the "accidental" coincidence of opinion held by a Social-Democrat and a representative of the imperialist bourgeoisie!!

The term "putsch", in its scientific sense, may be employed only when the attempt at insurrection has revealed nothing but a circle of conspirators or stupid maniacs, and has aroused no sympathy among the masses. The centuries-old Irish national movement, having passed through various stages and combinations of class interest, manifested itself, in particular, in a mass Irish National Congress in America (*Zimmerwald*, March 20, 1916) which called for Irish independence; it also manifested itself in street fighting conducted by a section of the urban petty bourgeoisie *and a section of the workers* after a long period of mass agitation, demonstrations, suppression of newspapers, etc. Whoever calls such a rebellion a "putsch" is either a hardened reactionary, or a doctrinaire hopelessly incapable of envisaging a social revolution as a living phenomenon.

To imagine that social revolution is *conceivable* without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe,

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