

IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

June 2016**Vol.31, No.6 ISSN 0790-7672****and Northern Star incorporating Workers' Weekly Vol.30 No.6 ISSN 954-5891****Northern Ireland:****Where Are The 'Moderates' ?**

Is it possible or desirable to have change in the way Northern Ireland is governed?

That question would certainly not be raised, if it were not for the continuing Sinn Fein electoral success in general—and, more specifically, its success in recent Irish elections. Until the rise of Sinn Fein, the Irish Establishment was content with the settlement brought about by the Good Friday Agreement. That Agreement was designed to produce communalised government—with the 'moderate' parties on either side of the divide in command.

However, after 1985 the sad truth emerged that there are no 'moderate' parties on the Unionist side.

A rational approach might suggest that the Union with Britain is safe, so long as a majority continues to vote for it—and that, whatever demographics, there are few signs of any widespread or pressing desire to break that link amongst Catholics. That approach would suggest that every effort should be made to soothe Catholic sensibilities—with such things as an Irish Language Act to the fore.

However, even though, cerebrally, Unionism might understand such facts, in practice ingrained attitudes of community hostility prevail. There are to be minimal cultural rights for Catholics—with the Traditional Unionist Voice (which gained something like a 1% increase in its vote, compared to equivalent losses amongst its two Unionist rivals) there to keep things straight.

The obdurate Unionist approach to the GFA, pioneered by UUP leader David Trimble, brought about the ousting of the 'moderate' SDLP as the lead Catholic party, and boosted Sinn Fein in its upward trajectory.

Can there be a 'moderate' Catholic party? In this context, a moderate party is one which accepts the cultural self-expression of the other community.

It is probably fair to say that there is a greater general readiness of Catholics in Northern Ireland to tolerate Protestant self-expression in its various forms—though there are a few territorial exceptions.

*continued on page 2***Sneering for Britain !**

Fergal Keane, BBC Special Correspondent, Order of the British Empire, makes a living sneering for Britain. Anyone who has watched his *Story of Ireland* video will know what I mean. Every few sentences of his narration contains a sneer against the Irish and their history. It would be condemned as racism if read by an Englishman. Which is probably why Keane was employed for it.

Keane is, of course, a famous war reporter for the BBC, going about the

world and discovering its awfulness and the awful people who live in it. He looks for evil and finds it wherever he goes and sneers at it. And he sneers with an Irish accent to show this is not an English sneering at the trouble the British Empire left behind in the world. He is a well-spoken Irishman with the eloquent turn of phrase that only the Irish possess with the English language.

I remember reading in a book by John Redmond's nephew (Redmond-Howard)

*to page 7***Brexit****Whither Europe?**

No British Party supports the European Union. No Party wants it to succeed in what it set out to do. All Parties are in agreement about the exemption from major European developments conceded by the EU to a succession of British Governments under the implicit threat that Britain would leave if they were not conceded—the Euro currency system, the common travel area, the commitment to ever closer union, and the privileged position accorded to Sterling by the condition that the Euro cannot be consolidated by measures that might be disadvantageous to Sterling.

The European project was launched without Britain's participation. Britain still saw itself as a great Imperial Power at the time, with its own mission of world dominance still not diminished beyond recall. It patronisingly approved of what the European Six were attempting, expecting that not much would come of it. But the combination of the Six worked. France, Germany and Italy showed that they could act together as a core for a

*continued on page 5***SOMME THINK**
WHILE OTHERS FLANDERS

Think of the dead and be thankful
your native country isn't also
dead
and think first before you call me a
ghoul
but can the dead wed
though they are now in bed
can they conceive a child called
Peace
or is this merely a lease
on territory you claim
while others are on the
wane.

Wilson John Haire. 30 May 2016

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It is understandable that Catholics should be more tolerant in this respect than Protestants. The long term is in their favour, which is to say that a united Ireland—territorially, if not nationally—is on the cards. It is the long-term which the Protestants are fighting off.

Be that as it may, the long-term grind of the communities against each other put the most vigorous parties on either side into dominance, the Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Fein, relegating the Ulster Unionist Party and the Social Democratic and Labour Party to second place.

That shift has brought about a change in the way the Irish Establishment views the North. It was not particularly concerned about how structures functioned, so long as Sinn Fein stayed on its side of the fence. But, with the increasing popularity of Sinn Fein South of the Border, there has been a noticeable change in attitudes. It seems that power-sharing on the eminently fair d'Hondt system produced the 'wrong' result—therefore d'Hondt must go.

The d'Hondt system gives each party Ministerial representation according to its electoral popularity. That gave the DUP and SF the preponderance. Micheal Martin of Fianna Fail has described that outcome as

producing a "*dictatorship*", and called for a new political arrangement. There can be little doubt that, in making this demand, he is not motivated by concern for Northern Catholics who endured decades of Unionist misrule in pre-Power Sharing days. It is rather that the Fianna Fail leader is casting about for a way of ousting Sinn Fein from power: an that he realises that there is no way of achieving this end under the GFA dispensation.

David Trimble's Ulster Unionist Party, under its spunky new leader Mike Nesbitt, has also been casting around for a means of regaining its position as lead Unionist Party.

Similarly, the SDLP, under a succession of leaders since Seamus Mallon, has been trying to get back the top position amongst Catholics.

The upshot of these power plays is that the two major parties which negotiated the GFA, the Ulster Unionist Party and the Social Democratic and Labour Party, are now disengaged from its governing structure, and have gone into opposition—a situation not allowed for in the GFA but which SF was forced to give its consent to in the 'Fresh Start' Agreement of 2015.

It should be said that this Opposition is unlike the Opposition in democratic states. Rather than accepting the system and

offering itself as an alternative Government, it is an opposition to the prevailing system of government. It is an "*anti-system Opposition*" (to use a phrase coined by Professor Brian Girvin to describe Sinn Fein before Sinn Fein became the system!). Rather than the Ulster Unionist Party and the SDLP offering themselves as an alternative ruling coalition, they are taking issue with the very concept of proportional community representation in Cabinet. They stand for 'majority rule'—albeit a weighted majority with Cabinet Government. Such a system would restore power to the majority community, as Cabinet responsibility would end the present freedom of action enjoyed by each political party in the Ministerial positions it holds.

For Mike Nesbitt's UUP, going into Opposition is a step on the road back to Majority Rule. He can garner votes from Unionists who hate to see Sinn Fein in Government. Things are more complex as far as Colm Eastwood's SDLP is concerned. The Party still supports "*Petitions Of Concern*", but it yearns for a deal with a 'moderate' Unionist Party, one which would enable it to trump Sinn Fein.

John Hume, while he was leader of the SDLP, firmly kept his eye on a united Ireland—which meant keeping his devolutionary wing under strict control. It has to be said that Hume himself started out as a 'devolutionist', meaning that he thought a fair accommodation could be reached in the medium term between Catholics and Protestants within Northern Ireland under general British suzerainty. However, a few years of political experience caused him to drop that belief and look to developing the 'Irish dimension', gradually developing Northern Ireland towards linking with the South.

After Hume's retirement, there was a succession of devolutionist leaders, beginning with Seamus Mallon. This was during the long infancy of the GFA institutions, at a time when its survival seemed doubtful. Nothing would have pleased these leaders more than a working arrangement with 'moderate' Unionism in a devolved administration. A voting alliance between the SDLP and the UUP was the heart's desire of these leaders. But, though the SDLP came courting, it was repeatedly spurned.

The UUP chose to go into Official Opposition after the May Assembly Election. This means it is given £60,000 a year and the Chair of the Stormont Public Accounts Committee.

Nothing would have pleased the SDLP

more than to be allowed to join the UUP in this departure from the spirit of the GFA. However, Nesbitt's objective in going into Opposition is not to make friends in the Catholic community. Rather, he is expressing the anger of the majority at being deprived of its old majority-rule model of devolution government—and its wish to bring down the GFA system of power-sharing as of right.

Colm Eastwood's SDLP, in continuing electoral decline, has decided to join the UUP in opposition—even though it will not be the *Opposition* in the Westminster sense.

Of course, it will be easy to be an Opposition for the next few years. All that there has been in recent years—and that can be expected for the foreseeable future—from the Westminster Government is Cuts, Cuts, and more Cuts. That makes life difficult for the Stormont sub-Government whose *raison d'être* is to spend the Block Grant it is given by Westminster—and in crucial areas to spend it in the way Westminster dictates.

It might be added that the Alliances Party—which has been described as a small 'u' Unionist Party—is as incapable of 'moderation' as are its big brothers. This is even though it designates itself as 'Other' in the Assembly—that is to say, not being in either the 'Unionist' or 'Nationalist' camp.

It has been the role of Alliance to supply the Minister for Justice in the devolved administration since the position was established a few years ago.

However after the Assembly Election, Alliance announced it would decline the Justice Ministry and thus any role in the Executive (which is a sort of approximation of a Cabinet in normal Government).

It announced that its price for continuing to accept the Justice portfolio would include that demand that provision for Petitions Of Concern be discontinued, and that Integrated Education become the norm. (It is already heavily favoured financially; however, 'Shared Education' has been adopted more generally as an agreed way of cooperating across the school divide.)

Petitions Of Concern are the bedrock of Power-Sharing. Without *Petitions Of Concern*, Northern Ireland would revert to a crude majority rule system in the Legislature. They give the Protestants and Catholics respectively a veto on initiatives from the other side. The feature is part of a structure which qualifies the power of majoritarianism and allows a voice to the substantial minority.

It is enlightening that an allegedly cross-community party like Alliance should seek

A 'Nazi' Ship?

There was an interesting exchange on RTE radio on 28th May. Marian Finucane was talking to a female US naval officer who is in Dublin with a training "tall ship" (training sailing boat). The ship was "confiscated" from the Germans at the end of WW2 (along with much else of the equipment of that country). Marian called it a "Nazi" ship, which the US officer obviously regarded as an absurd description, and continued to insist on calling it a "German ship". I sent the following text to the programme:

Dear Marian

Ships have no beliefs. The "Gorch Foch" which was seized as war booty by the US at the end of WW2 along with many other vessels was a German naval training ship. It was not and could not be a "Nazi" ship. Please refrain from using such propagandist absurdities on our national radio.

Philip O'Connor

to disrupt the peace brought by the 1998 settlement by making such a demand—a call which resonates with Unionist 'ultras'.

The second major demand, for enforced integrated education, is Cromwellian in tendency. It seeks to enforce a single model of education where there is provision for cultural diversity. In short, it is hard to see how Catholic/Nationalist or Irish Language education could survive a transition to uniform state administration. On the Alliance model, all children would be turned into good-thinking little Brits!

The Party took care not to make its intentions clear during the preceding Election campaign. It was sharp practice to spring such a policy on the democracy after the vote was cast and it will be surprising if this is not remembered in future elections.

The Alliance conditions for supplying a Justice Minister were rejected by the DUP and SF. And, as neither party could accept a candidate from the other, an Independent Unionist, Claire Sugden, the daughter of a Prison Officer, has been selected as Minister. If no Justice Minister had been found, there would have been a fresh election. This compromise is not ideal from a SF perspective. It enabled Colm Eastwood to criticise the party for accepting this situation. He was able to point that SF had allowed the Chairmanship and Deputy Chairmanship of the Assembly *Justice Committee* to go to Unionism.

This Election has seen Unionism hold its own position in electoral terms, whilst the position of Nationalism has been slightly diminished. This is in spite of the gradual demographic shift in favour of Catholics. It must be concluded that the population trend has concentrated Unionist minds, whilst encouraging a latitude on the nationalist side, meaning a lower turnout and the luxury of voting for protest parties

The DUP and UUP retained 38 and 16 seats respectively, while TUV retained its single seat, giving Unionism a total of 56 seats in the Assembly.

Sinn Fein's overall vote dropped by 2.9%. Due to some miscalculation and vote mismanagement, the party lost one seat, returning 28. The SDLP lost 2 seats, leaving it with 12. Nationalism therefore can muster 50 votes. SF will be disappointed not to have reached the 30 votes needed to block Unionist initiatives without having to depend on support from elsewhere.

As for the Parties listed as 'Other': Alliance retains its 8 seats. It is joined by two each from People Before Profit and the Greens.

Sinn Fein has suffered electorally both North and South because it is a Party of Government in the North and a would-be Party of Government in the South.

In the North, it has not had freedom of action because its hands are tied by Westminster decisions on structures and funding. Against its will it has become an instrument of austerity. That position is well understood by Catholics, which is why its position has held up well in this Election.

At the same time, the Party has taken notice of the electoral message coming from its community. It surprised commentators by having a virtual clean sweep of its Ministerial and Assembly Committee positions and appointing new faces. Amongst the newcomers is Mairtin O Muilleoir as Minister for Finance. It is the first time that a Catholic party has held this powerful position. It can be assumed that the DUP 'allowed' this to go to SF as part of an overall behind-the-scenes agreement. The DUP itself will have the new post of 'Minister for the Economy'.

O Muilleoir has an interesting background, having founded the lively *Andersonstown News* and having attempted to

break into the all-Ireland newspaper scene with the *Daily Ireland*—a venture kicked to death by Progressive Democrat Michael McDowell and others. He has been notable for cross-community initiatives, including a walk-about on the Shankill Road during which his police protection saved him from a mauling. Elected in South Belfast, he can be expected to enhance Sinn Fein's appeal to middle class voters.

Also notable in the SF reshuffle was the advent of very capable representatives from Counties Armagh and Tyrone to leading positions. Conor Murphy is Chair of the Economy Committee. His path to power has been colourful, to say the least. And then there is the appointment of Barry McElduff to Chair of the Education Committee. He is known to readers of this magazine for taking on the Duchess of Abercorn over the Pushkin Prize (see *Irish Political Review*, February 2000, *In Quest Of Pushkin*).

In the South, Sinn Fein has been partly outflanked on the Left by the protest voters. However, it has held its nerve and continues to advocate realistic, rather than Utopian, alternatives—but retaining its radical trajectory. If the party would develop a practical national industrial strategy, its position could be further improved.

The *Irish Times*, reflecting Southern Establishment dissatisfaction with the way the GFA is working out, welcomed the outcome of the NI Election with an editorial, *Welcome Hints Of Change In The North* (9.5.16). In this piece, *People Before Profit* success is welcomed as bringing "diversity" to the Assembly. We do not recall a similar editorial expression of welcome to a similar development in the South.

The editorial also shows goodwill towards the "loosening of the Belfast Agreement's political structures", with the expected decision of the UUP and SDLP not to join the Executive.

With a national division running through the North, it is impossible to see governing structures within the province that fail to take account of that division. What would be desirable, of course, would be to see a different form of politics come to the fore, one that does not reflect the communal divide but that straddles it. However, it is impossible to see such a development occurring whilst 'Northern Ireland' remains a separate entity. *People Before Profit*—like the Workers' Party of years gone by—thinks it can ignore both the national division in the North and the Border.

There is no word about these in its Manifesto. Its canvassers were instructed to tell voters that it is a single issue party: one devoted to opposing austerity—a noble dream, but a chimera. It base is within the nationalist community. It has contested seats within the subordinate Northern Ireland system where the substance of politics is communal—but matters relating to austerity are decided

by the Government of the state.

Whilst Northern Ireland remains an administrative unit with a powerful Unionist voting bloc, politics will continue to feature the Orange/Green divide. It is only when it ceases to be a devolved administrative unit and becomes part of an organic body politic of a state that real issues will take centre stage.

NI Assembly Election Results: 5 May 2016

Eligible voters: 1,281,595
(+ 5.9% over 2011)
Turnout: 54.9%: **703,744**

	Seats	Total Votes
DUP		
2011	38	30%
2016	38	202,567: 29.2%
SF:		
2011	29	26.9%
2016	28	166,785: 24%
UUP:		
2011	16	13.2%
2016	16	87,302: 12.6%
SDLP:		
2011	14	14.2%
2016	12	83,364: 12%
ALLIANCE:		
2011	8	7.7%
2016	8	48,447: 7%
GREEN:		
2011	1	0.9%
2016	2	18,718: 2.7%
PBP:		
2011	0	0.8%
2016	2	13,761: 2%
TUV:		
2011	1	2.4%
2016	1	23,776: 3.4%
IND.	1	3,277: 0.47%

Other Noteworthy Results

NI Labour	8 candidates got 1,577 votes: 0.2%
Workers' Party	4 candidates got 1,565 votes: 0.2%
NI Conservatives (standing for the first time in Assembly Elections):	12 candidates got 2,554 votes: 0.4%
UKIP	13 candidates got 10,109: 1.5%
EXECUTIVE POSITIONS:	
DUP	5 seats: plus one
SF	4 seats: plus one
Ind	1 seat: plus one
UUP, SDLP, Alliance	no seats on Executive (minus one in each case)

The 'People Before Profit' Vote

A 1.2% increase in numbers voting for PBP gave the party its first ever seats in the Northern Ireland Assembly. It has been claimed that this is a cross-community vote. However, analysis of the voting pattern seems to falsify this view. Here is how Niall Meehan analysed the situation in the Belfast *Telegraph*:

'People Before Profit' perceived as 'green'

The election of two People Before Profit (PBP) MLAs is welcome if, as is its intention, it adds backbone to the fight against austerity and can unite that effort. If it adds substantively to the demand for marriage equality and a woman's right to choose, even better.

On the subject of whether PBP is politically 'orange' or 'green', it is, despite PBP rhetoric, perceived as Left-wing or green. It is impossible to escape this dichotomy that reflects attitudes for (orange) or against (green) the state of Northern Ireland.

It would appear that PBP recognises this in practical terms. Its successful candidates stood in two overwhelmingly nationalist (green) constituencies.

Polling evidence suggests that PBP voters are very clear on this issue. Analysis of the distribution of Gerry Carroll's surplus vote in West Belfast illustrates the position. Of 3,117 votes above the 5,182 quota, remarkably only 12 were non-transferable. Sinn Fein received 1,546 votes, proportionately, of Carroll's surplus: that is 50% of 8,299 second-preference votes. Then 761 votes—25%—went to the SDLP.

Of the remaining candidates (all unsuccessful), a mere 12.5% went to two parties also claiming to be neither orange or green—253 to the Workers Party and 136 to Alliance. The Green Party received 379 votes. That left the UUP and DUP receiving 15 votes each.

In other words, less than 1% of PBP voters in West Belfast veered toward the distinctly orange shade of the political spectrum, while more than 75% were green in their second-preference political complexion. By any reckoning, PBP

voters discriminated in favour of green nationalist or republican politics and possibly saw themselves as a redder shade.

Of course, PBP should seek to win orange voters to its non-sectarian position.

I suspect, however, that these voters will perceive it as green, as have voters in West Belfast" (12.05.2016).

Brian Kelly of People Before Profit rejected Niall Meehan's calculations, claiming they were:

"faulty—they say nothing about PBP's first preference votes on the Shankill, for example, or about our result in North Belfast" (30.5.16, *Irish News*).

Unfortunately, Brian Kelly, while criticising Niall Meehan for not featuring PBP votes on the Shankill, did not give anything away about them either. If he has the numbers we would be glad to see them in this magazine, as we have been unable to locate them!

Europe

continued

united Europe and Belgium—Britain's catspaw in Europe—was bound into the combination.

If that development had been allowed to continue, the Europe on which Britain had acted manipulatively for two centuries and a half would disappear. Britain, with its Empire dissolving, would be isolated. British interest required that the transnational establishment of European structures should be stopped.

But the European development had gone so far that Britain could do nothing about it from the outside. It could only disrupt it by joining it. It applied to join. But the founders of the European project were still in place at the time and they understood why Britain had changed its mind about joining, and they said: *No!*

In order to gain entry, the Tory Party took on a European form and it flirted dangerously with socialism. Edward Heath, who appeared to be convinced that Britain's separate role as a World Power was played out and that its future was as a European state amongst European states, became Tory leader. He proposed far-reaching measures of economic management which would structure the Trade Union movement, which was very powerful at the time, into the functioning of Capitalism—as was the case in Germany. And his application to join Europe was accepted—the European founders being no longer in place.

That was in 1972. In 1975 Heath was

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Of the remaining candidates (all unsuccessful), a mere 12.5% of Carroll's vote went to two parties also claiming to be neither orange or green—253 to the Workers Party and 136 to Alliance. The Green Party received 379 votes. That left the UUP and DUP receiving 15 votes each. This suggests that 15 Unionist-minded voters voted for PBP in West Belfast.

Incidentally, PBP's increase in vote share (0.8% to 2.0 %) accounts for some of the 5.1% fall in the SF/SDLP vote.

ousted from the Tory leadership by Margaret Thatcher. Heath's economic project was condemned as "*corporatist*", which at the time was another way of saying "*fascist*". And the campaign to exempt Britain from full participation in the European project it had joined, with a view to undermining that project, was launched with Thatcher's *Bruges Speech* of 1988, and has been persisted in tenaciously ever since.

Was the Heath phase in the history of the Tory Party a deliberate feint to take the Europeans off-guard? Possibly. In those days the Tory Party still had about it the aura of the ruling class that had directed the affairs of the state since the *coup d'etat* of 1714. Decisions were made informally by a small inner circle in a way that seemed instinctive rather than analytical. Kipling, who was close to it, expressed it this way:

"...sometimes in the smoking-room,
through clouds of 'Ers; and 'ums'
Obliquely and by inference, illumination
comes,
Of some step that they have taken, or
some action they approve—
Embellished with the *argot* of the Upper
Fourth Remove..."

(*The Puzzler*)

Heath was the first elected Tory leader. Previous Tory leaders had not been elected: they had 'emerged' from what was known as "*the magic circle*". But the circle did not lose its magic straight off. And, if the whole thing was an exercise in deception, it is unlikely that Heath was privy to it, but was an honest man chosen for the occasion.

(He was only a petty bourgeois.)

The systematic disabling of the European project since Thatcher's Bruges speech is a remarkable achievement. In the 1960s Europe wouldn't let Britain in, and now it is appalled at the prospect of continuing without Britain.

The British '*Remain*' campaign is based on the assumption that the EU has been so intimidated that Britain can have things both ways—that Britain can remain a comprehensively independent state which remains a member of the EU only in order to make it do its bidding.

The case for the '*Leave*' campaign was cogently put by the Tory Leader of the Commons, Chris Grayling. He argues that the EU is not yet disabled because its core states, having established the Euro as their common currency, are under a compulsion to establish political structures to make it work. All options are open to Britain, which would be little affected by the collapse of the Euro. That is not the case with the Euro states. Their entanglement in the Euro system establishes a dynamic in them for integration which does not depend at all on nostalgic idealism. And it would not be advantageous for Britain to remain part of the EU on the assumption that it has been disabled for all practical purposes only to find something like the original European project being established against it as a *de facto* transnational state organised around the Euro.

So we repeat: there is no European party in Britain.

Britain and the EU have conflicting interests. That is a point of agreement between both sides in the Brexit issue. Their disagreement is only about how Britain pursues its interest against the EU.

And what is the EU, after thirty years of purposeful British erosion and disorientation? It no longer knows what it is. The circumstances under which it was formed—the stabilising Cold War conflict with the Power that overthrew the Nazi order of things—were changed fundamentally by the internal collapse of the Soviet Union 25 years ago. Britain availed of that opportunity to press for random EU expansion into countries that had been part of the Soviet system, accompanying this EU expansion with an expansion of NATO.

NATO had, for two generations, been a defensive military alliance of Western Europe and the USA against the Warsaw Pact—which was a defensive military alliance of Eastern Europe and Russia against NATO. There was nothing para-

doxical about that. The NATO/Warsaw Pact division was a division of the world which arose naturally from the fundamentally unprincipled alliance by which Nazi Germany was defeated.

Britain decided in 1939 to make war on Nazi Germany, after supporting it actively for five years. It lost the first battle, in May 1940, and withdrew from the Continent but refused to withdraw the declaration of a war which it no longer had any realistic expectation of winning. Germany then invaded Soviet Russia in 1941 and was defeated by it. And Russia pursued the German Army back to Berlin, liberating Eastern Europe on the way.

Eastern Europe consisted largely of a line of brittle Versailles states set up by Britain and France (out of the Hapsburg Empire) in 1919, while they were denying statehood to Ireland.

Britain came back into the War under US pressure in 1944, after the German Army had its main strength destroyed in Russia, and the British and American forces met the Russian forces in Germany. The line at which the Armies met became the line of division in the world for the next 45 years, and each side established a state system that accorded with its interests.

The world was divided between Capitalism and Communism, and neither side regarded that division as a durable settlement. Each side saw itself as committed to generalising its own system throughout the world—and Winston Churchill, who was an admirer of Fascism, said that he had always regarded Communism as the fundamental enemy.

Thus, because it was Communist Russia that defeated Nazi Germany in the war launched against it by Imperialist Britain, the world was divided into two powerful systems which defended themselves against each other.

The collapse of the Soviet system in 1990 left the Western defensive alliance without an actual enemy. But the West—US/UK—decided to preserve NATO as an instrument for use anywhere in the world, to absorb the East European states that had been part of the Warsaw Pact-Comecon system into the EU, and to prevent the autonomous national development of the capitalist system that was replacing Communism in Russia.

Many of the East European states had gone through a phase of Fascist development in the 1930s. When Britain broke up Czechoslovakia and awarded a piece of it to Hitler in 1938 and then declared war on Germany in a bewildering change of policy the following year, Soviet Russia asserted

hegemonic control over many of these states. Then, in 1941, Hitler invaded Russia and was hailed as a liberator in many of these states. Three years later the Russian Army drove the Germans back to Germany, occupied these East European countries, and establish pro-Soviet regimes in them. Forty-five years later the Soviet system collapsed and anti-Russian regimes were again established in those countries.

It was entirely natural that the resurgent nationalisms of those countries should take the form of a revival of the nationalisms that had been suppressed in 1944-45 and should be exuberantly Fascist—and that the events of 1944-45, which were officially a liberation of the world from Nazi tyranny, should be declared to have been a tyrannical conquest.

Ameranglia and the EU dealt with these Fascist phenomena by turning a blind eye to them. They could neither condemn nor support them without raising many awkward questions about the 2nd World War, which had been raised to the status of a sacred event in world history.

In fact these events in Eastern Europe in 1944-45, while being officially hailed at the time by the Western propaganda media as liberation, were privately regarded by Ameranglia, and particularly by the Anglian part of it, as conquest. But, since Britain was dependent on Russia to finish off Germany for it, it pretended to regard them as liberation.

This was particularly evident in the case of Poland.

In terms of the reasons given by Britain for launching another World War in September 1939, British policy Poland in 1944-45 was accurately described by a Polish Ambassador of the time as *The Betrayal Of Poland*.

The crushing of Nazi Germany by Communist Russia would probably have been followed within a few years by a war between the West and Russia, if the West had not lost its nuclear monopoly so quickly. The Russian Bomb brought about military stalemate and caused the Cold War.

Western propaganda within the Cold War did not formally brush out the fairy-story version of the World War, but its substantial implication was that the system in Eastern Europe established by the Power that had defeated "*the Nazi threat to civilisation*"—that kind of rhetoric continued in use—was itself a tyrannical conquest which it would be a good thing to destroy.

The USA conducted a few Show Trials of Germans at Nuremberg, but the way

they were conducted made clear that they were not intended to establish a new judicial order in the world. A senior American judge who refused to take part in them described them as lynchings.

A few Germans were hanged with great publicity. But much of the Nazi apparatus was taken into United States service for the Cold War.

Churchill, before bungling British foreign policy led him to become the great Western statesman of the Anti-Fascist War, had described Fascism as a development within capitalist civilisation for dealing with Communism when Liberalism proved ineffective. And he reasserted after 1945 that Communism had always been the basic enemy. That being the case, it is not surprising that Western Cold War contacts within Eastern Europe were Fascist, and that Fascism reasserted itself in the early 1990s.

The instinctive EU response was to use its immense power of patronage to cover over these developments in the smaller countries.

It then fostered extreme nationalist developments in Yugoslavia, where nationalist sentiment had appeared to be extinct, in order to destroy the Socialist state which had been an ally of the West in the Cold War, and which therefore survived the Soviet collapse. In those manipulated Yugoslav wars, Catholic Croatia reasserted itself under the Fascist chequered flag with which it had greeted liberation from Orthodox Serbia by Hitler in 1941.

Baltic Fascism against Soviet Russia in the 1990s was not particularly the responsibility of the EU rather than the USA. Balkan Fascism was entirely the responsibility of the EU, especially Germany and Britain.

But all of those things were minor compared with the Ukraine. The overthrow by Fascist coup of an elected Government which wanted to maintain co-operative relations with both Russia and the EU is the central responsibility of the EU—even though it was one of Obama's Ministers who rushed the matter at the end and said "*Fuck the EU!*". And Irish politicians were centrally involved in that coup.

Capitalist Russia, with its elected Government, had been demonised by the EU before that anti-Russian Fascist coup in the Ukraine, fuelled by the EU, led Putin to pre-empt NATO encirclement of the base of the Russian Fleet in the Crimea by sponsoring a referendum of the (mainly Russian) population of the Crimea on the issue of reunification with Russia.

What is it that causes EU Europe to exclude Russia from its idea of Europe and demonise it?

"Atavism" was a word much used by liberal intellectual nincompoops to explain the war that erupted in Northern Ireland in the 1970s. Atavism means the resurgence of forces that were historically defunct. There was no need of it for Northern Ireland, where the undemocratic mode of British government provided sufficient ground for what happened. But there appears to be need of 'atavism' to explain EU behaviour towards Russia.

Many ancient things are found to be still there when modern things prove to be superficial and break down. And one of the great underlying differences between Russia and Europe to the west of it is the form of Christianity within which each developed over many centuries. Western Europe, whether Catholic or Protestant, was Roman, and that fact seems to determine much in its superficially post-Christian existence. Russia, like the demon of the 1990s, Serbia, is Greek.

Russia is Christian again and is rediscovering itself in its continuity. EU Europe has in that regard reduced itself to a mess of ideological pretentiousness. For Germany and France 1945 is Year Zero. They try to live in a false myth of the "Anti-Fascist War", and they cannot account for their recent past.

But in social reality there are no Year Zeros. Before very long EU Europe will have to begin living in real history again. If the EU proves to be incapable of doing this, it seems probable that the national states which constitute it, and which it is increasingly incapable of hegemonising, will insist on regaining their own national history and cultures.

It was only in the Haughey period that Ireland took on a positive European aspect. When it joined the EU, in a parcel with Britain, it brought nothing to Europe. It was in flight from itself following the Lynch Government's repudiation of its Northern policy under British pressure, and it saw the EU as a refuge from itself. It could neither deal with the North in accordance with the terms set by the Constitution, nor repeal the relevant clauses of the Constitution and declare that the North was legitimately part of the territory of a foreign state and therefore none of its concern. It just went into equivocating denial. Then, when taken into the EU by Britain, it came up with the notion that membership of the

EU somehow made Northern Ireland irrelevant.

The Taoiseach, fearful of life in the EU without Britain, is now campaigning in Britain against Brexit. It is suggested that Brexit would restore the Irish border that the EU had caused to almost disappear—and that it was EU influence that brought the Good Friday Agreement (which Dublin now wants to undermine). But the EU has

Sneering for Britain !

continued

how the Irish could serve the Empire, if they were given Home Rule. Their great talent was the literary one. The Irish were to be the froth upon the Imperial substance with their wonderful use of words which the English had lost when Puritanisation took the joy of life out of them. The Irish had "*the gift of the gab*" as they used to say—a gift they would have given to the Empire if it accepted them as junior partners in its great project of making Greater Britain across the world.

Bernard Shaw once said that Ireland was "*plagued by clever fools who say the wrong thing in the most skilful way*". Britain has made it its business to cultivate this type so that they now say the right thing in the most skilful way, in service of the State.

Fergal Keane has now started writing a column for the *Sunday Independent*. Now there's a combination! He has found the transition from reporting for the BBC to writing for the *Irish Independent* seamless. His words need no changing. There seems to be no national difference in transferring them from the official broadcasts of the British State to the Irish newspaper. The two are of one mind.

A couple of months ago Keane said the following about 1916, which is included on the BBC website and was republished in the *Sunday Independent*:

"We cannot pretend that there is no link between the violence of 1916 and 1969... It inspired successive generations of republicans to take up arms. The proclamation made very clear the right of armed men to act in the name of the Irish people without asking their permission. Now, after 30 years of butchery, we have a working peace process... But as recently as this month the remaining minority who espouse physical force nationalism were still killing fellow Irishmen, basing their right to do so on the actions of the men of 1916" (SI 20.3.16).

nothing to do with it, one way or the other. When the South joined the EU the Border was being reinforced because the Northern War was taking off. And it was not the EU but Haughey that set in motion the developments that led to the Northern settlement. And Haughey was a good European, not because he was in flight from Irish national history but because he reasserted Irish national interest.

The BBC took its cue from Fergal Keane that any residue of violence in Belfast was something to do with 1916, that it continued to inspire the deed. 1916 had to be marked—it was imperative that it should be. Reports of any act of violence, no matter how unconnected with history, were followed with some reference to the centenary of 1916. The Centenary could not be let go off with enthusiasm, patriotism and pride. Where Keane sneered, the BBC followed with a connecting of contemporary violence with 1916.

There is, in fact, little connection between 1916 and the Northern conflict. The leaders of the Rising ensured that it did not have an Ulster aspect. They realised the significance of the complication of the North and made sure there was no fighting there—despite Northern enthusiasm to take part. As a result there were more Londoners in the GPO fighting by Pearse's side for the Republic than there were Belfastmen.

The erstwhile War in the Six Counties was an internal event, generated by the perverse political entity of 'Northern Ireland' and the Pogrom of the Unionist Party of August 1969. It may have referenced 1916 as it got going but 1916 neither caused it or motivated it.

Keane wrote a very nasty piece in the *Sunday Independent* (15th May) about Gerry Adams, following his tweet that used the notorious *n* word that one is not supposed to use. The SF leader said that he was a kind of black man from Ballymurphy in the scheme of things: he wrote this while enjoying a movie about an ex-slave in the US giving his tormentors their come-uppance. And that's all he said, in the social media equivalent of scribbling on toilet walls.

Gerry Adams has a very nonchalant attitude to social media which has disconcerted his enemies. How can this formidable man be so frivolous and so weird? What is this stuff he tweets about naked trampolining and plastic bath ducks?

But Adams, engaging in a little frivolity whilst watching a movie, strayed into territory where he could be got. And out of less than 140 characters great reams were filled with righteous condemnation that did not appear when the *Irish Times* infamously called its Editor "a white nigger" or when Elvis Costello sang of British soldiers in the North of Ireland: "All it takes one itchy finger, one more widow, one less white nigger. Oliver's Army is on their way..."

Keane reads a lot more than what Adams said in less than 140 characters in his scribbling on the ether:

"The Gerry Adams's study in comparative suffering between northern Catholics, the oppressed of Apartheid South Africa and civil rights-era African-Americans reflects something different to a confused meandering about history. Nor is he simply indulging a national gift for exceptionalism. This is not just about Catholics and their suffering, but the exceptional company in which Sinn Fein associates have sometimes placed Adams. By their reasoning he stands with Nelson Mandela. According to his own view of the past, he not only belongs in the same company as civil rights hero Rosa Parks, but among the millions sold into slavery, the whipped, degraded, raped and murdered of America's pre-Civil War southern states. Can he really be so convinced of this that he will tweet the toxic N-word?"

That is known as a *canard*. A *canard* is a false, deluding statement designed to confuse the audience, as it presents someone or something in a bad light by spreading an untruth. In short, the views attributed to Adams by Keane are views never expressed by the SF leader and are the views of Keane himself, which he would like Adams to hold so that they could be righteously condemned.

Keane continues:

"I imagine him visualising his place on a sunlit summit with his arms around the shoulders of Rosa Parks and Nelson Mandela. But this is not what the judgement of history, in this age of leak, revelation and more sceptical thinking, is going to deliver. There will be no repeat of the myth-making of the revolutionary period, no gods made of men, as was the case with Dev and Collins."

Imagination seems to pass for reporting these days. It has done in the *Sunday Independent* for years anyway. Great imagination is necessary for producing the same old story against Adams and the Northern Catholics over and over, year after year, by columnist after columnist, for ever and ever, Amen.

Here's Keane hoping as many others before him have hoped:

"At some point the younger generation of Sinn Fein leaders will surely decide it is time for him to move on and enjoy a fruitful retirement divided between Belfast and some part of Donegal where there is no access to wifi."

But back to Fergal's personal odyssey:

"Back in the mid-1980s, I lived in Belfast, but was beginning to specialise in South Africa. I travelled to the country first in 1984 and witnessed apartheid in all its indignity. I went to live there after Mandela left jail and the country began its bloody march towards democracy. I saw it go from a time of dehumanising segregation that reached into every part of black people's lives—the complete denial of democratic and human rights, the age of massacre and death squads—to the election of Mandela as the first leader of a non-racial democracy. It was very different from the Belfast I left behind."

1984 was a quiet year in Belfast. The present writer lived in the greater Ballymurphy area then. It was comparatively quiet there too. The Republican Army had been disorganised by the information of the 'supergrass' Robert Lean and the Volunteers were keeping their heads down.

During this year the present writer remembers having his front door smashed down at night and British soldiers standing round his bed with rifles pointing, on at least two occasions. He remembers the Royal Marines taking up duty in the area and threatening to kill him by the weekend. He remembers going to Queens for the first time, having his possessions taken from behind a locked door in Queens Library and replaced with a note saying "Dead Man Walsh—UDA." He received a bullet as further warning. After this he went to his supervisor, a white South African, who told him to see the Dean of Faculty. The South African was subsequently gunned down in his home by the UDA with weapons supplied by the Apartheid regime.

The Dean of faculty, Cornelius O'Leary was rather unsympathetic to the present writer and the threats made to him on Queens property. He said something about there being "no smoke without fire". A further piece of advice took the present writer to the Student Union where a future SDLP politician advised him that there was no point in contacting the police. They would do nothing after any serious event and would probably be in on it in any case.

Such was ordinary life in a quiet period in Belfast in 1984. There were no complaints, since this was pretty much general experience in West Belfast and you knew that others had lived through and suffered a hundred times worse. But I bet Fergal Keane didn't experience any of it before he went after greater action in South Africa on the road to his Ooder of the British Empire.

In December 2013 the Sinn Fein Leader, Gerry Adams, formed part of the Guard of Honour at the funeral of Nelson Mandela. The ANC had encouraged fraternal links between the ANC and Sinn Fein over decades and there had been a military alliance with the IRA.

Kader Asmal revealed in his memoirs, 'Politics in my Blood', how the IRA helped carry out a spectacular *coup de main* against one of the South African regime's most important strategic installations, an oil refinery at Sasolburg in 1980. This was the most significant military blow against the Apartheid regime and it was facilitated by Asmal, Adams, and Michael O'Riordan, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland. It involved the IRA training of MK cadres as well as reconnaissance of the target by Irish Republicans (See Manus O'Riordan, *Mandela Owed Gerry Adams, And Nelson Repaid The Debt!* in *Irish Political Review*, January 2014).

In 1990, on a visit to Dublin, Mandela shocked the Dublin and London Establishments, along with their respective medias, by continually insisting that Britain should be negotiating with Sinn Fein, without preconditions, to end the conflict in Ireland. In 1998, when a deal had been concluded, Cyril Ramaphosa, who led the ANC in its war on the white supremacist Government of South Africa, assisted the Republican leadership in selling the peace agreement to its rank and file in the Republican heartlands.

The ANC saw a greater parallel between South Africa and Ireland. But who are they to tell Fergal Keane, OBE that?

Pat Walsh

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Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

IRELAND AND THE MARSHALL PLAN

In the course of reading an article about something else, the Long Fellow learned that the Marshall Plan disposed of its funds from 1948 to 1951 throughout Western Europe. As luck would have it, this was one of the few times that Fianna Fáil was not in Government. During this period the Government was led by John A. Costello of Fine Gael and had such a distinguished personage as Noel Browne of Clann na Poblachta as Minister for Health. He was then only a few years older than the current Minister for Health is now. As well as the eradication of TB, this Government is remembered for the Mother and Child controversy.

The total amount of aid given to Western Europe amounted to \$13 billion, which in today's prices is about \$130 billion. The UK received about 26% of the total; France 18% and West Germany 11%. The Irish State received about 1%, which in today's prices represents a very considerable \$1.3 billion. In assessing the merits or otherwise of that Government, it is worth noting that it had a fair wind at its back.

IRELAND AND CHINA

Seven years after the end of the Inter Party Government, the Irish State decided to open up the economy to foreign investment. The Shannon Development Area was a key element in the strategy, partly because it had been a hub of innovative thinking. In the 1940s transatlantic flights stopped off at Shannon to refuel. But, with the introduction of jet engines in civilian aircraft, there was no longer such a requirement. The future of Shannon was bleak.

Brendan O'Regan, who was the head of catering at the time, decided that the airport needed to "pull the aeroplanes from the sky" (you could say those kind of things then). One of his proposals was to introduce duty-free shopping in the airport. As a development of this, there was a policy to exempt companies from VAT (or sales tax as it was then) in the surrounding area. Also, a zero rate of Corporation Tax was introduced in that area. As a result of the policy a cluster of industries emerged. This was the precursor to the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) which the Chinese developed to the nth degree. When the

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao arrived in Ireland in 2005 he insisted on visiting Shannon as an acknowledgement of where it all began (*Guardian*, 19/4/16).

IRELAND AND LEICESTER CITY

As a result of the retail development of Shannon Airport, Ireland had 'first mover' advantage in this lucrative area. The State-owned Aer Rianta company has developed and managed retail outlets in airports all over the world. One of the company's executives was a Dublin-born woman who worked for Aer Rianta in Moscow and then Bangkok. Her obvious talent was spotted by the King Power Group—a rival to Aer Rianta—which also happened to own Leicester City Football club. In 2010 she was appointed Chief Executive of Leicester.

The success of the team can be seen as one of the unintended consequences of Irish economic policy. The best signing that the club ever made was not Jamie Vardy; but Susan Whelan from Howth.

IRELAND AND THE BEGRUDGERS

The recent controversies surrounding tax havens have conflated two separate phenomena. On the one hand there are countries which have low corporate rates such as Ireland, which attract foreign capital in order to generate genuine economic activity. On the other hand there are tax havens such as the various British "overseas territories" (British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Channel Islands etc), the sole purpose of which is to facilitate tax avoidance, tax evasion (which is illegal), and the concealment of wealth from the proceeds of crime. There have been various British commentators who have been shrill in their denunciation of the former, while being noticeably silent on practices in their own political backyard.

The Anglophile ex Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis has joined the chorus, accusing the Irish of having "beggar thy neighbour" tax policies. But who has been beggared? Certainly not Greece! Irish tax policy has been used to attract productive capital from wealthy countries (usually the United States) to what was formerly a relatively poor country. In the past Ireland had low labour costs but the policy evolved to a strategy of moving Ireland up the international value chain. In recent decades highly skilled, well paid work has moved to Ireland. The IDA has attracted a cluster of industries—particularly in the pharmaceutical and Information Technology sectors. The effect of this policy is to

attract more companies working in these sectors because they know that there is a pool of skilled labour, which has been developed over decades.

It is arguable that the 12.5% Corporation Tax is an important factor in attracting foreign capital. For example, the UK has reduced its rate to 20% with no appreciable impact on Ireland. Also, the UK has more favourable income tax rates for middle and high income earners, which might partly explain the proliferation of billionaire Sheikhs and Russian oligarchs resident in London.

Nevertheless, Enda Kenny was right to resist pressure from the Troika to increase Corporation Tax rates. To have done so would have given the impression that the State had lost control of its industrial policy.

THE FLOOD/MAHON TRIBUNAL CAMEL

The biblical phrase: "to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel" can be applied to Irish journalism. It has reported on the minutiae of details revealed by the various Tribunals, but has failed to scrutinise the "camel": the Tribunals themselves.

The Flood/Mahon Tribunal is imploding before our eyes and, with the exception of *The Phoenix* magazine, there has been scarcely a comment from the journalists who invested so much moral indignation in its now discredited findings.

Estimates of its costs vary between 160 and 300 million euro. Its most recent report bears no relation to its original findings, which were greeted with such fanfare. *The Phoenix* reports:

"Gone from its reports are every single finding of obstruction against the 16 parties Flood condemned. Gone too, are all corruption findings against JMSE executives Roger Copsey, Joseph Murphy senior and junior, and Frank Reynolds; against Bovale's Bailey brothers; and Redmond (the Dublin City Manager—LF). Gone also are corruption findings against Burke (the former Fianna Fáil Cabinet Minister—LF), builders Tom Brennan and Joe McGowan and against Century Radio promoters John Mulhern, James Stafford and Oliver Barry. Gone, even, is its inconclusive assessment of PJ Mara and Dermot Desmond's involvement with those promoters. And much more (*The Phoenix*, 25/3/16)."

The Phoenix goes on to report that an audit of the Tribunal found that the Tribunal's "practice of evidence redacting was widespread".

That is to say, it suppressed evidence that was unfavourable to its case.

Unfortunately, this is not the end of the matter. The parties affected by the Tribunal's original findings may not be

satisfied with its abject surrender, but may seek compensation for reputational damage.

The Long Fellow thinks that if the Guards behaved in the same way as our overpaid lawyers there would be an outcry. Where is the Oireachtas inquiry into the conduct of Tribunals?

WILBUR ROSS AND THE PHOENIX

The billionaire investor Wilbur Ross resents being described as a "vulture". He prefers to be compared with a phoenix, which legend has it recreates itself from its own ashes. His *modus operandi* is to analyse the political and economic situation in the country in which he is considering investing and then put his money where his research suggests. In an RTE interview a couple of years ago he said that he read all the economic commentaries on Ireland in the years 2008 to 2010 which predicted the complete collapse of the economy. He concluded that the commentaries were superficial and decided to bet on Ireland by buying Bank of Ireland shares, making for his fund a profit of over half a billion euro.

In an interview in the *Sunday Business Post* (8.5.16) he had some interesting comments on the US Presidential candidates. Here is his explanation for the popularity of Donald Trump:

"It's because middle class and lower class Americans have got a bum deal for quite a little while, and they're sick and tired of it..."

"And no other politician, not Hillary, nor any other Republican, have really understood that phenomenon and how to deal with it. Frankly, I wouldn't be at all surprised to see some of the Bernie Sanders supporters come over and support Trump. Because while they may not be 100 per cent sure of what they do want, they are sure of what they don't want—and what they don't want is more of what has been going on."

Here is what he thinks of Hillary Clinton's record as Secretary of State:

"...is the world a better place since she was in charge? I don't think so. It's a more dangerous place.

"I don't think there is a country in the world with which the United States has better relations now than it did before. I can't name one. So, I'm not overly impressed with what she has done."

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Hugh Lane Gallery Marks Casement Centenary

The Hugh Lane Gallery, Parnell Square, hosts two exhibitions marking the centenary of the 1916 Rising. They are especially concerned with the life, death and legacy of Roger Casement. They represent the main ongoing public presentation in honour of the man which is to be viewed in the capital. Admission is free. The gallery is little more than five minutes walk from O'Connell St, up a modest incline. The exercise could only be beneficial for those with the mild audacity to venture forth and a guarantee of enlightenment in some shape or form awaits.

The main exhibition is called *High Treason* after Sir John Lavery's famous painting of Casement's appearance before The Court of Appeal. This large canvas in oils is the centrepiece. The bearded visage of Casement in the dock is at the centre of the painting. Lavery had been allowed into the courtroom, on the 17th and 18th of July 1916, so he could make his initial draft as the case was being heard. The work captures the tense public spectacle of a once renowned high state official on trial for consorting with the enemy in time of war.

Alongside hang portraits of various personalities from the time associated with Casement's story. There are also a number of reproductions of relevant popular posters, song lyric sheets and verse sheets from the time. It is the collection of portraits, however, which is most striking. They have come from the hands of such masters of the *genre* as Orpen and the already mentioned Lavery. Most of the works displayed are on loan from other institutions situated both in Ireland and Britain. Those portrayed include, among others, F.E. Smith, Edward Carson, Dr. Douglas Hyde, W.B. Yeats, Lord Chief Justice Sir Rufus Isaacs and Casement himself.

In a room nearby, the 2002 prize winning documentary film *The Ghost of Roger Casement* is being shown on a continuing basis. The writing and direction were by Alan Gilsenan. The film covers the main details of Casement's biography with an emphasis on his groundbreaking investigations of atrocities against native rubber gatherers in the Congo and Peru and his personally fatal embrace of Irish Republicanism in the last years of his life. The end of the film concerns itself with the international conference on Casement organised by the Bertie Ahern led adminis-

tration in 2000 and the bizarre attempt at something resembling a forensic examination of the contentious diaries which was to follow. The film lasts about 90 minutes.

The film is an artwork in itself. A variety of scholars and public figures are caught on camera making contributions. Some of these are brief snatches of opinion; others are at greater length. By far, most are well chosen. They are artfully edited and presented to ensure a provocative and dramatic effect. Newly-filmed scenes are alternated with archival footage. Still images and music are evocative.

It happens more often than not with written and filmed attempts to come to terms with Casement's life and legacy, that the dubious rubs shoulders with the credible. This film is no exception. Claims that he attempted to take his own life while being held in the Tower of London are reported without quibble. These attempts were reported to have been twofold. One story had him attempt to use poison he had taken with him from the submarine and had managed to hide from his captors in his hair. A second story had him eat bent nails which had been embedded in the firewood in his cell (yet all the while under 24 hour guard).

Owen Dudley Edwards, the Edinburgh based historian, makes the point that:

"Casement... was a walking disaster to the British government. The fact that a figure of such integrity in international humanitarianism was on the German side, and not the British and had broken with his own people feeling so strongly about it..."

Regarding the Diaries he says:

"They arrived quite extraordinarily conveniently. That is one of the most suspicious things about them. They are there when they were absolutely urgently needed."

Eunan O'Halpin, Professor of Contemporary Irish History at Trinity College, Dublin confidently says:

"...the forgery narrative, which tends to have more holes than a colander... this is an article of faith, I said at the conference this is the Irish Roswell, and so I think it is."

Towards the end of the film, the results of the Giles examination are announced by Prof. W.J. McCormack.

Taken as a whole the film in substance is more favourable to the contention the diaries are genuine than the opposite. The viewer fresh to the controversy would be led to believe that something that could meaningfully be called a "forensic examination" had, in fact, taken place. However, following the announcement of the outcome of the examination, partisans of forgery were among those recorded giving their views. This is an absorbing documentary.

Running contemporaneously there is another exhibition called *Our Kind* by the Dublin-born installation artist, Alan Phelan. One part of this is an installation and a related part is a 30 minute feature film. They are meant to be experienced in tandem and are meant as a response to Casement's famous speech from the dock after his conviction.

The installation is confined to one white-walled room. Around the room there is a dark band on which phrases taken from the speech are written in white capitals. These phrases are deliberately taken out of their original context and so are utterly subverted in meaning. For example, in the speech, towards its end Casement declared:

"Self-government is our right, a thing born in us at birth, a thing no more to be doled out to us, or withheld from us, by another people than the right to life itself—than the right to feel the sun, or smell the flowers, or to love our kind."

On the wall we read in capitals: *"THE RIGHT TO FEEL THE SUN, OR SMELL THE FLOWERS, OR TO LOVE OUR KIND"*

On the walls of the room there are words which can at first just barely be made out as they are in white lettering on a yet whiter background. This wall text covers a substantial part of the eye level wall surfaces. We read and notice this text is taken from various sexually explicit passages from the infamous Diaries. For example, 14th December 1911 was recorded as a particularly stupendous day from the point of view of same-sex talent spotting: "seven school boys (one a Cafuzo 17-18) and 5 of them white and 4 had huge ones". So, in this very different context the phrase "to love our kind" is subverted into a reference to homosexuality.

The game of taking phrases from the speech and de-contextualising them also happens in the accompanying film. Likewise, just as on the wall, dark bands appear on the bottom of the screen from time to time bearing white capitals. There is a sentence in the speech:

"But for the Attorney-General of England there is only 'England'; there is no Ireland; there is only the law of Eng-

land, no right of Ireland; the liberty of Ireland and of an Irishman is to be judged by the power of England."

From this comes the phrase *"THERE IS NO IRELAND"*, which subverts the whole concept of nationalism on which the sense of the speech is based.

Similarly there is a sentence:

"It is not necessary to climb the painful stairs of Irish history—that treadmill of a nation, whose labours are as vain for her own uplifting as the convict's exertions are for his redemption, to review the long list of British promises made only to be broken—of Irish hopes, raised only to be dashed to the ground."

From this is extracted the phrase: *"IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO CLIMB THE PAINFUL STAIRS OF IRISH HISTORY"* which is as much as to say Irish history is as well ignored.

It is interesting that in the exhibition the uncontested words of Casement, uttered after his conviction for treason, are deliberately taken out of their original context and distorted in their meaning. Meanwhile, the long contested content of his Diaries is artfully placed before the world as if sacred text. The room containing the installation has the aspect of an oratory where the blessed Diaries are honoured in solemn exposition. So called post-Catholic Ireland has retained a talent for unexamined dogmatic faith.

The feature film has a cast of three. The style is described as "counter-factual". This means that the scriptwriter has taken liberties with historical facts for the sake of some objective understood only by himself. The liberties taken here have been extravagant. The action happens in Norway in 1941. One character is Casement who, had he lived, would have been 76 in 1941. In the film he appears to be a man of about 40.

Another character is Alice Stopford-Green, who in real life died in 1929. Had she been alive in 1941 she would have been 94 years old. She was the daughter of a County Meath Church of Ireland Rector who became an influential Nationalist historian at the beginning of the 20th century. She had been a close friend and collaborator of Casement. Gina Moxley plays her as a woman in her 50s.

The third character is Adler Christensen. He was a man servant or male lover to Casement depending on which biographer you want to believe. They travelled from the US to Germany via Norway in 1914. Christensen was a young tearaway who found it difficult to stay out of trouble. After a stay in Germany he travelled back to the US, where he married and abandoned a series of women. The film has the two men living together as lovers in Norway.

Alice has travelled from Ireland to Norway to visit Roger. There is no dialogue for the first five minutes. The strange eerie music blends with the spectacular snow covered Norwegian landscape. The music was composed by Michael Fleming. The black and white film gives surfaces and facial expressions extra definition. The panning shots of the mountainous terrain draw in the viewer.

Alice and Roger 'learn' that Countess Markievicz has committed suicide in Ireland. They speculate it could have been an assassination. (The real Markievicz died naturally in 1926.) This is the only reference to Ireland in the film. This is where one of the leaders of the 1916 Rising has, on its 25th anniversary, suffered a sordid death. The implication is disillusion with the enterprise of national revolt and nation building.

Over and above modest elements of drama and plot, the audience has to endure a painfully tedious and convoluted verbal rigmarole. A film editor was needed who would have been prepared to cut out most of this superfluous dialogue, leaving a reasonably coherent and evocative short film of 15 or so minutes.

Interestingly, the actor playing Adler sports a Nazi or Nazi-like uniform. This is meant to be Nazi occupied Norway in 1941. This means Casement was sleeping with a Nazi. Nudge, nudge; profound and sordid meanings and understandings are ours for the taking.

It is not to be forgotten that this is all meant as a reflection on the speech from the dock. As mentioned already, two of the last phrases to appear on bands at the bottom of the screen are: *"THERE IS NO IRELAND"* and *"IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO CLIMB THE PAINFUL STAIRS OF IRISH HISTORY"*.

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.

Tim O'Sullivan

es ahora *

BARON BEW, ROY FOSTER *ET AL*

While the media/academia in Ireland prefers to insist that this country was insular and isolationist pre modernity i.e. until the revisionist took us in hand, really I find that it is contemporary Ireland that has turned its eyes inward and dares not comment on the wider world because where would that leave the commentariat? The citizens of Paris, Nantes, Rennes, and Brussels are out in their streets nightly, protesting new Labour laws and curbs on Trade-Union activity, while over in Germany an estimated crowd of 16,000 Trade-Unionists demanded their rights, as already accorded them by the German Constitution—and remain untouched. Brazil has its democratically-elected President Rousseff ousted by a *coup*, almost certainly helped in nefarious ways by Washington: yet barely a mention from our heroic press and chattering class.

A serious war-monger, Sir General Richard Shirreff, is allowed on RTE Radio's airwaves to make outrageous allegations about Russia's President Putin's intent to make war on a Baltic State. The subtext that he was actually selling a book based on that premise was barely mentioned. Yet, in fairness, when watching Sky News TV, the UK Secretary of Defence Philip Hammond MP issued a statement condemning Shirreff unambiguously. Sky also carried a statement from one journalist stating in *Press Preview* that Shirreff must have a huge mortgage on his home not yet paid for during his time in NATO (snigger) to be doing such idiotic stuff. But here not one word of criticism was directed against this war-monger. Isn't that strange? Or is it?

I heard that the *Sunday Independent* some time ago was carrying the suggestion that Dr. John Paul McCarthy was going over to Oxford to take over Roy Foster's gig. Ah! seriously how I laughed!

Apparently Ruth Dudley Edwards was whispering it about, while John Paul was practically heard praying aloud. The former, since that folderol about her house being burgled when the informer Séan O' Callaghan was staying with her—had it something to do with a male pick-up he brought home from the pub? I really can't remember—but poor old Ruth, well she didn't get to finish her book about the Home Office did she? I rather think that commission was snatched back by the UK State when it saw how things were sliding. . . . I had already heard from a sound

academic source that the job was going to a Northern Ireland academic and so it proved—they always keep these things in-house—don't they?

A Notice in the *Oxford University Gazette* c. 16th May 2016 announced that Ian McBride has been appointed to the newly titled 'Foster Professorship of Irish History' in the Faculty of History, with effect from 1st October 2016. Professor McBride will be a Fellow of Hertford where Foster had been *in situ*. McBride, who grew up in Co. Armagh, had earned his BA in Jesus College, Oxford after which he completed three years as a research fellow at Corpus Christie College, Cambridge. He received his PhD from the University of London and he lectured in Durham. He joined King's College London in 2000 as Professor of Irish and British History. He also became Patrick B. O'Donnell Professor of Irish Studies at the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies, University of Notre Dame (Jesuit). He hasn't a great body of published work, but he did present a BBC2 programme on '*Forgotten Revolutionary: Francis Hutcheson*', a one hour documentary on the philosopher Francis Hutcheson. He also contributed to the '*Journal of Contemporary History*' an essay titled '*The Shadow of the Gunman: Irish Historians and the IRA*' which one must allow isn't a very original title.

There have been intimations that the powerful Baron Paul Bew of Donegore (Co. Antrim) had been instrumental in getting the position for McBride and what a patron to have on one's side. There is still the matter of who is funding the professorship—I have it on good authority that it is certainly not Roy Foster himself, who got his funding from the Carroll building family, whose firm apparently went into liquidation but not before a ten year funding plan had been firmly put in place for Roy. I have heard credible whispers that the Irish Government is the money provider and this is not as far fetched as it might at first sound. '*The Revolution Papers*'—that Irish State exercise in re-invented history—has at its very centre—one historian—the *unlorded* (apparently for the wider Irish Diaspora) Professor Paul Bew. The English State also very much trusts Baron Bew of Donegore—he is Chairman of The Committee on Standards in Public Life, "*an advisory non-departmental public body of the United Kingdom Government*".

And he was appointed President of the Airey Neave Trust, taking over from former Cabinet Minister Lord Patrick Mayhew in 2012, where he is among such luminaries as Brigadier Ed. Butler CBEDSO whose British Army career saw him for much of 24 years as Commander of the UK Special Forces

where he was active in places as far apart as Northern Ireland, the Balkans and Afghanistan! When I looked up *The London Gazette*—which is published on behalf of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (Crown Copyright) and carries amongst other information the citations by Her Majesty for Royal Awards—I found to my amazement that Paul Bew got his barony for his "*contribution to the Peace Process in Northern Ireland*". I ask my readers who are more familiar with that subject to help me to process this Royal acknowledgement by giving me background on the politics of that era. Could he really have got such an honour by being advisor to David Trimble—now Lord Trimble? Really?

Anyway by way of saying Goodbye to Roy Foster—there is a book to be published by Oxford University Press, 23rd August 2016 titled: '*Uncertain Futures: Essays about the Irish Past for Roy Foster*': Edited by Senia Pasetta with the publicity blurb that—

"this volume has been produced to mark the retirement of Roy Foster from the Carroll Professorship of Irish History at the University of Oxford, and to mark his extraordinary career as a historian, literary critic, and public intellectual. . ."

Aren't they coy enough about not saying that this is a '*Festschrift*'? But then the latter is reserved for scholars—one word that is particularly absent from the wordy blurb. Perhaps they thought that would be taking things just a little too far for their taste—*non*? Anyway there are twenty-two contributors—amongst whom are Baron Bew himself, the new Professor Ian McBride, and one that holds a particular interest for me—the great Professor Hermione Lee whose essay is: "*Breaking Faith: Elizabeth Bowen and disloyalties*."

The price of the book is steep—\$95.06.

Roy Foster attended the Irish Embassy in London for a function for its '*Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme*'. It was the third in the series and it was on the theme of '*Women of 1916*', being held, as the Ambassador reminded everyone, on International Women's Day. The event was held on 1st March 2016 in the sumptuous ballroom of the Embassy. Ambassador Dan Mulhall hosted a panel consisting of Professor Roy Foster, Carroll Professor of Irish History, Hertford College, Oxford, Professor Senia Pasetta, Professor of Modern History, St. Hugh's College, Oxford and Dr. Lauren Arrington, Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Irish Studies, University of Liverpool. The discussion was moderated by Carolyn Quinn, BBC. A podcast of this lecture and discussion is available on the Embassy's website.

Julianne Herlihy ©

Below we report on a second meeting held in Kanturk meeting during the Feile Duthalla, on 23rd April addressed by Jack Lane.

The Irish Bulletin

This newspaper was published as the daily paper of the first Dail, from November 1919 to December 1921. It was necessary because of the total ban on Republican publications and the censorship of the non-Republican press under the *Defence of the Realm Act* (DORA). It was aimed at international opinion and its 'secret weapon' was accuracy. It has not been reprinted until now.

Whenever the Bulletin is referred to these days in academic literature it is almost invariably described as a *propaganda* publication. And as it was published by the Propaganda Department of Dail Eireann, that cannot be denied. However, the word *propaganda* has radically changed its meaning in the course of the last century—almost as thoroughly as the word *gay* has changed its meaning. Propaganda is no longer used in the original neutral sense of providing information about some person or event and is now understood as being the very opposite. At a superficial level it is easy therefore to seek to discredit the information in the Bulletin as *propaganda*.

There was an example of this approach in an article by Dr. Marie Coleman, a historian at Queen's University Belfast, in an article she wrote for *"The Irish Examiner"* on 27th November 2015 headed *"Women escaped the worst of the brutalities in the War of Independence."* The theme of the item is that each side was equally at fault in the killing and assaults on women during the war: *"In many cases where women died during the War of Independence, it was as a result of non-targeted or random acts of violence. Such incidental fatal attacks on women included the deaths in Galway of the pregnant Ellen Quinn in a drive-by shooting by police on November 1, 1920."*

This is a distortion of the facts. The two cases she quoted on the IRA side were the execution of two spies, Mrs. Lindsay and Kate Carroll, events which were therefore quite targeted. The case of Mrs. Quinn was not random or incidental. It was part and parcel of the terrorist campaign by the Crown forces on the population. All killings and assaults in that situation were targeted and not *"incidental"*. The very randomness of the killings is purposeful and deliberate, as the whole point is to terrify people generally and spread as much fear as possible. The target was the

whole population. For example, the American Commission calculated that there were 48,474 raids on private houses by the military in 1920 alone.

The Quinn killing was justified by the British Military at the Court of Inquiry as a *"precautionary measure"*. That is also a form of targeting.

This horrific killing of a pregnant woman with a child in her arms is included in Volume 3 of the reprint of the *Irish Bulletin*, where it was put in context as it did have a very specific context and consequence.

The Germans had executed Nurse Edith Cavell as a spy a few weeks earlier and there was unlimited anti-German propaganda being made about this at the time, suggesting that Nurse Cavell could not possibly have been a spy. The *Bulletin* quoted the German report on it which regretted having to execute a woman for spying and pointing out, among other things, that she would not have been executed if she happened to be pregnant. It has since been confirmed, in detail, by Dame Stella Rimington, former Director General of M15 that she was indeed a spy (*Daily Telegraph*, 12 September 2015, *BBC Radio 4*, 16 September 2015). But Mrs. Quinn was not a spy and posed no threat whatever to her killers. If Dr. Coleman wants an example of one of the the greatest examples ever of propaganda, in the modern sense, i.e. lies, she should reflect on the millions of words about Nurse Cavell written and spoken for a full century after her execution.

While Ms. Coleman confirms that there was an *"IRA general order which spared women accused of spying from the ultimate punishment"*, she does not refer to the very opposite order issued by Dublin Castle following Mrs. Quinn's killing and published in the *Irish Bulletin* (See Vol. 3 in this series). The *Bulletin* reported:

“PAVING THE WAY FOR "PRE-CAUTIONARY MEASURES".

A SECRET "CRIME SPECIAL" FOR THE BENEFIT OF THOSE WHO KILLS IRISH WOMEN.

Having killed Mrs. Ellen Quinn on November 1st as a "precautionary measure", having killed Miss. O'Connell (aged 15) on November 5th as a "precautionary measure", the English Military Government in Ireland is yet unsatisfied with its roll of women victims. It has circulated among its troops and constabulary the following secret "Crime

Special" which will be well understood by them as a direction as to the form their excuses are to take when other Irish women have been murdered by them:-

"SECRET.

Crime Special 50/1920.

R.I.C. Office,
Dublin Castle,
11th Nov. 1920.

County Inspector,

Information has been received that it is the intention in Sinn Fein circles to employ Irish women in the Commission of outrages.

This should be borne in mind when outrages are being investigated.

It is known that Members of the Cumann na mBan have been trained in the use of firearms, and it is possible that in some cases they have taken active part in the commission of outrages.

(Signed) C.A. Walsh,
D.I.G.

This was a declaration of war on women ordered directly by Dublin Castle and there can be doubt about its authenticity but Ms. Coleman ignored it, perhaps because it could not be dismissed as propaganda. Unlike the German policy, there is no qualification for pregnancy included in this order as was proved in the case of Mrs. Quinn and in a case of rape in Cork city. Ms. Coleman comments on this rape and assault case reported in the *Bulletin*:

"The edition of April 14, 1921 focused on *"Outrages on Irishwomen"* and carried two reports by a Mrs. Healy and a Nellie O'Mahony who claimed respectively to have been raped and sexually assaulted by members of the crown forces. The principal difficulty with this source is the propaganda nature of the *Irish Bulletin*; the veracity of these reports is difficult to judge and cannot be relied upon too heavily in the absence of more concrete evidence."

It took some courage nearly a century ago for any woman to report such crimes and it is acknowledged that the vast majority were therefore never reported. One would assume that an example of such courage was sufficient evidence in itself to verify the facts. Even the rapist concerned acknowledged his victim's courage!

Mrs. Healy had given her name and address, 106 Gerald Griffin Street, Cork City. She and her husband, an ex British soldier, also gave detailed statements to their solicitor, a Mr. McCabe and reported it to Sergeant Normoyle at the local Shandon St. police station. These actions do not leave much doubt about the facts of the case. And they might even prove sufficient to be able to confirm *'more concrete evidence'* today if Ms Coleman took the trouble to undertake some local

research. But she appears happier to dismiss the crime as propaganda and say, in effect, that the Healys were lying. And there is not much evidence of empathy with rape and sexual assault victims by Ms Coleman in this case or the others reported in the *Bulletin*. Clearly, she has other priorities in her accounts of the War of Independence.

It is also worth noting that, as Mrs. Healy's statement makes clear, her pregnancy did not deter the rape, just as pregnancy had not

deterred the killing of Mrs. Quinn.

Ms. Coleman's comments illustrate how necessary it is to read the *"Irish Bulletin"* for a proper understanding of the facts about the War of Independence and it is the only means of countering the partial, distorted views and weasel words that are now prevalent in academia among historians of the period typified by such as Ms Coleman.

Jack Lane

An Account of a Conference, sponsored by the
South Kilkenny Historical Society, held in Mullinavat on 20 May

Should Ireland Have Stayed In The Empire?

CASE FOR LEAVING

The speakers for the first session (*"Easter 1916—the case for and against"*) were Eugene Broderick, Eamon Ó Cuív, Owen Walsh and Pádraig Yeates.

Broderick argued that the 1916 track produced more independence more quickly, against the argument that an uninterrupted Home Rule movement would have delivered independence without bloodshed. He said that the motivation of the 1910 Liberal Government was politically opportunist; that, like the Conservative/Unionist Party which resumed power a few years later, its purpose was not to deliver justice for Ireland. He quoted Lionel Curtis, a British colonial administrator with whom the Free State Government had dealings: *"The English want the Irish to be like dogs running after the British coach"*.

Ó Cuív argued that the violent course of events after 1916 was due to decisions of the British side, and not the Irish who, after 1916, provisionally set out a political path to independence, involving elections, conference and international networking. But by the time the First Dáil met on 21st January 1919, and before ever Dan Breen fired a shot in Soloheadbeg (on 21 Jan. 1919), 39 elected TDs were interned without trial for non-violent political activity. So the political path was blocked by Britain.

As stated by Douglas Hyde at the first meeting of the Gaelic League in (1892?), the issue was whether Ireland was to be British or Irish. By 1916, this translated into Ireland independent or subordinate, deciding its own future for better or worse, or having others decide for it.

In opposing this, John Bruton is not an unconditional anti-violence Sheehy-Skeffington pacifist. He is on the militarist wing of contemporary politics, so his

objections to 1916 and the WoI (War of Independence) do not have moral weight in themselves in the way that Sheehy-Skeffington's stance has. Realistically, the choice in 1916 was fighting for Britain in the trenches, or fighting for Ireland in the GPO.

CASE AGAINST

Owen Walsh is a recent graduate in academic history, and recommended setting aside historical pre-conceptions in favour of an objective, evidence-based approach to the pro's and con's of the 1916 Rising. Much new evidence has come to light, such as Court Martial files, Bureau of Military History, and Pensions files. The focus should be on poverty in Dublin, workers' rights, the suffragette movement, the chequered reality of the actual lives of the actual participants in 1916. They were not saints. Even if we approve of the Rising, we should not disapprove of the Irish involvement in the Great War. We should keep an open mind.

Pádraig Yeates said he had a different message. Lloyd George is pilloried for sending in the Black and Tans. But it was LG who had instituted the Old Age Pension. If it was not already there thanks to LG, would any Irish Government have initiated this? Or Unemployment Benefit? As a result of independence we now have the HSE (Health Service Executive) rather than the NHS (National Health Service). He would gladly trade the one for the other. Dublin's Red Light district did not disappear after 1922. In fact venereal disease peaked in 1932. *"Blaming the Brits"* does not wash. It was our own culture. The Irish Party of John Redmond would not have achieved much. But the replacement parties did not do any better. Progressives like Seán O'Casey and Ernie O'Malley left. Emigration from Ireland exceeded any other state. Ireland had

Independence, but not for them. It was only when Independence was ceded to Europe in 1972 that women achieved equal rights. Things changed when we changed the Union Jack for the Tricolour. But not for the better.

TERRORISM

Following these contributions, Chairman Ed Synnott of South Kilkenny Historical Society initiated a panel discussion by posing the question *"How do you define terrorism?"* Ó Cuív said that in an ideal world everything would be decided by debate, discussion and voting. The new technology of communication should make this easier. All violence is wrong, but when it occurs, it is best dealt with by talking to those involved. We should look at injustices and start putting them right.

Yeates agreed, saying that British policy of *"gun control"* kept the 1916-23 casualty figures in Ireland relatively low. But we should consider what subsequently happened. He himself had been involved in the Republican movement, and, among casualties he personally knew of, most had died at the hands of IRA and other paramilitaries, not the British Army. Violence has not gone away. Broderick said that the War of Independence produced a period of peaceful, democratic, constitutional rule which was practically unmatched in the world.

SECOND SESSION

For the second session of Saturday morning, *"Was it for this that all the blood was shed"*, the panel included David Begg and Noel Whelan, but not Eamon Ó Cuív.

Begg said that 1916 is complex, and talked about Tom Kettle, his father Andrew Kettle, Jim Larkin, William Martin Murphy, the 1913 Lockout, James Connolly (*"Only the Irish working class remains as the incorruptible inheritors of the fight for Irish freedom"*), the involvement of ITGWU members in the Great War British army. He tracked the social input into the 1916 Proclamation, as originating in the constitution of the Citizen Army. Begg sought answers to the puzzle of Connolly's involvement in the Rising (his secret discussions with IRB in January 1916, his dismay at collapse of the Second Socialist International organisation, the confusion that his participation caused to his followers). He observed that the Irish pattern of politics (two and a half parties) never corresponded to the European mainstream. He said it was a great mistake that the Labour Movement stood aloof from the Land Annuity issue in the 1930s. Did Connolly make a mistake in *"joining with the poets"* in 1916, as

Larkin put it. He said Redmond's support for Great War was a tragic mistake. He described his efforts as a Trade Union official to engage with northern loyalists, such as Great War tours etc, and their shared heritage of (. . . violence?..).

Broderick cautioned against the practice of hitching the Rising to various contemporary causes, social or otherwise: "*Patrick Pearse would have paid the water charges.*" "*Patrick Pearse would NOT have paid the water charges.*" Etc. etc. He said that the social element in the Proclamation was marginal and incidental, that the Rising and its Proclamation were primarily about Irish freedom and sovereignty, and that they were ultimately successful in those terms. How people subsequently use their freedom and sovereignty is up to them (us), and we should not seek to pass the buck onto the Rising and its makers.

Whelan reminisced about his Wexford family origins, his work in Fianna Fáil headquarters, "*1916 was complicated*", there is no straight line from 1916 to the present. Fianna Fáil carried forward the social aspect of the Rising. (Begg commented that FF broke from that role in the late 1960s when it entered the service of TACA—monied supporters.)

Walsh commented on the survival of the state through civil war, depression, N.Ireland 1969-94, the 2007 economic crisis. He was glad that the Tricolour and the Rising have been recovered from Provisional Sinn Féin. After the Wol women were "*put back in their box*", but this happened in many countries, along with censorship, prohibition etc.

A COMMENT

Readers will make up their own minds about the merits of the various arguments. Regarding Begg's agonising about Connolly's involvement in 1916: there is no reason for doubt, Connolly supported Germany (as did Larkin in the USA) for social reasons. Lloyd George brought in the Old Age Pension, but the British, French, Russians and Americans were way behind "*our gallant Allies*" in the social field. The War, as a large scale catastrophe involving a large part of the world, was fomented by Britain. What was the point of Connolly trying to get health and benefit reforms for workers if they were to be devoured in the trenches for no good reason? Likewise Yeates and the NHS. While Britain was playing balance-of-power with France, Hitler etc., and setting up mayhem in the Middle East, Africa and India, de Valera was valiantly trying to counter this

Pat Muldowney

AN EDITORIAL COMMENT

Begg's position encapsulates what has always been the fundamental incoherence of Irish labour: small "l" - big "L": the party hardly bears contemplation)

Yeates's position is just absurd. He leaps forward to 1945 for his NHS. What about the 30 years in between? What was life like for English workers in the 1920s and 30s? A miserable lot with a failed General Strike squashed by the army, relentless misery punctuated by glorious failures like Hunger Marches, unbelievable urban slums and degradation (as chronicled in *Wigan Pier*). Maybe there was a joyous side to English working class life in the 1920s-30s, but little evidence of it is apparent.

Dev's Ireland (in the 1930s) was quite a grand and contented place by comparison. Workers defected in their droves to FF. New housing, expanding industrial employment, vocational education, Trade Unionism—all on the rise in a very optimistic atmosphere. Many working class families remember that era with great warmth.

Also, Irish welfare between the wars largely kept pace with British reforms (such as they were, and as a matter of policy), and benefit rates were actually occasionally even ahead of British ones. As for the institutional care system: it was awful—but it was in England as well. But then the destitution of the poorest classes, the under class, was a colonial legacy—at the end of the 19th century Irish Workhouses (enduring legacy of the Famine) had 10 times more inmates per capita than their English counterparts.

Furthermore, Irish emigration in the 1920-30s decidedly did not direct itself to England: (regarded by the poorer Irish emigrant at the time as leaping from poverty into an even worse hell hole) but to the US and Australia where Irish communities had established themselves with pathways into well paid work etc. Mass Irish emigration to England only started again in WW2, with its extravagantly paid wartime employment boom, and subsequently to the welfare state that followed.

The era of British boom welfare versus Irish misery was at best the period from the 1950s to the early 1960s. By the late 1960s Irish workers were back in an optimistic mood, the economy was booming, wages rising fast etc. People were returning from England in their droves at this time. At that time the only really big advantage

Britain had was the NHS and marginally better welfare. By the 1990s Irish welfare provision substantially passed out British levels and remains better.

Yeates spoke about 'women'. The social treatment of unmarried mothers was hardly any different. Equal pay in England only came in in 1971; Ireland followed just three years later, in 1974—hardly a massive gap. On other women's rights: things like divorce etc were way beyond the reach of working class people in Britain also until the 1970s. Abortion and Contraception were the big things England had over Ireland since the 1970s. But these are moral, not 'rights' issues.

So where's all the big deal?

Yeates is playing on a myth that England had a welfare state in 1922 and Irish workers were fooled into turning their backs on it (an extreme case of "*false consciousness*"?). This is claptrap and he only gets away with it because people in Ireland have been massaged into total ignorance of the true history of De Valera's Republic.

The most lamentable aspect of Yeatsism is that it has got a tight hold on the minds of the Irish labour movement and women activists (see their combined horrendous anti-1916 diatribe in the recent "*Seven Women*" RTE film). The hard core of the Irish revisionist movement has shifted, and, following the ideological defeat of Trinity College ('Our War', Hart etc.), has relocated itself with its "*hard gospel*" right at the very centre of the Irish Left—not amongst the anti-austerity street politicians, but the labour movement establishment itself. Even Liberty Hall is celebrating Connolly in a very ambiguous manner.

There is a final point to be made. As an Imperial Power, Britain has enjoyed a standard of living subsidised by other societies around the world. Irish Republicanism broke with that, and Ireland is a better place on account of it. Ireland is internationally recognised for its anti-Imperialist stance.

Of course Empire was and is profitable to the Imperial Power. Indeed, Ireland is one of the societies that continued to subsidise British living standards, even after Independence: for instance, the Irish Banking System until quite recently used to simply lodge its deposits in the City of London for a nominal return.

Even though direct Colonialism may have passed, golden pathways remain from the erstwhile Empire, bringing financial and commercial advantages to Britain. ■

In Praise Of 77 Women Of The Easter Rising

The concluding sentences of authors Mary McAuliffe and Liz Gillis in their book, *Richmond Barracks 1916: We Were There—77 Women of the Easter Rising*, read:

"They, these seventy-seven women were there during Easter Week 1916: their lives, their activism, their contributions and those of the almost 200 other women who were there, are central to the history of the Rising. Their histories deserve to be known." (p 261)

Indeed they do, and this thoroughly researched book pays long overdue tribute to the 77 women arrested by the British Army and detained in Richmond Barracks in the wake of the Easter Rising.

In a Facebook posting of my May *Irish Political Review* article on Constance Markievicz, Jim Fitzpatrick, the internationally acclaimed artist of revolutionary portraits—from Che Guevara to Connolly and to Markievicz herself—writes:

"Time to fight back. All year there have been vicious attacks on the patriots of 1916 and especially on the Countess. Blind to any facts they rage against this amazing woman fighter who devoted her later years to the poor of Dublin. No wonder the revisionist knobheads hate her more than all the 1916 men put together."

McAuliffe and Gillis provide more evidence of how extreme was this loathing of Markievicz:

"Countess Markievicz was the woman with whom the authorities and the media were most concerned immediately after the Rising... The *Irish Times* of 28 April 1916 refers to the arrest of the 'prominent' Countess Marckievicz (sic) while 'fantastically dressed in male attire'... In New York Sidney Gifford (sister of insurgent Nellie Gifford) described how reports from England described Markievicz as a 'sinister figure who had a room in her house entirely filled with human skulls'. Headlines such as 'Countess shot Six' and 'Woman Rebel leader' indicate the discomfort generally felt about combatant women" (pp 251-2).

But the purpose of the book is to get way beyond any preoccupation with Markievicz alone, or with even the wider, but nonetheless limited, subject-matter of Roy Foster's *Vivid Faces* (2014). McAuliffe and Gillis observe:

"Roy Foster has written about a new generation of young revolutionaries, the

'vivid faces' who rejected much of the cautious constitutional nationalism of their parents' generation... Among this revolutionary generation he focuses on the elite middle classes, those women (and men) who were engaged, among other issues, with feminism, socialism and nationalism... However, this middle class, educated, politicised cohort which Foster concentrates on, were a small minority of the women who were participants in the Rising. Alongside these leadership groups were younger, working class women (and men) influenced by ideas of nation, gender and class freedom whose contributions and activism also helped bring about the startling transformation of Ireland that began in 1916" (p 16).

The authors themselves had already been quite specific:

"Among the advanced nationalist women who were Citizen Army members were Countess Markievicz, Helena Molony, Madeleine French-Mullen, Marie Perolz and Kathleen Lynn. In addition to these middle class (and one aristocrat) women, most of the other female activists in Liberty Hall were working class women such as Rosie Hackett, Jinny Shanahan, Bridget Brady, Bridget Goff, Martha Kelly and others who had joined the women's section of the Citizen Army in 1913 and 1914. Eighteen women from the Citizen Army were arrested during and after the Rising." (pp 11-12).

They further elaborated:

"Although the middle class is often regarded as the class that produced the Easter Rising, the majority of the seventy-seven women arrested were lower middle class or working class women. Of the twenty-four women members of the Irish Citizen Army who took part in the Rising, eighteen were arrested... (with) thirteen (of them) more representative of the working class women... politicised through involvement in trade unionism" (p 31).

The individual biographies are quite fascinating. Take the sisters Annie and Emily Norgrove, arrested following the surrender of the City Hall ICA garrison in which they had served. They were from a Protestant working class nationalist family, whose ICA lieutenant father George also served in both the GPO and City Hall garrisons, while their mother Maria served in the Jacob's garrison. During the Treaty War, George, Annie and her brother Robert also served with

the IRA. As recently as 2010 the grenades and artillery shells they had stored were discovered under the kitchen floor of what had once been the Norgrove family home.

But the radicalism of the 77 Richmond Barracks women prisoners was not limited to the ICA 18. The authors highlight the radicalising roles of *Inghinidhe na hEireann* and the Irish Women's Franchise League:

"A number of Inghinidhe women were also involved in the formation of Sinn Féin in 1905, the first nationalist organisation where women could hold executive offices alongside men." (p 19).

"The failure of the IWFL and other suffrage groups to get women's right to vote included in the 1912 Home Rule Bill created an unbridgeable gulf between most IWFL supporters and the Irish Parliamentary Party. Many women soon became more involved with Sinn Féin and later with more advanced nationalist organisations." (p 20).

"Cumann na mBan split (as did the Irish Volunteers) over John Redmond's call for the Irish Volunteers to join the British Army and fight on the Western Front. In October 1914 the Cumann na mBan national executive released a manifesto which stated that '*we came into being to advance the cause of Irish liberty... We feel that ... to urge ... Irish Volunteers to enlist in the British Army cannot be regarded as consistent with the work we have set ourselves to do*'. Many of the moderate members who supported Redmond left the organisation at this juncture. As Jenny Wyse Power later wrote, the departure of the moderates '*cleared the road*' for the work of Cumann na mBan." (p 24).

Post-Rising, their work was no less significant in the December 1918 General Election. The authors relate:

"Cumann na mBan were determined to play their part in a successful election for Sinn Féin... The size of the electoral gain by Sinn Féin, taking 73 out of 105 seats, indicates that women voters supported the party to the detriment of the Irish Parliamentary Party—perhaps, as was written in the (suffragist) *Irish Citizen*, there was '*an element of ironic justice in the fact that women, whose claims (for the right to vote) it (the IPP) so long opposed with such unbending hostility, should have played so large a part in its final annihilation*'." (pp 103-4).

And they remained loyal to the Republic that had been the free choice of the electorate, evoking, in turn, the most extreme expressions of misogynist loathing:

"The arguments against the Treaty swayed the majority of Cumann na mBan, including most of the seventy-women... While a few ... supported the Treaty, the majority were opposed to it... Many of

the seventy-seven women were arrested during the Civil War and returned to Kilmainham Gaol where they had spent ten days in May 1916... WT Cosgrave, President of the Free State Executive, said in a speech that, unhappily for Ireland, 'die-hards are women whose ecstasies at their extremest can find no outlet so satisfying as destruction'... (pp 257-9).

The heart of the book is the 144 pages devoted to the individual biographies of the 77 arrested—sorted by the four garrisons in which they served—as well as "other women arrested". But the perils of being unable to see the wood for the trees are impressively avoided by the authors in their preceding 106 page narrative, providing an account of how each of those garrisons functioned during the Rising, with exceptionally readable clarity of military history detail. And, as for the 77 women themselves, the authors left no stone unturned in trying to find as much information as possible in respect of each of them. Only in the case of three of the arrested was it impossible to find any organisational or further information, other than the fact that they had been arrested. The result is a wonderful achievement of which the authors can be justly proud.

I myself am delighted to have been of some assistance in the case of one biography, that of Barbara Retz, of whom the authors themselves write:

"Women such as (*inter alia*)... Barbara Retz are rarely if ever mentioned in the history books, yet they deserve their place." (p 7).

"Not all Dublin citizens were opposed to the Volunteers and their attempts to free Ireland. While being marched to Richmond Barracks, many locals from the James' Street area up to Inchicore did not throw food and spit at them as has been widely supposed. Instead several of the crowd cheered on the men and women. Lizzie Mulhall was one such person. As a member of Cumann na mBan she was cheering her comrades as they marched to imprisonment in Richmond Barracks. It seems that her cheers drew the attention of the British military and she was promptly arrested. She was taken prisoner and held in Richmond Barracks and Kilmainham Gaol." (p 232).

"Lizzie Mulhall and Barbara Retz, who had been arrested for supporting the insurgents as they walked to Richmond Barracks, were released on 8 May" (p 88).

But who was Barbara Retz / Reitz? Unlike Lizzie Mulhall, she had no known organisational affiliation. My attention was drawn to her name by an appeal on the project website which sought any information, new or additional, on the 77. I wrote

to the authors wondering if she could have been related to the German pork butcher George Reitz, whose South Circular Road shop had been ransacked by a racist Redmondite mob in August 1914, but for whom I could find no 1911 census entry for that premises. The authors had, however, located the census entry for Barbara at her home in nearby Dufferin Avenue, living with her husband George, who was indeed a butcher. That clinched the connection. The 1914 Redmondite mob attacks on Dublin's German community had been completely ignored by historians until I described them at the 2001 Douglas Hyde Summer School in a paper entitled *James Connolly Re-assessed*, published as a pamphlet by the Aubane Historical Society in March 2006. A May Day 2006 lecture entitled *The Justification of James Connolly*, included in the September 2006 SIPTU booklet *James Connolly, Liberty Hall & The 1916 Rising*, covered the same ground. I highlighted therein the *Irish Worker* eyewitness account by Michael Mullen of the attack on the Reitz shop, his expression of solidarity with the German butcher, and his call on the Irish Citizen Army to prevent any repeat of such attacks on German nationals. I have written further on such events in the August 2014 ("*Centenary Commemoration of a Redmondite Racist Rampage*") and the January 2016 ("*Colum what you like—but not pro-German!*") issues of *Irish Political Review*. See www.indymedia.ie/article/76008?userlanguage=ga&save_prefs=true to download the 2006 May Day lecture.

So, a reciprocal gesture of solidarity from Barbara Retz / Reitz with the Irish Citizen Army would indeed have made sense. And historians Mary McAuliffe and Liz Gillis are to be applauded for not alone pointing out that she deserves her place in a 1916 history book, but for delivering on that injunction themselves in the course of their own wonderful book.

Manus O'Riordan

IN MEMORY OF BARBARA RETZ / REITZ—1916 DETAINEE

[An excerpt from *Richmond Barracks 1916: We Were There—77 Women of the Easter Rising*, by Mary McAuliffe and Liz Gillis, by kind permission of the authors.]

Barbara Retz —Born: Germany; Organisation: Unknown—has the most unusual surname among the seventy-seven women. (Many thanks to Manus O' Riordan whose research steered the authors

in the direction of the Reitz family butchers and the connection with the Irish Citizen Army.) There is only one family in the 1911 census which is probably hers. In 1911 George and Babette Retz lived at Dufferin Avenue off the South Circular Road in Dublin. In the late nineteenth century, pork butchers from around Stuttgart had migrated to Britain and then on to Ireland. In Dublin, quite a number, including Haffner, Olhausen, Speidel and Mogerley, ran very successful pork businesses, many in the South Circular Road area. According to the 1911 census, George and Babette Retz were both born in Germany and were originally Protestants. George was a pork butcher with his own shop. During this period there were over 1,000 Germans in Ireland, mostly living in Dublin. Interestingly the Retz family became members of the Church of the Latter Day Saints or Mormons. On a single night in 1914, several businesses were attacked by an anti-German mob. On 17 August 1914, the *Irish Independent* reported that the German Pork Butchers of Reitz / Retz and Lang "had a rough time on Saturday night". A mob of "youths" attacked the shops, breaking the windows and leaving the shops wrecked. In addition over £20 was taken from the till. In seeking compensation for the damage George Retz said that he had lived in Britain for twenty six years and was not eligible for military service in the German Army. In the *Irish Independent* the writer Padraic Colum condemned the attack, writing that he hoped "there are few Irish men or women who have read without indignation the account of unprovoked attacks upon German shops in our capital and in other towns in Ireland. What have these defenceless traders done to the citizens of Dublin? ... I remember when the Anglo-Irish and the English universities mocked Irish civilisation ... it was from the German universities that the word went forth that made our culture respected".

Interestingly *The Irish Worker*, the labour newspaper (edited by James Connolly), also condemned the outrage. On 22 August 1914, the newspaper reported that the mob were indulging in "German baiting" and that the authorities had turned a blind eye, noting that the Dublin Metropolitan Police had actually arrested George Retz and allowed the destruction of his shop. The paper made it clear that if the homes and businesses of Germans were attacked again, "an appeal to the men of the Transport Union and the Citizen Army to act as a guard for their houses would not fail to produce good results". This connection between the

protection offered by the ITGWU and the Citizen Army to German businesses may be the reason Barbara / Babette Retz was arrested and held in Richmond Barracks and Kilmainham Gaol after the Easter Rising 1916. Barbara Retz was released on 8 May.

How Barbara Retz came to be arrested or what her involvement was in either Cumann na mBan or the Citizen Army is

not clear from the records. She may simply have been in the wrong place at the wrong time and swept up in the chaos and arrests post-Rising. There is also no evidence that any of the family were involved in republican activities after the Rising. Retz and her family remained in Ireland until 1948 when they travelled to New York. She died on 25 May 1948 in New York.

Mary McAuliffe and Liz Gillis

Two Nations Once Again

Is Republicanism the same thing as Anti-Partitionism? Does a detour, on the way to ending Partition, mean the end of Republicanism? Anti-Provo Republican Dissidents think that it does and now it seems others are following.

In the last few weeks Gerry Adams equated Republicanism with simple Anti-Partitionism in trying to minimise the West Belfast vote for *People Before Profit*. The 'Two Nations' label he put on them did them no harm: it appears. PBP denied they were "*Two Nationist*" on the basis that they were an all-Ireland entity. So maybe the label was better applied to the SDLP? However, PBP denied they were "*two nationists*", although they are apparently not going to be "*Nationalist*" in their designation at Stormont but "*Other*".

Irish News journalist Patrick Murphy has blamed the Two Nations theory for the poor showing of Nationalists in the Assembly election in his *Irish News* (14.5.16) column:

"They will find it difficult to reverse the trend, because by accepting that unionists are British and not Irish, they abandoned the political argument for Irish unity. The two-nations theory is now the bedrock of the border."

Again, confusion over Partitionism and Two-Nations.

This is history repeating itself (as farce?) within Northern Nationalism.

An *Irish News* editorial, produced at the time Lloyd George unveiled his Partitionist Government of Ireland Bill of 1920, is very pertinent to all this. It was headlined '*Father O'Flanagan's Partition Scheme*'—a reference to the view of the 1916 Sinn Fein Vice-President that there were two Irish Nations and that Nationalists had better take account of that fact if they were to successfully establish a single state on the island. Here is the *Irish News* in 1919:

"Lloyd George was generous; he found an Irish father for the Partitionisation plan; his speech might have been an utter failure... had he not commandeered the Rev. Michael O'Flanagan to the Partitionist front and turned the batteries of Sinn Fein's Vice-President against the principle of Irish National Unity with so much effect that the most phlegmatic Saxon became impressed... The case for Partition was made out for the English Prime Minister by the Rev. Father O'Flanagan. If the Vice-President of Sinn Fein had not written and published the fatal letter of June, 1916, which was recited against Irish nationhood at Westminster with such remarkable effect last night, the necessity for discussing and rejecting the scheme propounded by the Prime Minister might never have arisen. Father O'Flanagan wrote and published that letter two months after the Dublin Insurrection had been quelled in the blood of its leaders; he wrote and published his eloquent exposition of Ireland's 'dual nationhood' at the moment when the leaders of the Irish National Parliamentary Party were making a desperate attempt to rescue the country from chaos and ruin by framing a temporary arrangement under which peace and the possibility of constructive national work might be secured pending the end of the war. Mr. John Redmond and his colleagues never for a moment contemplated the permanent division of Ireland into two fragments, nor did the idea of acknowledging the existence of 'two nations' in this island ever enter their minds. They were negotiating on the basis of a strictly temporary arrangement when Father O'Flanagan's letter appeared. Thereafter, Lord Lansdowne and his friends in the House of Lords insisted on making the tentative arrangement permanent and binding for all time. The words in which Mr. John Redmond rejected the heresy of Permanent Partition may now be recalled...

"Mr. Redmond spoke as follows:—' We took the position of saying that in the middle of the war he could not expect the Parliament of the country seriously to take up the final and permanent settlement of these proposals, and when the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary of State

for War, Mr. Lloyd George, put this proposition before us it was presented to us merely as a temporary war measure. I do not believe that for one moment he ever thought that this proposal was to contain a permanent settlement of any of these great problems. It was put before us as a temporary emergency or war measure, not to settle any of these great problems, which could not be settled in existing circumstances, but merely to bridge over the period between now and the permanent settlement. As such it was accepted by us, and as such it was submitted to our followers; and I repeat today... we cannot consent, and no fair-minded man can expect us to consent, now to vary that agreement by making the whole future of these Ulster counties the subject of a permanent and ensuring settlement such as Lord Lansdowne demanded in his speech.'

"During the same debate Mr. Devlin declared, even more emphatically, that he 'would never agree to the permanent exclusion of Ulster'. That was the position taken up by the Irish Nationalist representatives of 1916 when the question of an arrangement to end with the war was under discussion. Nothing has occurred since then to alter the convictions which inspired those vigorous and uncompromising repudiations of the destructive 'two nations' theory; but three and a half years later Mr. Lloyd George comes before the British Parliament, the Irish nation, and the world with an elaborate scheme for permanently disrupting the country; and he commends that scheme to Nationalist Ireland and to the Irish race on the authority of the Rev. Father O'Flanagan...

"Ireland is to be split, with all possible scientific accuracy, into two sections divided by alleged racial and existing religious dissonances... no Irish nationalists attended to listen to the Prime Minister's long explanation of his reasons for adopting Father O'Flanagan's full theory. We do not suppose he will ever seek to put into practice; if he does he will fail" (23.12.19).

The context of the Fr. O'Flanagan letter was Asquith's offer to Redmond in 1916, its acceptance by Devlin, and the conference of Nationalist representatives on Black Friday at St. Mary's Hall.

Three days before the conference a letter written by Fr. O'Flanagan was published in *The Freeman's Journal*, urging acceptance of Asquith's proposal for temporary exclusion of six Counties.

Father O'Flanagan's "*two nation heresy*" went as follows:

"We can point out that Ireland is a nation with a definite geographical boundary... National and geographical boundaries scarcely ever coincide;

geography would make one nation of Spain and Portugal history has made two nations of them. Geography did its best to make one nation of Norway and Sweden; history has succeeded in making two nations of them. If a man were to contrast the political map of Europe out of its physical map he would find himself groping in the dark. Geography has worked hard to make one nation out of Ireland; history has worked against it. The island of Ireland and the national unit of Ireland simply do not coincide. In the last analysis the test of nationality is the wish of the people... The Unionists of Ulster have never transferred their love and allegiance to Ireland. They may be Irish, using Ireland as a geographical term, but they are not Irish in the national sense..."We claim the right to decide what is to be our nation. We refuse them the same right. After three hundred years England has begun to despair of making us love her by force. And so we are anxious to start where England left off. And we are going to compel Antrim and Down to love us by force" (FJ 20.6.16).

Father O'Flanagan had the courage to recognise the complication that confronted Nationalist Ireland if it wished to build a single state on the island. That complication was there long before Father O'Flanagan recognised it and would have been there even if he had never acknowledged its existence. However, *The Irish News* wished to pretend that it would not have existed and it would not have come to the attention of the British Statesmen, who wished to make something of it, if it were not for Father O'Flanagan's Two Irish Nations.

Father O'Flanagan's suggestion of the existence of Two Irish Nations was subjected to the same misrepresentation at the moment of his letter, as it was in 1919 and has been ever since. He was arguing that Ireland had an inalienable right to independence and that should be immediately recognised by Britain. Having conceded that right, it was then up to Nationalist Ireland to obtain the consent of those who felt themselves to be part of the second Irish Nation to be a part of an Irish State.

Fr. O'Flanagan understood nationality to lie with the subject, rather than being an external imposition. If anyone wishes to know another's nationality, wrote O'Flanagan, the ultimate test is "*Ask him*" (*The Leader* 12.8.16; also see Denis Carroll, *They Have Fooled You Again—Michael O'Flanagan, Priest, Republican, Social Critic* for a biography of the Gaelic Leaguer; contributor to *The Catholic Bulletin* and *An Phoblacht*; Vice-President

of Sinn Fein from 1917 and President of Sinn Fein, 1933-5; advocate for the separation of Church and State; and defender of the Spanish Republic against Fascism.)

Fr. O'Flanagan was not "*Partitionist*" and was not arguing that Ireland should be dismembered. He was in favour of a united Ireland and wanted to bring it about through recognition of the facts of the matter that were preventing it.

Father O'Flanagan made explicit recognition of the two Irish Nations in order to try to overcome the complication in Ulster. That was a prerequisite for a functional policy on the issue. John Redmond and Joe Devlin would never take the necessary first step of recognising the national difference and as a result they never had a functional policy on Partition. And it was their policy rather than O'Flanagan's that tended to be passed down to modern Sinn Fein.

The Devlinite *Irish News* persisted in making the point that Sinn Fein's 1918 election victory was responsible for the Partition of Ireland. But it was against Redmond and Devlin's Home Rule proposal that the Ulster Protestants signed the Covenant, set up and armed the UVF, the Curragh mutiny occurred and civil war was promised through "*the full grammar of anarchy*" by British Unionism.

It was in reaction to the threat of Home Rule that Ulster Protestants most revealed that they believed themselves to be another nation.

If Devlin did not know that some form of exclusion was inevitable by this time, he was living in a land of make-believe. He, himself, had countenanced it and carried it among those affected, against substantial opposition, at St. Mary's Hall, while wishfully thinking that this would have no bearing on the situation after the War.

And yet *The Irish News* believed the formal agreement of Ireland's representatives to Partition, however temporarily they might have believed it to be, would have less effect than a letter from a member of a small party without a single MP!

One can only conclude it must have been that Devlin could not face being the man who agreed to the Partition of his country. He would "*never accept it*", even though he must have known he had no means in preventing it and he would also probably work with it.

Because Devlin would not admit to the Protestant complication that made Two

Nations in Ireland, he was open to Lloyd George's counter-argument that Ireland was not a Nation itself and did not come under the Wilson Principles because it could not as a single unit and agree what it wanted.

Of course, Lloyd George was just making a debating point that hid Britain's real reason for not allowing 'self-determination' to Ireland—that the Irish wanted more than Britain was willing to concede to it and it just would not allow self-determination to Ireland in the first place. He was using the 'Ulster' complication (and Fr. O'Flanagan) to obscure the issue.

But he was able to do this because of the position of Devlin and *The Irish News*, whereas he would not have been able to do so if Fr. O'Flanagan's understanding had been widespread within the Nationalist movement.

In the end Devlinite politics amounted to this: wanting to maintain Ireland as a single unit, with national recognition through a local parliament, within the UK and Empire. But that was something that proved to be unrealisable between 1912 and 1918 and it was definitely an impossibility by 1919. And what did Joe Devlin matter to Britain by 1919? It had wrecked his party and left him washed up on the back benches of its parliament—an inconsequential remnant of the lost world of Imperial Ireland, who would be thanked now and again for the recruiting work he did in the War.

Lloyd George was a clever politician—one of the cleverest. He must have realised that the inability of Nationalist Ireland to deal with the Ulster complication could be utilised in the Imperial interest in dealing with the demand for self-determination. He knew that he must show he was addressing this aspiration. And if this was the case with Devlin, it was to be even more the case with Sinn Fein, which stood for a greater demand than the Parliamentary Party ever did. Just as 'Ulster' had defeated Devlin, it also had future possibilities for leverage over the Republicans, so long as they persisted in their desire to incorporate it. After all, knowing someone's desire for something that can be kept from them is a sure way to manipulating them.

There are signs that Sinn Fein understands this. McGuinness said in a radio interview at the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis of 2012:

"I recognise that there are one million people on this island who are British and let me state here and now that as a proud Irish Republican I not only recognise the unionist and British identity, I respect it.

People who think that a new Ireland, a united Ireland can be built without unionist participation, involvement and leadership are deluded... The war is over and we are in the process of building a new Republic" (*Irish Independent*, 23.6.12).

This was, de facto, the 'two nations' view of the Northern situation as put by the Irish Communist Organisation (more conveniently known as 'Athol St.') in 1969.

The ICO, as an active element in Northern politics, had its origin, along with the Provos, behind the West Belfast barricades in August 1969. Republicanism was almost dead as a movement in 1969. As far as it was present, it called itself "*Republican Socialism*". But Republican Socialism had no currency when the masses were impelled into action by the events of mid-August. Socialist appeals could not cross the barricades in a situation in which the sense of nationalist difference was uppermost.

The ICO therefore said that the fact of national difference must be acknowledged in order for there to be any practical possibility of cross-community *rapprochement*. It proposed this to the Dublin Establishment, which was very anti-Partitionist in its rhetoric at the time. Taoiseach Lynch issued a formal rejection of the proposal at the Fianna Fail Ard Fheis about a month later.

The Republican Socialist IRA of 1969 became the Officials, or Stickies, in 1970, and it condemned both the "*two-nationists*" and the new Republican body that began to organise itself on the evident realities of Northern life. It condemned the Provos as sectarian bourgeois nationalists in the pay of the Dublin Establishment. And it condemned the ICO as Imperialist. And then, in the course of about a decade, its members entered the Dublin Establishment, qualifying for entry by the vehemence of their condemnation of the Provos.

The Provos also condemned the "*two nationists*"—or some of them did. In 1972, when military action was at its most intense, the *Republican News* (April) derided the "*two nationism*" being published down in Athol St. Liam Mac's page denounced the ICO as a "*true blue unionist organisation*" (30.4.72). But there were also others who knew better, Ruairi O Bradaigh being one of them.

The *Workers Weekly* (Athol St: a precursor of the present *Irish Political Review*) replied to *Republican News* that—

"In August 1969 it contributed more to the defence of Catholic areas than some bodies with very great pretensions. As a consequence of its involvement in this it

was led to do some serious thinking about the developments that led to August 1969, and about the general national question. It came to the conclusion that there was no validity in the 'one nation' dogma which it had taken from the Catholic bourgeoisie. There were no national ties between the Catholic and Protestant communities. They were two distinct historical communities. They could form a common state by agreement, but for either to assert national rights over the other was completely undemocratic... Furthermore, we have observed that for all practical purposes nobody believes in the 'one nation' theory. Everybody, be he Republican or Unionist, who makes practical political calculations reckons the Protestant and Catholic to be distinct and separate communities... The inevitable outcome of the national conflict will be a *compromise between the two nations*" (*Workers' Weekly* 5.5.72).

The view of the Dublin Establishment of the early 1970s was that Ulster Unionism was a kind of illusion that would soon be blown away, or a delusion that would be rectified by a sharp shock. It saw the North as being run by a feudal aristocracy that was manipulating the masses by means of an obsolete form of religion that had somehow dragged on from the 17th century and would soon be overcome by modern fashion. Brendan Clifford was derided for mistaking this concoction, that was bound to collapse, for a nation. He replied in a pamphlet, published about that time, that he was sure the Ulster Unionist morale would long outlast the morale of Dublin Establishment anti-Partitionism. That was borne out over subsequent decades.

Dublin Governments in the new millennium have even less understanding of basic facts of life in the North than they had in the 1960s and 1970s. The Provos grew in strength by coping with facts. And they have long coped with the fact that the difference running through the North is a national difference, and that it must be worked around.

Dissident Republican intellectual Anthony McIntyre expressed the opinion that anti-Partitionism is Republicanism, and that any admission of a national complication in the North abandons Republicanism:

"Republicanism is dead in my view because it lacks the capacity to overcome the bedrock of partition—the refusal of the unionists to consent. Republicanism as we knew it had a coercive attitude to unionism. Republicanism sought to coerce the Brits out of Ireland and the unionists into a united Ireland. It failed absolutely and nobody yet has put forward

a plausible strategy for making coercion work. And once republicanism abandons coercion and acquiesces in the consent principle it is no longer republicanism, but merely embracing the Brit/unionist/constitutional nationalist means of getting the Brits to leave and getting the unionists into a united Ireland... The unionist question is the central question and one that can't be wished away. The unbridgeable cleavage between the British state and republicanism was not on whether Ireland should or should not be united. It was on the terms it would be united. The Brits insisted on the partition/consent principle. Republicanism dissolved itself in order to acquiesce in the Brit position. Once the consent principle is accepted it is an acknowledgement that partition has a democratic basis and is therefore legitimate. That is something which is irreconcilable with the republicanism we knew... There are only two ways to unite the country: coercion of the North or consent. The republican position is one of coercion. The British state's position is one of consent. The coercive position does not have to be one of armed struggle. The Brits or the international community could arrive at a conclusion that the six counties are Irish territory and should therefore be returned... Republicanism can do everything... apart from signing up to the consent principle which legitimises partition. The entire philosophical basis of republicanism is that... no minority on the island has the right to rupture the national unity and that to recognise the consent/partition principle is to give them that right" (From the *Pensive Quill*, September 2014).

Academic history is doctrinaire and merges conveniently with doctrinaire notions of Republicanism. And it contrasts with Sinn Fein's understanding of social reality, of the "*bulks of actual things*", as Pearse once put it, in relation to the substance of the Northern Protestants.

What was it that Wolfe Tone actually said? He did not say: There are no Anglicans, Dissenters and Catholics, only Irishmen. He said his aim was to bring it about that Anglicans, Dissenters and Catholics would all become citizens of an Irish nation. He wanted to make them into Irishmen because the nation was what was becoming the general form of socio-political organisation.

That surely was what Martin Mc Guinness set out to do.

McIntyre said Republicanism was dead because the Republican War to knock down the British State in the Six Counties and set up an all-Ireland state failed in that object, and that what it succeeded in doing counted for nothing.

The War failed in one object and

succeeded in another. It caused the British State to exert pressure on the Protestant community to submit to a re-arrangement of the internal mode of government in the North. That rearrangement gave the Catholic community a guaranteed position in public life which enabled the Republican cause to be pursued Constitutionally.

McIntyre said that Republicanism is Anti-Partitionism pure and simple, and that it was a matter of "*all or nothing*". If an interim settlement, that was much more than nothing, was achievable as a result of the military action, it should not have been achieved or accepted. The Republicans who achieved it, and used it as ground for achieving Irish unity by other means, killed Republicanism.

The right thing for Republicans to have done was to admit defeat, plead guilty to having waged an unjust war, and walk away from the situation.

The revisionist historians depict Republicanism as an elitist ideology that despises the people. That was a caricature of the Republicanism of the past, but it seems to be true of the rejectionist Republicanism that sees no value in the interim settlement which greatly improved the political and social position of the Catholic community, and which that community had experienced as a victory that opened the way to further development.

At the time of the 1998 Agreement McIntyre wrote an article for the *Guardian* headlined "*We, the IRA, have failed*". What failed was the One Nationism on which the War was launched in 1970. But that denial of national diversity within the North was not an IRA position particularly. It was the general position of nationalist Ireland as a whole, from the President and the Taoiseach downwards—barring Athol St. (and some isolated individual voices, like Desmond Fennell). The Provisional leadership felt its way towards an interim settlement taking account of the fact of national difference within the North. McIntyre and his colleagues continued in denial of that fact.

"The republican position is one of coercion. The British state's position is one of consent... Republicanism can do everything... apart from signing up to the consent principle which legitimises partition. The entire philosophical basis of republicanism is that... no minority on the island has the right to rupture the national unity" (*Pensive Quill*, September 2014).

There was a war between the British State and the Provisional IRA on the issue

of uniting Ireland by force. If the War had not been fought with the British State, it would have been fought with a military force of the Ulster Protestant community. That was the case on the island in 1919, and in the North in 1970.

Redmond denied that *Ulster Would Fight*, and he expected the British Army to bring it into line for him.

Sinn Fein in those times was not so certain that Ulster would not fight. It knew that the British Army would not force 'Ulster' into an all-Ireland political structure. And there were prominent members of Sinn Fein who did not see the coercing of 'Ulster' into the Republic as being Republican in spirit.

The Vice-President of Sinn Fein recognised in 1916 that:

"The Unionists of Ulster have never transferred their love and allegiance to Ireland. They may be Irelanders, using Ireland as a geographical term, but they are not Irish in the national sense..." (Fr. Michael O'Flanagan as reported in *Freeman's Journal*, 20.6.1916).

The question now is whether the political force generated out of the segment of the Irish Nation which was trapped on the wrong side of the Border, and subjected to hostile government by the Unionist Irish nation for 50 years, can succeed where the one-nationist Anti-Partitionism of the 26 County state failed so completely.

The Constitution of the 26 County state denied the legitimacy of British sovereignty in the 6 County secession until 1998, and it never paid any attention to the anomalous form of government established by the British State in its Six County region. The North was undemocratically governed even by British standards, regardless of the question of legitimate sovereignty, but Dublin Governments never made that an issue with Britain.

The Southern sovereignty claim was repealed in 1998, with IRA approval, but no definite view of what Northern Ireland was then was ever published by the Southern State or its major political parties. The sovereignty claim was replaced by an "*aspiration*" to unity, but no political engagement with Ulster Unionism with a view to achieving that aspiration followed.

The first nationalist political force that ever came to a close political engagement with Ulster Unionism is Provisional Sinn Fein.

CONSENT?

As the position of the nationalist com-

munity in the north strengthens with Republicans in government under the 1998 Agreement, and the nationalist population increases proportionately, the consent principle with regard to unity will possibly become a live political issue. The expectation of this was a factor in the making of the 1998 settlement. Consent was not a pig in a poke.

The Unionists chose their ground. They chose, or agreed to, a kind of minimal Home Rule, connected with Britain but detached from British politics.

Unionism has not flourished under this form of Unionist Home Rule. The nationalist minority of a third in 1921 maintained itself for half a century, and it has done much better than maintain itself since Unionism threw itself into crisis by its conduct in 1969.

Sinn Fein has signed up to consent. So has the SDLP. (It is too often forgotten that the 'Constitutional nationalists' rejected the principle of consent for most of this period, calling it the "Unionist veto".)

Which consent is meant—*Unionist* consent or *Northern Ireland* consent?

The constitutional position under the Good Friday Agreement is that, once a first Border Poll is held, it will be repeated every seven years. That provision has kept the peace since 1998 and it is impossible to see it abrogated.

Some people are trying to move the goalpost from Northern Ireland consent to Unionist consent. They want to reassert the principle that was adopted in 1912 that there must be an agreement acceptable to Unionism. In the end that meant Ulster Unionism.

But Unionism chose Six Counties as its safe haven, and surely the ground on which consent must operate is the Six County voting population.

Will Unionism agree to that, if there is a danger of the consent vote going against it?

History is not yet at an end.

Pat Walsh

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Ken Livingstone, anti-Semitism, and the state of Israel

The charge against Livingstone is that he has brought the party into disrepute. From what I have been gathering, his accusers claim that he has done this by expressing remarks that are considered anti-Semitic and racist. However, the wolves who were first to the prey (John Mann *et al*) have found that their teeth have been somewhat blunted by the realisation that what Livingstone said has been accurate (more or less), and the main campaign is now pushing for his exclusion from the Labour Party based on two main premises.

Firstly, that, by introducing the association of Hitler with Zionism in the context of the ongoing controversy (which in its latest manifestation is the remarks made on twitter by Naz Shah), he was introducing something that was extraneous to the debate and deliberately designed to cause offence to the Jewish people. In other words, the accuracy of what he has said is not challenged—Peter Beaumont in the *Guardian* on Saturday goes the furthest in challenging the accuracy of Livingstone's position (<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/apr/30/livingstone-muddies-history-to-support-hitler-and-zionism-claims>)—but, in general, there has been no convincing challenge to what Livingstone has said about the relationship between the Hitler Government and the leadership of the German Zionist movement.

The accusation is now relying on the claim that in commenting on Naz Shah's alleged anti-Semitism Livingstone did not restrict himself to the question of her alleged anti-Semitic remarks but instead gratuitously introduced an issue that touched upon Hitler's final solution in a way that somehow implicated the Jewish people in their own fate under Hitler—a variation of this seems to be that, by introducing this, Livingstone is distorting Hitler's attitude towards the Jewish people and substituting his actual attitude with one that implies a more benign one.

The other part of what Livingstone is accused of relates to his defence of Naz Shah's remarks on the basis of them being rude rather than anti-Semitic. By doing this he has become an apologist for her

anti-Semitism. This latter charge seems to me to be the one that will do him most damage not because what she said was intrinsically anti-Semitic but because she herself has stood up in the House of Commons and admitted it to be so.

However, was what she said anti-Semitic? In my opinion her remarks could be construed as such but they could also be construed as an awkward and immediate response to a situation in 2014 when Israel was committing war crimes against the Palestinians in Gaza. How one defines her remarks depends entirely on how one is pre-disposed. Personally, I can understand such a human response to a situation where people of her belief, living in a small and densely populated area were being systematically attacked with all the armaments that a modern state has at its disposal. Her jokey remark about the removal of Israel to the United States can only be construed as anti-Semitic if one is pre-disposed to interpret it that way. Did it warrant the headline in the *Jewish Chronicle* "*Labour MP Naz Shah backed plan to 'relocate Israelis to America'*" [<http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/157363/labour-mp-naz-shah-backed-plan-relocate-israelis-america>]?

This is what Livingstone said he did not find anti-Semitic, but is that failure to interpret these comments as anti-Semitic in itself evidence of Livingstone's own anti-Semitism? I think any reasonable person would not believe it to be so, particularly from someone who has a record of fighting anti-Semitism. This however, brings us to the later revelation (apparently discovered by the *Jewish Chronicle* and later disseminated to such effect by the likes of the Guido Fawkes blogger) that on 29th July 2014 Naz Shah had used her Facebook page to urge supporters to vote in a poll backing calls by John Prescott to define Israeli actions in Gaza as a *war crime*. The online poll at that stage had been 87% against such a definition and 13% in favour. She tagged her call for more votes in favour with the statement "*The Jews are rallying to the poll at the bottom and there is now 87% disagreeing and 13% agreeing. Click 'Yes' I agree with John Prescott that Israel is committing war crimes*". This has since

become the basis of "*The Jews are rallying*" accusation. This bald statement is removed from context and portrayed as some kind of general anti-Jewish statement.

Could there have been any truth in her statement that the Jews were rallying to this particular poll? What does reason and common sense imply would be the answer in the particular context of the ongoing bombardment of Gaza by Israelis? At the worst the use of the term could be described as ill-conceived and crass but is it evidence of anti-Semitism, again by someone who has a history of fighting anti-Semitism in her community?

To get back to Peter Beaumont's article in the *Guardian*. The final paragraph of the article states:

"As the Haaretz columnist Anshel Pfeffer summed up Livingstone's three days of interventions: 'His historical version of the Holocaust was only slightly more bizarre than his contention that someone who only hates Jews living in Israel—but not outside it—cannot be considered an anti-Semite'..."

This is a significant distortion of what Livingstone said. What he said was:

"I've heard a lot of criticism of Israel. If I was to criticise the South African government as riddled with corruption you wouldn't say I was racist—you'd say I was being critical of that government. "I think blurring these two things undermines the importance of anti-semitism because a real antisemite doesn't just hate the Jews in Israel, they hate their Jewish neighbours in Golders Green or Stoke Newington, it's a physical loathing" (*Independent*, 28 April 2016).

Livingstone says that anti-Semitism is based on a loathing of anyone of a particular people but, if that people is the dominant electorate of a state, criticism of the actions of that state, or its leaders, is not the same thing as a loathing of anyone who shares the same race as the character of the state or its leaders. The implication of the position of Anshel Pfeffer and Peter Beaumont is that, if one is to criticize the actions of a state or its leaders, *ergo* you automatically are criticizing the nation of people who define the nature of that state. This is patent nonsense with no other object than to immunise the state of Israel from criticism and the way this argument has been constructed relies upon a cynical use of how actual and real anti-Semitism has manifested itself through history.

But now that it has been raised there is no getting away from the peculiar nature

of the state of Israel. In its eventual manifestation it is a construction that was only made possible through the actions of members of a people motivated by a particular ideology. Its physical emergence relied on the capacity and determination of members of that people so motivated to displace the indigenous population of a part of the world where in ordinary circumstances such actions would be anathema to common human decency but in the particular historical circumstances of the time was deemed justified. But it is not an easy thing to construct a state based on a people that only represented a small minority of the population of the land on which it was to be constructed. And so it has turned out. The state continues to assert its legitimacy in the blood and suffering of the indigenous people of the territory its founding ideology claims as its biblical birthright and Israel consistently refuses to define its own borders because the territory claimed by its claim to biblical legitimacy remains unfulfilled. That is the peculiar nature of the state of Israel. This peculiarity is compounded by the fact that the state has not produced within its electorate a significant component capable of putting a brake on the ideological drive of its founding ambitions. In such circumstances can the electorate of the state of Israel not be held to some account for the actions of the state to which it expresses allegiance?

The German people were blamed for the fact that Hitler came to power through a manipulation of the democratic process and responsibility for all subsequent actions of his government has fallen on their heads. We are told that because there was no effective resistance to the Nazi persecution of the Jews the German people must have been complicit in the Holocaust. Yet, the first thing that Hitler did when coming to power was to eradicate those elements capable of providing leadership for such resistance. So it was that the first people he eradicated or incarcerated were socialists, communists, trade unionists, and all religious and community leaders who were critical of the ideology upon which his new state was to be based. By such actions Hitler ensured that any resistance to his regime would be disorganised and ineffective. Has the state of Israel undertaken any such purge of potential leaders of resistance to its actions from within its own electorate—something that would explain the complacency at best and complicity at worst of the electorate in the actions of their state? The real oppression has been directed against the members of the indigenous population.

TTIP Bad For Environment

If anyone was wondering whether Fine Gael was listening to growing public concern around TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) then Brian Hayes MEP (IT 25th February) gave a clear answer (May 25th). It is not listening.

Fine Gael sees the role of the Irish Government as the champions of EU trade deals rather than as defender of Ireland's interests within same.

Those who have expressed serious reservations on TTIP include groups as diverse as farming organisations, small business bodies, trade unions, health service providers, environmental organisations and consumer advocates. Their reasons are varied and multifaceted.

That Fine Gael would attempt to reduce concerns to a couple of peripheral issues is not surprising. But that it would cite enhanced environmental action as a reason to support TTIP is so outlandish that it highlights either the growing desperation of TTIP supporters or shocking ignorance.

TTIP, by the European Commission's own admission, represents a danger to the environment.

In its official impact assessment, the commission admitted that TTIP will see millions of extra tonnes of CO2 pumped into the atmosphere. The energy chapter in TTIP will see a massive increase in imports of gas and oil from the United States, including from tar sands, which are the dirtiest and most carbon-intensive of all fossil fuels.

The recent leaking of TTIP negotiation texts revealed that climate justice and environmental protection did not feature in negotiations at all.

Both the "general exceptions" rule, enshrined in the Gatt agreement of the World Trade Organisation, and the highly regarded "precautionary principle", are entirely absent from the negotiating texts.

Mr Hayes states that concerns surrounding the proposed investor court system are "scare tactics". He explains that such investor dispute mechanisms exist in 1,400 bilateral agreements signed by EU states (he is at odds with the European Commission, which argues that the investor court is significantly different from the old investor-state dispute settlement system) but he fails to mention that of the 1,400, none applies to Ireland.

Why is an Irish Government advocating a system that has never been used in Ireland and which, if enacted, holds the sole purpose of allowing corporations to sue governments for enacting policies through the democratic system?

The entire premise of an investor-state resolution mechanism could only be based on the assumption that Irish and European courts are so systemically flawed that foreign investors should have a special right to bring claims to an alternative judicial system.

As a result of the investor state dispute settlement system in the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta), Canada is the most sued country in the developed world.

At the end of 2015, Canada had already paid out over €135 million to American corporations as a result of Nafta.

Foreign investors are seeking another €1.75 billion from the Canadian government in new cases.

A total of 63 per cent of claims against Canada relate to environmental protection or resource management programs.

We cannot be both an advocate for environmental protection and a cheerleader for TTIP in its current guise. It is either one or the other.

Matt Carthy MEP, Sinn Fein

Letter published in *Irish Times*, 27.5.16

This is not to say that Jewish civil rights groups like B'Tselem [<http://www.btselem.org>] have not been subject to political harassment by the state of Israel but they continue to have the protection of the judicial part of the state. Yet, despite the more conducive environment for an effective opposition to emerge we have seen neither hide nor hair of it. Election after election only brings to power those

who share to one degree or another the founding ideology of the state of Israel—an ideology that at its core requires the ongoing oppression of the indigenous population and the territorial expansion of the state. In such circumstances can such an electorate continue to claim immunity from the accusations of their complicity in the actions of their state?

Eamon Dyas

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

POPULATION CONTROL

Population growth in the past has been controlled by episodes of famine or disease or war or by a combination of two or all of these. In the late mediaeval times, there were many outbreaks of the Black Death—the bubonic plague—which was spread by fleas from rats to humans. The most catastrophic epidemic in Europe started in Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1347 and it spread westwards across Europe and London was attacked by plague in 1665. About one-third of the population died. There was a severe outbreak of bubonic plague in China in 1894. About ten to twelve people die of this plague in California each year and so it is not totally eliminated. In 1919 an influenza called the Spanish Flu killed about ten million people in Europe—more than had died in the 1914-1918 Great War. The combined effect of the flu epidemic and Great War deaths did slow down population growth but only momentarily.

And we have managed to control some of the worst diseases by advances in medical science—so far. However, these medical interventions by means of penicillin and anti-biotic drugs, steroids etc are now losing their effectiveness because the bacteria are developing resistance. But the world population continues to increase.

Palaeontologists have said that the present human race may be the fourth human race to inhabit the Earth and that the previous human races were obliterated by major catastrophes. Such a scenario is quite possible but there is no evidence for it. Which is strange—when one considers that there *is* evidence in old rocks for ferns which are, as we now know, the oldest discovered flora found in rock formations. The age of the Earth is now estimated at 4,500 million years which gives a lot of time for previous human civilisations to have come and gone—but there is no evidence. We would expect to have found a human skeleton or two in the sedimentary rocks in Australia but none has been found. Of course, the populations may have been very small and cremation may have been widely used. But still . . . there surely would have been some evidence. Of course previous civilisations may, like us, have discovered nuclear fission and may have eliminated themselves.

USA President Barack Obama's supporters in the nuclear industry wish to insulate themselves from a possible change of policy arising from a change of President and so Barack Obama has recently announced a spend of over one trillion dollars—i.e. one million millions of dollars on nuclear armaments—which is maybe one reason that the US never signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Agreement while insisting that other countries like Iran can't have even peaceful nuclear reactors for their energy needs. Apart from the ethics of transferring all of these tax dollars from the relatively poorer tax-paying people to the wealthy elite—who for the most part are certainly non-tax paying corporations led by the billionaire club—there is the ethical position adopted by the USA in producing so much lethal weaponry which, once produced, has a half-life of 500,000 years. Even allowing for the shoddy production standards and failure rate often encountered in juicy Government contracts, President Obama's proposal is so over-the-top that it is endangering the future of the human race.

Why is Obama doing this to us and to his own people? There is no point in it except to enrich US corporations. The missiles cannot be safely used because so many other nations have nuclear arms that any strike by the US will result in several retaliatory strikes on the US itself followed by the deaths of masses of populations. A nuclear war would result in the whole planet Earth becoming radioactive and the human race would suffer a lingering and horrible death. The use of nuclear capability would have such appalling consequences that its very existence should ensure a strong and enduring desire for international peace. Nuclear capability does presently exist, unfortunately, and therefore the addition to it proposed by President Obama will not make the world more peaceful and will not make the US safer but instead will confirm the USA's status as a Rogue State. A State which does not want international peace.

And a State which pursues a policy which will inevitably result in population control on a grand scale.

Population control is already a by-product of the pharmaceutical industry which is producing and widely distributing chemicals (especially the contraceptive pill) which result in reproductive control. Some populations are no longer reproducing themselves e.g. Germany, Austria, and Sweden etc. by direct application of these chemicals. However, there is also an unintentional effect of these chemicals

and this is the inevitable presence of the chemicals in wastewater effluent. It has been known for some time that fish in rivers downstream from wastewater treatment plants have suffered from sex changes in which the male productive tissues of the fish have been "*feminised*" and altered so that affected fish do not breed just to name but one species which has undergone drastic if unintended transformation.

The treatment plants cannot eliminate chemicals from the wastewater (the sewage) with the result that EDCs' (Endocrine Disrupting Compounds) are passing into the rivers resulting in the "*inter-sex*" fish. The EDCs are attributed to hormones such as oestrogen in contraceptive pills which are very widely used—not to mention the many other hormonal drugs that are administered to women during their life cycles.

Most cities in the world rely on rivers for drinking water and the water for human consumption is usually treated with filtration and chlorine to remove the more obvious forms of pollution. But these treatments do not remove EDCs from the drinking water. In big cities such as New York and London, it is reported that recycled drinking water has passed six sets of kidneys by the time it eventually is released seawards. The mind boggles at what sexual and reproductive alterations have been caused by such drinking-water. Our species seems to have a great desire for self-destruction. And no one really wants to acknowledge the process, it seems, never mind stop it!

IRISH UNIVERSITY REVIEW

Just to lighten us up a little bit—here is an idea of what academia is producing:-

"... This troubling indeterminacy visually displayed on the computer screen in such a controlled fashion in these Flash poems appears again, though in a slightly different form, throughout the static .pdf 'texts for screen' as they once highlight authorial control and the simultaneous presence of uncontainable meaning through the explicit foregrounding of alterity within repetition. ... "

This quote and much of same is written by Kenneth Keating in an essay titled '*Repetition and Alterity: Geoffrey Squires's 'texts for screen'* in the current Spring/Summer 2016 edition of *Irish University Review*. Vol. 46. No. 1.

Is this what they do with real taxpayer's money?

It doesn't stack up!

Michael Stack ©

A Trade Union Programme

...It is of course an historic year during which we are commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Easter Rising and the Trade Unions, generally, if not universally, take great pride in the role played by James Connolly and the Irish Citizen Army in the Rising. I say generally because the Trade Unions are also victims of the divisions in our country...

In respect of Connolly's role in 1916 he was taking a stand against Empire, he was taking a stand against the slaughter of the First World War and in doing so he was claiming a stake for a Workers' Republic in Ireland. His vision of a country where working men and women would be enjoy the fruits of their own labour hasn't yet been realised.

Three years before the Rising in 1913 both Connolly and Larkin were pitted in the bitterest of battles against the Dublin Employers and William Martin Murphy and his ilk...

Yet in this Republic of today the employers, the Capitalist Class, take pride of place and their interests trump that of workers, their families and their communities. The modern day William Martin Murphys are operating a new form of slavery and serfdom, trying to control workers through zero hours contracts, flexible employment contracts and not so well concealed bullying and intimidation and anti-Unions policies. Most of these companies, to paraphrase Brookeborough the first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, would not have a Trade Unionist about the place and many of them don't.

Others tolerate Unions because they have no choice and at this point I wish to pay tribute to the workers in Dunne's Stores who have refused to be intimidated by one of our own home-grown capitalists and to the TESCO workers who are enduring the might of a multi-national giant with a courage and spirit not unlike that of the men and women of 1916.

In 2016, and not only in Ireland, there is a grave inequality of wealth and... gross imbalance of power. This is exemplified starkly in the power of large corporations to sue Governments for policy decisions which interfere with their bottom line, profits; the power of companies to shut up shop, transfer their production and devastate communities and families without any consequences.

And the virtually secret negotiations between the European Commission and Canada and the US on the Canadian and European and the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership will deliver even greater power to corporations through the creation of private secret courts to enable

corporations to sue Governments. It will also give effect to an extended system of regulatory convergence which will cause immense problems in relations to environmental, food safety and other standards.

In a nutshell, CETA and TTIP and the increasing power of corporations equate to the hollowing out of what democracy we have left and our political system... The European Commission and our Governments are trading away democracy. We need to build a campaign here in Ireland to oppose these proposed agreements...

...Congress has developed a 10 point plan for workers...

1. Significant improvements to the pay and terms and conditions of employees ...
2. A democratic, accountable high quality education system which is inclusive, affordable and accessible; with a share of public spending of at least 7% of GDP...
3. A universal single-tiered health system, ... with a spend of a minimum of 10% of GDP.
4. An unprecedented programme of investment in affordable and social housing ...
5. The abolition of the current system of water charges and a referendum to enshrine public ownership and control of our water sector.

In addition we have laid out our demands in relation to Youth, Childcare, and the proper resourcing of our important community sector...

We also demand a new approach to pensions...

We also need to address the systematic removal of Trade Union representatives from decision making processes...

In respect of Northern Ireland let me say that we value devolved government because it has enabled us to avoid or mitigate some of the worst of the Westminster Tory policies... we will continue to expose the plans to reduce Corporation Tax as unacceptable. We will continue to fight privatisation of any public services or functions.

...the Irish Trade Union movement will work with all parties that are committed to improving the position of working people, we will criticise and campaign against any injustices and we will work towards the fulfilment of Connolly's aim to establish a Workers' Republic in this country, where it is the people who exercise the power not the corporations, not the home grown capitalists and not institutions such as the European Commission.

I will conclude with the words of Jemmy Hope, perhaps the most radical of the United Irishmen...

"It was my settled opinion that the condition of the labouring class was the fundamental question at issue between the rulers and the people, and there could be no solid foundation for liberty, till measures were adopted that went to the root of the evil, and were specially directed to the natural right of the people, the deriving a subsistence from the soil on which their labour was expended."

SHAW continued

attempt to disarm one side without disarming the other would have been an act of open war on Irish Nationalism.

The only alternative was to introduce compulsory military service, and send all the volunteers to Mesopotamia or Flanders; but this again could have been done by a national Parliament only, and the Government had postponed that. Under such circumstances, if George Washington had been Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Cavour or Carnot Under-Secretary, they could have done nothing but try their utmost to preserve good humour, and hope that nobody would throw a match into the gunpowder.

And this, it seems, is exactly what they very wisely did. But it should not be forgotten that all Governments of the Dublin Castle type are really in the hands of their police and permanent officials, who do very much as they please because they cannot be disowned or "turned down" in the face of the democratic enemy. Mr. Birrell, like the Kaiser or the Tsar, had not the sort of control that President Wilson or Mr. Asquith enjoys. All autocracies are shams as to real public power. Ireland is governed by police inspectors, gombeen men, and priests, not by Secretaries of State.

At all events, if Mr. Birrell and Sir Matthew insist on their assailants explaining exactly what they should and could have done that they did not do, I shall be greatly surprised if either their critics or the gentlemen who are undertaking to replace them will venture to answer them.
George Bernard Shaw.

1 When Shaw wrote this communication, twelve of the insurgents had already been executed. Two more, including James Connolly, were to be shot on 12 May. The remaining ninety-seven death sentences were commuted to sentences of penal servitude.

2 The Chief Secretary and Under-Secretary for Ireland, respectively, at the time of the Easter Rising.

(From *Bernard Shaw: The Matter with Ireland. Hitherto uncollected writings* edited by David H. Greene and Dan H. Laurence. Rupert Hart Davis, London, 1962)



LABOUR

Comment

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The Easter Week Executions

(To *The Daily News*, London, 10 May, 1916)

Bernard Shaw

Sir,—You say that "*so far as the leaders are concerned no voice has been raised in this country against the infliction of the punishment which has so speedily overtaken them.*" (1) As the Government shot the prisoners first and told the public about it afterwards, there was no opportunity for effective protest. But it must not be assumed that those who merely shrugged their shoulders when it was useless to remonstrate accept for one moment the view that what happened was the execution of a gang of criminals.

My own view—which I should not intrude on you had you not concluded that it does not exist—is that the men who were shot in cold blood after their capture or surrender were prisoners of war, and that it was, therefore, entirely incorrect to slaughter them. The relation of Ireland to Dublin Castle is in this respect precisely that of the Balkan States to Turkey, of Belgium or the city of Lille to the Kaiser and of the United States to Great Britain.

Until Dublin Castle is superseded by a National Parliament and Ireland voluntarily incorporated with the British Empire, as Canada, Australasia, and South Africa have been incorporated, an Irishman resorting to arms to achieve the independence of his country is doing only what Englishmen will do if it be their misfortune to be invaded and conquered by the Germans in the course of the present war.

Further, such an Irishman is as much in order morally in accepting assistance from the Germans in his struggle with England as England is in accepting the assistance of Russia in her struggle with Germany. The fact that he knows that; his enemies will not respect his rights if they catch him, and that he must therefore fight with

a rope round his neck, increases his risk, but adds in the same measure to his glory in the eyes of his compatriots and of the disinterested admirers of patriotism throughout the world.

It is absolutely impossible to slaughter a man in this position without making him a martyr and a hero, even though the day before the rising he may have been only a minor poet. The shot Irishmen will now take their places beside Emmet and the Manchester Martyrs in Ireland, and beside the heroes of Poland and Serbia and Belgium in Europe; and nothing in heaven or on earth can prevent it.

I do not propose to argue the question: it does not admit of argument. The military authorities and the British Government must have known that they were canonizing their prisoners. But they said in their anger: "We don't care: we will shoot them; we feel that way." Similarly the Irish will reply: "We knew you would: you always do; we simply tell you more or less politely how *we* feel about it."

Perhaps I had better add that I am not a Sinn Feiner, and that since those utterances of mine which provoked the American Gaels to mob my plays some years ago to the very eve of the present rising I used all my influence and literary power to discredit the Sinn Fein ideal, and in particular to insist on the duty of Ireland to throw herself with all her force on the side of the French Republic against the Hohenzollern and Hapsburg monarchies. But I remain an Irishman, and am bound to contradict any implication that I can regard as a traitor any Irishman taken in a fight for Irish independence against the British Government, which was a fair fight in everything except the enormous odds my countrymen had to face.

I may add that I think it hard that Mr. [Augustine] Birrell, an Englishman, should be sacrificed on the tombs of the fallen Sinn Feiners. Mr. Birrell and Sir Matthew Nathan (2) did what they could with their hands tied by the Army commands and Sir Edward Carson. Obviously the one thing that could have made Ireland safe from an outbreak of civil war was the impartial disarmament of the civil population, as in the sixties during the Fenian scare. Failing that, it has been the merest chance that the outbreak occurred in Dublin, and was headed by Sinn Fein, provoked by a bogus Castle plot. A Popish plot, equally ingeniously simulated, might have produced the same result in Belfast, headed by the Ulster Volunteers. A convincing announcement of the abandonment of Home Rule would set the National Volunteers shooting tomorrow. Why were they not all disarmed? Because the Government was afraid of Sir Edward Carson and "the Mutineers of the Curragh", and to

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