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## Disengagements And Engagements

Brexit is raising problems about what a British Minister in Belfast calls "*our shared identity and history*". That is, the shared identity and history of Britain and Ireland.

Official Ireland, under indirect British management, had come to believe in that *shared identity and history*. It was therefore shocked when England did its own thing with regard to Europe without any concern for its Irish identity.

Where did that leave Ireland's British identity? Or its *English Home Counties* identity—because the affinity of the Anglicising Irish middle class, which lacks an upper class, has never been with Scotland, still less with Wales or Northern England. To the extent that these Irish are British, it is Home Counties English that they are.

The rulers of the English body politic know what the *shared identity and history* with the Irish is and how it should be preserved. England is one of the ultimate constituents of the world. It is not capable of being anything but itself. And the way for the Irish to conduct themselves at moments like this is to tag along with it.

But the difficulty is that a generation of the Irish constructed a state for themselves a hundred years ago, killing the British who tried to prevent them. It was baptised in blood, which is the only way such things are done for real in this world. It was the only baptism that England would acknowledge the force of.

The governing Irish generation, that is now withering, has done its best to conjure away that rupture by means of educational brainwashing—what Pearse called *The Murder Machine*—but it is now having to come to terms with the fact that it has failed. And that it was England that failed it.

States are not easy things to set up. But, once they are set up and made functional by the actions of the people who inhabit them, they are not easy things to get rid of.

Ever since Jack Lynch, in 1970, disowned his own Northern policy, the governing Establishment has been embarrassed by the independence of the state, and the means by

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## Michael D. at Béal na Bláth

When it was announced that Michael D. would give this year's oration at Beal na Blath, Dermot Collins, the Chairman of the Béal na Bláth Annual Commemoration Committee was reported as saying that the organisers were honoured when the President accepted their invitation to give the oration because "*President Higgins has a great knowledge of Irish history and is an original thinker so we are really looking forward to hearing what he has to say on Michael Collins and his legacy.*" (Irish Times 16.6.16).

But Mr. Collins has had some very original thinkers at Beal na Blath in recent years. Enda Kenny had Michael Collins advising Vladimir Lenin on economic policy. Brian Lenihan in his oration there praised that most original of thinkers, Professor Peter Hart, who interviewed the dead in his researches in West Cork. Frances Fitzgerald made Collins a great feminist last year. How much more originality does Dermot need? Surely a dose of historical facts at Beal na Blath

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## False History

*Inventing analogies between the Irish Independence movement and Zionism distorts the true history of two utterly different movements*

Dr Aiden Beatty's article, '*Zionists looked to Irish history*', in the Irish-American newspaper, *The Irish Echo* (July 12, 2016), greatly distorts the evidence for a historical parallel between two movements—Irish nationalism and Israeli Zionism—in their successful founding of

states in the twentieth century. The article is of course not an objective comparative study. It is written for the brazen political purpose of softening Irish American opinion on Israel and disquiet in those circles about a central aspect of Hilary Clinton's programme for the Presidency,

her unbending support for the Israeli regime and all its works.

Dr Beatty relates how, during World War Two, militant Zionists were split on how to treat the British occupation of Palestine, with the Haganah mainstream upholding the alliance with the British while "*those on the radical right*" advocated opening a guerrilla war against them to complete the conquest and Jewish settlement of the territory. In this dispute, the "*right-wing Zionists*", according to Beatty, "*looked to Irish history for lessons*".

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The "National" Press and 1916

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**Jack O'Connor:**

A Trade Union Strategy to Win for Working People

(page )

which it was achieved, and has been trying to escape from it—except for one Taoiseach, who was disgraced for treating the British as equals.

But the state set up by that generation a century ago has objective existence in the world, and has its own distinct interests which those who govern it have had to take account of, regardless of themselves. The national state imposes national imperatives.

Before there was an Irish state, Irish society was often caught by the twists and turns of English policy and was punished for not keeping up with them. Since there was an Irish state its independence has been enhanced by changes of British policy which it could not follow

It went into the EU along with Britain. It joined the EMS, preparatory to establishing a European currency, along with Britain. When Britain suddenly left the EMS, Ireland could not see its way to following. And so it got the Euro instead of the English pound with an Irish picture on it.

And now it has to decide whether it has become sufficiently un-English to be an active participant in a Europe which does not include Britain.

The immediate problem appears to be the Common Travel Area. Ireland is part of two common travel areas—that of the EU and that of what has been increasingly referred to as the *British Isles*. But it does not seem that both can continue if Brexit is implemented. So where will the *de facto* Border lie? Along the winding edges of the Six Counties—where for many purposes it never really existed—or the ports of Belfast and Larne and Warrenpoint?

If the EU holds firm against Britain, it will depend on how independent Dublin can be in its relationship with Britain. The Dublin Establishment is in a state of shock right now. It formed an altogether false idea of England and is angry because England took no heed of it. But England will ensure that negotiations are protracted and something much colder than anger is needed on the Irish side.

William O'Brien, who brought about the major Irish social reform of the 20th century, in conflict and conciliation with the Unionist Party, has been all but removed from the Irish historical record—with Cork University being to the fore in dismissing

him. He tried to explain that what was required on the Irish side in Anglo-Irish relations was a cool reasonable intransigence on essential points. The English will only deal with you as an equal if you leave them with no other choice.

The Brexit referendum has inspired the Taoiseach to call for the activation of the Partition Referendum, provided for by the 1998 Agreement, and the Fianna Fail leader, Micheál Martin is tending in the same direction. Gerry Adams says, rightly, that they are coming round to the Sinn Fein position. They have spent the last ten years trying to undermine the Sinn Fein position in the North as a way of rolling back its development in the South.

There has been a campaign to Partition Sinn Fein. It says that the development of Sinn Fein is being held back in the South by the fact that it has as its leader a Northerner closely connected with war (and peace) in the North—although it is a plain fact that the basic strength of Sinn Fein in the South is that it is the party that has fought the longest war ever fought in Ireland, and that it made a successful transition from war to peace, despite mischief-making harassment by the Dublin Establishment.

Fianna Gael has reverted to anti-Partitionism with a plop. And certainly the thing to do is oblige Britain to let the referendum process begin. It's no good waiting for the result to be determined in advance by Opinion Polls, because referendums affect opinion and do not merely reflect opinion formed beforehand.

If Fianna Gael were in earnest in the matter, they would be organised in the North, as Sinn Fein is organised in the South. The Fianna part of it has nominal organisation in the North, but Martin does not let it function.

De Valera would not extend Fianna Fail to the North because he had the task of establishing the substantial independence of the 26 Co. state to attend to and pursuing the chimera of unity would get in the way of it.

Unity was a chimera in those days. It had been set up deliberately by Britain when it was setting up the Treaty Free State, and Collins had bought into it. De Valera concentrated on what was achievable, which was the freeing of the Free State from the Treaty. He let the North be. It was run by the Protestant community organised as a flimsy pretence of a political party, financed by Westminster and run in great part by Whitehall, completely detached

from the political life of the British state and without a political life of its own.

It is not conceivable that De Valera—who learned the art of politics through use of a robust commonsense instructed by Machiavelli, who wrote a lot more than the notorious *Prince*—did not see that that Northern Ireland was set up as a March Hare for Southern politicians to chase instead of tending to their own proper business.

But that is not how things are now. The nationalist community in the North, abandoned by Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour in 1970, fought a war against the British State which Britain could only end by negotiation. The Protestant community has been broken up into something resembling political parties. And the character of the Nationalist community has been changed greatly by the war that it fought—a war which Micheál Martin and others have been treating as a mere outbreak of criminality.

And, under the new dispensation post the GFA, there has been a lot of private financial investment in the North.

The Dublin Establishment has been shocked by Brexit into seeing that Britain is not what they thought it was—or what they pretended to think it was, because they never dared to take a sober, fearless look at it with a view of understanding it in a cool, deliberate state of mind.

They are now disillusioned, but disillusionment is a long way from practical political understanding. And in their state of shock they have become anti-Partitionist again. But they are no nearer to seeing the Northern Ireland structure and its internal social components for what they are than they were forty years ago. They are as disengaged mentally from Northern realities as they were forty years ago. They refused to engage with the Northern War as their War—and they do not yet even acknowledge that what it was was a War—and so they are equally disengaged from the reality of the peace settlement made in 1998.

Micheál Martin dissents from the Taoiseach's call for an immediate Border referendum. He wants an All-Ireland Forum as a preliminary to a referendum, to be held in the context of the Brexit complication, with both Northern communities having voted Remain. It's a variant of the 1914 scenario which saw Irish unity as being implicit in the Redmond Volunteers joining the British Army alongside their deadly enemies, the Ulster Volunteers, for the purpose of killing Germans.

Philip Orr explained on Radio Eireann twenty years ago, when the neo-Redmond-

ites were beginning to celebrate the Somme and their minds were overwhelmed by the scale of it, that from the Ulster Unionist viewpoint the whole First World War was only an incident in the Home Rule conflict. Radio Eireann could not take in the meaning of that remark. The Southern Establishment has never shown any interest in the inner development of Protestant Ulster over close on four centuries. And no more has Southern anti-Revisionism. Their only interest is in finding debating points. And debating points do not reconcile: they just irritate.

Martin wants an All-Ireland Forum which *"should include employers, trade unions, farming organisations and other sections of civil society"*. And, in that Forum: *"We must all put the national interest first and foremost"* (Eve. Echo, 16.8.16).

The old saying will finally prove true! the Ulster Unionists are attached to the half-crown rather than the Crown. They will follow their economic noses into a United Ireland in order to remain in the EU.

A North Antrim Protestant, apparently living in the South and married to a native, has an interesting article in the *Irish Daily Mail* (23.7.16) about driving North in a Southern car and stopping at Bushmills where her husband was recognised as being a Fenian—and where things remain as they were forty years ago:

"The thing about Northern Ireland is that, in many regards, it is a self-centered and inward looking society.

"The whole notion of a 'Northern Irish' identity has become a topic for debate in recent times... peddled by the likes of Rory McIlroy, but in reality many, many people in the North, particularly those raised in the so-called Protestant tradition, as I was, have always thought like that.

"Especially those who have lived all their lives in the North—be that in a working-class loyalist estate in Ballymena or amid the well-heeled middle-class leafy suburbs of south Belfast.

"There is little or no will among those sections of the population to understand or embrace the Irish tradition. Why should there be?" (Article b Roslyn Dee.)

That is a fact which this journal has been trying to communicate to Southern politicians since 1969. It is a fact which the South does not want to hear.

The Southern Establishment goes through cycles of reviling the North and wanting nothing to do with it, and then suddenly seeing a mirage of unity on the horizon.

The Six Counties were driven in on themselves by the British State in 1921, placed in a position of being in it but not of it. Then in 1970 the South broke off

relations with the Northern minority in the most provocative way, driving it to fight a war on its own behalf.

The great change brought about in the life of the Northern Nationalist community by the War is something which the disengaged South could not experience. And, insofar as it is acknowledged that there has been considerable change of some kind, the Dublin Establishment feels obliged to attribute it to something other than the War—even to themselves!

The Ulster Unionists remain in substance what they were were made in 1921—a semi-detached region of the British state—and they have become attached with feeling to this very odd condition. They are not likely to follow their economic noses into a united Ireland—as they might do if they had lived for the past 90 years within the political normality of the British state whose official ideology is close to being economic determinism.

The Nationalist community has established itself as an active component of this peculiar political structure called Northern Ireland. Through the long war against the British State, it has achieved *"parity of esteem"* in earnest with the local majority within the 6 Co. variant of the state. It refused—despite encouragement by the State Government—to fight a 'civil war' with the local majority.

When the Government of the state failed to crush it, the local majority was then obliged by the State to make terms with it in drastic alteration of the 6 Co. mode of sub-government.

Ulster Unionism never got the chance to fight its war. In July 1914 it announced the formation of its Provisional Government and was armed and ready to fight in defence of it against all comers with German weapons, but in August it was whisked off to fight the Germans instead. Then in 1918 it agreed to Six Co. Partition on the condition that it would be governed as an integral part of the British state within British politics—but allowed itself to be persuaded by Whitehall to operate a Home rule system, outside British politics, to help in the war against Sinn Fein, with the threat that, if it did not do so, it might well come under Dublin rule.

It made what it called *"the supreme sacrifice"* of operating 6 Co. Home Rule in semi-detachment from the state, without anything that could reasonably be called politics. Fifty years later it had another chance to fight its war. Around 1974-5 it was encouraged to do so by Secretary of State Merlyn Rees. But the Provisionals

refused to fight it and insisted on fighting the Government of the state.

When the Government made a settlement on terms with the IRA in 1998 the Unionist leader, David Trimble, was made to go along with it by personal intimidation by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair. Advised by the Official IRA—Eoghan Harris and Lord Bew—Trimble tried to subvert the 1998 Agreement from within. He refused to accept the outcome of the War. Paisley accepted it and made the deal which enabled the Agreement to function.

The present relationship between the communities is the outcome of a War. It could not have come about without war. Under British rule war has always been the ultimate determinant of things in Ireland.

"Constitutional nationalism" could never bring about the relationship with Ulster Unionism that Sinn Fein/IRA has done. Ulster Unionism appealed to force in 1914 and almost a century later made a deal with force. Constitutional nationalist blather always left it cold and contemptuous.

The Constitutional nationalists, left out in the cold, are now doing their bit to derail the Republican/DUP deal, urged on by what used to be called "Official Unionism". And the current scandal is about advice which was given to a Unionist dissident, Jamie Bryson, about how to present his case about Peter Robinson's involvement with NAMA sales to the Stormont Finance Committee. The Finance Committee was chaired by Sinn Fein. The *Irish News* declares that Sinn Fein "coached" Bryson. From what has come to light, we cannot see that Sinn Fein did anything that would not be done by the Chair of an impartial Parliamentary Committee at Westminster, who wanted to ensure that all relevant matters were brought to the attention of the Committee.

There is a degree of normality in the North in the Sinn Fein/DUP era that never existed in the days of the UUP and the SDLP.

The antagonism of the communities continues. We said in 1998 that we did not see how the Agreement could do anything but alter the way it expresses itself. And its expression has altered in interesting ways. In particular we are thinking of the engagement of the Unionist ultras with the then SF Chair of the Stormont PAC, and an under the radar pre-arranged fight in Dublin between Northern unionist youth and their nationalist counterparts. That strange event raises all sorts of interesting questions, not least of which being the willingness of Protestant youth to travel South!

## Casement And The Law

I have to take issue with the 'Editorial Note' to Tim O'Sullivan's letter in July's *Irish Political Review* (p.23) on Roger Casement's barrister Alexander Sullivan's supposed greed.

I would dispute the implications of Serjeant Sullivan being "handsomely paid" for Casement's defence, and of his only taking the brief on the condition of such payment.

He was offered the brief by his brother-in-law George Gavan Duffy after it had been declined by top Irish and London QCs Tim Healy and Sir John Simon, even though they were supposedly subject to the barrister 'taxi rank' principle.

Obviously he expected a fee for his considerable work which, for the trial itself, was £525. He also indicated later to Gavan Duffy, "Fifty guineas is quite enough for the appeal". In the event, he actually waived this charge as the anticipated funds from America never materialised. Indeed, Duffy himself, was out of pocket by several hundred pounds at the conclusion of proceedings.

Duffy was certainly critical of several of Sullivan's decisions in court but Casement, having chosen a conventional defence, against the advice of George Bernard Shaw, was in the hands of his barristers.

Sullivan, being a Home Ruler, had no time for Casement's separatism, or him personally, and paid for such views with an attempt on his life. On a visit to Tralee in 1920 for a compensation case and when dining at the house of a local solicitor, E.R. Slattery, a large group of men broke in shooting at him several times. He moved to England the following year as a result of threats to his life.

In relation to the "suspicious disappearance of documents circulated privately by the British government"—presumably the photographed pages from Casement's diaries, or the typescripts—it is true to say that no recipient has ever since displayed them. They were however mostly shown to people, as was the case with John Quinn at the British Embassy in Washington, and not handed over. One exception was the American Ambassador in London, Walter Page, who was given copies.

Tim O'Sullivan is correct to write that Sullivan's statements on what he remembered of Casement, his homosexuality, and the diaries were contradictory, and indeed unreliable. By the time Sullivan entered the controversy in the columns of the *Irish Times* in 1956, it must be said he was 85 years old. As the correspondence continued, he increasingly withdrew his earlier assertions that included discussion with Casement of famous homosexuals, until on 25 April 1956 he finally, and honourably, admitted that Casement, "told me nothing about the diaries or about himself". I relate these episodes at greater length in the 'Authenticity Controversies' chapter of my recently republished book, *Roger Casement: The Black Diaries – with a Study of his Background, Sexuality, and Irish Political Life*, and in my July 2016 *Roger Casement's German Diary 1914-1916*.

It was not like Casement to be precise about his sexual status while Gavan Duffy was trying desperately to prevent any discussion of the diaries with him. It is likely he knew they were authentic, and of Casement's homosexuality, having the year before gone through several trunks of Casement papers, according to his Bureau of Military History statement (WS 381). It was a copy of a 1950 lecture on Casement to London-Irish Gaels. Duffy presumably destroyed them all the papers as they never otherwise surfaced.

**Jeffrey Dudgeon [UUP Councillor]**

## Editorial Response

It might be that Sullivan was not handsomely paid for the case. Some historians say that he was. We did not realise that the matter was contentious, and we can provide no evidence either way. What is the present value of £525 in 1916? It could be worth around £150,000, taking *labour earnings* inflation as the standard (according to the website, *measuringworth.com*).

Certainly Sullivan did not take the case only for the money. He did it as a service to the State whose own barristers would not take the case. The English Bar is an integral part of the system of State, and in 1916, with General Elections suspended and a general Coalition in place, the State and the Government were one and the same thing. But there had to be a pretence of a Trial because of Casement's status internationally. So an outsider was brought in from another jurisdiction.

The Bar and the Judiciary are part of the same system of law. Sullivan was qualified formally to plead at the English Bar but he was not part of the system within which he

acted as a favour to the Government. And it is well known to those who have any contact with the system that all barristers are not equal within it, and that the Bench has to pay more heed to some than to others. English law is not a cerebral activity.

Casement was allowed only low-level representation.

If Sullivan almost paid with his life four years later, it was not for his "views" but for his actions. It stopped being a matter of views in December 1918/January 1919 when an independence party was elected in Ireland, declared independence, and set up an independent Government and Britain established a regime in Ireland that was purely military.

Sullivan chose to act with the regime in the War between the elected Irish Government and the State which he served in 1916 and continued to serve after it had lost all semblance of representative status in Ireland.

Dudgeon OBE dismisses very lightly the documents that were used by the Government in 1916 to intimidate various important people who might have been uneasy about the double-standard regarding treason as between the Irish in the United Kingdom and the Italians in Southern Austria, in a war which Britain declared to have nothing to do with national/Imperial interest and to be entirely about international standards.

These people were shown or given something which purported to show that Casement was a queer and they backed away fast. (The English middle-to-upper classes had a very strange relationship with homosexuality.)

Alfred Noyes, the poet, who did some of the dirty work in the USA, expected that the documents he had been shown were part of something that would soon be placed in the public arena. But the years passed, and the decades passed, and the Diaries were not made publicly available, and the Government would not even acknowledge that they existed. Noyes concluded from this, reasonably enough, that he had been duped by forgeries.

It was not until 43 years later that something called *Casement's Diaries* was put in the Public Record Office. There has been a dispute ever since about the authenticity of those items. But those who, during these 43 years, concluded that bogus documents were shown to them in 1916, have been condemned as having been in the psychological condition of "denialism".

Mr. Dudgeon OBE has brought about a 2nd edition of the alleged Diaries. We do not know if he now deals with the accusation of "denialism" against those who concluded during those 43 years that what was shown in 1916 was bogus.

And the complete disappearance of what was put about in 1916 in order to ensure that Casement was hanged! Were these photocopies and typescripts not State documents? And is it a matter of no public concern that they should all have disappeared without trace?

They couldn't do that in the Soviet Union!

## Michael D. at Béal na Bláth

continued

would be more appropriate before Michael Collins becomes a comical figure, a case of a whatever you're having yourself in history.

It was to be hoped that Michael D. would not add any more 'originality' and that he would give some actual facts about Collins that are not usually mentioned there. He no doubt appreciated the need to do this from his own political background.

He put the issue well:

"A Chairde Gael, Dear Friends, the memory of Michael Collins will forever be enmeshed with that of the tragic and

bloody Civil War which raged on this island throughout the years 1922-1923. This was a dreadful human tragedy for so many Irish families. And while we should never underestimate the challenge that it was to build the foundations of a stable democratic state in the midst of turmoil and in the shadow of a great power, we must never forget what a terrible price was paid in divided families and divided communities, leaving a legacy that was felt for generations."

How did he explain this 'enmeshing'?

President Higgins made the usual eulogies to Collins's personality:

"...[Collins] was a person of extraordinary talent. He was energetic, committed, pragmatic, with a zest for life and companionship, and the robust rural version of that companionship. His background was endowed with what I

would call 'the native richness of rural Ireland'."

And he "...noted his swagger, his strut, his braggadocio". President Higgins went on to say that he—

"He recognised early the importance of intelligence as a tool of oppression but also one that would be of strategic importance in a liberation struggle. Many historians regard his destruction of the imperial intelligence system in Ireland as his greatest contribution."

Or, to be 'rural' about it and call a spade a spade, his greatest contribution was in the very necessary assassination of spies.

Michael D. then jumps to his next contribution as being—

"his chairing of the Committee on the 1922 Constitution—an attempt to resolve the issues that the Treaty had created. The amendments for which he secured agreement from some of his fellow republicans were rejected by London. As to why these rejections were so, there is perhaps an answer in Erskine Childers' memorandum, 'Notes on the British Memo': the British side were absolutely clear that they were not ready to compromise on Ireland's link to the Empire and its formal allegiance to the Crown, as one of its leading minds in jurisprudence put it, that 'keystone of the arch in law as well as in sentiment'. The British leaders knew that the Empire was, in the words of Lloyd George, at a 'critical phase' in its history. Alarming reports had been received from India of the growing strength of Gandhi's passive-resistance movement, and they were wary to make any concession that might eventually ripple throughout the Commonwealth."

When the agreed Constitution was rejected outright in London, and so humiliatingly that Collins could not get himself to sign the emasculated document, he did not see any need to explain what happened to his "fellow republicans" who had agreed the Constitution with him and had agreed a Pact on which the 1922 Election was to be fought to preserve unity. Instead he broke the Pact—which the electorate became aware of on the day of the Election—and thereby turned the Election into a farce ensuring the division over the so-called 'Treaty' continued.

The situation that the British would not tolerate a breakup of the Empire was not exactly news in 1922. There had been a war over this issue for some years! The issue was how to proceed in the negotiations that were ongoing since the Truce. How did Collins handle those negotiations when the baton was passed to him?

At what turned out to be the last united Cabinet meeting on 3rd December 1921, Griffith put the case for accepting what was on offer, Dominion Status. The meeting lasted seven hours and it was agreed that any British terms offered would be brought back for further consideration: the delegates were not to sign anything. The important role of Collins was that he was the dog that did not bark (apologies for the rural metaphors). He did not support Griffith and only made red herring suggestions (to go marine for a change.) But Griffith had no battalions. Collins had, but kept his counsel. Even his great defender, Tim Pat Coogan, cannot explain or understand his attitude. That was the crucial event in the whole negotiations.

Collins went back to London, but did not attend the next meeting with the British. Lloyd George smelt his opportunity, met Collins on his own and promised him everything—including Northern Ireland, like Lucifer promising all Jesus surveyed.

Collins then did the necessary to coerce the other delegates that needed coercing to accept what was on offer and acted in defiance of the Cabinet agreement in Dublin. Lloyd George's ultimatum must be seen in that context. He was confident when making it that it would work because of his understanding with Collins.

At that last Cabinet meeting Griffith had suggested putting what was on offer to the Dail and Cathal Brugha pointed out that a divided Cabinet meant a divided country. Brugha understood the functioning of parliamentary government better than most. A united Cabinet, on whatever policy, would avoid 'civil war'. That unity was what de Valera tried by any and every means to maintain, hence External Association, Document Number 2, even abandoning "the straightjacket of the Republic" if necessary.

In the event the Treaty was signed without Cabinet approval and De Valera and the other Ministers were left to discover that from banner headlines in the morning papers.

By Collins and the others agreeing to the so-called 'Treaty', which had to be ratified in Ireland and Britain, the Irish Parliament was presented with a divided Cabinet. There was no danger whatever that the British would have got themselves into such a parliamentary mess. (The spectacle of a divided British Cabinet made a rare appearance over Brexit and as Cathal Brugha foresaw it produced a divided country and the consequences were not what the Government wanted.)

Then we are told by Higgins that

"It is also important to acknowledge that the recognition that had been given to those Unionists seeking a separate status in the north-east corner of the island meant that some form of accommodation, of partition had been regarded as inevitable. This was a conclusion that was accepted by both Eamon de Valera and Michael Collins. The proximate, urgent issue remained, of course, as to the security of the minority population in the province of Ulster and their future in the event of a boundary being established."

This is historical nonsense. Collins waged war in the North to end Partition. De Valera never contemplated such a thing. Collins abandoned the war when he decided to attack the Four Courts. The "security of the minority population in the province of Ulster" was infinitely worse as a result as it faced the backlash from this half cocked war. Collins had never appreciated the Northern Ireland issue and had believed Lloyd George's assurances that the separate entity would not last.

Why did Collins act the way he did? One can speculate but there is no denying the facts, and those facts are not what can yet be said plainly at Beal na Blath though Michael D. did make the best effort yet to do so.

Jack Lane

## False History

continued

Disapproval of "right wing" Zionists in support of "moderate" ones is of course a standard political game in the US Democratic Party. To substantiate his case Beatty recounts how Avraham Stern, leader of the terrorist Stern Gang, translated P.S. O'Hegarty's 1924 book, *The Victory of Sinn Fein*, into Hebrew, and how Yitzhak Shamir, also of Stern, "adopted the pseudonym Michael whilst on the run, in homage to Michael Collins". At "the other end of the political spectrum", he adds, "the Marxist Zionist group Ha-Shomer Ha-Tzair (*The Young Guard*) condemned the attempts to emulate the Irish".

These are of course the sum total of the fairly well known threadbare facts in relation to Zionist "emulation" of the Irish national movement. And far too much is consciously read into them, by Beatty, as

by others before him. The reality is that no branch of the Zionist movement ever sought to emulate the Irish "*Sinn Féin movement*" for the very good reason that, apart from both being "nationalist", the essential aims of the two were the precise opposite of each other. Beatty, in fairness, does reference Ha-Shomer Ha-Tzair, who pointed out bluntly to both Marxists and "right-wing" militants alike that "this is not the way the Irish won their freedom". He also adds that Ha-Tzair highlighted the

"obvious difference between Zionism and Irish nationalism: where most Jews still lived in the Diaspora and Palestine still had a predominantly Arab population, in Ireland the national struggle was that of 'a people on its land' ..."

This is a nice way of saying that, while Zionism proposed the seizure of someone else's territory and the importation of a population to 'settle' it, the Irish Independence movement was the democratic revolt of almost an entire "indigenous" population against its colonial rulers.

The 1945-47 Zionist insurgency in Palestine was a campaign by the military *avant-garde* of a colonial settler population against its Protecting Power which, in Zionist eyes, had lost its will to see through the Zionist Project. Britain had overseen the mass importation of Jewish settlers in the 1920s and 1930s, increasing the Jewish proportion of the population of Mandate Palestine from 7% to over 40%, but now, weakened as a world power, was in danger of actually implementing the UN partition decision which granted Israel a portion of Palestine far smaller than Zionist aspirations. The Protecting Power had become an obstacle.

The Zionist project had from the start relied on Imperial patronage. One of its founders, Theodor Herzl, in his book *The Jewish State* (1896), advocated as the aim of the movement the creation, under the protection of a great power, of a Jewish state outside Europe in the form of a colony cleared of its native inhabitants. This has remained the movement's perspective down to the present. During the "Arab Revolt" against relentless Jewish settlement in the 1930s, mainstream militant Zionist collaboration with the British in the suppression of the "Arabs" is described by British "security expert", Keith Jeffery:

"In Palestine, where... the security problems were not dissimilar to those in Ireland, a ... sophisticated unorthodox force was run during 1938 by [British intelligence officer] Orde Wingate in the

form of 'Special Night Squads'. There were three of these, comprising up to 30 Jewish supernumerary police (mostly also members of the Haganah) under British officers. Operating mainly at night they successfully hit at the Arab insurgents, taking the fight to their hide-outs in the hills. But behind the success was good intelligence. The Jews had local knowledge, and Wingate also acquired informers within the Arab community.

Wingate's death squads, composed of Zionist auxiliaries, were thus a "*sophisticated*" development, not of the Irish forces of 1919-21, but of the British terrorist police squads—the "RIC Auxiliaries" and "Black-and-Tans" employed against them with the assistance of local loyalist elements. But, by the 1940s, for the "right wing" Zionists the Protecting power which had facilitated them thus far had now become an obstacle to the final realisation of their programme.

Beatty does not say it, but the blatant differences between the Irish nationalist experience and that of the Zionist movement are of such a fundamental, overwhelming nature as to negate the few incidents of superficially "*Irish inspired*" revolutionary posturing by Stern Gang members and others. The sole "*lessons*" that radical Zionist organisations such as Stern seem to have taken from "*Irish history*" were firstly the role played behind the scenes and within the Irish national movement of the tightly organised revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), whose role O'Hegarty extolled in his 1924 book, and the methodology employed by Collins's "Squad" against British counter-insurgency special forces in Ireland in 1920-21.

Collins' activity in this regard was a purely technical matter of military strategy in support of the popular war being fought on the ground by the national revolutionary movement, most forcefully in the Munster counties. Emulating aspects of Irish revolutionary innovation, such as Collins' hit squad, was far from unique to Zionist insurgents. During the "*Arab Revolt*" of the 1930s against Zionist colonisation and its British protectors, police raids on Arab headquarters allegedly uncovered what were termed "*Sinn Fein manuals*"—probably copies of the IRA tactical newsletter *An t-Óglach* of the 1919-21 period—translated into Arabic.

The later Muslim Brotherhood too can be seen as having adopted the organisational methodology and even the nomenclature of the Fenian IRB. But as regards analogies of political substance, Richard Crossman, a British post-War Labour Party

statesman (and avid Zionist), was nearer to the mark when he noted the role of the "*Irish revolution model in modern history*" in the liberation strategies specifically of colonised peoples. This was brought home to him, he later wrote, when the Egyptian national revolutionary leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, told him that writings from the Irish struggle had provided the "*textbook of our Egyptian revolution*".

Beatty refers to the general histories of the Irish and Jewish peoples to find further analogies. He points to what he calls the "*role of major traumas [the Famine and the Holocaust]*" in forming the modern national identities of the two peoples as well as to the part played in their political development by their capable diasporas, particularly in the US. It might be noted however that, while the Great Hunger in Ireland certainly pre-dated the rise of its modern national movement, Zionism and the implementation of its radical programme of displacement and colonisation was not a consequence of the European Holocaust as it had been in train for several decades before that catastrophe occurred. Beatty mentions that Irish nationalists were often to the fore in highlighting the plight of Jews in countries where they were persecuted, such as Michael Davitt's revelations of the pogroms in Kishinev in the Tsarist Empire, then an ally of Great Britain. He also recounts the initial undoubted widespread Irish sympathy for the Jewish people at the time of the formation of Israel, as reflected in the comments of then Irish Foreign Minister Seán MacBride.

But to go on to describe, as Beatty does, both peoples as having had a similar "*tortuous relationship with the British Empire*" is to stretch an alleged historical analogy to breaking point.

There was of course a traditional British racist contempt for the Irish, not totally dissimilar to the anti-Semitism that was also deeply ingrained in British Imperial thinking and was a major factor framing the UK's 1904 Aliens Act. Indeed during the First World War it was often to Germany, rather than to Britain and her Allies (which included the then violently anti-Semitic Tsarist Empire) that Jews, particularly in Eastern Europe, initially looked to as their protectors. The "*Balfour Declaration*" of November 1917 and the linked event of US entry into the "Great War" changed this. Signed when 93% of the population of Palestine was still Arab, the "*Declaration*" represented a major shift in British Jewish policy in the world, from one of suspicion and hostility to the

Jews as a people to one of definitive support for the as yet largely fictitious Zionist project. Indeed it was the Imperial "*Declaration*" of support which first made the project realisable at all.

It is interesting to note how Winston Churchill, one of the last of the great British Imperialists, later justified the strategy of the "*Balfour Declaration*" on the basis of a combination of anti-Semitic and Imperialist reasoning. In an article published in 1920, "*Zionism versus Bolshevism: Struggle for the Soul of the Jewish people*", he argued that a Jewish homeland in Palestine could serve two useful purposes. Firstly it would divert the "*malevolent*" internationalist revolutionary activity of that "*astounding race*", "*the Jews*", into the safer waters of a nationalist project. By this means, he wrote, "*International Jewry*" would be facilitated in adapting to the political programme of a nationality rather than its current tendency of acting as a disruptive internationalist force. He saw this destructive "*internationalism*" reflected both in Jewish preponderance in global finance on the one hand and Bolshevism on the other. He argued that a "*Jewish State*" acting under British guidance would not only divert this "*malevolent*" internationalism into safer national waters, but could simultaneously serve the purpose of creating a strong, loyal, white British colony at the head of the Suez Canal protecting the route to India. Such an entity "*by the banks of the Jordan, a Jewish State under the protection of the British Crown, ... would be especially in harmony with the truest interests of the British Empire*". A senior British official in 1920s Palestine, Sir Andrew Storr, summed up the same idea when he described the Palestine "*Protectorate*" as blossoming into "*a loyal little Jewish Ulster in a sea of hostile Arabism*".

No such British enthusiasm—let alone from men like Churchill and Storr—accompanied the prospect of Irish nationalism realising its aims.

*Au contraire!*

The British policy of promoting the Zionist programme was pursued with vigour. Under the British Protectorate, the Jewish population of Palestine, which in 1914 had composed just 20,000 native Jews and 10,000 Zionist settlers (7% of the total population), had risen by the late 1930s to over 500,000 (over 40% of the population of Mandate Palestine). The Zionist relationship with the Empire was thus, if anything, the very opposite of that of Irish nationalism to it.

Dr Beatty refers to the period in the 1930s when Ireland held the Presidency of the League of Nations, but only to relate the lobbying for Irish support by Zionist militants. He does not mention Ireland's role at Geneva on the Palestine question at this time except in terms of a generalised "*opposition to partition*" as some kind of bizarre principle, devoid of context. This is nonsense. Éamon de Valera, as President of the Council of the League, and although a close friend of the Irish Chief Rabbi, Isaac Herzog, and of the Jewish community in Ireland generally, stubbornly opposed British partition proposals for Palestine for straight forward democratic reasons. He defended the rights of the indigenous population not to be dispossessed or displaced from their land or, as an editorial in his Fianna Fáil newspaper, *The Irish Press*, put it, to be "*ousted from the coastal areas to the hills*" to make way for a programme of colonial settlement.

De Valera also vociferously supported the rights of the Arab peoples in general to full national self-determination. The leading Irish liberal of the time, Owen Sheehy Skeffington, writing in the semi-official foreign policy journal of the Irish state, *Ireland Today*, straight forwardly described the Arab revolt against Britain in Palestine in the 1930s as the fight of an oppressed people "*against British Imperialism, which is using the Zionist movement as a willing instrument*".

Dr Beatty, in continuing his theme of historic parallels, refers to Robert Briscoe's role as a link between Irish nationalists and European Zionists. But, by his own account, Briscoe, a former IRA officer from a Dublin Jewish merchant family and now a Fianna Fáil TD, had never been a Zionist until the 1930s. He then became an ardent supporter of the so-called "*Zionist Revisionists*", who Hannah Arendt described as the "*fascist*" wing of Zionism, a description with which many historians would concur. Its chief spokesman was the Polish Zionist Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky who, through Briscoe (who visited him in Warsaw and who brought him with a Zionist delegation to Dublin), hoped to win Irish support at the League for a deal with the anti-Semitic Polish Government to transfer a million of its "*unwanted Jews*" (Briscoe) to Palestine.

In 1931 Jabotinsky had defined the aim of Zionism as "*the conversion of the entire mandate territory in Eretz Israel on both sides of the Jordan into a Jewish State, in other words a commonwealth with a Jewish majority*", and proposed the "*re-settlement*"

of the Palestinian Arab population to Iraq to make way for this expansive Jewish nation. Beatty mentions none of this. Nor does he mention the fact that when De Valera met with Jabotinsky he questioned him about the future the Zionists planned for the Arab population and protested the rights of the indigenous population not to be overwhelmed by Jewish settlers. Analysing these conversations, Shulamit Eliash, of the "*Jabotinsky Institute*" in Israel, concludes that de Valera saw the Middle East from the perspective of Irish history, viewing "*the Arabs in Palestine as the equivalent of the Irish Catholics*". The corollary of this of course is that, if the Zionist settlers in Palestine and their interests could be compared to any population group in Irish history, it was to the various groups of British settlers introduced into the country and whose prosperity was dependent on the Imperial Power quelling the natives. The Briscoe-Jabotinsky lobbying for Irish support for a radical Zionist colonisation policy failed utterly.

Dr Beatty refers to De Valera's visit to Israel in 1950 as if it was some kind of expression of support by De Valera for the recently founded State of Israel. He does not tell us that this visit was part of a programme of travel which De Valera undertook during his brief period in opposition between 1948 and 1951. Those travels included India too for example. Nor does he tell us that, while in Israel, where De Valera met Israeli leader Ben Gurion and some of his ministers at the home of his old friend, former Irish Chief Rabbi, Isaac Herzog, the discussion of politics was studiously avoided. It was a social call to an old friend and the chatter was light hearted, revolving at its most serious around mathematical problems.

This contrasted sharply with his very political statements during his visit to India. Contrary to what Beatty implies, De Valera was not sending any signal of approval or endorsement of the Jewish state. Indeed, and against the wishes of his Israeli hosts, De Valera insisted on continuing his visit by crossing the dangerous armistice line to Ramallah, then under Jordanian rule, because, according to Briscoe, he wished to meet King Abdullah as he also "*sympathised with the Arab people in their hope of independence and prosperity*". Here he was to be deeply shocked by the wretched conditions of the hundreds of thousands of refugees violently expelled from Israel and now subsisting in primitive UN camps.

The Irish Government in fact had no

illusions about how the State of Israel had come into being and the ethnic cleansing that had accompanied it, events which bore no comparison with any Irish nationalist experience, except as victims at the receiving end of it. J.J.W. Murphy, a reviewer in a respected and influential Irish journal of the time, commented in 1950 that

"the traditional picture of Cromwell's 'Hell or Connaught' policy in Ireland gives a fair idea of what happened in Palestine during 1948 to Arabs whose homes then were in what is now Jewish territory."

The same writer in another article described how—

"very few Arabs are left in Israel. ... About five-sixths of those Arabs who lived there fled in terror of the Jewish extremists ... [T]he Jews have taken their lands and homes for the new Jewish immigrants who are pouring into Israel ..."

De Valera shared Murphy's outrage and upset. When Edwin Samuel, son of the first British High Commissioner of Palestine, met de Valera in April 1952, he found him implacably hostile to Irish *de jure* recognition of Israel, blaming the new entity for the catastrophic Palestinian refugee problem. He added that Arab Christians had fared better under Arab rule, compared to the ruthless military repression to which Israeli rule subjected them. An Anglo-Irish writer, Erskine Childers—a cousin of the later Irish President and a strong champion of action against European persecution of the Jews in the 1930s—was among the first to expose to the British public, in an influential article in *The Spectator* in 1961, the full extent of the Zionist ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians during the formation of the Israeli state.

It should be mentioned that Ireland refused until 1963 to recognise the State of Israel and was to the fore at the UN in 1967 in condemning Israeli annexation and colonisation of yet more Arab lands. This should be understood against a background of Irish Government policy in which (unlike for instance the British 1904 Aliens Act) anti-Semitism had never played a role. Indeed, in his 1937 Constitution, De Valera had explicitly recognised Judaism as one of the faith communities of the Irish nation, uniquely placing it under the protection of the State alongside the Catholic and the Protestant. As Professor Joseph Lee, by no means an uncritical admirer of De Valera, has written, this was "*a gesture not without*

dignity in the Europe of 1937".

In 1957, Irish Foreign Minister Frank Aiken had proposed at the UN to both Arab and Israeli delegations that the Arab states might consider *de facto* recognition of Israel in return for Israel accepting its then (pre-1967 UN) borders as final. He also demanded—to the disapproval of *The Irish Times*—that the UN accept responsibility for the refugees who had resulted from the UN policy that had facilitated the ethnic cleansing of 1948-50 and that it vindicate their right of return. But neither of these were things which Israel had any intention—then as now—of conceding, and the Irish diplomatic initiative failed. The activist role of Irish policy since that time in support of the Palestinians and in opposition to Israeli expansionism and colonisation has been well documented.

In 1980, in the "*Bahrain Declaration*", signed by Irish Foreign Minister Brian Lenihan (snr.), Ireland became the first European Community Government to officially endorse the national rights of the Palestinian people and to recognise the PLO as their legitimate representatives. The "*Bahrain Declaration*" was to be the catalyst for a fundamental shift in EC policy towards the Israel conflict and the adoption by the Council of Ministers in June 1980 of the "*Venice Declaration*" which finally established European recognition of Palestinian national rights and of the representative role of the PLO.

Fanciful attempts to construct a basis in the history of the Irish Independence movement for greater sympathy in Ireland or among Irish Americans for the Zionist project fly in the face of the true and indisputable facts of that history. Beatty's article at the end of the day cannot get around the abhorrence of Irish national leaders for the central tenet of Zionism—the establishment of Israel through the ethnic cleansing and colonisation of Palestine.

**Philip O'Connor**

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***Irish Political Review* thanks the family of Patrick O'Beirne for this note of his life and work. A long-standing subscriber to the magazine, he occasionally contributed articles explaining Australian current affairs to our readers.**

## Obituary for Patrick O'Beirne

Patrick Brendan O'Beirne was born on 1st October 1927—eleven years after the Easter uprising and seven years after the establishment of Irish Independence and the ensuing civil war. He grew up on the one hand been regaled with tales of Fenian rebellion. While on the other, he lived in an atmosphere of tacit uneasiness that underpinned the structure of the fragile new Irish state and was a legacy of the preceding years of unrest. He once recalled walking into a bank as a small child and seeing a man covered in blood, being taken away. This was the result of a botched IRA robbery attempt. It was in this environment that his desire for social justice and a fairer and more peaceful society took root.

In the early 1950s, Patrick emigrated to Australia and it was here he found his political footing. In order to support his wife and newly established family, he took a job as a sheet metal worker. Appalled by the shocking employment conditions that he and his co-workers had to endure, he quickly joined the Trade Union movement and was quite successful in obtaining better conditions in many of his workplaces. In fact he was so successful that he was frequently blackballed from several Sydney workshops. His involvement with the Trade Union movement also introduced him to the theories of Karl Marx and Lenin and soon after he joined the Communist Party of Australia.

In the 1960s, he and his family moved to Katoomba. There he joined the Peace movement and campaigned for Nuclear Disarmament and later against Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War and its ensuing policy of military conscription.

In the 1970s he joined the socialist left faction within the local branch of the Australian Labour Party and held the position of Returning Officer. He was active right up to 2010 and was responsible for nominating the two incumbent Members of Parliament for the State and the Federal Governments respectively.

At the same time, in keeping with his concern for workers' rights, he joined the Blue Mountains Unions Council, an organization dedicated to maintaining working conditions in Australian society, and held several positions within that organization.

Parallel to his interest in Australian politics, was his passionate interest in the Irish Political situation. Although he had left Ireland as a young man, he was deeply attached to it and was extremely upset when sectarian violence broke out in Northern Ireland in the late 60s and early 70s. It prompted him to take political action by first joining the Australian branch of the Connolly Association. However he found the 'one nation' paradigm that the Association advocated as a solution to the Troubles a little too simplistic and sectarian. He then discovered the B & I C O and felt right at home with its Marxist Leninist view of the world and its more complex 'two nation' theory as a more democratic and realistic analysis of the Irish question. Patrick then became a regular contributor to the *Irish Political Review* until his 80s when he stopped writing due to ill health. Even so, he took an active interest in the political views of the organization and eagerly awaited delivery of his monthly IPRs right up until five weeks before his death.

Patrick died peacefully on 16th July 2016 and is survived by his wife Noleen and his six children. He will be sorely missed by anyone who knew him and we have a lost a tireless champion for the rights of workers and a man who dearly loved Ireland.

Obituary prepared by his family

# Shorts

from  
*the Long Fellow*

## THE LAST GAULLIST!

The Long Fellow is pleased that the *Musée du Quai Branly* has been renamed the *Musée Jacques Chirac* (*The Irish Times*, 22.6.16). No politician has done more to promote the existence of this museum, which is devoted to ancient Asian, African and American Indian cultural artefacts. His profound understanding and sympathy with non-European cultures enabled him to take political positions which were at variance with his right wing colleagues. He was a long-standing supporter of the African National Congress and he was against celebrating the 500th anniversary of Columbus's "discovery" of America because it ushered in centuries of Genocide. But the former French President will probably be best remembered for opposing the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

For a brief period, France's prestige in Africa and Asia was unrivalled. But she failed to build on that. Perhaps Chirac was partly to blame. Lara Marlowe in her *Irish Times* article says that when he visited the US he had a speech in his pocket on the Genocide of the American Indian, but his advisors persuaded him not to deliver it. If he occasionally lacked courage, his successors did not have the independence of spirit for such a question to arise.

It is not often appreciated how cultured a person Chirac was. During his Presidency the French media portrayed him as a buffoon and a "super menteur" (a big liar). And yet he was fluent in Russian and in his youth had translated numerous works by Pushkin that had never been published before in France.

Perhaps the last word should be given to the Russian Ambassador to France who, on observing the President's successor (Sarkozy), commented that Chirac might turn out to be France's last Gaullist.

## SOCIALISATION OF PRODUCTION

One of the great insights of Marx was that capitalism had succeeded in "socialising" production. In previous modes of production independent producers worked in isolation from each other, but as Capitalism deprived more and more producers of an independent means of subsistence, they were forced to work collectively in factories. The mere act of

working collectively enabled a massive increase in production which was accentuated by machines. Of course, Marx saw a contradiction between the "socialisation" of production and its ownership in private hands, but even ownership had its "social" aspect. Individual amounts that are deposited in the banking system lose their individual identity once the banking system lends those funds to businesses. The individual deposits become part of the unvariegated mass of social capital.

The more "social" an economy is, the greater will be its productive capacity. A few years ago a survey found that the median Greek household wealth was greater than that of Germany. But, when total wealth was taken into account, Germany along with the Netherlands was at the top of the league of Eurozone countries and Greece and Portugal were at the bottom. The explanation is that a far greater proportion of social wealth in Germany is held by Government and the Corporate Sector.

## PENSIONS

The pension system in the Republic is probably the least "social" of Eurozone countries. The State provides a basic level of pension on retirement, which is unrelated to contributions made during a person's working life. It is, in effect, a safety net and there is nothing wrong with that. But if a person wants to maintain his standard of living in retirement he must make his own arrangements.

Incredibly, there are 140,000 defined contribution schemes in Ireland. This represents more than half the total number of pension schemes in Europe! The Netherlands has only 400 with a population of 16 million. 99% of the Irish schemes consist of 50 or less members (*The Irish Times*, 22.7.16). Think of all the administration costs involved in running such schemes!

There is no doubt that the provision of pensions is one area of economic life that the State is the best equipped to administer. Greater State involvement would eliminate a vast swathe of selling and administration costs incurred by the private sector. All that is required is the political will: the economic case is unanswerable.

## IRISH WATER

The provision of water in the Republic has been another aspect of the State that has not been "social" in its scope. Up until the setting up of Irish Water the management of our water resource was devolved to a patchwork of autonomous Local Authorities. Water operating costs per

capita are twice the costs in this State compared to Northern Ireland. There are 855 water treatment plants in the Republic, while the North manages with only 24 (*Sunday Independent*, 24.4.16). There has been no planning for the future needs of the population as a whole.

Since Irish Water has been set up, there is evidence that this is changing. One of the first tasks of the organisation was to audit the water resources in the State with a view to planning for future needs. It also plans to address the water needs of Dublin which has been running close to capacity for some years (there were water shortages in the capital during the 2013 Web Summit).

Irish Water proposes to build a 170 km pipeline taking water from the Shannon to Dublin. If the 1.2 billion euro project is approved, work will begin in 2019 and will be completed in 2024. Construction work will be on a 50m-wide way strip of land. On completion there will be 20m wide "way-leave", which does not seem too environmentally intrusive. The pipe itself will range from 1.6m to 2.3m in diameter and the trench will be 4m deep (*The Irish Times*, 23.7.16).

On the face of it, it seems sensible to transfer water from an area that has been prone to flooding to an area which has experienced water shortages.

Irish Water thinks that the population of the greater Dublin area will increase from 1.5 million (2011 census) to 2.1 million by 2050, placing extra demands on the water supply. Also, supply difficulties can cost the economy 78 million a day. This seems a reasonable justification for the project. However, an organisation called the River Shannon Protection Alliance is campaigning against the project.

The arguments of this organisation appear to have been well-researched. Ironically, some of the points are a vindication of Irish Water's current policies! The Alliance thinks that the project is unnecessary because the treatment capacity has improved in recent years, with upgrades in the Ballymore Eustace and Leixlip Plants. Also, it thinks that Irish Water is underestimating the benefits of water conservation as a result of domestic Water Charges.

Another point that the Alliance has made is that leakage from pipes amounts to 40%. But the Long Fellow remembers when the estimate was greater than 50%. The installation of water meters enables a better estimate of this figure. Another benefit—as discussed at last year's Sinn Féin Ard Fheis—is that the water meters have a "non return valve". This prevents

backflow from the house when there is a drop in water pressure. About 20% of contamination in the system is caused by backflow.

The Long Fellow is unable to adjudicate on the merits of the Irish Water project, but he is encouraged that there now seems to be an intelligent debate on how to manage our water resources.

#### INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL

As well as observing that capitalism "socialised" production, Marx observed that it became "international". Whatever about the "social" shortcoming of some areas of Irish economic activity, nobody could say that the Irish State lacked an international dimension. Indeed, some of our EU partners think we are too international.

In general, the international investment in this country is engaged in real economic activity. However, in some cases there is little economic substance as the recent 26% "increase" in our Gross Domestic Product has highlighted.

The GDP figure is designed to highlight economic activity that generates tax revenue, even if that activity cannot be properly attributed to the country in question. The profile of our tax revenue suggests that there are anomalies in the system. For example, it is probably unusual for a country to have Corporation Tax as the largest single contributor to Tax Revenue. The fact becomes even more extraordinary when it is considered that our Corporation Tax rate (12.5%) is very low by international standards. An enormous 2.8 billion euro (37% of gross corporation tax receipts) is paid by the top ten multinationals. This has doubled in less than 5 years (*The Irish Times*, 25.7.16).

We have always been an attractive location for foreign capital but it seems that in recent years there has been an escalation in foreign investment. Most of the recent increase has no economic substance. The Long Fellow can only guess at why this is so. He suspects that there has been a movement of capital from traditional tax havens to Ireland. The adverse publicity associated with tax avoidance in various Caribbean islands with their criminal associations has scared off some of the large multinationals. Tax avoidance measures involving Ireland are seen as respectable by comparison.

Another factor that is inflating our GDP figure is the method of accounting for depreciation in intellectual capital. While this is accounted for as a cost to the company, it is treated as "gross savings" (i.e. part of income) in the GDP figure.

Apart from the difficulty of understanding what is happening in the economy (making it difficult to plan) the inflated GDP figure means that our contribution to the EU will increase by about 280 million euro each year. In 2014 Ireland became a net contributor to the EU for the first time

(1.69 billion contribution versus 1.52 billion benefit—*The Irish Times*, 22.7.16). But the Long Fellow does not consider this a great injustice when it is considered the billions of euro in Corporation Taxes that is generated from economic activity that occurs outside the State.

#### Government to appeal the Court ruling to preserve Moore Street

## Moore Street Update

An article of mine in the July *Irish Political Review* described the background to the High Court victory of the *Save Moore Street* campaigners. In this article I will provide an update on the story that includes six separate developments.

In a nutshell the Government has decided to appeal against the High Court ruling on the grounds that it may have implications for future infrastructure projects. Minister Humphreys has been at pains to point out that she accepts the main finding about preserving Moore Street but that the ruling must be appealed on technical grounds.

As an indication of good will she has adopted a Fianna Fail proposal that a cross party Moore Street consultative group should be established. The date for a Supreme Court hearing of the appeal has been set for 19th December 2017, a date when the tide of patriotic feeling associated with the centenary might be expected to have ebbed.

It should be noted that the behaviour of the Government regarding Moore Street seems distinctly unenthusiastic. The restoration of the buildings has not been subject to tender procedure, the Government seemed happy to allow Chartered Land let the buildings deteriorate, and no plan for the promised Museum on the site has been produced.

The expectation on the official side appears to be that the museum will never see the light of day and that the heritage site will be obliterated under the much hyped shopping complex.

#### PLANNING PERMISSION FOR SHOPPING COMPLEX EXTENDED

The first development was that on April 8th Judge Max Barrett refused to allow Chartered Land to perform works on the Moore Street buildings. He did allow the State to make basic conservation measures. On June 7th Dublin City Council granted Chartered Land a five year extension on its planning permission. Planning

permission decisions are not bound to take note of High Court rulings, apparently, but many will see the extension as an indicator of the continued commitment of top Council officials to the Shopping Complex project.

On June 15th Fianna Fail issued a press statement on behalf of TDs Eamon O'Cuiv and Darragh O'Brien welcoming Minister Humphreys' taking on board of their proposal for a Moore Street consultative group which will have cross party membership and will also include stakeholders like the 1916 Relatives, Dublin City Council and the Moore Street traders.

#### GOVERNMENT APPEAL

The Government's decision to appeal against the High Court ruling was announced on June 15th. Minister Heather Humphreys stated that she was supporting the appeal because of advice from the Attorney General and from the Departments of Environment and Transport, the OPW, and Transport Infrastructure Ireland who were concerned about indirect implications of the judgement.

On 7th July the Minister announced the appointment of Mr Gerry Kearney, former Secretary General of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, as Chair of the new Moore Street Consultative Group. The Chair will have the function of leading the process.

An article in the *Irish Times* on July 8th described an exchange in the Court of Appeal in which Ms Justice Mary Finlay Geoghegan set the date for the Supreme Court hearing. She stated: "there must be more focus on the issues in dispute in order to try and reduce the 'volume' of grounds of appeal... The appellant must identify exactly what issues she wished the appeal court to decide".

At that same hearing the barrister representing Chartered Land, Michael O'Donnell BL, stated that there had been an overnight sale of property at the centre of the case to Dublin Central Limited

Partnership, acting through its general partner, Dublin Central GP Ltd, Grand Canal Square, Dublin. The most likely implication of this is that the new owners of the site, the British-owned Hammerson group, wish to have a direct involvement in the proceedings.

#### 1916 RELATIVES WILL FIGHT APPEAL

A report on the *RTE News* website states:

"The 1916 Relatives Association, the group who took the original legal action, say they will fight it in the appeal courts. Colm Moore, the individual who took the action on behalf of the association, rejected the claim that the Moore St judgment could set a precedent.

"It is a unique site, it's in the judgment. So no other site or area comes into the equation"

Mr Moore rejected claims that the preservation of the laneways could impede roadworks. He said there is no preservation order in place and the Minister can grant

permission for works at any stage. *"In my view the only rationale behind this is to build a shopping centre"*, he added.

#### IRISH LANGUAGE DOCUMENTARY

An interesting source of background information to the case has been provided on the *Save Moore Street* Facebook page. It is a YouTube podcast of an Irish language documentary made for TG4 called: *"Iníúchadh Oidhreacht na Cásca—Moore Street"*. A blurb states, *'Acclaimed and controversial TG4 documentary exposing the corruption involving councillors and developers in their attempts to develop the historic Moore Street'*. The documentary is sub-titled and well worth watching. It brings home how matters concerning national heritage have become the responsibility of TG4 the Irish language channel, while the national broadcasting station, RTE, has been given over to anti-national ideology.

Dave Alvey

## When *The Irish Times* Predicted Darwinian 'Evolution' For A New Gaeltacht: Towards 'A Superior Knowledge Of English'

#### INTRODUCTION:

It was good to see an RTE programme, for once, slap down the *Irish Times* sense of its own historical "superiority"—as "the paper of record"—when the TV station broadcast *"Creedon's Epic East"* on July 26th. John Creedon was shown visiting the County Meath Gaeltacht of Rath Chairn, as he related: *"After centuries of foreign plantations, 80 years ago the Free State Government established a settlement of its own. This time Irish speaking farmers from the rocky soil of Connemara were offered the chance to start a new life in Rath Chairn's fertile fields, which had been bought up by the State."*

He spoke to one resident whose parents and grandparents had been among the first migrant families. She herself commented: *"They gave up their way of life, and they did it for their children, to better their lives. They were pioneers."*

Creedon continued the conversation: "The Rath Chairn settlers faced another challenge; holding onto their Irish language in a tiny colony surrounded by English speakers. Not everyone was convinced they'd succeed. I was looking at a piece there from the *Irish Times*, in D'Olier Street, in Dublin. It says: *"They are all Irish speakers, and will be encouraged to*

*maintain their Gaelic speech... We suspect, however, that evolution will have its way, and that the Gaeltacht emigrants, instead of spreading the tongue of the Gael, merely will acquire a superior knowledge of English...* 'So ye were going to move up in the world and learn English!'"

They both grinned derisively. And John Creedon summed up:

"But the *Irish Times* couldn't have been more wrong. Rath Chairn clung tightly to its native tongue... The thing about culture is that, by its very definition, it is a living thing, it is an organic thing, it changes, it has to change. And it has changed here over the years. But, for all of that, that little flame, that was brought here by the men and women of Connemara, is still flickering, and is being cradled very carefully by the Irish speakers of Rath Chairn."

Manus O'Riordan

## The New Migration

Editorial, *The Irish Times*,  
25th May 1935

The Department of Lands has issued a very clear and explicit statement on its new migration scheme. Several families have already been moved from the Gaeltacht to new holdings in the neighbourhood of Athboy, Co. Meath, where they have been presented, to quote

the Department's words, with "every opportunity to make good", and others will be transferred as time proceeds. The purpose is twofold. Firstly, the scheme is designed to relieve the appalling congestion of the Gaeltacht, where it is virtually impossible to obtain even a bare living and totally impossible to gain anything more, and to give the displaced families the chance of a new and better livelihood on the best land in Ireland. This part of the Government's policy deserves praise. If the cattle trade actually is doomed, and if it is a settled thing that the "ranches" of Leinster are to be divided, then the available land, by all means, must find careful and deserving cultivators; and who are more deserving, or more likely to work hard, than the occupants of the Gaeltacht, who have learned their trade by harsh experience? The experiment is being conducted with thoroughness. Not only land and a house, but essential stock and equipment, are provided for every family; an instructor is present to advise them concerning the cultivation of the unfamiliar soil; and provision is made for the education and entertainment of the children. One trouble, which is not mentioned in the official statement, lies in the average countryman's disinclination to change his surroundings. To many of the old people who have been transplanted, this emigration from the home of their youth, and of their fathers, even for a better region and fairer prospects, must be a severe blow. Some of them never had been previously more than a few miles from their Gaeltacht holdings, and to such people the omnibuses that carried them from Connaught to Leinster must have appeared almost in the light of the emigrant ship. The young people, however, will have forgotten the Gaeltacht, and to them the change will be nothing but a boon. With the Government's second purpose we have less sympathy. Its idea is that the transplanted families shall act as missionaries of the Irish language. They are all Irish speakers, and will be encouraged to maintain their Gaelic speech, leavening thereby their immediate neighbourhood, and, in process of time, the whole county and province. The fairest thing that can be said about this hope is that it improves upon the doctrine of compulsory Irish, and stands a far better chance of success. We suspect, however, that evolution will have its way, and that the Gaeltacht emigrants, instead of spreading the tongue of the Gael, merely will acquire a superior knowledge of English in their more spacious quarters.

Manus O'Riordan

## Reflections on a Belfast Meeting

While attending a public meeting at this year's Feile in West Belfast on 9th August I asked a question of the main speakers which on reflection could have been answered by referring to critical events in the history of West Belfast itself.

The subject for debate was, '*How can the Left solve the problems of Ireland*', and the speakers were: Gerry Carroll of People Before Profit, Eoin O'Broin of Sinn Fein, Gerry Grainger of the Workers' Party and Malachi O'Mara of the Green Party. My question which took the form of a comment ran along the following lines:

Taking up a point from Eoin O'Broin that the ideological approach of Left activists didn't always resonate with the wider community and that making solid connections with the real concerns of the people was the critical challenge for the Left, I stated that the intellectual heritage of the Left based on Marx, Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, while having value in the way it gave activists an orientation, was also a liability. It encouraged unhelpful traits like intolerance and dogmatism. I avowed that as Thomas Davis had said, 'We have but one weapon, mind', it was important for Left activists to be flexible and open in their thinking. I said that the study of history, preferably outside of universities, was the best way of educating the mind for coping with the complexities of politics.

All four speakers responded to the question but the most apposite answer came from Eoin O'Broin. He said that being tolerant was essential as the Left needed to cooperate. He said that he may get in trouble for his opinion but he welcomed the outcome of the recent Assembly elections in West Belfast in which People Before Profit had won a seat, preventing Sinn Fein from winning all five.

As a supporter of the '*Right2Change*' broad Left alliance in the South, O'Broin would be expected to support greater tolerance across the Left but his magnanimity towards People Before Profit was still surprising.

Gerry Carroll and Gerry Grainger were notably defensive on the question of Left dogmatism. Carroll took the opportunity to state that Left unity was impossible in the circumstances of the North because Sinn Fein was in Government and therefore implicated in the implementation of austerity while the rest of the Left was actively opposing it. Gerry Grainger said that the Left was often attacked for being dogmatic

but what this actually meant was being principled.

The problem of the Left's preoccupation with ideological purity was taken up by a number of speakers from the floor; one speaker from Meath even suggested that we had no need for Marx and Lenin as we had the Proclamation, a commendable sentiment for the year that's in it but perhaps a tad exaggerated.

However, given the history of the community which hosts Feile, the discussion was altogether beside the point. The efficacy of various strands of left ideology as against traditional republican ideology was tested in key events in the history of West Belfast during the years of conflict and the actual course of events there should leave no one in any doubt as to the unsuitability of leftist ideology in circumstances of political flux, and the lack of connection to reality that usually accompanies leftist ideology.

Following the events of August 1969, and the later capitulation of the Lynch Government to pressure from the British, the Catholic minority in the North was thrown back on its own resources. In those difficult circumstances the ideological stance taken by what was later called the Official Republican Movement was shown to be thoroughly bankrupt.

Of course nailing down the role of ideology in leftwing politics is challenging. It is possible that the worst type of dogmatic leftism can have positive effects in certain circumstances. And it can always be said that the Officials incorrectly applied the ideology they were importing. But, piecing together the overall response of Official republicanism to the Northern conflict as opposed to the stance of the Provisionals, still provides valuable insights into the effect of using socialist dogma to set a political agenda. This is done in Pat Walsh's recently published book '*Resurgence*', an analysis of the Catholic predicament in Northern Ireland from 1969 to 2016. It is possible to trace much of the thinking of the Official Republicans through the period using the book's index.

Under the leadership of figures like Cathal Goulding and Tomas MacGiolla Sinn Fein in the late sixties had become a leftist party heavily influenced by the Communist Party of Great Britain. It is conceivable that, had the eruptions of August 1969 not happened,

the party's move to the Left might have eventually borne fruit in the form of a small degree of electoral support; in time it might even have provided some useful political leadership to the Catholic working class, although that is debatable. But the siege of Derry and the invasion of the Falls did take place. The Catholics of the North needed a means of military defence and the source they looked to, apart from the Southern Government, was the IRA. In that time of need, because of their immersion in socialist ideology the republicans had no military capacity worth talking about, neither arms nor trained combatants, and their political contribution inflamed sectarian tensions and added to the general confusion.

The Officials failed to provide a defence force when it was needed but they cannot be castigated on that ground alone; August '69 took most people by surprise. What was indefensible on the part of the Officials was the pretence they engaged in of having a military capacity, the mistaken analysis they made of the Ulster conflict when the dust settled, and their subsequent descent into what can only be described as a dangerously incoherent anti-republican sectarianism. Regarding the negative effect of Goulding's pretentious sabre rattling Pat Walsh quotes Paddy Doherty as follows:

"Many Protestants believed that the rioting had been directed by the IRA and they were fearful and angry. Peter Pan {Doherty's name for Goulding} did nothing to allay their fears. From the safety of his builder's yard, he announced that he was sending paper battalions north to defend the Catholic population. His nonsensical threat destroyed any residual belief Keenan and I still had in him" (*Paddy Bogside*, p. 156, *Resurgence*, p. 26)

In 1970, long after the dust of the August riots had settled, the Officials came up with two ideas for addressing the Northern crisis: the focus of agitational politics should be on achieving the programme of the Civil Rights movement; and the Stormont sub-government should be defended as preferable to Direct Rule by Westminster. Both ideas were ill conceived. Pat Walsh rightly describes the Civil Rights Movement as being "*well past its sell by date*" in 1970. The British had decided to address their problem in Ulster by investing in housing and jobs and reforming the electoral system, thus removing the main civil rights grievances, and continued civil rights agitation "could only be an aggravating force on things, fuelling further conflict of a communal character" (*Resurgence*, p. 97).

Defending Stormont was likewise an

inappropriately sophisticated position at a time when simple crude facts needed to be the focus of agitation. As Walsh argues (*Resurgence*, p. 135) the destruction of Stormont was realisable and popular with the Catholic masses; it was therefore a good political move on the part of Provisional Sinn Fein to make it a short term objective.

Walsh captures the essence of the Officials' incoherence in the following paragraph:

"The Officials suffered from the attempted juggling of two ideologies that were largely incompatible—Republicanism and Socialism. And both Republicanism and Socialism were indeed *ideologies* for the Stickies, being largely disconnected from reality in each case. The Officials asked themselves what was the Republican/Socialist thing to do in each situation that confronted them and they found they got contradictory answers. A Republican would behave one way, a Socialist another and they kept coming down in the middle in an attempt to reconcile the answers. So what resulted was incoherent, confused and neither here nor there" (*Resurgence* p. 135).

Disconnection from reality is the effect which ideology had on the Officials. As the Provisional faction developed and split from them, Goulding and his associates concocted a theory that Fianna Fail was the string-puller behind the Provisional puppet. Pat Walsh shows this to be malicious fantasy. Focussing on the chronology of events he shows that the Officials were the ones in receipt of arms and finance from Fianna Fail at the time when the alleged 'Provisional Alliance' was claimed to have been formed. The character of the Republican Army that emerged from June 1970 onwards was the very opposite of a Dublin puppet.

So, disconnected from reality and losing support to the Provos, hostility towards the Provos increasingly became the all consuming preoccupation of the Officials. Walsh summarises the demise of the Officials as follows:

"It was no surprise, therefore, that the Provos went from strength to strength whereas the Officials declined to something of an irrelevance, despite, or rather because of, all the grand theories and schemes they had for their 'Revolution'. The interference of the international Communist movement in the simple republicanism of the IRA in the 1960s ultimately produced Sinn Fein the Workers Party, the Workers Party, and when Communism collapsed in the 1990s, Democratic Left. Then Democratic Left went into the Irish Labour Party and all declined together" (*Resurgence*, p. 136).

The common thread that links all the different names that the Officials have called themselves, a thread that includes various high profile media and academic intellectuals whose political orientation was shaped by their time in the Officials (e.g. Lord Professor Paul Bew in academia and Eoghan Harris in the media) is an obsessive hatred of the Sinn Fein of Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness. This obsessive anti-Provoism is the last vestige of the ideological quagmire that the Officials got bogged down in. It achieved a second innings by lining up with the big guns of anti-national historical revisionism in the South. Thankfully that once powerful movement now appears to be heading towards the same graveyard in which all the other Official grand theories have ended up.

\*

Feile is a hugely impressive community festival that reflects the self confidence of the people of West Belfast. That it exists is a testament to the transformation that took

place in the Catholic community as a result of the 28-year armed struggle, a struggle that did not end in disarray due to Sinn Fein's successful move into electoral politics.

In discussing at a Feile event the role of ideology on the Irish Left it would have been well to remember how the Catholic community needed to discard leftist ideology in the process of breaking out from Northern Ireland's political slum. Feile would not exist if that had not happened.

For clarification I must add one final point. No participating party or tendency in the political process can operate without an element of party mythology or ideology. The trick is to retain an ability to keep abreast of political reality while continuing to carry the ideological baggage, and holding firm to core principals. Ideological baggage by its nature needs to be carried lightly. That is surely a lesson that the story of Official Republicanism must give to the Irish Left.

**Dave Alvey**

**Review: *Resurgence* by Pat Walsh, Volume Two, *The Catholic Predicament in Northern Ireland*, 586 pages**

## **Northern Ireland: Britain And The Conflict**

Volume One—Catastrophe—by the same author was about the plight of the Northern Catholic from 1914-1968. *Resurgence* covers the years 1969-2016.

To me, as someone born and brought up in that purposely dysfunctional area of the Six Counties, these two volumes are the old and new testaments recording the birth, near death and resurrection of the Northern Catholic.

In the beginning Britain created Norn Iron. It was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep and the spirit of Britain moved back across the waters. The children of Protestant Ulster cried out: 'Why has thou forsaken me!' But they were given whips and told to control the Philistines. Then PIRA said let there be light. And there was light. And Sinn Fein took up the torch after PIRA broke its sword across its knee in the confidence that its mission had been accomplished.

If only things were as simple as the Bible.

What a wonderful book to come out during the 100th Anniversary of the Dublin Easter Rising of 1916. But as you read it you will see a different history has been created by the Northern Catholic. It is extremely well-researched and, along with

Volume One you have a veritable reference library with its contents page outlining the 18 chapters plus its bibliography and index.

It begins at the Belfast and Derry barricades and falls and rises through three British Governments and their machinations. War is politics by other means and politics is war by other means, notes the author and Sinn Fein has certainly learned this lesson.

"*It is destruction by peace*", continues the author. And Britain is a master at breaking treaties. The Long War of 28 years might have been dangerous, but the peace seems to be an never-ending mine-field. Fortunately there are benefits to living in the Six Counties: you learn the British way of thinking. I mean main-man Britain and not the never-never land of Protestant thinking; for their thinking is more spiritual than ideological. Sinn Fein has obviously learnt the Brit way of thinking.

And on the question of thinking this book teaches you to think politics. Just as you thought the SDLP, for example, has been a waste of time, and only in being because of the armed conflict of PIRA, you find that John Hume is the architect of the Good Friday Agreement and it was their baby, and it was their responsibility

to see it grow up. But they're not very good at child-rearing so what happens but Sinn Fein adopts it and brings it up properly.

And why is the Irish Government in Dublin so anti-North and specifically so anti-Northern Catholic and becoming so West Briton: the answer lies in this book.

We meet Professor Bew, who has surprising friends.

We also meet Anthony McIntyre, Brendan Hughes and Ed Moloney. They are anti-Partitionists. You can have partition like in the case of India and Pakistan but they are two functioning states on either side of their borders. Which means that it isn't the partition of Ireland that is causing the problem but the sub-government set up by Britain in an area they have named Northern Ireland, prompts the author.

Pat Walsh goes on to show how the Republican dissidents and their sometime allies, the British State, the Dublin Government and Ulster Unionism, try to wreck the Good Friday Agreement..

You will also find out how mindless the thinking can be when the anti-Partitionists, at one point, the SDLP, calls for the British Army to withdraw from the Six Counties without understanding what can happen to the Nationalist population if Loyalist military strength builds up ensuring a civil war with PIRA in defending its people. Something that could spread over the border.

When I was on one occasion part of the theatre scene in Dublin 1973 I met some Republicans in a pub near the Abbey Theatre. I don't know what organisation they belonged to but the owner of the pub was one of them. They thought civil war would be a good thing if it started in the North and in drifting over the Border would drag in the South. They were in favour, in the midst of this, in seeing members of their own Government assassinated. I say this in the knowledge that the Northern dissidents seem unable to expand their argument in defence of continuing the Northern war, whereas you feel the author has plenty more to say even after finishing this lengthy book. Now I wonder if the dissidents had a secret agenda that could deliberately have plunged the whole of Ireland into civil war. What else could have happened when you think what the British military mind has done in intervening in other countries in an effort to mould something they can dominate. It is never too far away in many countries today. It's best never to say never but that doesn't look likely now with the Northern Republi-

cans hold on things along with the large Protestant population who are rarely heard from but seem to appreciate a relative peace.

The author reminds us that the Celtic Tiger didn't attract the unionists, nor did the downing of the Catholic Church in the South. I once gave my father a biography of De Valera to read. He read this heavy tome with its green, white and orange cover as a Protestant from the old CPNI. He said he had respect for De Valera and also Mahatma Gandhi but he wasn't going to live in India.

The author notes the endurance of the Catholic population under duress.

'*He who endures wins*' was the battle cry of the Vietnamese. The Catholic population of the Six Counties endured and won. The enduring began before the War even started. I know for a fact that Catholic mothers told their impatient sons that they must wait like they had to wait to be born. Fifty years of that, with teenagers growing into grandfathers and grand-

mothers, after having seen their own mothers and father and grandparents insulted by the sectarian set up. The pity of it all is I have experienced being in Protestant workforces in the heavy industry of the shipyard and no greater humorous and generous people you could have associated with.

This book is a world in itself, peopled with a huge range of people with something definite to say. Some are deceased now, some have been rehabilitated and some are the real survivors of a very turbulent time when you could be even afraid of letting the cat out into the street. Gerry Adams comes to mind as the greatest of all survivors, and so many more who are not far behind him. The author also appreciates the Reverend Ian Paisley and Brian Faulkner, and I agree with that.

Read it for yourself and if you appreciate the facts and the hard work in bringing this to you then you will come away an even more thinking person.

Wilson John Haire, 22.8.2016

## Part One

### A Sniper from an Ivory Tower

This first article deals with what we might describe as the "*literary criticism*" made by Dr. Robert McNamara (UUJ) of the '*Catholic Predicament*' books, '*Catastrophe, 1914-68*' and '*Resurgence, 1969-2016*'. The political criticism—what exists of it apart from long-range sniping—will be dealt in a subsequent piece.

McNamara begins his Irish News review (28.7.16) with a rather misconceived point:

"Contrary to the claim of Dr Walsh, there is a long tradition of books from the Northern Catholic perspective. Indeed, contemporary academic literature contains few pro-unionist books. (There are, admittedly, plenty of books critical of the Provisional IRA, which are not the same thing, which may explain the author's confusion.)"

To back up his argument Dr. McNamara gives one example from about 40 years ago: Michael Farrell's '*The Orange State*'. 'The Orange State' is, of course, an anti-Partitionist analysis with some Marxism grafted on. It suffers from a very basic problem—that 'The Orange State' was never actually a *State*. It should have been apparent to Farrell that NI was not a state when he wrote it in 1976. By that time Westminster had prorogued the NI sub-

government of its pseudo state and the real State itself had gone on operating as if nothing had happened. Politically, the Provisional IRA was face to face with the State it was at war with, having smashed its false front. Farrell and the Civil Righters had become irrelevant because they thought they were dealing with an Orange State. The Provos knew better.

The present writer knows only too well that there are few Unionist histories and Irish academia is a nationalist preserve. However, it is a revisionist nationalist preserve, strongly anti-republican, and on the whole hostile to the Northern Catholics. How many Northern Catholics were in senior lecturing positions in Queens University, Belfast, over the last 50 years? In my experience the History and Politics Departments in the North have been dominated by Englishmen and Southern Irish, with a few Ulster Protestants of the liberal persuasion and others from around the world thrown in. Is it likely that any understanding of the Northern Catholic predicament might emerge from such sources?

The short point I made somewhere was that the vast majority of books do not seek to understand the predicament of Northern

Catholics. They are about organisations, ideologies, the "Troubles" etc. They do not attempt to understand the perversity of NI and the position it placed the minority community in. The books may have been largely Anti-Partitionist up until recently and since 1970 revisionist, but that is not even half the story. "Orange Terror" by "Ultach" from the 1940s is an honourable exception.

"Moreover, he has decided to use only a tiny proportion of the vast body of literature on Northern Ireland in these extraordinarily long, wearying, badly written, poorly edited and frustrating books."

In the two volumes McNamara has supposedly read there are over 200 books listed in the Select Biographies. I did not repeat the ones in Volume 1 in Volume 2, so the Bibliography in *Resurgence* is shorter than in *Catastrophe*. *Resurgence* uses a large amount of primary material so there are less books included. There are all the major NI newspapers, many UK and ROI newspapers, a large number of pamphlets, magazines and other publications, as well as State files from Britain and Ireland. And, of course, there is much more—knowledge gained over the years that cannot be attributed in the light of what happened to the Boston Project.

This is a Select Biography. It is not the sort of Bibliography used in academic works that aim to list as many books as possible (many unread except in a very limited way to steal references) to show off the academic's "wide-reading" and to reference cronies. How clearly this line of criticism exposes the academic for what he thinks important! Long bibliographies simply lengthen books by often more than 20 pages and increases the price proportionately. Since McNamara thinks my books already too long (with actual writing rather than lists of books) he cannot have it both ways. Does he really think that the reader would prefer 20 valuable pages of listing books instead of writing—and the reader having to pay for it?

I can inform Dr. McNamara that I have been reading everything I could get my hands on about NI for about 35 years. I have forgotten about more things than most academics have drawn a salary to read. My interest in NI was, however, not academic. It was as a participant in the conflict and having a desire to contribute to an accommodation between the two communities that would transfer it to the political sphere that I searched out knowledge. So I made it my business to find out as much as possible about it. But in the years I spent doing a Phd I learnt that

Irish academia was irrelevant to the conflict and inconsequential in any resolution of it. Those who did the fighting would have to provide the solution. And so it turned out.

McNamara's verdict that these books are "*badly written, poorly edited and frustrating books*" is a subjective judgement and a sure sign that a reviewer is incapable of engaging with the substance of the arguments. I suspect that the style of writing—deeply unacademic and profoundly political—is what really grates on the constipated academic, stifled by "*academic rigour*".

Athol Books has attracted the ire of Irish academics for decades. I know. I witnessed it myself within Irish academia. I was told to keep their publications out of the Bibliography of my PhD if I had any sense. I was allowed to make the same points, watered-down, but I should never attribute them. Most of all the name Brendan Clifford was beyond the Pale.

I wondered why?—and it attracted me even more to that mysterious place down at the edge of the Falls. What I came to understand was that this bunch of unspeakables had published information that Irish academics forging their careers were jealous of. The amateurs, acting through political necessity, had got there first. And they seemed to have a strange knack of getting things right. So what was done by the Ivory Towers was to take these arguments produced by Athol Street, neuter them, not attribute them, pretend others had produced them, and then incorporate them subtly in academic writing. By doing this papers, dissertations and publications of the academic careerists were added to. Ideas were plundered but used in the most superficial way. And in doing so, they distorted and negated the force of argument.

I was not prepared to engage in such a process and it led me into conflict, a conflict I could not win within academia, but which was won outside.

It seems to me that the antagonism McNamara has toward these books and Athol Books is that of the professional/mercenary toward the amateur/volunteer. Academic/commercial publishing has a vast array of resources available to it for the publication process. And it charges its limited readership dearly for the service, limiting its reach correspondingly. It is probably inconceivable to it that a small band of volunteers write and produce for nothing, in their own time, merely to influence the world in some way. How unacademic! So let's find the spelling

mistake that those damn upstarts missed and ridicule them! That will teach them and keep them in their place!

The biggest surprise I had was when I learned '*Resurgence*' had been even reviewed by the Irish News. '*Catastrophe*' had been ignored by the paper, despite the fact that it was about a subject very dear to the newspaper's heart, historically. It was, however, reviewed very favourably by the *Andersonstown News*, which outlined the central arguments to its working class readership in a clear and informative way. But then West Belfast is an intensely political place and devours politics for the purpose of moving forward. It is most unacademic.

Perhaps it was because the Editor of *The Irish News* was on holiday at the time that '*Resurgence*' slipped through. It was most unusual that an Athol Books publication was reviewed and given any publicity at all. That is not the usual approach. And then it was given to a reviewer who was obviously not familiar with what was what and he became rather hysterical about the general thrust that held the 26 County State and Irish academia to account for what happened in the North.

More sensibly it should have been ignored, as usual.

Later in his review McNamara, the critic of repetition, repeats his charges in a fuller piece of vitriol:

"It would be easy, if space allowed, to list the numerous misspellings, poorly drafted sentences, repetitions of quotations, bizarre capitalisations, narrow reading, odd interpretations of events, and non-standard names given to organisations and treaties, which mar these volumes."

This type of criticism will perhaps bring back memories to readers of teachers' reports in their school days. "*Must do better*", it seems, to get the *imprimatur* of academic excellence. So let us say *Mea Culpa* and move on, ruling out any future career in the universities (sigh of relief!).

As for spellings—a considerable portion of time was spent checking them and even Microsoft Word didn't spot them! But since a list is not provided what can be said? "Steak knife" was deliberately "misspelt" since that was the original spelling. Editors began to change it to "Stakeknife" after they were mysteriously threatened with legal action by the State. I have kept the original. Reports from behind the barricades in 1969/70 have their original spellings retained. And I make a point of retaining original spelling even if now considered wrong by academia.

"*Odd interpretations of events*"? Or perhaps, different interpretations of events from the standard accounts. Does the reader want to read another academic regurgitation of all previous work, with some little tweaks, that characterises academic output? If the present writer had such an intention he would never have bothered. I would have done something more useful. I am unpaid, remember, and have better things to do with my time than regurgitate the flaccid output of Irish academics. I only write because I believe I have something different to say, that might be useful to the general understanding of historical and political problems.

"*Odd interpretations of events*" is actually praise, therefore.

What is this about "*bizarre capitalisations... and non-standard names given to organisations and treaties, which mar these volumes*"?

These are actually very deliberate and I am glad they have touched a tender spot.

Here are some of the "*bizarre capitalisations*" that I presume McNamara has in mind (failing to provide his list): 'State'—to distinguish a real State from a pseudo-state or where the actual Government or Executive is being spoken about; 'Constitution'—to refer to a real existing Constitution; 'War'—to emphasise that it was a War; 'Pogrom'—to describe what it was and how it is remembered; 'War of Independence' and 'Treaty War'—to emphasise what they actually were what they say they are.

The academic needs to say why he finds these "bizarre" so we can see how his mind works. But readers will surely be able to hazard a guess.

And finally, there are the "non-standard names given to organisations and treaties" that have annoyed McNamara.

Could he mean the use of the term "Republican Army" to describe the IRA by any chance? I wonder why he finds that so distressing? Or the description of the Anglo-Irish Agreement as the "Hillsborough Treaty"? What is so wrong in that? He really needs to explain so we can get a sense of his problem.

Then perhaps we will know the real cause of his righteous indignation.

Pat Walsh

**Resurgence: 1969-2016**  
by Pat Walsh  
586pp €30, £25  
Postfree in Ireland and Britain

**DVD Review: Hubert Butler. Witness to the Future.... but silenced in his own country.** DVD Filmed, Directed and Produced by Johnny Gogan. Bandit Films Ireland. 2016.

## Hubert Butler: The DVD

This documentary opens with a voice-over by Julia Crampton (Hubert Butler's daughter) who says: "*My father when asked to describe himself would say "market gardener" ...*" and then it pans to a shot of Lara Marlowe who is obviously addressing a meeting—probably of the Hubert Butler Annual Lecture in Kilkenny—and she is shown mid-sentence, saying of Croatia and Pavelitch and contemporary Islamic State that there is "*this extraordinary alliance of religion and crime...*"

Voice Over of Roy Foster:

"He believes in a slap as a thing that was necessary to administer which he does so well in his writing".

Voice Over of Fintan O'Toole:

"This is one of the great essayist and not just of Ireland—he is one of the great writers of this form."

Voice Over (VO) of Olivia O'Leary:

"To pick up a book of essays which was just so fresh, it could well have been written in our day—this man was fifty years ahead of his time."

VO which I didn't recognise:

"Butler had become international—his time had come".

Lara Marlowe. France Correspondent, *The Irish Times* (Pictured again in hall):

"It is always dangerous to speak for the dead but I have a hunch that Hubert Butler might agree that nationalism and religion—so often scourges of humanity in the past are in danger of blighting our young century."

Robert Tobin.

"If Butler was around today the bumper sticker he might have on his car would be:

Act Locally, Think Globally.

This was very much how he tried to frame his own life. Hubert was born very much into what you might call County Unionist Society—his parents were unquestioning of the *status quo*. It was about King and Empire but they are also very much into responsibility for their local community and felt their connection with Bennettsbridge village where Maidenhall was located and I think as he grows up what Hubert remembered later was a blissful pastoral childhood and then very rudely he—in his estimation—

was sent off to school in England and this was a great trauma to him as he recorded it later on."

There is a shot of Rev. Robert Tobin, Biographer. He has on his clerical collar of C of E and he is seated on a lovely sofa in a rather spacious room—he is now a Tutor and Vicar in Oxford. He continues—

"Hubert was sent off to a Prep School and then he got a scholarship to go to a Public School 'Charterhouse' and then of course he is coming and going on the mail boat travelling from the UK to Ireland and it is during one of these trips that as he is leaving, he passes through Dublin just days after the Easter Rising. And this is a sort of epiphany for him because he says that the buildings were still smoking as he passed by and of course the Great War was going on and he was being trained to get ready to go off to Flanders but he said what had happened in Dublin was much more real and his academic career is really stellar and then he goes off to St. John's College, Oxford."

Chris Agee. Poet and Publisher. There is a shot of him out in the Dalmatian coast and he notes that at Oxford Hubert meets some new people from the new states from Slovakia and Yugoslavia and one of the latter says "*in Oxford in 1918 there was spring time in the air—it was about the breaking up of Empire and there was these new states inspired often by a republican ideal*".

VO—unrecognised.

"His mother Rita particularly supported the Union with Britain and she was upset at Hubert wanting to live and work in Ireland."

Joseph Hone. Foster Son of Hubert Butler is now shown as the person talking.

"So she had the bright idea of writing to her cousin who of course was Lord Grey who was the British Foreign Secretary at the time and pleading with him to get Hubert into the Diplomatic Service. This is the same man who a few years earlier had said:

"The lights are going out all over Europe, I think we shall not see them lit again in our own lifetime."

Hubert didn't get a diplomatic posting and became finally what he wanted to be remembered as: an Irishman in the mould of Wolf Tone and Henry Flood—there were no barriers north and south versus the Border."

"I am an Irishman" is how he wanted to be remembered and I think he is and will be without barriers."

Next is a shot of huge cheering crowds and there is Eamon de Valera up on the back of a truck and he is eulogising and the enthusiasm just jumps off the screen.

Rev. Robert Tobin:

"There is a famous essay called 'The Auction' in which Butler describes how his mother was very worried about her son and that he had caught *the infection of nationalism* {JH italics} which there is this extended metaphor in the essay about being akin to catching tuberculosis and his mother wants to inoculate him against this and he clearly becomes more and more enamoured with the possibility of being an Irish nationalist and deliberates about how he'd change" (sic).

Next up is a shot of Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Monaghan.

"Tyrone (Tony) Guthrie meets Butler as an undergraduate student in Oxford and they become fast friends because they identify as Irishmen in Oxford. Hubert meets Tyrone's sister Peggy and clearly there is something going on. Her photograph flashes up and it is a picture of a rather dour looking unfashionable young woman. Anyway Tony organises a walking tour of Sligo with Hubert and Peggy, and he also takes along a young woman, Judy, who later becomes his wife. They all spend the Easter holidays walking together and that really is where the romance between Hubert and Peggy is sealed."

There is a portrait of a young woman and it is very well rendered and beneath it is written: Susan Margaret (Peggy) Guthrie. Self Portrait. 1927.

VO:

"Peggy was a trained painter—she had been to Arts School."

Christopher Fitz-Simon, Former Artistic Director, National Theatre of Ireland.

"I knew she was interested in painting but it was only later when I saw her paintings and sketches hung in Maidenhall that I realised *Wow!* She could have been as famous as her brother Tyrone Guthrie who was an internationally famous theatrical producer."

Rev. Robert Tobin:

"Hubert clearly had no interest in becoming a farmer like his father had been and so he came back to Ireland to work for the Carnegie Library and work under the influence of Horace Plunkett and he is now very much clear that he wants to participate in building up the

*new nation* but at the same time there is this tremendous sense that it is going to be hard to make a living as a young Irish Protestant given all the challenges that that community would be facing so I think it fair to say that there is a certain pragmatic reason for Butler going abroad but there is also clearly a sense that he wants to explore the world and he is deeply invested in the idea that Irish people should be cosmopolitan."

Chris Agee:

"Butler always alluded to the fact that *Ireland was one of the 15 or so Secession States that arose out of the 1st World War—Versailles*. And that it was in a unique position to lead the other Secession States to be what a State could be in the interwar period and he stayed more and more to that idea. Yugoslavia was, Ireland was, Czechoslovakia was—other States in the East were" {here there is a shot of war-torn Mitteleuropa}.

Agee continues:

"that Eastern focus preoccupied him because he always saw himself as an *inheritor of the consciousness of a Secessionist State*. Russia was the successor of the collapse of the Tsarist State and so what does he do? The Great Russian writers Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Chekhov were always more conscious of temperament than uniformity of needs. Then Karl Marx and the Revolution created the Economic Man." (As this is being intoned there are pictures of working men in odd caps—Russian presumably and lots of old scenes and images that convey a very bleak time).

"He said that St. Petersburg had the toughness of a city that had been built around an idea and not a market. Peter's Window on Europe had been made for autocrats but, once opened, it could not be shut. Marx as well as Dickens, Byron, George Sands and all the other foreign influences had effect. Tolstoy—no less than Dostoevsky, the Slavophile had hated Petersburg and its western culture as the ..... hates the foreign peril but what they could not ignore—still less could their successors ignore was this origin." (sic)

VO Roy Foster.

"He knew the language. He translated *The Cherry Orchard* for his brother-in-law Tyrone Guthrie."

(Now there is a shot of Foster above the title Carroll Professor of Irish History, Oxford, dressed beautifully in a dark linen suit, grey silk shirt and hair browner than ever, allowing a mere stippling of grey at the sides. He is seated in a comfortable fabric-textured armchair with books and files artfully placed behind him.)

In fact we know that Butler did not properly know Russian because no less a person than the Russian-born Isaiah Berlin said, on receiving some writing of Butlers',

that his competency was *"barely adequate"*. But Foster goes on to state that Foster continues:

"Butler loved Russian writers like Gogol and Lermontov *and those unpredictable slightly wacky insights that they had*. Seán O'Faoláin had once told Butler that he could become the Irish Gogol if he became dotty enough to become an Irish Gogol" (Foster laughs).

"Hubert wasn't dotty and he didn't become that—he became something else. He told me about Ukrainian Nationalism years before I dreamt such a thing existed—away back in the late 80s, I hadn't realised {Here there is a close-up of a bewildered looking Foster.} how nationalisms had continued to be in the Soviet world and of course we have all become caught up with these since. But often he came back to London and then he begins learning Serbo-Croat at the School of Slavonic Studies."

I have been puzzling about how Butler found the money for all this but in a *London Review of Books* article (Vol. 22, No.5, 8th March 2011) no less a person than Neal Ascherson, the *Observer* journalist who was present in 2000 at the Hubert Butler Centenary Celebration 20th -22nd October in Kilkenny, and who infamously got entangled with Brendan Clifford over the Balkans and came out much the worse (see Clifford's articles in the *Irish Political Review* and *Church & State* at the time)—anyway Neal Ascherson states in a review of D.S. Mirsky: *A Russian-English Life 1890-1939* that Butler tried to conceal from Soviet Intelligence that he worked *"in the school of English intelligence—the School of Slavonic Studies"*. And there is a whiff of truth about this assertion and Ascherson would certainly be a person in the know—because how else would Butler be roving Europe at a time of a widening crisis without obvious means—even Fintan O'Toole has his doubts—see below.

Rev. Rob Tobin also goes on to state here that

"Butler came back to London to the School of Slavonic Studies to learn Serbo-Croat and this really prepared him to go out to Yugoslavia and to explore the multiple cultures that comprised Yugoslavia" (here there is a shot of a ferry coming into a harbour).

Chris Agee:

"Here we are in Dalmatia."

(There is a lovely scenic shot of a white ship crossing the sea towards a thickly forested coastline with a lighthouse in left foreground—and a sunlit Chris Agee reading from Hubert Butler's essay *'In*

*Dalmatia—1937*.) The focus is on the pastoral setting, hills, mimosa flowers, women washing clothes etc.

"Yugoslavs say that Venetians had cut down the original forests for the piles on which Venice was built. That observation about the forests being cut down is because he is implicitly thinking back to Ireland, where the British Navy cut down the forests so the story goes. It is a very good example of how his Irish and Yugoslav experiences fertilised each other to great effect. The Cypresses which appear in all those Renaissance portraits—it is easy to see how Croatia at first appears as an idyll—very like Ireland because he would become Ireland's Orwell—he was always politically attuned—he had a fine antenna. What began as an idyll had a dark side and the two echo in many respects Ireland itself. Ireland is a beautiful green country with many charming if infuriating traits—it has had a troubled turbulent history—so this whole territory of Yugoslavia was a territory of faultlines between the two rites of Christianity and between Islam and Christianity and between East and West.

"It was to Split that the body of the murdered King Alexander returned in 1934. He was assassinated in Marseilles at the behest of the Croat Separatists led by Pavelitch." (Here there are scenes of the murder of the King in his car and the sounds of gunfire.)

"Butler had just arrived in Croatia and had witnessed the mourning of the King. More than any other event—the assassination of King Alexander suggested to Butler and others the fundamental precariousness of interwar Yugoslavia. As Butler would write:

"During our time in Yugoslavia the shadow of the assassination hung over the whole country. Hitler had come to power in Germany and Jewish refugees were flowing to the Dalmatian coast. In Italy and Hungary Pavelitch and his helper Artukovitch were training the army of the Croat Rebels who were in 1941 to sweep into Yugoslavia and proclaim the independent State of Croatia"...". (Here are images of people beside ships, armies that are using the Hitler salute and jarringly a nun in her post Vatican II habit going to cross a road!)

"... and yet my recollections are of peace and beauty—there was almost no traffic ... Zagreb in the 30's was a very cultivated little town—there was an Opera House and a Theatre. Dalmatia was Italianate and Belgrade was largely Turkish in character."

Roy Foster:

"And the contrast I often have when I am reading Hubert about this central Europe is that he is much more intelligent than Paddy Leigh-Fermor whose flowing purple prose books on travelling as a young man through the Castles of Hungary or Transylvania—all those

places as a young man with a backpack but always staying in these very grand houses and I feel there is far less of the reality of what is happening between people on the ground in these immeasurably complex and interesting important areas than I get in Hubert."

Chris Agee.

"This is Orstiez—a small village not far from Dubrovnik where Hubert Butler met in a café during his first stay the famous English novelist Rebecca West. In a letter home to his mother he describes the afternoon as pouring down with rain and Rebecca West as being chauffeured around the country by her rich husband in a roadster. Butler asks West what she is doing here? She responds: "I am working on a novel on Yugoslavia or more precisely Yugoslavia and me!"..."

VO:

(On screen we see Riga Strand in 1930. Black/white photo—huge crowds having a great time on the beach and in the sea. VO is reading from HB's essay:)

"...boys light bonfire on the beach after it is deserted—they come from nearby woods ... Jewish faces who have not lost the colours of the Mediterranean though it may have been many generations since their ancestors came up from Palestine to the shores of the Baltic. Persecution has hardened them and enabled them to survive war and persecution ... perhaps it is they in the end who will decide the future of Riga Strand. Many of the Jews who came to Dalmatia came particularly to escape the Holocaust."

Chris Agee.

"What Butler saw of the looming predicament of the Jews in Eastern and Central Europe—what he saw in 1934-'37 of the persecution in Dalmatia and what he gleaned from the documents led him inevitably to the epicentre of the Jewish Crisis—Vienna—Imperial Capital of Austria/Hungary from which the Yugoslav lands had only recently been detached".

(Cuts to footage of planes/bombers in the air and Hitler looking up at them surrounded by some of his army.)

VO:

"The name is Lime—Martin Lime."

(Footage from the film—which is hugely used and really I do know the famous actor who gets off the train and walks around a deserted town but I cannot recall his name or that of the film—of course throughout the documentary there is hardly ever a clip/photo captioned or dated which would have been very helpful to the viewer!)

Rev. Rob Tobin:

"He volunteers to work for the Quakers in Vienna and works closely with Emma Cadbury—a famous Quaker activist—to try to get as many Jewish people out of Vienna as possible."

Fintan O'Toole:

"Butler's position was a little bit anomalous because he was working with Quakers but he wasn't one of them. He didn't really have any official position and I suppose he had some of the glow of the Quaker history in Vienna where they were very highly regarded and they had all these contacts particularly with Nazis who were Austrian. He was able to use his suave Anglo/Irish manners to get into the Embassies to try to talk to people. In the end they had to break the law—he had to take the law into his own hands to a very large extent by shipping people out of Austria—getting them to England—having his wife Peggy meet people in the station in London *and get them pretty much illegally to Bennettsbridge* and then try to get them onwards from there."

(While O'Toole was thus giving the most implausible version of history that I have ever heard—and being university-educated I have heard *some*—there was a collage of shots of buildings with huge Swastikas with soldiers everywhere, a shot of a ship full of refugees, presumably; and a shot of lovely wealthy young women, with fur coats and smiling on the side of a quay.)

Rev. Rob Tobin:

"Butler himself draws on various favours from people he himself knew in Ireland and then the Quaker community really steps forwards."

Fintan O'Toole:

"Whether people were turning a blind eye or whether this assumption that this nice man in the boat with these respectably dressed people—it was probably OK *is really not clear*—but what is clear is that he was operating very much on his own initiative and himself and Peggy were doing this according to their own lights." (Here there is a photo of Butler and his wife, in their fifties perhaps, very well dressed.) "There was a Committee", Fintan goes on, "to aid Christian refugees—the word Christian was very specific so it fit into the institutional support that was there."

Rev. Rob Tobin:

"You have this interesting distinction the Government makes and of course Butler is pretty much angry and antagonised by the Irish Government's refusal to recognise the gravity of the problem."

Fintan O'Toole:

"The thinking here was and Hubert Butler reportedly said that this was said to him: "That the American Jews will look after the Jews and our job is to look out for Christians or Jews who perhaps have converted to Christianity—they would be OK—otherwise they would be none of our concern"..."

No-where is any of this evidenced by names or any other documents—it's really a stream of consciousness played out by O'Toole, Tobin, Agee and Foster—so far!

"In 1938 Butler attends the famous Evian Conference—the issue of Jewish refugees is being discussed. He tells the story with obvious anger and frustration about the two Irish delegates at the Conference who say something to the effect: "Sure nobody came to our aid when we were in trouble" and to him—this sort of summarises the Irish 'blinkerer'" (Rob Tobin uses air quotation marks at this word) "reaction to what is at stake and just how dangerous the condition of Jewish people is."

Fintan O'Toole.

"There was also a deep reservoir of anti-Semitism—there was a sense you couldn't be bringing a large number of Jews into Ireland—they would be an irritant to the body-politic, they wouldn't fit in, they wouldn't look like us and Ireland was this beautiful homogeneous Catholic society and we didn't need *these aliens*."

To be continued in the next issue.

**Julianne Herlihy** ©

## PS

Robert Tobin was the young man with the crew cut who tried to get the microphone away from Brendan Clifford during those **censored debates** in Kilkenny in 2000. He was then an undergraduate in Oxford, according to the notes on the leaflet. A more recent search revealed that he was raised in Boston and Texas and took his first degree from Harvard. A Fulbright Scholar, he holds degrees from Trinity College, Dublin, Oxford and Cambridge. He is an ordained priest in the Church of England, having served as a curate in Buckinghamshire and as the Episcopal/Anglican Chaplain at Harvard before taking up his present post as Chaplain and Tutor at Oriel College, Oxford.

**JH**

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## Why Constance Markievicz Stood By The Republic

### INTRODUCTION

In the May issue of *Irish Political Review* I wrote of the malicious misogyny directed against 1916 leader Constance Markievicz, further exemplified by a quotation I cited in the June issue: "*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'...*" (Quoted by Liz Gillis and Mary McAuliffe, *Richmond Barracks 1916*, p 252). In a future issue I'll review three biographical works published this year: *Constance Markievicz—Irish Revolutionary* by Anne Haverty; *Sisters Against The Empire—Countess Constance Markievicz and Eva Gore-Booth, 1916-17* by Patrick Quigley; and *Revolutionary Lives—Constance and Casimir Markievicz* by Lauren Arrington. Here, however, I'll take note of two particular items brought to light by Arrington. Firstly, the fact that the "*human skulls*" gossip did not originate in England itself, but rather, with the Rising not yet ended, with England's voice in Ireland, the *Irish Times*. (Arrington, p 136). An *Irish Times* British War service recruitment column, entitled "*Women's Work in Ireland—Conducted by Shamus*", contained the following on the Friday of Easter Week, 28th April 1916:

"By accident I heard of the brave way in which Mrs. Katherine Nelson, of 49 Lower Mount Street, acted, and so I called to hear from her own lips what had happened. Mrs. Nelson is a soldier's wife and the mother of a boy in the Royal Navy, who is now on active service, and who has been to the Dardanelles. On the famous Wednesday of Easter week she was sitting in her house looking at the Staffords marching townwards. One by one she witnessed these poor chaps dropping—slaughtered by the murderous fire of the concealed miscreants. Mrs. Nelson seized a jug of water and ran into the street to succour the wounded... Mrs. Nelson, before her married days, had been closely associated with the Countess Markievicz, when she was Miss Gore-Booth, and was with her in London when she was presented to Queen Victoria in 1887, the Jubilee year... Mrs. Nelson said the Countess was never quite normal—always a constant source of trouble and anxiety to her people owing to her eccentricity. She declines to believe that she is a good shot, as has been stated in

the papers, as she has always suffered from defective vision and is very short-sighted. Mrs. Nelson married and went a-soldiering with her husband, and in this way lost sight of the Countess for many years, but she had often seen her recently, and sometimes in such shabby attire as would almost cause one to offer her charity. The Countess, Mrs. Nelson states, was always peculiar about her religion, and was a student of occult science. In her early youth she went in for spirit-wrapping and table turning, and later is said to have had a room for her spiritual exercises, the shelves of which contained many human skulls. Although connected with many of the noblest families in England, she appears to have cut herself completely adrift and to have consorted with a class of persons of a kind very different from those with which she was associated in early youth."

Secondly, Arrington also drew attention to how, in its issue of 4th January 1922, the *Irish Times* had sneered at Markievicz's contribution to the Dáil Éireann debate on the Treaty the previous day:

"When the Dáil resumed after a break over Christmas and the New Year, the battle lines were drawn. Each deputy was given the opportunity to speak just once in order to articulate his or her position on the treaty. As a demonstration of loyalty to the idea of the nation, Markievicz began by speaking in Irish, with an accent that the *Irish Times* mocked as reminiscent of 'the Irish of Stratford-atte-Bowe'. She argued that the treaty was a sugarcoated Home Rule bill, which would disestablish the democratically elected Dáil. These observations later prompted George Gilmore to claim that Markievicz was unique in her understanding of 'the realities' of the agreement" (p 213).

It is, however, another part of Markievicz's speech that has been singled out for highlighting and misrepresentation. In his Collins hagiography, Tim Pat Coogan made the following contribution to the misogyny:

"Cathleen ni Houlihan, Yeats' synonym for Ireland, would show herself as an envious, strident, venomous bitch throughout the Treaty debates... Collins was singled out for special treatment, on the grounds of both drink and sex. Countess Markievicz regaled the Dáil with a rumour that Collins had broken up a royal romance! ... As a result 'Princess Mary's wedding is to be broken off... The Princess Mary is to be married to Michael

Collins who will be appointed first Governor'. This nonsense came at a particularly bad moment" (*Michael Collins—A Biography*, 1990, p 277).

In the *Irish Independent* of 11th December 2011, Kim Bielenberg wrote:

"A few weeks after the treaty, Constance Markievicz stood up in the Dáil to make her outlandish claim that 'there is a suggestion Princess Mary's wedding is to be broken off and that she is to be married to Michael Collins'. Perhaps wishing to dampen down the rumours about his three-month stay in London, it was then that Collins stood up and announced his engagement. He did not name his betrothed, but she was Kitty Kiernan."

In the *Irish Examiner*, on 22nd August 2012, Richard Fitzpatrick wrote:

"Michael Collins's assassination (*sic*), 90 years ago today, ended the most celebrated love triangle in Irish history. Three weeks earlier, on August 2, 1922, Collins's friend, Harry Boland, who had fought on the opposite side in the Civil War, was killed in a hotel in Skerries, resisting arrest (*sic*). Both men had been in love with Kitty Kiernan... Boland pleaded with her to marry him, but Collins, in a bizarre exchange in Dáil Éireann during the fractious Treaty debates in January 1922, announced he was engaged to her. The timing of the announcement was to disabuse the Irish parliament of the notion that he was to marry Princess Mary, a charge made by Countess Markievicz."

But isn't it remarkable that Coogan, Bielenberg and Fitzpatrick—and a host of others—have systematically omitted the very next sentence that Markievicz uttered immediately after her supposed "charge"? This is what she said:

"I heard there was a suggestion—there was a brother of the king's or queen's suggested as Governor-General, and I heard also that this Lascelles was going to be Governor. I also heard that there is a suggestion that Princess Mary's wedding is to be broken off, and that the Princess Mary is to be married to Michael Collins who will be appointed first Governor of our Saorstát na hÉireann. All these are mere nonsense."

Yes, it was Markievicz herself who described such rumours as "*nonsense*"! She had thrown them into the debate in order to get a rise out of Collins, and it worked, for what it was worth. But it was a tactical mistake. It took from the seriousness of her address, which her detractors are only too happy to consign to silence. It was a coherent, reasoned, analysis of the Treaty, so well recognised by George Gilmore, and its content is so

much at odds with the eccentric, woolly headed, loopy, caricature Markievicz advanced by her enemies. Hereunder, therefore, is the full text of the rest of her Dáil address on 3rd January 1922, together with her follow-up Dáil address on January 9th:

**Manus O'Riordan**

### **CONSTANCE MARKIEWICZ: DEBATE ON TREATY, 3 JANUARY 1922**

*A Chinn Chomhairle agus a lucht na Dála, táim im' sheasamh go láidir agus go fíor anso inniu i gcúis Phoblacht na hÉireann d'eirigh i Seachtain na Cásga, cúig bliana ó shoin.* I rise today to oppose with all the force of my will, with all the force of my whole existence, this so-called Treaty—this Home Rule Bill covered over with the sugar of a Treaty. My reasons are twofold. First, I stand true to my principles as a Republican, and to my principles as one pledged to the teeth for freedom for Ireland. I stand on that first and foremost. I stand, too, on the common sense of the Treaty itself, which, I say, does not mean what it professes to mean, and can be read in two ways.

I would like you first to take the Treaty, to draw your attention to clauses 17 and 18 and to ask the delegates what limiting power England and the English Parliament will have on the constitution which they are prepared to draft. I would also like to ask them what they mean by number 17: "Steps shall be taken forthwith for summoning a meeting of Members of Parliament elected for constituencies in Southern Ireland since the passing of the Government of Ireland Act." What do they mean by that? Is that a meeting of the Southern Parliament, or is it a sort of committee which is to be formed, or what does it stand for? It is not An Dáil; it is not called a meeting of the Southern Parliament. It is called a meeting of Members of Parliament elected for constituencies in Southern Ireland. What power has England to set up such elected representatives as a Government? She has power under the last Bill, I believe, to set up Crown Colony Government, but I doubt whether she has power to set up this as a Government for Ireland. That is a thing I would like to ask the plenipotentiaries, if they have thought about it.

Then I see in that letter that Mr Griffith quoted with regard to the setting up of this Constitution for Ireland—discussing the Second Chamber, Lloyd George says:

"The establishment and composition of the Second Chamber is therefore in the discretion of the Irish people. There is nothing in the Articles of Agreement to suggest that Ireland is, in this respect, bound to the Canadian model." Well, Mr Griffith published the letter which he wrote to the Southern Unionists. It was dealt with today by Mr Art O'Connor. This is the letter: "Sir, I write to inform you that at a meeting I had with representatives of Southern Unionists I agreed that a scheme should be devised to give them their full share of representation in the First Chamber of the Irish Parliament, and that as to the Upper Chamber we will consult them on its constitution and undertake that their interests will be duly represented."

Now I want to know by what authority the Chairman of the Delegation said this. And I want to know also what it means. Does it mean that the Chairman of the Delegation wishes to alter the form of representation of this country by some syndicalist representation, or representation by classes, or by trade unions, or by public bodies, or something else? Mr Griffith, surely, does not mean that they would merely get their proper representation or the representation they are entitled to. It must mean something special. Now why are these men to be given something special? And what do the Southern Unionists stand for? You will all allow they stand for two things. First and foremost as the people who, in Southern Ireland, have been the English garrison against Ireland and the rights of Ireland. But in Ireland they stand for something bigger still and worse, something more malignant; for that class of capitalists who have been more crushing, cruel and grinding on the people of the nation than any class of capitalists of whom I ever read in any other country, while the people were dying on the roadsides. They are the people who have combined together against the workers of Ireland, who have used the English soldiers, the English police and every institution in the country to ruin the farmer, and more especially the small farmer, and to send the people of Ireland to drift in the emigrant ships and to die of horrible disease or to sink to the bottom of the Atlantic. And these anti-Irish Irishmen are to be given some select way of entering this House, some select privileges—privileges they have earned by their cruelty to the Irish people and to the working classes of Ireland; and not only that, but they are to be consulted as to how the Upper House is to be constituted. As a Republican who means that the Republic means government by the consent of the people (hear, hear) I object

to any sort of government of that sort, whereby a privileged number of classes established here by British rule are to be given a say—to this small minority of traitors and oppressors—in the form of an Upper Chamber as against all, I might say, modern ideas of common sense, of the people who wish to build up a prosperous, contented nation.

But looking as I do for the prosperity of the many, for the happiness and content of the workers, for what I stand, James Connolly's ideal of a Workers' Republic—(A pro-Treaty deputy interjects: Soviet Republic)—co-operative commonwealth, these men who have opposed everything, are to be elected and upheld by our plenipotentiaries; and I suppose they are to be the Free State, or the Cheap State, Army, or whatever selection these men are, to be set up to uphold English interests in Ireland, to uphold the capitalists' interests in Ireland, to block every ideal that the nation may wish to formulate; to block the teaching of Irish, to block the education of the poorer classes; to block, in fact, every bit of progress that every man and woman in Ireland today amongst working people desire to see put into force. That is one of the biggest blots on this Treaty; this deliberate attempt to set up a privileged class in this, what they call a Free State, that is not free. I would like the people here who represent the workers to take that into consideration—to say to themselves, what can the working people expect in an Ireland that is being run by men who, at the time of the Treaty, are willing to guarantee this sort of privilege to a class that every thinking man and woman in Ireland despises. (Note: *Saorstát Éireann* was the official Irish-language name for the Irish Free State; but since the Irish-language word "*saor*" can be translated into English as either "free" or "cheap", Markievicz played on this linguistic ambiguity by referring to "the Cheap State—MO'R).

Now, there are one or two things that I would like an answer to. It strikes me that our opponents in speaking have been extraordinarily vague. We had Mr Hogan, Deputy for Galway, before the recess talking a great deal about the king, and he was rather sneering at the idea of the king being head of a Free State. In fact his ideas about the king amounted merely to one thing—an individual's ideas of a modern king. What he lost sight of is this: that the king today in England—when you mention the king—you mean the British Cabinet. Allegiance to the king like that does not even get you the freedom that is implied—a dual monarchy. The king today is a

figurehead, a thing that presides at banquets, waves a flag, and reads his speeches someone else makes for him; which mean absolutely nothing but words put into his mouth by his cabinet. Also the same vagueness comes into the question of the oath. As a Republican I naturally object to the king, because the king really stands in politics for his prime minister, the court of which he also is the head and centre, the pivot around which he turns—well it is not one of the things that tends to elevate and improve the country. It tends to develop all sorts of corruption, all sorts of luxury and all sorts of immorality. The court centre in any country has never, in the history of the world, for more than a very short period proved anything, through the centuries, but a centre from which vice and wrong ideals emanated.

Now, with regard to the oath, I say to anyone—go truthfully and take this oath, take it. If they take it under duress there may be some excuse for them, but let them remember that nobody here took their Republican oath under duress. They took it knowing that it might mean death; and they took it meaning that. And when they took that oath to the Irish Republic they meant, I hope, every honest man and every woman—I know the women—they took it meaning to keep it to death. Now what I have against that oath is that it is a dishonourable oath. It is not a straight oath. It is an oath that can be twisted in every imaginable form. You have heard the last speaker explain to you that this oath meant nothing; that it was a thing you could walk through and trample on; that, in fact, the Irish nation could publicly pledge themselves to the king of England, and that you, the Irish people, could consider yourselves at the same time free, and not bound by it. Now, I have here some opinions, English opinions, as to what the oath is; but mind you, when you swear that oath the English people believe you mean it. Lloyd George in the House of Commons on the 14th December said:

"The main operation of this scheme is the raising of Ireland to the status of a Dominion of the British Empire with a common citizenship, and by virtue of that membership in the Empire, and of that common citizenship, owing allegiance to the king and swearing allegiance to the king."

For the moment I will confine myself to the statement that there has been complete acceptance of allegiance to the British Crown and acceptance of membership in the Empire, and acceptance of common citizenship; that she (Ireland) has accepted allegiance to the Crown and partnership

in the same Empire. Mr Winston Churchill in the House of Commons on the 15th of December, 1921, said:

"In our view they promise allegiance to the Crown and membership of the Empire. (Hon. Members: No, no.) That is our view. The oath comprises acceptance of the British Constitution, which is, by Articles 1 and 2 of the Constitution, exactly assimilated to the Constitution of our Dominions. This oath is far more precise and searching than the ordinary oath which is taken elsewhere. (Hon. Members: No, no.) It mentions specifically membership of the Empire, common citizenship, and faithfulness to the Crown, whereas only one of these matters is dealt with in the Dominion Oath."

Now here is a curious thing. Sir W. Davidson asked why should they not take the Canadian Oath, and the answer by Mr Churchill is this:

"The oath they are asked to take is more carefully and precisely drawn than the existing oath, and it was chosen because it was more acceptable to the people whose allegiance we are seeking, and whose incorporation in the British Empire we are certainly desirous of securing."

"Sir L. Worthington Evans: What does 'as by law established' mean? It means that presently—next Session—we shall be asked in this House to establish a Constitution for the Irish Free State, and part of the terms of the settlement will be that the members who go to serve in that Free State Parliament will have to swear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution as passed by this House of Commons. How is it possible to say that within the terms of that oath they can set up a Republic and still maintain their oath?"

Now here is one important extract I want to read to you on this point:

"Sir L. Worthington Evans: Then it was suggested by the Hon. Member for Burton that this oath contained no allegiance to the Throne, but merely fidelity to the King. I have not time to go into the history of the oaths which have from time to time been taken in this Parliament, but I did have time while the Hon. Member was speaking to look up Anson on Constitutional Law, and I extracted this: 'There were at one time three oaths. There was the Oath of Allegiance'—and this is how Anson defines it—'it was a declaration of fidelity to the reigning sovereign. . . But Anson's description of the Oath of Allegiance is that it was a declaration of fidelity to the throne, so that in this oath as included in the Treaty we have got this: we have got the Oath of Allegiance in the declaration of fidelity, 'I will be faithful to His Majesty King George V, his heirs and successors

by law.' And we have got something in addition—a declaration of fidelity to the Constitution of the Irish Free State as by law established, and, in further addition, we have the declaration of fidelity to the Empire itself."

Now, personally, I being an honourable woman, would sooner die than give a declaration of fidelity to King George or the British Empire. I saw a picture the other day of India, Ireland and Egypt fighting England, and Ireland crawling out with her hands up. Do you like that? I don't. Now, if we pledge ourselves to this oath we pledge our allegiance to this thing, whether you call it Empire or Commonwealth of Nations, that is treading down the people of Egypt and of India. And in Ireland this Treaty, as they call it, *mar dheadh*, that is to be ratified by a Home Rule Bill, binds us to stand by and enter no protest while England crushes Egypt and India. And, mind you, England wants peace in Ireland to bring her troops over to India and Egypt. She wants the Republican Army to be turned into a Free State Army, and mind, the army is centred in the king or the representative of the king. He is the head of the army. The army is to hold itself faithful to the Commonwealth of Nations while the Commonwealth sends its Black-and-Tans to India. Of course you may want to send the Black-and-Tans out of this country. Now mind you, there are people in Ireland who were not afraid to face them before, and I believe would not be afraid to face them again.

You are here labouring under a mistake if you believe that England, for the first time in her life, is treating you honourably. Now I believe, and we are against the Treaty believing, that England is being more dishonourable and acting in a cleverer way than she ever did before, because I believe we never sent cleverer men over than we sent this time, yet they have been tricked. Now you all know me, you know that my people came over here in Henry VIII's time, and by that bad black drop of English blood in me I know the English—that's the truth. I say it is because of that black drop in me that I know the English personally better perhaps than the people who went over on the delegation. (Laughter)

(A pro-Treaty deputy interjects: Why didn't you go over?)

Why didn't you send me? I tell you, don't trust the English with gifts in their hands. That's not original, someone said it before of the Greeks—but it is true. The English come to you today offering you great gifts; I tell you this, those gifts are

not genuine. I tell you, you will come out of it a defeated nation. No-one ever got the benefits of the promises the English made them. It seems absurd to talk to the Irish people about trusting the English, but you know how the O'Neills and the O'Donnells went over and always came back with the promises and guarantees that their lands would be left them and that their religion would not be touched. What is England's record? It was self-aggrandisement and Empire. You will notice how does she work—by a change of names. They subjugated Wales by giving them a Prince of Wales, and now they want to subjugate Ireland by a Free State Parliament and a Governor-General at the head of it. I could tell you something about Governor-Generals and people of that sort. You can't have a Governor-General without the Union Jack, and a suite, and general household and other sort of official running in a large way. The interests of England are the interests of the capitalistic class. Your Governor-General is the centre for your southern Unionists, for whom Mr Griffith has been so obliging. He is the centre from which anti-Irish ideals will go through Ireland, and English ideals will come: love of luxury, love of wealth, love of competition, trample on your neighbours to get to the top, immorality and divorce laws of the English nation. All these things you will find centred in this Governor-General... (The 'Princess Mary' diversion—MOR)... You will find that the English people, the rank-and-file of the common people, will all take it that we are entering their Empire and that we are going to help them.

All the people who are in favour of it here claim it to be a step towards Irish freedom, claim it to be nothing but allegiance to the Free State. Now what will the world think of it? What the world thinks of it is this: Ireland has long been held up to the scorn of the world through the British press. According to that press Ireland is a nation that lay down, that never protested. The people in other countries have scorned us. So Ireland can bear to be scorned again, even if she takes the oath that pledges her support to the Commonwealth of Nations. But I say, what do Irishmen think in their own hearts? Can any Irishman take that oath honourably and then go back and prepare to fight for an Irish Republic or even to work for the Republic? It is like a person going to get married plotting a divorce. I would make a Treaty with England once Ireland was free, and I would stand with President de Valera in this, that if Ireland were a free republic I would welcome the

king of England over here on a visit. But while Ireland is not free I remain a rebel, unconverted and unconvertible. There is no word strong enough for it. I am pledged as a rebel, an unconvertible rebel, to the one thing—a free and independent Republic.

Now, we have been sneered at for being Republicans by even men who fought for the Republic. We have been told that we didn't know what we meant. Now I know what I mean—a state run by the Irish people for the people. That means a Government that looks after the rights of the people before the rights of property. And I don't wish under the Saorstát to anticipate that the directors of this and the capitalists' interests are to be at the head of it. My idea is the Workers Republic for which Connolly died. And I say that that is one of the things that England wishes to prevent. She would sooner give us Home Rule than a democratic Republic. It is the capitalists' interests in England and Ireland that are pushing this Treaty to block the march of the working people in England and Ireland.

Now, we were offered a Treaty in the first place because England was in a tight place. She wanted her troops for more dirty work elsewhere. Because Dáil Éireann was too democratic, because her Law Courts were too just, because the will of the people was being done, and justice was being done, and the well-being of the people was considered, the whole people were behind us. You talk very glibly about England evacuating the country. Has anybody questioned that? How long did it take her to evacuate Egypt? What guarantee have we that England will do more than begin to evacuate Ireland directly the Treaty has been ratified? She will begin to evacuate, I have no doubt; she will send a certain number of troops to her other war fronts.

Now there is one deputy—not more than one, I hope—who charged that we rattled the bones of the dead. I must protest about the phrase of rattling the bones of our dead. Now I would like to ask where would Ireland stand without the noble dead? I would like to ask can any of you remember, as I can, the first time you read Robert Emmet's speech from the dock? Yes, it is all very well for those who now talk Dominion Home Rule to try to be scornful of the phrases—voices of men from the grave, who call on us to die for the cause they died for. I don't think it is fair to say what dead men might say if they had been here today. What I do think fair is to read the messages they left behind them, and to mould our lives with

them. James Connolly said, the last time I heard him speak—he spoke to me and to others—a few phrases that very much sum up the situation today. It was just before Easter Week in 1916. We had heard the news that certain people had called off the Rising. One man wishing to excuse them, to exonerate them, said:

"So-and-so does not care to take the responsibility of letting people go to their death when there is so little chance of victory."

"Oh," said Connolly, "there is only one sort of responsibility I am afraid of and that is preventing the men and women of Ireland fighting and dying for Ireland if they are so minded."

That was almost the last word that was said to me by a man who died for Ireland, a man who was my Commandant, and I have always thought of that since, and I have always felt that that was a message which I had to deliver to the people of Ireland.

We hear a great deal of the renewal of warfare. I am of quite a pacific mind. I don't like to kill. I don't like death, but I am not afraid to die and, not being afraid to die myself, I don't see why I should say that I should take it for granted that the Irish people were not as ready to die now in this this year 1922, any more than they were afraid in the past. I fear dishonour; I don't fear death, and I feel at all events that death is preferable to dishonour; and sooner than see the people of Ireland take that oath meaning to build up your Republic on a lie, I would sooner say to the people of Ireland: "Stand by me and fight to the death." I think that a real Treaty between a free Ireland and a free England—with Ireland standing as a free sovereign state—I believe it would be possible to get that now; but even if it were impossible, I myself would stand for what is noblest and what is truest. That is the thing that to me I can grasp in my nature. I have seen the stars, and I am not going to follow a flickering will-o'-the-wisp, and I am not going to follow any person juggling with constitutions and introducing petty, tricky ways into this Republican movement which we built up—you and not I, because I have been in jail. It has been built up and are we now going back to this tricky Parliamentarianism, because I tell you this document is nothing else.

Pearse Beasley gave us to understand that this is the beginning of something great and that Ireland is struggling to be born. I say that the new Ireland was born in Easter Week 1916, that Ireland is not struggling to be born. I say that the Irish language has begun to grow, that we are

pushing it in the schools, and I don't see that giving up our rights, that going into the British Empire is going to help. In any case the thing is not what you might call a practical thing. It won't help our commerce, but it is not that; we are idealists believing in and loving Ireland, and I believe that Ireland held by the Black-and-Tans did more for Ireland than Ireland held by Parliamentarianism—the road that meant commercial success for those who took it and, meaning other things, meant prestige for those who took it.

But there is the other stoney road that leads to ultimate freedom and the regeneration of Ireland; the road that so many of our heroes walked, and I for one, will stand on the road with Terence MacSwiney and Kevin Barry and the men of Easter Week. I know the brave soldiers of Ireland will stand there, and I stand humbly behind them, men who have given themselves for Ireland, and I will devote to it the same amount that is left to me of energy and life; and I stand here today to make the last protest, for we only speak but once, and to ask you read most carefully, not to take everything for granted, and to realise above all that you strive for one thing, your allegiance to the men who have fought and died. But look at the results. Look at what we gain. We gained more in those few years of fighting than we gained by parliamentary agitation since the days of O'Connell. O'Connell said that Ireland's freedom was not worth a drop of blood. Now I say that Ireland's freedom is worth blood, and worth my blood, and I will willingly give it for it, and I appeal to the men of the Dail to stand true. They ought to stand true and remember what God has put into your hearts and not be lead astray by phantasmagoria. Stand true to Ireland, stand true to your oaths and put a little trust in God.

### **MARKIEWICZ: DEBATE ON DEV RESIGNATION, 9 JANUARY 1922**

I want to get back to common sense and plain facts. The President offered to resign. He resigned on Saturday. It was at the suggestion—or almost request—of the opposition he withdrew his resignation until this morning, and I strongly resent then that he should be accused of any political trick. Surely when the President's policy is defeated the obvious course is for the President to resign. Now, we want order and peace in the country. We do not wish to see disruption and disagreement which may lead to very serious results up and down the land. We listened to Mr.

Collins' suggestion of a joint committee that from the President's point of view and from my point of view is an impossibility, because we disagree on fundamentals, that is, on the Treaty. Mr. Michael Collins stands for Saorstát na hÉireann, and I stand for the Republic. As a person who stands for the Republic I cannot consider anything less, nor will I work with anyone who considers the case of Ireland from a lower standard than my own. Now, the President's name was put forward for re-election. Now, I ask, what do the opposition mean? Why do they not put up a man of their own as President—which I would consider the honourable way out of this? I myself believe that, except on the one question of the Saorstát as against the Republic—that is, the Free State or Cheap State, as the other Irish translation has it—there is a majority in favour of the Free State in this House, but I do not know that on any other of the points of President de Valera's policy that there has ever been any disagreement in this House. And, of course, the opposition are pre-supposing that this House is definitely divided.

One of our party proposed President de Valera as President of this assembly. And I conclude Deputy Mrs. Clarke proposed that because, when the President resigned, the opposition did not, in their turn, propose a President. They, apparently, did not stand for the Republic. We then, as Republicans—or a member of our party—proposed our much loved and much respected President, the man who carried out the great fight in Boland's Mill with a gun in his own hands, as a Commander, in Easter Week; the man who fought elections, the man who went to jail, the man whom we have all known as the straightest, truest and most honourable man we ever had anything to do with. Even his opponents will admit there could never have been a criticism of the President's bravery, courage or honour. We proposed the President and they are refusing to elect the President. They are trying to overthrow the Republic. This is what I would put to them: we established our Republic; they have this Treaty. This Treaty has been passed by the House. They have a clear road in front of them. They go over—they take up the negotiations, they form a Constitution and then go on. But I say why should our side be supposed to end our opposition to the destruction of the Republic? Now, the members of the opposition here blame the President because, when he was put forward as President to be elected, he simply and frankly and honestly stated that, as President, he would continue his

work as President of the Irish Republic—a protector and fighter for the Irish Republic. That was an honourable line, and a thing for which I respect and value him.

We know to-day that England is in the tightest corner she was ever in. We know there is a paper wall around India and Egypt as big as there had ever been around Ireland before Easter Week. We do not know what straits England is in. We don't know what may happen in the coming year while the Provisional Government which Mr. Griffith and Mr. Collins are going to set up is functioning, and I say now it is necessary that the Republican interest should be held and the situation watched. And I say now: let this vote be a straight one. The Republic exists to-day. Let the President be elected and let him stand by his ideals and the world will know the man he is. I would say that those who stand for the ultimate Republic in Ireland, who believe in the Republic, and who work for the Republic, must support the President. What matters is that the Republic is not allowed to be overthrown today by any side-tracking, personal allusions—petty and mean—against brave and honourable men, and also by juggling and tricks. Again I repeat—it is very simple the outlook to-day—the state and condition at the moment is this: the President has resigned because he considers it his duty. The members of our party who wish for the re-affirmation of the Republic are supporting him. Let those who wish to overthrow the Republic vote that there ought be no President from this day in Ireland; and let them realise that they are using the little bit of authority, the one little piece, to pull down what Ireland has gained by centuries of fighting, of misery and of suffering. And that is the position to-day.

**Letter to Jude Collins Blog**

**Russia Today!**

The lead story on page one of *The Times* of London (July 30) says "*Putin wages propaganda war on UK*". On page 27 its leading Editorial, headed "*Putin's Information War*" declares—"The Kremlin hopes to gain a foothold in Britain with a spurious news channel" [a reference to *Russia Today*]. And it opines that "*its lies are best answered with facts*".

Forgive me if I find the posturing of *The Times* funny... It is well known that all key BBC commentators are vetted by the the Secret Services and some of them Secret Service Operatives. Jon Snow of Channel 4 has described how the spooks tried to recruit himself, and there are many key commentators who, if they are not themselves enlisted with those services, are enthusiastic collaborators. The Official Secrets Act and "D" notices constrain those commentators who might be tempted to reveal truths embarrassing to evildoers in the State's direction and practices.

And then, there's *The Times*, once nicknamed "*The Thunderer*" for the self-importance of its Editorials, but in fact a Thundering Liar for well over a century. It's been an enemy of those who sought to improve the lot of the Irish people from Daniel O'Connell to Charles Stewart Parnell, to John Redmond and Eamon de Valera to Gerry Adams.

When the idea of nominating John Hume as a candidate for the Irish President was mooted, the paper had the cheek to inform us that, as Hume came from "*Londonderry*", his nomination should not be admitted.

I won a battle against *The Times* in its propaganda war against Ireland when I forced the Press Council to condemn it for lies following the death of Bobby Sands. I had to write about twice a week for nine months in long-hand on a matter that could have been settled in five minutes had the Council or *The Times* a scintilla of integrity.

The day the paper was censured, its Editor, Harold Evans was hailed as "*Editor Of The Year*" by his fellow British Editors. He has since been Knighted.

I've no brief for Mr Putin, but he scares me far less than the Bear-Baiting antics of NATO on Russia's borders and the continuing mischief of the US, its allies and cats' paws in the Middle East and beyond.

**Donal Kennedy**

**EDITORIAL NOTE: Readers are commended to view the *Russia Today* channel for its fair reporting and raising of issues avoided by the mainstream media. Of it might truly be said: its facts are answered with lies.**

**Roger Casement Remembered At Pentonville**

Roger Casement, the Irishman born in Dublin, arrested in Kerry, conveyed to London, hanged by an Englishman after conviction by an English Jury of High Treason' was remembered and honoured outside Her Majesty's Prison Pentonville, London on Wednesday 3rd August ,the centenary of his death there, by between a gathering of 60 to 70 drawn from the Connolly Association and other organisations .A representative of the Congolese community recalled the humanitarian work of Casement who had revealed to the world the enslavement, torture and murder of Africans by the employees of King Leopold of the Belgians. Leopold was responsible for genocide there of up

to ten million Africans to enrich himself, and Belgium ,by the extraction of rubber.

Casement's speech from the Dock of the Old Bailey was read out. to remind us of the reasons for his presence there,for which he made no apology. . At 9.00 AM the crowd stood bareheaded for one minute's silence. A lament was played on the Irish War Pipes.

Authentic and Authenticated writings of Casement written between 1911 and the outbreak of the Great War and entitled "*The Crime Against Europe*" and "*The Crime Against Ireland*", published by Athol Books in 2003 with an Introduction

by Brendan Clifford, were on sale. Casement forecast Britain's War on Germany which had been planned and prepared for since 1904 and condemned it as a crime. The Socialist James Connolly independently judged it a crime, as did the Catholic Bishop of Limerick, Dr.Dwyer.

Casement's authenticated essays collected under the titles above appear to have been ignored by nearly all commentators, or dismissed as unworthy of study.

But other alleged writings of his have been lucrative sources for some writers and useful weapons for anti-democrats, who would not dare to suggest that his trial judge, Lord Reading, the former Rufus Isaacs, had been involved with Lloyd George in a scam involving Marconi Shares.

**Donal Kennedy**

Does  
It  
Up

Stack  
?

#### AUDITORS AND ACCOUNTANTS

It has been said that Accountants belong to the second oldest profession and certainly records of accounts have been discovered on 6,000 years old Mesopotamian clay tablets. The recording and keeping of accounts in modern times has been classified as the work of book-keepers—who are thought of, by Accountants, as a sort of lower-class accountant because Accountants have, in their own eyes, leveraged themselves into a profession by establishing Guilds, Institutes, Associations and Societies "for the better regulation of their profession". And of course as Adam Smith cynically puts it:

"People of the same trade seldom meet together even for merriment and diversion but the conversation ends in a conspiracy against the public or in some contrivance to raise prices."

In the Anglophone areas of the world, the Scots were probably the first groups of accountants to form corporations, with these institutes formed in Edinburgh in 1854, Glasgow in 1855 and Aberdeen in 1857 respectively. Then the Incorporated Society of Liverpool Accountants was formed in January 1870 and the Institute of Accountants in London was formed in November 1870. The latter institute applied for a Royal Charter but was refused.

Another body—The Society of Accountants in England—was founded in 1872 and in October 1872 changed its name to the Institute of Accountants. So there were five institutes/societies and these combined to obtain a Royal Charter, which Queen Victoria of England signed on 11th May 1880 and this Charter established the 'Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales'. The application for the Royal Charter began with an obvious lie—"That the said societies were not established for the purpose of gain nor do the members thereof derive or seek any pecuniary profit from their membership."

Back in 1880 there was some fuzziness about what exactly an accountant did for a living, since all the accounting records were written by book-keepers. Well, the London accountants were increasingly employed as auditors under the Railway Acts of 1840s. the Joint-Stock Companies

Acts, the Bankruptcy Acts, and the Winding-Up Acts of 1848 and 1849. The *Limited Liability Act of 1855* was the single biggest influence in providing work for accountants. These accountants had no recognised qualifications. As Frederick Whinney, a prominent accountant said in 1887:

"... the new work available had resulted in a great number of persons who thought they had nothing whatever to do to become accountants but to put up a plate and designate themselves as such, in order to become rich men."

Which was exactly what he did himself. And it is still possible today for a person to "put up a plate" and call themselves accountants. The title *accountant* is not reserved by law although functions such as appointments as auditor to a limited company are reserved to qualified Chartered Accountants and the Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) under the modern Companies Acts.

Back in the 1880s the UK Parliament was busy passing laws which made more and more work for accountants in Britain and in Ireland. In 1885 The Society of Incorporated Accountants was founded in London and drew members from England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. In 1888 The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland was founded. While the Institutes of Chartered Accountants—one in England and Wales, three in Scotland and one in Ireland—had reciprocal membership arrangements, their relationship with the Society of Incorporated Accountants was stormy and bitter for many years. This bitterness even extended into religion. The members of the Institutes of Chartered Accountants were mostly Freemasons and it was virtually impossible for a Roman Catholic to enrol as an apprentice for the necessary five-year apprenticeship to become a Chartered Accountant. Catholics could and did become members of the Society of Incorporated Accountants which was one of the reasons for its success in attracting members.

None of the Institutes or the Society would admit women members. Proposals to admit women were made at Council Meetings and Annual General Meetings from the 1880s onwards but these were defeated by substantial majorities. Speeches were made with the most outrageous objections against women: "Women could not possibly be duly qualified" and—

"accountancy was amongst those professions which required for their

proper fulfilment those masculine qualities and experience of the world and intellectual capacity and courage which were very rarely to be found in members of the weaker sex".

And these were the mildest objections that were alleged. Even after the Institutes admitted women, there remained for years afterwards offices of accountants which would not admit women trainees/articled clerks.

In 1903 the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants was founded as a Federal institute, alongside which each State in the Union has its own State Institute of CPAs. In 1905 the London Association of Accountants was formed and in 1926 the more patriotic of its Irish members formed The Irish Association of Accountants—a body which in 1965 merged with the Irish Society of Accountants to form the Institute of Certified Public Accountants (CPA) in Ireland .

World-wide, the CPAs would be by far the largest grouping and CPA auditing firms headquartered in USA would be auditors of the largest companies in the world. Price Waterhouse, Deloitte, EY, and KPMG etc. are all firms, the majority of whose partners worldwide are CPAs, although in the UK and in Ireland the partners would be Chartered Accountants and in Germany they are called *Wirtschaftsprüfer*.

In the Anglo-phone world none of the Institutes have the word "Auditor" in their titles, even though as far as the public is concerned the auditing function is by law the most important function of accountancy.

To be continued—next:

*Are Auditors necessary or useful?*

#### KILKENNY

From the 12th August to the 14th August 2016 there was *'The Big Squeeze'* on in this mediaeval city. It promised to be the greatest *'Gathering of Accordionists'* ever seen in Ireland. There were workshops, Presentations and Concerts galore and it was a really great weekend.

It was officially opened by the Lord Mayor of Kilkenny at St. Kieran's College on the Saturday 13th August at 10 a.m. That night there were two of the biggest Accordion Orchestras playing in the fine hall of the College. The first was the Royal Meath Accordion Orchestra and then came the Castletown Accordion Orchestra and in all my life I never realised how versatile an instrument an accordion was. They had the packed hall on their feet and it was the greatest *craic*.

The night before I had attended *'The Gathering'* at The Bróg Maker where all our own people from Cork had come to play. It was overseen by the great Ceilí Maestro himself Donal Ring with his band and what *craic* we all had. On the Sunday night we had all the Scottish people over for the Robbie Burns night and between them, their haggis and our own proud contribution—well all I can say is—it was a week-end to remember!

The only jarring note was that on the fine Saturday as we were walking through the city—Parliament Street—we came upon a strange event. Right outside the impressive granite Court House was a very odd sight. It was a WW1 covered trench—a rather big structure with sand-bags all around it and over it (There are photos available—see [www.kilkennygreatwarmemorial.com](http://www.kilkennygreatwarmemorial.com)) and, as we gaped across the street, a very stylish elderly man saw our stares and came up to us. He immediately said—in a very posh accent—that we had to go over and see the installation and very enthusiastically added that he had just been and it was quite an experience. He said that all the war sounds could be heard and you'd really think you were right there out in the trenches at the time.

Well I exploded and while being perfectly polite asked him did he know how many men were slaughtered in that one day alone—not to mention the five months that followed and they gained not an inch of ground—400,000 men! I told him the Generals had taken six months to plan the battle and they planned to lose up to 500,000 men, making it organised murder and not a war!

Then he scuttled off muttering something under his breath that I know he wouldn't dare say to my face. But, has it come to this in Ireland—that we use the barbarity that was the Western Front *for entertainment purposes*? Because whatever those who entered the tunnel thought they were experiencing—there was no blood, guts, dying groans, rats and wet muddy trenches in which those poor exploited boys/men lay.

It is a fund-raiser for the Kilkenny War Dead—the blurb reads: *"Their names will be inscribed on Tablets of Kilkenny Limestone in a place of honour in the 12th century Church of St. Mary's off High Street"* and all contributions should be sent to the Bank of Ireland with the a/c number being given. Inside the pamphlet amongst other material there is this gloss:

"Many of these young men were only 16 years of age. 500 Kilkenny Reservists

marched off to war in August 1914. ..

They left their homes and families for the far-flung fields of France and Flanders; they were not the authors of future historical events then unfolding. They followed their dreams and aspirations like all young men and women and suffered in the most horrific conflict that had until then befallen the human race."

On the back of the pamphlet are these lines:

*"Died not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor,  
But for a dream born in a herdsman's shed.  
And for the secret Scripture of the poor."*

by Tom Kettle. 2nd Lieut. Tom Kettle B. Coy, R.D.F., Nationalist, co-founder of Irish Volunteers, Economist, War correspondent, joined Dublin Fusiliers in 1914. Killed at the Somme 1916. Poem written for his only child Betty."

Michael Stack ©

## O'CONNOR continued

and workers in the enhancement of their skills. This is particularly applicable in the rapidly changing dynamics of the modern labour market where skills and competencies are becoming redundant almost as rapidly as they are appearing.

15. The third criterion I mentioned at the outset relates to the political arena. As long ago as the new unionism of the 1880s, our leaders recognised the necessity to compete for political influence and power in order to overcome the limitations of what could be achieved through workplace collective bargaining. This saw the development of political funds and political affiliations to the labour and social democratic parties. Today, in the light of the crisis of social democracy and the increasing diffusion of political representation on the Left, there is a need for a more nuanced approach. However, this is not an argument for the depoliticisation of Trade Unionism. Indeed, quite the opposite is the case. However, our political activity should focus on shifting the entire fulcrum of the debate in society in a manner which prioritises human considerations and egalitarian objectives as distinct from promoting one political party. The aim must be to frame the architecture of the political 'centre ground'.

16. On the face of it, this seems an awesome challenge. Yet it is still entirely within the capacity of the Trade Union movement in Ireland as things stand at present but it cannot be undertaken successfully by any single Trade Union. Thus, we must have the courage and vision to make the changes that will enable us to accomplish it. The roadmap was outlined in the recommendations of the report of the Commission on Trade Union Organisation to the biennial delegate conferences of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, in Killarney in July, 2011 and then in Belfast in July, 2013—the centenary of the Lockout.

These envisaged developing a stronger,

more united, more coherent movement, organised in a federal rather than a confederal congress. This, while respecting the autonomy of each individual Trade Union, would facilitate co-ordination of collective bargaining and organising across each of the individual sectors of the economy in both jurisdictions on the island. Such co-ordination would optimise the prospects for the negotiation of the best possible agreements with employers who respect their employees' right to organise.

Simultaneously, it would enable the deployment of irresistible force in support of workers seeking to organise where unions are not recognised.

This capacity would be reinforced by the development of a fully resourced research capacity, a new Workers' College, an independent workers-controlled media platform and the opening of Trade Union centres in every major town on the island.

The elements are actually reflected in the 'One Cork' project which is underway on a small scale here in this city.

17. As we stand today, we have the capacity to ensure that workers can organise to win but that will not remain the case indefinitely. The sands of time are ebbing away. It is time to wake up and smell the roses!

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stances irrespective of generational dynamics. It therefore follows that the challenge we must overcome is to instil a belief in people that they can actually win by organising.

8. Of course, the reality is that the balance has shifted quite dramatically against organised workers and in favour of capital over the past quarter of a century or more. This is attributable to the complex interaction of an array of global factors, each of which merits an entirely separate paper on their own. However, for this evening's purpose I will simply cite the most significant of them:

A The fall of the Soviet Union more than a quarter of a century ago. This immediately virtually quadrupled the global supply of labour available for exploitation by capital (from about 750,000 to two billion when China is included).

B The extension of the process of globalisation. This imposed the exploitative employment standards of the developing world in the marketplaces of the West.

C The decline of manufacturing in the developed economies.

D The expansion of household credit and indebtedness in response to the collapse of real incomes.

E The ultimate global collapse of 2008.

F The decline of social democracy and the shift to the centre right in the political arena. Lenin wasn't wrong when he said "the crisis of social democracy is the crisis of capitalism".

9. In Europe, in particular, the response which has been employed since 2010 (and earlier in our case) has been one of retrenchment—austerity combined with a "*race to the bottom*" in the workplace to maximise "*competitiveness*". This, as we know, has resulted in the generation of mass unemployment particularly among the young in several European countries, which has not been seen since the immediate post-war years, accompanied by precariousness and hopelessness which is increasingly evolving into desperation.

10. We are now entering a new and more dangerous phase in the evolution of the crisis of capitalism and of European and global history. What has happened is that the politics has now caught up with the economics as we always said it inevit-

ably would and it is manifesting itself in a sharp swing in most cases to xenophobic nationalism and the radical right. It is no overstatement to say that we are on the road to catastrophe. This leads through the disorderly collapse of the euro which would inevitably result in levels of deprivation and societal break down beyond anything that can be visualised in our everyday imagination. It would end in a regime of competing nation states and ultimately in regional wars.

11. I should say at this point that unless the policies of one-sided austerity or even fiscal neutrality as they now call it, combined with the race to the bottom in the world of work, are abandoned immediately the scenario I describe above is not some vague possibility—but is actually inevitable.

12. I turn then to the question as to "*What is to be done?*". After all we are not the EU Commission, the Council of Ministers or the governing board of the ECB. We are not even the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). What can the Trade Union movement, under pressure in a small country in the western periphery of Europe, actually do? Well, it remains to be seen—but our obligation is to do everything that we can in our own space.

13. First and most important, we must address the ideological question. Our movement is comprised of an array of organisations founded on the basis of different but not incompatible premises. A number of our Unions are vocational organisations formed to promote the interests of those employed in a particular profession, vocation, trade or craft. Others are more general in character formed to promote the interests of members but in the context of a wider historical mission towards an egalitarian society. As long as we function on the basis that, irrespective of the prevailing conditions in the economy and more particularly in society, the cause of a particular vocation or trade or craft can be furthered independently, we cannot make real progress. We have to face up to the challenge of influencing the conditions within which we organise and operate as distinct from simply promoting the cause of a particular group in a context which is determined by others.

The other concept that must be debunked is the notion that it is in some way our role to provide an antagonistic voice against management in those businesses and institutions which recognise their employee's right to organise and be

represented by Trade Unions. This thinking is fundamentally flawed. Our task is to optimise the quality and the security of our members' employment in these businesses and institutions. It therefore follows that we must be at the forefront of the thrust to enhance productivity and innovation instead of getting in the way of it as we sometimes do. The fact of the matter is that the security and quality of our members' employment is entirely dependant on the prosperity of the enterprises in which they work. Moreover, the key to good working conditions and indeed standards of living generally is exponentially increasing productivity. I emphasise, because it will undoubtedly be misrepresented, that this is not about increasing the drudgery or onerousness of work. Actually, it is precisely the opposite.

There is another complementary reason for this approach and that is to minimise employer hostility. We have to reverse the current equation in which we can sometimes find ourselves impeding the prospects for an enterprise that engages in collective bargaining instead of actually enhancing them. Meanwhile, we fail to confront those who do not respect their employee's right to organise or be represented by Trade Unions. This equation is graphically evident in any analysis of the deployment of Trade Union resources as between 'servicing' members where we are recognised and organising to confront those who do not afford recognition. It is a fundamentally flawed strategy and it is doomed to failure. The reality of it is that, apart from workers, we should be able to demonstrate that employers who recognise Trade Unions also enjoy an advantage over those who don't.

14. The second criterion I mentioned at the outset arises in the pedagogical arena. This is at least two-dimensional. In the first instance, we have a responsibility to equip workers to assert their own interests by knowing their rights and understanding how to vindicate them. At a collective level, that extends to developing a greater understanding among our members and workers generally of the nature and character of the forces and influences at work in capitalist society. This applies both in terms of the economics of the companies in which people may work and the wider political arena as well. In parallel with this, we equally have a responsibility as has been the case with the craft unions of the past to facilitate the education, training and development of our members

## 1916 continued

*William Martin Murphy, Proprietor of the "Irish Independent" on the 1916 Uprising— "Royal Commission on the rebellion in Ireland, minutes of evidence and appendix of documents, (London, 1916) 110-111:*

". . . . That the authorities allowed a body of lawless and riotous men to be drilled and armed and to provide themselves with an arsenal of weapons and explosives was one of the most amazing things that could happen in any civilised country outside of Mexico. This body was even allowed to hold meetings with uniforms and arms, and to discharge their rifles at night in the streets of Dublin without any attempt to check them or prosecute them. Fortunately the long strike [1913 Lock-Out] was coming to an end when the Citizen Army commenced to drill. If they had been in existence in the early days of the strike, when the disorders were at their height we should have had a foretaste of the recent fighting in the city . . . ."

**Irish Times:** Past and Present, a record of the journal since 1859, by John Martin. Index. 264 p.p. ISBN 978-1-872078-13-7. Belfast Historical & Educational Society. 2008. €20.

**Contents:** "*...a very fine journalist, an excellent man, but on Northern questions a renegade or white nigger*".

**Those were the words, from a conversation with the British Ambassador to Ireland, at a lunch meeting in 1969, which he duly reported without delay to his masters at the British Foreign Office. But who said them and to whom did they refer?**

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## A Trade Union Strategy to Win for Working People

Comrades and friends,

1 This year's Mother Jones Festival takes place against the background of the continuing trauma of the most serious crisis in global capitalism since the 1930s. It is important to say from the outset that this is a demand side crisis largely attributable to exponentially growing inequality in what we know as the "developed world".

2 The phenomenon manifests itself in the world of work or the "labour market" in the form of mass unemployment, increasing precariousness and social insecurity on an unprecedented scale. This is increasingly evident in Ireland, Europe and the West. Precarious work, of course, is not new in the developing world where it has been the order of the day for a long time.

3 It falls to the Trade Union movement to step up to the task of reasserting human priorities in the workplace and ultimately in the wider economic and social paradigm. It is important to stress this because in the culture of "business unionism" this tends to be taken for granted or even lost sight of altogether. It is also important to say that Trade Union organisation is the only way to address the task. More important, it is crucial to assert that the Trade Union movement in Ireland still has the capacity to meet the challenge and to win for working people. Indeed, this is the fundamental premise of this short paper here this evening.

4 However, to do so, our movement must transform itself, ideologically, culturally and structurally.

5 In practical terms, it is a challenge which must be met at an industrial, pedagogical and political level.

6 In order to approach it, we must disabuse ourselves of a number of deeply held myths and misconceptions. One of these, for example, is that the dramatic growth in the, post- Lockout, Irish Transport and General Workers' Union between Easter Week 1916 and the end of 1918 was primarily attributable to the resistance offered during the Lockout itself and the subsequent events which occurred throughout the decade of rebellion. The fact of the matter is that what happened had more to do with the Munitions Act.

**Address at the Mother Jones Festival, Firkin Crane, John Redmond Street, Cork, by SIPTU General President, Jack O'Connor on 28th July 2016.**

This was because, in 1917, the legislation which had been put in place by the Government in the United Kingdom to maintain industrial peace for the duration of the War was extended to Ireland. Agricultural Wages Boards, which had been set up across the UK to determine wages and conditions to guarantee the food supply, were then put in place in Ireland as well. Virtually immediately, agricultural labourers found that the most effective way to secure improvements was by joining a Trade Union and they flocked to the ranks of the ITGWU in their thousands. It quickly established itself as the dominant union in the sector, absorbing smaller land and labour unions along the way. Membership, which had fallen to somewhere between 3,500 and 5,000 by the time of the Easter Rising, increased to 68,000 by the end of 1918 and 120,000 in 1920. Obviously, the sentiment engendered by the Lockout, the Rising and the War of Independence influenced developments but they were not the primary reason for the growth in union membership. The institutional arrangements put in place for conciliation and arbitration over a whole range of industries also resulted in a very dramatic rise in Trade Union membership and density across every single region of the UK. That phenomenon has replicated itself repeatedly in all circumstances in which conditions favourable to the growth of union membership have presented— e.g. during the post war period across Europe, the period following the economically regenerative 1960s and the period following entry into the EEC in Ireland. The purpose of this reference is to debunk the myth that declining Union density in the Ireland or indeed throughout the developed world is in some way attributable to some kind of inter-generational or cultural disconnect. It could be argued that such exists but it is consequence rather than the cause of the phenomenon.

7. The simple fact of the matter is that working people and indeed people generally for that matter will organise in one of two circumstances or better still when a combination of both exist. These are:

- A When they believe they can win and
- B When they have no other alternative.

That rule applies throughout the history of industrial societies and in all circum-

continued on page 28



"... the surgeon's knife of the State must not be stayed until the whole malignant growth has been removed." (*Irish Times*, May, 1916)

## The "National" Press and 1916

*"Irish Times" on the proclamation of the Irish Republic, 24th April*  
—*"Irish Times"*, May 6, 1916.

### THE PROCLAMATION OF THE IRISH REPUBLIC.

Few people have heard the beginning of the official declaration of an Irish Republic. Fewer stayed to the end. Though Sackville Street was fairly crowded at the time, the majority of the people paid little attention to the doings of the rebels, and preferred the more practical process of looting.

"At 1.30 there came from the Post Office a small man in plain clothes with a bundle of papers under his arm. Escorted by a guard of revolutionists, he made his way to Nelson's Pillar, and began to speak, surrounded by not more than 30 men.

"Citizens of Dublin', he said, 'the last of the public buildings of the city is now in our hands. We have captured the General Post Office, and in this memorable day Ireland, as a Republic, has freed herself from the Republic *sic.* of England'.

"The speaker then launched into the well-worn theme of Ireland's wrongs and England's oppression. The subject was evidently equally familiar to the orator and his hearers. As he gained fervour and thundered out the phrases he had used so often before his audience became progressively bored. A sweet shop was broken into, and nearly all rushed across the street to join in the spoil. A few old men and women who had lost their desire for sweets remained. Even these soon become discontented. 'Isn't Clery's broken into yet', said one. 'Hivins, it's a great shame Clery's isn't broken'. On a rumor that this great event was going to happen they moved over to the shop windows and left the speaker finishing his peroration with no one to listen to him but

his guard.

"Like the revolution itself, the proclamation was a great fiasco."

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*"Irish Independent" on the execution of the patriotic leaders of the Irish Republic*

—*"Irish Independent"*, May 10, 1916.

### THE CLEMENCY PLEA.

Mr. Asquith stated in the House of Commons, in reply to a question by Mr. Redmond, that the general instructions to General Sir John Maxwell, who had been in direct and personal communication with the Cabinet on the subject of the punishment of those connected with the Dublin rising, were to sanction the infliction of the extreme penalty 'as sparingly as possible'. Up to the present twelve executions have been officially announced, including five of the seven men who signed the proclamation. The *Manchester Guardian* asserts that the

executions are 'becoming an atrocity' and adds that further severity inflicted by troops sitting in secret will be a sign of weakness. On the Unionist side the *Daily Express* states that now is the time to show that the Government can be merciful as well as strong. In other quarters stern and severe measures are demanded. In the discharge of their duties the military and civil authorities are confronted by these two views; and in these circumstances it may be a thankless task to offer any suggestions. We cannot refrain however, from expressing our own views . . .

"Our view is that all prisoners under the age of twenty one should be let off unless some grave charge against them individually can be proved. A number of young lads have, we understand, been already liberated, and quite properly. Young men of twenty one and under are hardly level headed and responsible enough to have realised the dreadful and awful character of the wild enterprise of Easter Monday. In addition to these, the rank and file and all those who filled only minor parts in the tragedy might be dealt with leniently; also those who came out under a misconception. When, however, we come to some of the ringleaders, instigators and formentors not yet dealt with, we must make an exception. If these men are treated with too great leniency they will take it as an indication of weakness on the part of the Government, and the consequences may not be satisfactory. They may be more truculent than ever, and it is, therefore, necessary that society should be protected against their activity. Some of these are more guilty and played a more sinister part in the campaign than those who have been already punished with severity."

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