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Thoughts on the Northern Election

The comments of Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams after the Northern Election, and about the prospects of a united Ireland, should first be noted:

"Mr Adams said that despite the result, 'unionists still have a majority among the population in Northern Ireland. There is still a big onus on us to persuade them that this is how their future would best be developed. I don't want to see the unionists in the place that nationalists used to be in. We need an entirely new Ireland, we need an Ireland which unionism is comfortable with, that they have an ownership of and that they agree to.'

"It's not exactly tangible, it's a sense of expectation, a sense of hope, a sense of 'doability'," said Mr Adams. "Ten years ago Scottish independence was a minority occupation for men in kilts. Most people in Scotland hadn't really bought into it, but now they have. The same thing is going to happen, in my opinion, for those of us who want Irish unity."

"When asked if he now envisaged seeing a united Ireland within his lifetime, the 68-year-old said: 'It depends how long I live, but my hope is—yes.'" (BBC website 10.3.17)

Adams was calming the sense of triumphalism being expressed among some nationalists and injecting a sense of realism into what the election actually represented.

It was true that the election result was a significant symbolic victory for the Catholic community, and Sinn Fein in particular, in chastening the DUP and Unionism in general. But it had not altered the fundamentals of the situation in the North.

What the election did was halt, and likely, turn back a Unionist roll-back of the Good Friday Agreement that had been gathering momentum since 2012.

The Good Friday Agreement established a position of formal equality between the two communities in 'Northern Ireland' after 80 years of unionist domination/nationalist subordination. However, it was not a static equality. Although the Agreement severely restricted the amount of communal victory possible through its various safeguard devices, the DUP, once Paisley had gone, seem to have seen the new constitution as an

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Martin McGuinness, RIP

Was Martin McGuinness a murderer who repented, promised not to do it again, and sought forgiveness and reconciliation with those whom he had mistakenly looked on as his enemies?

That is the impression BBC Radio 4 sought to convey to its listeners on the 7 am News on the morning of his death (22nd March)—the main item on the bulletin being Jean McConville: followed by Peter Hain, who is now a Lord. What the *Today* programme says is of some consequence, as it reflects British ruling class thinking.

Lord Hain, interviewed on Radio Eireann about an hour later said that McGuinness and Gerry Adams had physically forced him into a corner at Stormont and threatened him.

What would have been the main item in the British News that morning if McGuinness had not died was an initiative taken by the Blairite Deputy Leader of the British Labour Party, Tom Watson, to

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Britain's Strategic Interest In Ireland

In 1949 the Secretary of the British Cabinet, Sir Norman Brook, prepared a Memorandum for the Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, which remained under wraps for the following 30 years. It arose from the Declaration of a Republic in Dublin that year. It said—

"For many years past, members of all political parties here have been able to take the line over partition that there is nothing they would like better than to see a united Ireland, but this is a problem which Irishmen must settle among

themselves.

It has been very convenient for the political parties to be able in this way to avoid the responsibility of favouring either one side or the other in this controversy.

It seems to me that Eire's new status will make it impossible for any political party in this country to preserve this detached attitude any longer. So long as Eire owes no allegiance to the Crown, and is not a member of the Commonwealth, it seems to me that any United Kingdom government will be compelled

Airstrip Two?

to take a positive line in supporting the continuance of partition, partly because they must support the Loyalists in the North, **but mainly because it is important for strategic reasons that some part of Ireland should remain within His Majesty's Dominions...**"

That year Westminster passed The Ireland Act, falsely purporting to vest sovereignty over the Six Counties with the "*Parliament of Northern Ireland*". Sovereignty in the United Kingdom continued and still continues to lie with the Sovereign in Parliament—the real Parliament at Westminster. In 1972

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Labour Comment, edited by **Pat Maloney**:

Protectionism And Fascism

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invitation to struggle and utilised the small room for manoeuvre to advance their old war of attrition against the Catholics.

Paisley had taken care not to do such a thing. He had recognised that he was wrong in the 1960s and had learned his lesson. If Civil Rights had been conceded what happened would not have happened. So he determined this time, when he had formal power, to implicate Sinn Fein in the Government of 'Northern Ireland' to sap its vigour and take momentum out of any nationalist advance.

Arlene Foster, coming from the UUP and outside of Paisley's sphere, is the best Ulster Unionist First Minister for Repub-

Strategic Interest continued

Westminster blew the "Parliament" at Stormont away, as one might blow out a candle on a teacake.

In 1949 Britain was one of the founders of NATO. In that year also George Orwell's novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was published. It is believed its MINISTRY OF TRUTH was inspired by the author's experience with the BBC. It is also believed that its **Airstrip One** stood for Britain.

But it seems that in Whitehall *some part of Ireland* would do nicely for **Airstrip Two** and it need not be in the North.

Donal Kennedy

licans since the last Ulster Unionist First Minister, David Trimble. She seems to have failed to understand the subtleties of things. And she had many willing DUP backbenchers that think in terms of fundamentals, and who were dissatisfied with not getting the Croppies to Lie Down anymore, to not disabuse her of mistakes.

Sinn Fein was placed in a difficult situation by the revival in the DUP's willingness to vigorously assert Protestant communal interests and to quash any small concessions the Fenians might want in order to maintain their self respect. Sinn Fein received a series of slaps in the face (like the pulling down of the Long Kesh Peace Centre proposal and withdrawal of funds for the Irish Language/along with granting more money for Orange Halls). And all the time the Catholics, even though they were increasing in number, were going to the polls in lesser number.

Then came the instability of the establishment of a formal Opposition. Sinn Fein, against their better judgement, agreed to this in the Fresh Start agreement of 2016. It was a reckless suggestion promoted by academic know-nothings and media ignoramuses who imagine that 'Northern Ireland' can be a better thing in the world.

These stupid people imagined that the Government/Opposition model of a real

State, along with the party games played at Westminster, could be imported into the pseudo state of 'Northern Ireland' for the betterment of the system and without consequence.

The Opposition, trying to justify its job description, and being criticised for not justifying itself, by the same academic know-nothings and media ignoramuses who had advocated it, began pressurising the UUP's Mike Nesbitt and the SDLP's Colum Eastwood to perform. And perform they did with Arlene's gift of intransigence over the RHI scandal.

It was at this point that Sinn Fein re-asserted the Good Friday Agreement, which nationalist Ireland had ratified through overwhelming majority in 1998, against those who had departed from it—namely the UUP, Alliance and the SDLP, who always claimed to be its creators.

Sinn Fein did this by using its most fundamental mechanism for showing that 1998 meant equality—the joint First Ministry established at the head of the Executive—to call a halt to the undermining of the Agreement.

The Office of the First and Deputy First Minister is a joint one with equal power for each component. Although the Prod First Minister has a superior title to the Fenian Deputy First Minister—to protect Prod sensibilities about no longer being seen as superior these days—they are actually Siamese twins who cannot act, unless acting together.

Sinn Fein, which had put forward a moderate proposal for the First Minister to briefly stand aside while a preliminary review was conducted of the RHI scandal—a proposal which would have protected her from the slings and arrows of the Opposition—found itself slapped down again by the self-righteous First Minister, backed by her self-righteous minions.

The DUP, which had been taking liberties with the joint nature of the Office of First Minister/Deputy First Minister, got an election that it had not bargained for, on ground that it did not wish to fight on.

Sinn Fein got an election that it had never wanted, had tried to avoid fighting, and had never intended to fight, on ground that it was very advantageous to fight.

A perfect situation for an Ambush!

An Ambush is defined as—

"a long-established military tactic in which combatants take advantage of concealment and the element of surprise to attack unsuspecting enemy combatants from concealed positions."

Sinn Fein, which was not thought to be fit for an election after the failure to advance in 2016, the Centenary of the Easter Rising, marshalled its forces quietly and calmly. In a swift and devastating attack, it mustered the people of the new plantation of globalisation, whose futures had been thrown into doubt by Brexit, and who had suffered at the hands of Racists in Unionism, in extraordinary numbers. It took up positions and wiped out the Unionist majority, the DUP's 30 vote position giving it the Petition of Concern blocking power in the Assembly—along with the delusions of an advance toward a new Jerusalem/old Stormont.

Sinn Fein was undoubtedly helped by three other events. The delusional Ulster Unionist leader, Mike Nesbitt—no coincidence a media man—had issued a statement saying he would transfer votes to his fellow Opposition party (Fenian part), rather than within the Unionist Family. That helped do for a couple of DUP seats or so. The less delusional, other (Fenian) part of the Opposition, the SDLP leader, Colum Eastwood, decided to refrain from such an innovation and effectively said thank you very much, you fool! Which only emphasised that the UUP/SDLP would be incapable of meaningful joint government, as was proved in the past.

A second event that helped Sinn Fein was the First Minister's "You don't feed a Crocodile" remark.

Foster has lately said that she had in mind Sinn Fein when she mentioned not feeding the insatiable green beast of the swamp, rather than the ordinary decent toothless Fenian—or Fenian she would like to have toothless. But the ordinary decent Fenian knows that its teeth are Sinn Fein and it would be starving without the ability to bite, since the bastards on the bank are not inclined to feed the crocodiles and never have been.

Paisley had a strategy of feeding the crocodiles enough to keep them happy in the swamp. He knew that left unfed they would be away with your leg, and taking you along to pastures new.

I presume that, if Sinn Fein manage to save the Good Friday Agreement and resurrect the Executive, they will be keen to keep the current First Minister. She has been very good for Republicanism and there will be divisions, however suppressed, within the DUP around her.

Perhaps she can be nominated by Sinn Fein as First Minister, to show their

Casement Diaries: Fact And Supposition

It is encouraging that Mr. O'Sullivan now agrees that "*there is no verifiable record that the volumes were shown to anyone in that period...*" He conjectures that the vital evidence was concealed and *presumes* its existence. To make this credible he must explain why the typescripts were substituted as evidence for the unseen bound volumes.

The British Government confirmed in March 1959 that Rev. Harris was shown typescript material:

"After the dismissal of the appeal a typescript copy was shown, on the Home Secretary's instructions, to Mr. (later Sir John) Harris, whose personal knowledge of Casement in the Congo the Archbishop of Canterbury had commended to the Home Secretary's attention" (Working Party, Annex A, HO 144/23481).

The same document also confirms that the photographs made & shown were also of typescript materials. Mr. O'Sullivan has not produced the photograph mentioned in his last article (*Irish Political Review*, January, 2017). Nor has he (or anyone else) produced any evidence of the existence of the volumes at that time. If it is fallacious to conclude their non existence, it is even more fallacious to conjecture their existence. *Esse est percipi*. Mr. O'Sullivan's volumes enjoy an exclusively suprasensible existence; such mental items cannot be evidence for the historian or the jurist or the man on the Clapham omnibus. Rather than indulge in futile conjectures, Mr. O'Sullivan should explain why there is a lack of archival evidence, why the typescripts were substituted, why the typescripts were photographed and why the volumes were concealed. It is unclear what he wants to state but he is free to believe *without evidence* that the typescripts are copies if the word of Casement's traducers is sufficient for him. "*It is useless to attempt to reason a man out of a thing he was never reasoned into*". Jonathan Swift.

Paul Hyde

confidence in her leadership, and then voluntarily step aside for a period while the RHI is dealt with.

The other context of the Northern election result, already referred to, is Brexit. The truth of the matter is that nobody really knows how Brexit will pan out in relation to the prospects of a vote in the Six Counties for a united Ireland.

Sinn Fein benefitted by the Remain vote in the Six Counties and the Brexit vote in the UK. It established political difference between the two territories, the sort of difference which is also being exploited by the Scottish nationalists. A Scottish vote to dismantle the Union would undoubtedly be a grievous blow to the Union.

On the other hand "*the Union*" is not the basis of Ulster Unionism anymore and hasn't really been since 1920. The supreme sacrifice of Ulster Unionism in 1920 conceded that Westminster could undermine the Union all it wanted as long as it did not force them into an all-Ireland majority government of Fenians. Ulster Unionists took up for Westminster the governing of the Fenian minority in its territory, to ensure they would not become

a majority. And gradually the Unionist position has been whittled down to the simple: "*We are not Irish and will not be governed by an Irish Government*".

It is not at all certain that Scotland will vote for a leaving of the Union. In fact, it is doubtful if the Scots have it in them to take such a step. They are a different people to the Irish. It will require Englishmen, who may wish to get shot of them, to taunt and goad them about their unwillingness, to make them willing.

If Irish nationalism rides the horse of Scottish nationalism it may find itself thrown when the Scottish horse refuses the fence. So it would be advisable not to hitch the two horses together but to simply observe the race from a distance, maintaining that the outcome is a separate event (even though it probably won't be).

Actually, Theresa May might choose to hitch the two together, since a Scottish referendum and 'Northern Ireland' Border Poll would best suit the Westminster Government in 2020 or 2021, after the Brexit dealings are concluded. Just in time for the Centenary of 'Northern Ireland' itself, when a strong Unionist vote might be expected!

But things may go the other way: Britain may become a shambles in dealing with Brexit; the Europeans might consolidate themselves after Trump and Putin minimise the effects of the Syrian disaster created by the Obama Presidency; the UK might be have to leave without a customised trade deal, leaving trade relations governed by the WTO default agreement; jobs may drain away from the Six Counties; agriculture may go into collapse with the cross-border market disrupted by hard Brexit and New Zealand imports devastating the agri-food sector, the biggest employer; travel restrictions may begin to aggravate the middle classes—and any number of other problems it is impossible to visualise at present.

The choice between a crumbling, insular, UK and a resurgent forward-looking Europe may give Sinn Fein the 50 plus 1 majority it needs for Irish unity, under the Good Friday Agreement. And then what? 1912 all over again?

There is all to play for. The momentum that 1998 took out of 'Northern Ireland' has been overcome by a world that is fluid and resembles the 1919 situation.

Pat Walsh

Brexit John's Problem

John Bruton is one who thinks a lot of the EU. Deeply shocked by the result of the British Referendum, he seemed to accommodate himself to the new reality and to draw appropriate conclusions about the need for Ireland to make its own way in Europe.

However, it now seems that he cannot accept Brexit as a fact of life. And, following Tony Blair, he now hopes and expects that the UK will reverse the referendum result. He says that "I believe conditions can be created in which the UK voters could decide not to leave the EU at all" (Irish Independent, 13 March).

And he is really horrified at the thought that the parting of ways between Britain and Europe could happen without an exit agreement being reached.

"This 'no deal' scenario would see an overnight halt to flights, to trade and to commerce. There would be immediate, massive currency instability."

This is project fear with knobs on. In

2017 Northern Ireland Assembly Election Summary

In last month's magazine there was an inaccuracy in the votes cast for Nationalist and Unionist candidates in the election of March 2nd.

Here is a breakdown of the results for 2016 and 2017 provided by **David Morrison**:
(Ch = Change; Sh = Share)

	2016 1st Pref	2016 %Sh	2016 %Ch	2017 Seats	2017 1st Pref	2017 %Sh	2017 %Ch
<i>Seats</i> Ch							
DUP	202,567	29.2	-0.8	38	225,413	28.1	-1.1
28	-10						
SF	166,785	24.0	-2.9	28	224,245	27.9	+3.9
27	-1						
SDLP	83,364	12.0	-2.2	12	95,958	11.9	-0.1
UUP	87,302	12.6	-0.7	16	103,314	12.9	+0.3
-6							
AP	48,447	7.0	-0.7	8	72,717	9.1	+2.1
GP	18,718	2.7	+1.8	2	18,527	2.3	-0.4
TUV	23,776	3.4	+0.9	1	20,523	2.6	-0.9
IND	22,650	3.3	+0.9	1	14,407	1.8	-1.5
PBP	13,761	2.0	+1.2	2	14,100	1.8	-0.2
UKIP	10,109	1.5	+0.8	0	-	-	-
PUP	5,955	0.9	+0.6	0	5,590	0.7	-0.2
CON	2,554	0.4	+0.4	0	2,399	0.3	-0.1
LAB	1,577	0.2	+0.2	0	-	-	-
OTH	6,745	1.0	+0.8	0	6,122	0.8	-1.6

Unionist vs Nationalist (2017)

	1st Pref	%Sh	Seats
Unionist	362,157	45.1	40
Nationalist	334,303	41.6	40

Unionist = DUP+UUP+TUV+UKIP+PUP+CON+IND Claire Sugden

Nationalist = SF+SDLP+PBP

(Note: This leaves out other candidates amongst the Independents and Others who might be classed as Unionist or Nationalist.)

his view this scenario should be avoided if "the EU side should adopt... an offer of continuing UK membership of the EU broadly on the basis that the UK was a member in 2015, before David Cameron's ill-fated 'renegotiation'..." So please turn the clock back and start again. This is pathetic.

It has been plain for decades that the UK is not happy with the EU and has sought and found a myriad ways to curtail its development. When Britain decided it was no longer part of the European model, not long after it joined, it set about damaging the Union. Its guiding motto was the spirit of Rome—that it had

modelled itself on to create its Empire—came into play: "Delenda est Carthago".

From personal experience John has well described British tactics when he had responsibility for the Convention on the Constitution. He refers to this experience again indirectly when he says that "Some members will point to the UK's insatiable demands, when it was a member, for opt outs, rebates, and exceptions." The phrase "feeding a crocodile" would in this case be a most appropriate description of UK behaviour within the EU and there is absolutely no doubt that it would continue in its demanding approach so if given an opportunity. Like leopards, crocodiles do not change their spots.

John's problem is that he simply does not understand England and the UK. Some years ago when Blair and others were advocating joining the Euro an objector who could no longer stand the economic jargon blurted out "*We would rather eat grass than be told what to do by Brussels*". That is the spirit of Brexit and it is now dominant and England at least is very happy with it as it is a return to the natural order of things for it.

Of course it can all be put more poetically and profoundly: "*Nought shall make us rue, if England to itself do rest but true*". But the message is the same; England will do what pleases it and cannot ever regret or fail when doing so. John would spare himself a lot of hand-wringing, and maybe sleepless nights, if he could get that simple fact into this head. And that is the spirit that he should be advocating for Ireland and not his constant whinging in fear about the future.

Jack Lane

Asylum-Seekers in Ireland

Is Ireland's treatment of Asylum Seekers unusual or unique? That is the impression given by Tomás Lynch in an Internet Blog on the *Rabble* website:

"Ireland, along with Lithuania, remains one of only two countries that do not allow asylum seekers to work while their asylum case is being processed.

Up until recently people living in Direct Provision weren't able to cook, and are generally barred from accessing third-level education" (*Playing The Big Man in America*, 15.3.17, http://www.rabble.ie/2017/03/15/playing-the-big-man-in-america/?utm_campaign=shareaholic&utm_medium=email_this&utm_source=email).

It is not generally understood that there is a distinction between Asylum Seekers and Refugees (not every asylum seeker will be recognised as a refugee, but every refugee is initially an asylum seeker). But, even given that distinction, this statement is not correct:

There are other countries which do not allow asylum seekers to work. For instance, I know from experience that the UK does not permit asylum seekers to work legally or have access to third-level education while their cases are being processed. In fact such people are not even permitted to access conventional English language classes until their status is formalised.

Of course this is not the best situation for asylum seekers to find themselves

in—but to say that Ireland is unique in this respect and to fail to identify the UK as also operating this policy appears to be another example of denigrating the Irish situation unnecessarily. Surely there's enough out there to genuinely criticise without resorting to a means of reporting that is so easily discredited!

Of course, in order to work illegally or indeed to attend an English language course, the individual has to be at liberty. This is not the case for people who end up in immigrant detention centres. The figure for those held in such institutions in the UK in 2015 was 32,414 (at an average cost of £91 per day). Although the vast majority of those held in these institution will only stay an average of a couple of months, in some cases their application may take much longer to process.

The UK is the only country in Europe that does not have a time limit on this type of detention.

Only a small number of those seeking asylum ever succeed. For instance, in 2014 only 14,065 individuals were granted permission to stay.

Individuals can find themselves in immigrant detention centres for a number of reasons. They can be held while their application to stay as refugees is being processed, or if it is being fast-tracked, or if, having been refused refugee status, they are appealing, or if, having exhausted the process and failed, they are awaiting deportation.

People in detention have very little liberty of movement and are not allowed to leave at will.

The decision to place such people in these centres rests with immigration officials and not with the courts.

In many cases however, if for no other reason than to save the State money, immigration officials prefer to leave asylum seekers at liberty if they can prove that they have somewhere to stay and provided there is someone who will take responsibility for them. Such people must show that they have the means (adequate accommodation and income) to support the individual concerned.

Yet, even if they live outside detention centres, these asylum seekers are still constrained by the same prohibition against work and education while their application is being processed.

This of course does not prevent them working illegally or attending classes where those running the classes are

prepared to turn a blind eye. However, they run a big risk in so-doing as if caught their application could be refused.

There is a pattern of difference between those who are seeking asylum while living in a detention centre and those who have been granted the liberty to live outside while their applications are being processed. In the case of asylum seekers living in detention centres, their applications are usually processed very quickly—presumably because of the high cost of maintaining such people in these places. As already stated, this process usually takes a couple of months. On the other hand, those granted the liberty to live outside the detention centres usually find that their applications can take years. I personally know someone in this situation who has been waiting for nearly three years and I'm told that this is not unusual. Presumably this is because the State gives priority to processing those costing it money in maintenance, while those who cost the State nothing are perpetually put at the bottom of the tray.

Another obvious, though unstated, reason for delay could be that the State is well aware of the need for such people to find work and the longer they are kept in their state of legal limbo the longer they provide a useful reservoir of cheap labour to sustain the wider economy.

This is a situation that those asylum seekers left at liberty share with the vast majority of illegal immigrants.

It would be a mistake to think that all illegal immigrants are asylum seekers. In the majority of cases illegal immigrants prefer to remain outside the State-operated asylum system precisely because of the restrictions formal asylum seekers are compelled to live under. There's enough demand out there for cheap labour—to which the authorities turn a blind eye—for this not to have been lost on the majority of illegal immigrants.

The areas of growth in the British economy in recent years (the hospitality and tourist industry, street food, cafes, small construction businesses, etc.) are particularly suited to the use and exploitation of illegal labour and it is difficult to believe that the Government is not aware of this.

While there may be valid criticisms to be made of the way Ireland processes applications for asylum, it goes not good for reformers to paint things blacker than they are.

Eamon Dyas

Glimmers in the Brexit debate

At a public meeting on Brexit hosted by Government Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor (March 6th in Dalkey, South Dublin), I took the opportunity to raise a pertinent point made in an editorial in last month's *Irish Political Review* ('Irish fudge undermines EU solidarity'). The point I raised was that the Government should be proactive in upgrading the transport infrastructure, especially the ports, in responding to the challenge of Brexit.

I pointed to the current practice in which nearly 80 per cent of merchandise trade between Ireland and the Continent is transported by truck, using Britain as a landbridge. I suggested that this was done for logistical reasons but that it also reflected a dependency mentality. Confronting that mentality, I went on, was a responsibility of Government; because of Brexit it was beholden on Government to provide vision so that old ways of thinking changed.

To my surprise, as I spoke, I heard quite a few expressions of agreement from the well-heeled audience. My contribution was the first to be addressed to the Minister; previous speakers had asked questions of a panel of experts from the IDA, Enterprise Ireland, the Irish Exporters' Association, and Retail Excellence. The Minister did her best to answer my point but she said nothing about the need for vision from the Government.

After the meeting it occurred to me that the business of governing is too often conceived of as a type of bureaucratic function. In fact, the key activity is communication. At the meeting the Minister did her job by facilitating two-way communication between the agencies and the public. Otherwise, regarding Brexit, the Government consults with the representatives of industry and other relevant bodies and passes on their messages to Europe and the UK Government. The job is seen as one of passing messages around the system and through international channels.

This understanding of the purpose of government is inadequate. There may be a handful of politicians—the current Minister for Finance, Michael Noonan, springs to mind—who understand that leadership entails seeing questions in broad perspective and taking appropriate

initiatives, but really, you have to go back to the tenure of Charles Haughey as Taoiseach to see government being conducted on a basis other than glorified public relations.

Every now and then one sees glimmers of competence from the current Government on Brexit. An article by Tim O'Sullivan on a similar public meeting held in North Dublin in last month's *Irish Political Review* describes how Eoghan Murphy, a Junior Minister at Finance, sees upgrading transport connections as a necessary part of the response to Brexit. Murphy also stated that the key message that needs to be communicated to foreign investors, especially in Asia, is that Ireland will not be following the UK out of Europe.

But glimmers of competence are no substitute for coherent leadership. Jack Lane, in another article in the last *Irish Political Review*, hits the nail on the head when he says that two opportunities are available to the Irish Government following Brexit: taking full economic advantage of it; and deepening the European dimension of Irish life arising from it. In place of such a perspective the Government is hiding behind the lack of clarity as to the intentions of the UK Government. Failures of leadership are the responsibility of the Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, but in fairness he does not deserve sole responsibility for it in this instance. Fine Gael and the Irish elite in general have devoted so much effort to doing down their own national tradition in recent years (witness the initial plan for last year's 1916 centenary) that they now lack any sense of a clear orientation in international affairs.

Whatever about leadership, it seems that some of the approach advocated by *Irish Political Review* may be filtering into public consciousness. In a discussion on Brexit on the Marion Finucane programme (RTE radio 1, Sunday March 12th) one of the contributors, Conor Burke, the Editor of the *Irish Independent*, criticised the official response to Brexit for failing to place enough emphasis on practical matters like upgrading the ports.

The host read out three responses from listeners on the Brexit discussion and two of them pertained to the need to upgrade Rosslare Port and its road links.

There are some positive signs that the

Irish political class is beginning to wake up to the implications of Brexit but the challenges coming down the tracks, including an increasing likelihood of movement in the direction of a united Ireland, will only be met if whatever parties find themselves in power take the reins of government from the civil service and re-orientate Ireland back to a politics rooted in the national tradition.

Dave Alvey

McGuinness

continued

wreck it rather than let it settle down under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership to be a Socialist Party once again. Hain, having helped to put the skids under his Party as a marginal Blairite, would not have been consulted by the media on the Party row. And the Party, absorbed in its own feud, would have had nothing to say about McGuinness. As a Party, it had washed its hands of Northern Ireland and cultivated ignorance of it.

Blair himself was interviewed about McGuinness around 8 am. And he brought a dose of reality into things. Martin was a military commander who became a statesman. What was astonishing about that? Isn't it how the world works?

Maybe he didn't put it quite like that, but by contrast with the sentimental waffle, that is what it sounded like.

Blair, for a brief moment, had been infinitely larger than the Labour Party. He had been bigger even than the Tory Party. He was a national statesman—the only one from the Labour side that has ever been since Ernest Bevin, who made it an enthusiastic warmongering Party in the late 1930s and then remade the British social structure during the War.

Blair reminded Britain that it was a war-fighting state. He set out to demonstrate that radical liberals could make war just as well as the Tories. Unfortunately he picked the wrong war to make and demonstrated only that the successful art of war-making is largely a matter of choosing the right war to make.

The amoral context in which he saw Northern Ireland deserted him when it came to Iraq. He reverted to abstract moralising about tyrants and came to grief. But his insight that war was normal for Britain, combined with the cult of personality by which he made the Labour Party a blunt instrument of his will, enabled him to deal realistically with the war-party in

Northern Ireland and to negotiate a profound alteration of the devolved system—frankly intimidating David Trimble for the purpose.

So, violence pays, the BBC interviewer (John Humphries) said to him. He had the grace not to pretend to deny it

There was a War in Northern Ireland. Acts done in wartime are not equivalent to acts done in a democratic state in peace time. And wars are not fought within democratically-governed states—that is states governed by political means, in which the electorate can be as actively involved as it wants to be—from which it follows that Northern Ireland was not democratically governed.

Gerry Kelly was interviewed briefly on

Radio 4. He said that McGuinness joined the IRA because there was no democratic means of reform available in Northern Ireland. The interviewer let the remark pass, rather than challenging it or agreeing with it.

It is very rarely that the BBC allows that fact to be stated in the downright manner that Gerry Kelly does well. And, when an embarrassing fact gets through in an interview, it is best to let it pass without comment. The implications of it are too awful to dwell on. And discussion of the point only makes it more memorable.

So, it is quite appropriate—if surprising—that the Irish flag was flown at half-mast over Leinster House in memory of the IRA military commander and statesman.

happened. So they sought a compromise of a kind which they would never have contemplated without failure in war. And, but for the war, the Unionists would never have accepted that compromise.

They agreed, in the sectarian system of devolution, detached from the democracy of the state, to make a fundamental alteration which put the Catholic community on a par with the Protestant constitutionally, and discarded the shallow pretence of democracy which had camouflaged the Protestant-dominated apartheid system for half a century.

The war declared by O Bradaigh was an actual war by 1971. The system of law such as it was, had ceased to be functional. The rules of war prevailed (the actual rules that arise from circumstances, not the pretended rules of the UN). It still seems to be denied in right-thinking circles in Dublin that there was a war which merited the language of war, such as *collateral damage*, and not just a murder campaign to which 'justice' must continue to be applied.

Arthur Balfour, who abolished the Irish landlord system, angered many people when he responded to appeals for justice by saying that there wasn't enough of it to go around. It is an indisputable truth of the world at present that there is not enough of it to go round—probably even less than there was at the turn of the 20th century. Collateral damage seems to be the main damage that is inflicted. The British Government inflicts it as much as any other. What are the victims of it supposed to do? Although it is never explained, they are clearly expected to overcome their egoistic outrage, relativise themselves, see themselves in the perspective of the larger picture. And it's about time that that expectation was applied to the Northern Ireland War in which Martin McGuinness played such a distinguished part.

Brendan Clifford

War And Its Exigencies

Under the intense provocations of the Northern Ireland system, imposed by Westminster and operated by the Unionists, Martin McGuinness joined the War that was declared, as far as we recall, in the Summer of 1970, by Ruairi O Bradaigh, on anti-Treaty grounds. But it was not Partition that fuelled it, so that the war quickly grew beyond the power of policing to deal with.

I opposed it on political grounds—living just down the road from Divis Flats in West Belfast. We were approached, as opponents of the War, to help to stop it by passing on information. If we had agreed and had been found shot on a piece of wasteland, would we have had legitimate grounds of complaint?

Brendan Hughes, in his secret interview on the Boston College tapes, which Micheal Martin vouched for as genuine history, says that Jean McConville, in Divis Flats, was an informer for the British Army, that she was warned to stop it Or Else, and that she continued. The dogs in the street said much the same thing at the time. But when the BBC dragged it up as the fact to remember McGuinness by, her killing was presented as simple murder.

I don't know who killed her, but I take it to be a certainty that she was not killed because she gave a cup of tea to a British soldier.

Divis Flats at the time was a stronghold of the Official IRA, which fought a fantasy Marxist-Leninist war for an object that was a mirage, and declared the Provo war

to be sectarian because it was based on social and political realities. The Officials, or Stickies, have long since disappeared as an influential force. Some members went into the Irish Labour Party and others the House of Lords. Its only voices at present is Eoghan Harris, kept man of the *Sunday Independent*, and Lord Bew (who was outed as a Stickie by the *London Review of Books*).

The war as declared by Ruairi O Bradaigh was unwinnable. It was based on the mistaken assumption that Northern Ireland could be made too costly for Britain to hold. The Republican movement, in the broad as well as the narrow sense, has always somehow failed to understand that war is an integral part of British normality. The Northern Ireland war was only a marginal cost to it—and it was something for the Army to do during a lull in the international scene. (I reckoned in the 1970s that the British Army was the fourth strongest army in the world, and the third most usable, the Chinese Army being only a Home Army.)

Gerry Kelly was asked on BBC Radio 4 what caused McGuinness to convert from causing "*horror and terror*" (as Lord Hain put it) to peacemaking. He said it was the military stalemate that brought about a change on both sides.

The British found that they couldn't win. When they thought they had everything bolted down and could leave the Northern Ireland morass unchanged, Canary Wharf

Zimbabwe: *a post-colonial episode*

A propos Lord Hain: He was a junior Northern Ireland Minister in Blair's Government and therefore became an expert on the place. He once addressed a meeting at the Unemployed Centre in Belfast. He denied absolutely that the Six Counties had been subjected by the Westminster democracy to a system of undemocratic devolved government, excluded from the democracy of the state, which in political practice could only

function in the way that was being condemned as "sectarian".

But, if Northern Ireland was not subjected to undemocratic government, where did the War come from? And, if it was not acknowledged to have arisen against a system of undemocratic government, what justification was there for it? The only response was waffle. (Weren't these the Irish after all? And why suppose that the Irish acted reasonably?)

Coming from South Africa, Hain made a name for himself as an Anti-Apartheid activist and an anti-racist, so one might have expected him to take some notice of the similarities between the old South African government and the Northern Ireland system. But he didn't want to know about that.

After Robert Mugabe began to undo the white colonial land settlement in Zimbabwe, Hain saw his action as racist and condemned it. And it so happened that just about the time that McGuinness died, a Minister of the Mugabe Government was being subjected to inquisition on BBC's all-night television by a BBC operative with a fanatical glint in her eye. Her job was to get the Minister to say something that could be represented as a criticism of his Government, that could be worked up into condemnation. The Minister was aspiring to an international post, and was therefore conciliatory, but in fact he gave nothing away.

Zimbabwe was called Rhodesia until about 1980. It was the last site of active British colonisation. The colonisation went on into the 1970s. It was comprehensively white racist in its political and social structures, and was therefore seen as a desirable destination as coloured migration into England became perceptible. The *Times* was inspired to say at one moment that the better English genes were emigrating there, leaving inferior types at home to maintain the stock.

The colony of Rhodesia declared independence illegally in 1964 but the Imperial Power (which was Labour at the time) let it be. After some native activity of the "horror and terror" kind, a settlement was brokered under which the native population was enfranchised.

The understanding was that the land, so recently taken by the English colonists, would be transferred back into native ownership by means of commercial transactions financed by Britain. But, once a black Government was installed by agreement, Britain forgot about the land question. The land colonisation was to

continue under the protection of native rule.

But Mugabe was not having that. He authorised the seizing of the colonised lands by direct action and their break up into small farms. There was an immediate outcry about coercion and corruption. And no doubt there was both. Hardly anything is done in this world, even within long-standing stable systems, without a bit of each.

The Colonial agricultural system was called *Commercial Farming*. The Commercial Farmers owned vast estates and worked them with hundreds of labourers, producing for the Imperial markets. The transfer to small-scale farmer-owners naturally involved a kind of economic collapse, as these things are measured by advanced capitalism. The BBC, along with the *Irish Times*, worked overtime to persuade the world that Zimbabwe was facing mass starvation for which it would itself be entirely to blame. Mugabe was demonised and there was talk of arresting him for crimes against humanity. And the economy, which was in the process of

being put on a new basis, was subjected to international sanctions.

In fact, but for the new black South African Government, which protected Mugabe, and Chinese economic investment in its industry, Britain might well have brought down the Mugabe Government. In the event, it won time in order to sort itself out. And, despite the attempt to make a difficult situation catastrophic, I don't recall hearing anything on the BBC about mass starvation.

The Minister who submitted himself to BBC's *Hard Talk* refused to give an inch on land reform. And, on the state of the economy, with rampant inflation, he asked the inquisitor what she thought would have been the condition of Europe after Britain's Second World War if America had not given it a massive bail-out with the Marshall Plan. He did not need to go into the specifics that Zimbabwe, instead of getting the promised subsidies from Britain, got sanctions. The point was understood.

Brendan Clifford

European Council Blocks Positive Economic Governance

From September 2010 to September 2015 I was one of three nominees of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to the Workers' Group of the European Economic & Social Committee, serving as a member of two Sections—ECO (Economic & Monetary Union and Economic & Social Cohesion) and REX (External Relations Section). My experience in external relations debates had not been a happy one, given the EU euphoria about the "Arab Spring", and its Russophobic hysteria and enthusiasm for a *coup* in Ukraine. On one occasion I was the only member to speak out at an EESC plenary session in opposition to the military intervention in Libya. On another occasion, I was also the sole individual, in a plenary meeting of 300-odd members, to speak out and take a stand (or, more literally, remain seated) in reaction to EESC partisan support for the "Kiev Spring" upheaval which led to that *coup*. On such issues the EESC, in line with the EU in general, had lost the plot with its manic expansionism.

My experience of economic policy debates had been more fruitful, and I had been successful in ensuring stronger wording in EESC Opinions on deepening economic governance in the Eurozone, notwithstanding the heads-in-the-sand

stances of the European Parliament, the European Council and the Barroso-led European Commission. In September 2015 my EESC membership came to a close. Irish Trade Union membership was reduced from three to two, and I was replaced by SIPTU General President Jack O'Connor. I was, however, enabled to return and observe some of the proceedings of the ECO Section, at meetings that Jack O'Connor was unable to attend and where I would be his non-voting alternate. And what I witnessed shocked me. Gone was the cut-and-thrust of previous years, or any more pathbreaking initiatives. Unanimous consensus on bland Opinions had become the order of the day.

But then came quite a different meeting this past February 2nd, which debated an Opinion paralleling an initiative taken by the Juncker-led European Commission that attempted to break with the decay that had characterised the previous Barroso Commission.

See https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2017-european-semester-communication-fiscal-stance_en_1.pdf for the full text of European Commission Communication of 16th November 2016, entitled "Towards A Positive Fiscal Stance For The Euro Area". I will not quote from it here, as its most significant elements are

quoted in the David Croughan statement reproduced below.

See <https://webapi.eesc.europa.eu/documentsanonymous/EESC-2016-05339-00-01-AC-TRA-en.docx> for the full text of the Opinion adopted by the EESC at its plenary meeting of February 22, having previously been debated at the ECO Section meeting of February 2nd, at which I had been present. The Opinion, as finally adopted by the EESC, said, *inter alia*:

"The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) endorses the priorities set out in the European Commission's 2017 Annual Growth Survey, i.e. the primacy given to fostering job creation and growth, through the three pillars of the AGS: pursuing structural reforms, ensuring responsible fiscal policies, and boosting investment... The AGS 2017 outlines the most pressing economic and social priorities, accompanied by specific recommendations, however the EESC takes very seriously the negative aspects of the rules of the Stability and Growth Pact and Country-Specific Recommendations applied at national level to set the euro area fiscal stance..."

The EESC welcomes, in principle, the missions set out in the 2017 growth survey, as well as the distribution of tasks between the Commission and the Member States... According to the European Commission's latest forecasts, EU Member States' economic development will fundamentally stay the same between 2016 and 2018 in comparison to 2015, and the principal source of growth will be consumption rather than investment. This outlook, which is related to low growth and investment, is inauspicious, all the more so given that the strengthening of domestic demand remains as important as ever when it comes to boosting investment...

Implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact, and monitoring how its provisions are applied and what their impact is on individual Member States' economies, are important elements of the European Semester process. It is regrettable that the semester process has proved to be a one-sided instrument that proscribes high debt and deficits on pain of penalties, but only prescribes a simple reduction of high surpluses. The EESC is in favour of flexibility, particularly when this enables public investment to boost sectors that are also of long-term benefit (education, training and healthcare)."

While paralleling in some respects the concerns highlighted in the initiative taken by the Juncker Commission Communication, the failure of the EESC Opinion to specifically recognise that this was a much needed challenge to the existing order of economic governance of the euro area, was hardly a ringing endorsement. Such weaknesses in the draft Opinion had been

pinpointed by David Croughan in the intervention I had observed on February 2nd. Croughan is the former head of economics with the Irish Business and Employers' Confederation, a member of the EESC Employers' Group and Vice-President of the ECO Section, and he has given me permission to reproduce his contribution hereunder.

Notes of comments made by David Croughan at ECO meeting of 2nd February 2017:

"The Commission Communication "Towards a Positive Fiscal Stance for the Euro Area" which accompanied the Annual Growth Survey (AGS) was in my opinion one of the most meaningful economic contributions to come from the Commission to advance the post crisis economic agenda. Qualitatively, it was far superior to previous Euro area reports published alongside the AGS and should be recognized as such by the Committee.

Indeed the Commission proposal was almost an invitation to challenge the existing order of economic governance of the euro area, because of the problems it identified. And it should have an important role in the process of deepening Economic & Monetary Union (EMU). After all, emergency rules brought in during a time of crisis—a crisis that for too long was badly misdiagnosed as mainly a fiscal problem rather than a financial and banking collapse—should not necessarily become permanent, immutable rules.

Deepening EMU fundamentally requires thinking European, yet the rules dominating the Semester process are national—though they did play a strong role in restoring trust and confidence during the crisis. But there are no aggregate rules to determine the appropriate fiscal stance of the euro area. Any possibility of an appropriate fiscal stance in the euro area is down to mere chance, because currently the stance is whatever the aggregate of the Member States adds up to.

The Commission and many others, including the EESC, agreed that we needed a stimulatory fiscal stance (sadly just rejected by the Council) to get Europe growing and jobs created. One of the most telling remarks from the Communication was "even if economists can point at a desirable fiscal stance for the euro area... such a stance will not be the spontaneous result of the application of the rules to each Member State". Further it says, "a full delivery of the fiscal requirements contained in the country specific recommendations adopted by the Council in July 2016 would imply, on aggregate, a moderately restrictive fiscal stance for the euro area as a whole in 2017 and similar trends can be estimated for 2018". But we need the opposite. So there is an opportunity to review these overly restrictive emergency rules and change them. The Commission further says, that "it is important to stress that the

current fiscal situation conceals a clearly sub-optimal repartition of the fiscal adjustment across countries at this point in time".

In the context of the White Paper, deepening EMU, I think we need to find a way to channel sufficient resources into investments (whether physical infrastructure or education) in member states or regions where it is needed to help competitiveness catch-up. Otherwise, the euro area will continue to diverge with resulting macro-economic imbalances. It won't happen if we continue to refuse to seriously address a bigger (perhaps 2% of GDP) EU budget. In the meantime what happened to the Convergence and Competitiveness Instrument proposed in 2012, following on from the Blueprint suggested by the last Commission?

Again, exposing the inadequacies of the current system, the Commission says "First, the EU's current fiscal framework contains no rules or instruments to directly manage the aggregate fiscal stance of the euro area" and second, "the rules of the SGP are essentially designed to prevent excessive levels of deficit and government debt". The rules are not there for general economic management of the euro area. That is why in the semester process the rules "proscribe" or forbid high deficits and debt but only "prescribe" or suggest the reduction of budgetary surpluses.

For these reasons, I believe the main thrust of our opinion should have been about how to rectify the identified problems contained in the Commission communication accompanying the AGS "Towards a Positive Fiscal Stance for the Euro Area"."

But, as noted by David Croughan, the horse had already bolted on January 27th, at the meeting of Member States Ministers of Finance in ECOFIN—the EU's Economic and Financial Affairs Council, following which was issued their "Council conclusions on macroeconomic and fiscal guidance to the member states (annual growth survey)". These conclusions were replete with more than 30 statements using one or more of the following positive wordings, duly capitalised:

'WELCOMES', 'BROADLY SHARES', 'AGREES', 'STRESSES', 'ACKNOWLEDGES', 'UNDERLINES', 'INVITES', 'LOOKS FORWARD', 'ENCOURAGES', 'RECOGNISES', 'RECALLS', 'SUPPORTS', 'EMPHASISES', 'REAFFIRMS', 'HIGHLIGHTS' and 'CONCURS'.

But in the midst of all these feel-good and self-satisfied conclusions was one

'NOTES', where these assembled Ministers for Finance gave a collective kick in the teeth to any suggestion that existing economic governance needed to be challenged. And so the conclusions also stated that the Council merely "NOTES the Commission Communication and analysis

of the fiscal stance calling for a positive fiscal stance for the euro area as a whole". These conclusions were rubberstamped at the EU Summit of Heads of Government on March 9th, as the ostriches put their collective heads back in the sand.

Manus O'Riordan

Ireland. (And that's quite apart from the fact that Ireland and Britain have dissonant aspirations for Europe.)

Paul Gillespie, Irish Times, 7 Jan '17, article: 'It makes sense to stick closer to Brussels than London on Brexit'

Last month we published the beginning of an overview of current developments with the Brexit debate. The story continues below.

A Round Of The Irish Brexit debate

Part Two

KEY EXTRACTS FROM THE DEBATE

Ray Bassett, Sunday Business Post, 1 Jan '17, article: 'Proper Brexit plan is badly needed'

"Ireland needs to position itself as the leader of the countries wanting as soft a Brexit as possible. We should do all in our power to ensure that Britain gets full access to the single market, including in the financial area. We should support Britain's demand to control immigration flows, accepting that it is currently receiving an unsustainable level of inward immigration. We just have to recognise that no British government could possibly settle for a deal with the EU which does not include migration controls. That is the political reality...

Ireland should not shrink from claiming the mantle of Britain's strongest ally within the EU. Instead of bleating about a common EU position, we should be convening meetings in Dublin at heads of government level with like-minded countries such as the Nordics, Netherlands etc. that have a powerful self-interest in Britain getting as good deal as possible. While I have no doubt our officials are working on this behind the scenes in Brussels, it is time to do so in a much more open and public manner.

It is galling to see Ireland agree to exclude Britain from some meetings in Brussels. By refusing to attend a heads of government/state dinner without the British prime minister, while Britain is still a full member of the union, we would be sending a very strong signal that we intend to be 'active players' in this debate."

Comment: What is remarkable about Ray Bassett's article is how explicitly he makes the case for supporting Britain. He even wants UK banks to retain their current position of dominance in the EU. Making such a case before the Brexit result would have been surprising but understandable, given the importance of Irish-UK trade, but making it now that the UK has resolved to leave, verges on a straightforward declaration of allegiance to Britain.

David McWilliams, Sunday Business Post, 1st Jan '17, article: 'We can't wash our hands of Britain'

"Ray Bassett, the former Irish ambassador to Canada and senior diplomat for more than 30 years, has written an extremely important article in today's *Sunday Business Post*. He is worried about the stance that our government, particularly the Department of Foreign Affairs, is taking regarding Brexit. You should be worried too.

It appears that the Irish government has decided that there is no special relationship with Britain, and that our attitude to Britain and Brexit will be subservient to the EU's attitude...

This column has argued for some time now that we stay in the EU, but draw the line at the present EU. We shouldn't embrace any further integrationist stuff nor sign up to any further federalist projects. This means doing precisely the opposite of the Brits. Rather than following the British out of the EU, we should vow never to leave it. The EU can't kick us out. There is no mechanism. We should simply opt out of Mr Barnier's plans. This means we have full access to the EU, but we don't need nor want to go any further—not because of some cultural aversion, but because it's not in our interest.

Right now, the British need friends. It's their hour of need. They are isolated. We should be their friend in the EU, not because we are weak but because we are strong. The strong, self-confident country behaves generously."

Comment: David McWilliams is here putting an Anglophile spin on the Government's decision to turn down the offer from the British House of Lords of an Anglo-Irish bilateral agreement on Brexit independent of the EU. Such an agreement would have breached EU law. His proposal that we opt out of further EU integration would entail Ireland playing the obstructive role played by the UK over many years. Being seen as the UK's friend in the EU would severely disadvantage

"Critics such as the recently retired Irish diplomat Ray Bassett and the columnist David McWilliams say the Government lacks allies in Brussels, must beware marginalisation by federalists such as Barnier and should press much more openly for an alliance with Britain to secure a soft outcome reflecting close Irish-British ties. Their case underestimates British disarray, overstates Irish isolation, misinterprets Barnier's Gaullism and ignores the diplomatic tactics involved."

Noel Whelan, Irish Times, 6 Jan '17, article: 'It is naive to say Ireland would never leave the EU'

"In an interesting opinion piece in the *Sunday Business Post* last weekend, the former Department of Foreign Affairs official Ray Bassett, whose perspective on Europe is obviously different from Farage's, also raised the possibility that Brexit might give rise to the possibility of Ireland leaving the EU. Indeed, Bassett went further and argued that drawing attention to the risk of Ireland leaving should be part of our negotiating strategy in order to counter the 'punish the Brits' elements in Brussels. His central point was that we should be emphasising the risk of 'Irexit' as a means of concentrating minds in the EU about how damaging a hard Brexit could be for Ireland."

Comment: Whelan's contribution is interesting primarily because of his association with Fianna Fail. Given its history, Fianna Fail might have been expected to set the running in opposing Fine Gael's over-zealous embrace of the alliance with Britain. But Micheál Martin, apart from an under-reported speech to the International Institute for European Affairs (IIEA), has kept a relatively low profile on Brexit. That Whelan should support the stance of Bassett and McWilliams while Fianna Fail keeps its head down highlights the extraordinary abandonment of tradition that has occurred in that party.

John Downing, Irish Independent, 9th Jan '17, article: 'Farage hanging around Brussels acting like a juvenile delinquent'—Hogan'

"Meanwhile, Mr Hogan has roundly rejected claims by Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage that Ireland may follow Britain's example and leave the EU.

Mr Hogan launched a scathing attack on the Ukip MEP, calling him a 'juvenile

delinquent hanging around corners in Brussels telling others what to do about the EU'.

The commissioner said that although Mr Farage was a leading light in the Brexit campaign, he now had no clue what Britain's next move should be. Mr Hogan also insisted Ireland 'has deep and long-standing links with mainland Europe'.

Last week, Mr Farage said he did not support the view that Irish people were major supporters of EU membership. He pointed out that Irish voters had twice voted 'No' in referendums on EU treaties, and he argued that if Britain could show it was better off outside the EU, Irish people would have a rethink on the issue in the coming two to three years.

But Mr Hogan said that Mr Farage had used EU taxpayers' money in the past to intervene in an Irish referendum on the EU's Fiscal Treaty in May 2012. The commissioner said Mr Farage had distributed leaflets in Ireland with 'misinformation' on the issue.

"But Irish voters rejected his claims and endorsed the Fiscal Treaty. I'm also confident that he completely underestimates Irish people's deep and long-standing links with the peoples of mainland Europe. That was even cited in the 1916 Proclamation, which mentions 'gallant allies in Europe', Mr Hogan said."

Comment: The reference here to the Proclamation might appear as populist, but it represented a gamble on Hogan's part for which he deserves credit. Looking to history as a source of orientation is exactly what has been missing from Irish statecraft in recent times. Phil Hogan, a staunch Fine Gaeler, is here showing Fianna Fail how the richness of the national tradition provides a secure orientation for engaging with the challenges of contemporary politics.

Phil Hogan, Irish Times, 9 Jan '17, opinion piece: 'Phil Hogan: Now is the time to cut our ties with Brexiting Britain'

"Brexit will happen and we now need to take a very strategic and far-sighted review of our relationships with both the UK and the rest of our European partners. There will be a new dynamic in European affairs, and Ireland needs to be absolutely prepared to influence, shape and lead that dynamic and change.

If we don't step up to the plate in managing this fundamental shift in our relationship with our European neighbours, then others will shape the environment for us.

It is also important that our political relationship with the United Kingdom matures to reflect the changed political and legal circumstances."

Professor John O'Brennan, Irish Times, 12 Jan '17, letter: 'Phil Hogan and Brexit'

"Mr Hogan undoubtedly feels strongly about the potential impact on Ireland of a so-called 'hard Brexit'. But this is not the appropriate channel through which to deliver his message.

Mr Hogan echoes former Irish diplomat Ray Bassett in suggesting that Ireland has few allies in the European Union. This is simply untrue.

Far from being viewed as a surrogate of the UK, Ireland has charted a completely autonomous course in the Council of Ministers in Brussels, though cooperating with our nearest neighbour on a range of (though far from all) policy issues.

In a constellation of power where there are no permanent alliances, Irish officials have sought determinedly to pursue purely Irish positions independent of the United Kingdom. They will continue to do so during the Brexit negotiations and after the UK leaves the EU"

Comment: Where was Professor O' Brennan when Ireland switched from being a reliable defender of the EU to being the main supporter of Britain's campaign to reform the EU along Eurosceptic lines? If he doubts the occurrence of such a development he need go no further than the pro-British pundits cited in this section. The Anglophilia rampant in the Irish media is also well represented in the upper echelons of the Government and State as exemplified by Ray Bassett.

Brendan Keenan, Irish Independent, 12 Jan '17, article: 'Lords a strange ally in fight to mitigate Brexit fallout'

"As long as the North is part of the UK, Commissioner Phil Hogan's idea of turning away from Britain and cleaving to the Continent is fantasy; which is why the North's position is the ultimate sleeping constitutional dragon in all of this—one we must all hope does not reawaken."

Comment: This is another example of Anglo-centric bias in the Irish media but it is more deftly worked than the forthright assertions of Bassett and McWilliams. Brendan Keenan is here using the North as a hook to keep the Republic from aligning with the EU.

Catherine May, Irish Times, 14 Jan '17, opinion piece: 'Ireland must not play the UK off against the EU'

"Following the UK decision to leave the EU, 28 countries now have to work out what this means for them and where they go from here. We know instinctively that the EU will be different without the UK.

The country's departure will change the bloc's future direction and this will not always be comfortable for Ireland.

We identified with many UK positions

and were happy to support a large member state championing the need for EU reform.

Now there will inevitably be a shift to a more "continental" view of the EU. All countries, especially the smaller ones, will need to reflect on the implications of deeper economic integration.

Understandably so far the debate in Ireland following the UK vote has focused mostly on the terms of the UK exit. But a wider debate is needed.

Already there are voices hinting that Ireland should follow the UK and leave the EU. I profoundly disagree.

A small country like ours can have very little influence in shaping developments that affect us if we are not part of a bigger bloc."

Comment: While Catherine Day is to be commended for adding her voice to the pro-EU lobby in the debate, it is disappointing to see her muddying the waters as in the title of her piece. A criticism that can be made of some officials performing diplomatic functions is that they try to placate all sides. In the current dilemma facing the Irish Government there is an overriding need to undo the pre-Brexit alliance with Britain and create new alliances. A clear signal needs to be sent to the other 26 member states that Ireland no longer dances to a British tune. In that context Ireland needs to unambiguously side with the EU. Once that hurdle is cleared a new relationship can be forged with Britain.

Irish Times editor Kevin O'Sullivan, Irish Times, 31 Jan '17, editorial: 'A commitment to working together'

"But, as former EU commission Secretary General Catherine Day argued recently, EU negotiators will welcome an input to deliberations arising from "problem solving" bilateral discussions between the two states as long as their outcome respects the limits of what is permissible in EU treaties. So there remains plenty of scope for a bilateral talks process alongside the main discussions. Yesterday's meeting appears to have been a useful opener."

Comment: Here we see that the damage that can be wrought by failing to make the hard decision regarding the relationship with Britain: bilateral talks with Britain independent of the EU—which is clearly what the UK Government wants—will create unlimited scope for mischief and confusion.

Joe Mulholland, Irish Times, 16 Jan '17, opinion piece: 'Brexit is not just about Ireland and the UK'

"Most of the discourse on Brexit in this country has focused, not surprisingly, on the rather narrow agenda of possible

economic effects on our economy and the restoration of a border between North and South.

The fallout from Brexit, however, will be much more extensive and far-reaching for Ireland, Europe and the wider world, which makes it imperative that we broaden the discussion to take account of the bigger picture.

Such is the threat to the very existence of the European Union posed by a major member state's decision to leave, together with the growth of anti-EU, populist far-left and far-right movements resulting in instability in many member states, there is an urgent need to widen the discourse to take account of the overall state of the union. The disintegration of the European Union, no longer unthinkable, would be disastrous not only for the people of this island but for everyone in Europe and far beyond."

Blair Horan, Irish Times, 19 Jan '17, letter: Theresa May and Britain's Brexit strategy:

"...The EU will not be punishing the UK when it refuses to allow it to cherry-pick the trade aspects of the Treaty of Rome that it signed 45 years ago next Sunday. It will, in fact, be protecting the single market and ensuring that no European country can gain a competitive advantage by refusing to abide by its common rules.

The choice was made by the Six at a meeting in Messina in June 1955 to create a continental scale market with the four freedoms rather than a free-trade area. History and geography still matter in Europe, and that choice is unlikely to be overturned just because the English and Welsh have now changed their minds.

The UK's leverage in these negotiations will be weak compared to the EU. It sends 44 per cent of its exports to the EU, while the EU only sends 8 per cent to the UK.

The formal trade negotiations will not begin until the UK has left the EU in 2019, so if the UK leaves the single market at the same time, it will default to trade based on WTO tariffs. That would have very serious consequences here because 37 per cent of Irish agri-food exports goes to the UK. The farming and agri-food sectors would need significant financial assistance to protect jobs and secure new markets and support from the EU would be essential.

Over time, the UK would negotiate a free-trade agreement but it would not match existing arrangements, and most likely would still require concessions by the UK on free movement and EU regulations.

The best way to avoid a customs Border on this island is for Northern Ireland, exceptionally, to remain in the customs union but that would only be possible if the free-trade agreement includes the agri-food sector.

Whatever happens, Ireland's future will remain with the EU. The alternative would

be a return to the UK's orbit and sterling; a cheap food policy that would destroy our farming and agri-food sectors; and replacing a market of 445 million people for one of 65 million."

Ray Basset, Sunday Business Post, 22 Jan '17, article: "Time to defend our interests"

"Brexit will be a messy event for the rest of the EU. The calls by the Austrian prime minister, Christian Kern, and the Dutch deputy prime minister, Lodewijk Asscher, for the curtailment of free movement of labour, means that the British negotiation in this area may not be as intractable as at first sight...

There may be an effort to quicken and deepen EU integration after the British leave. Such impulses are deeply damaging to the public standing of the EU and probably represent a bigger threat to its long-term future than Euroscepticism."

Comment: Basset is doing more here than articulating a case for the maximum alignment between Ireland and Britain. He is egging Ireland on to become a thorn in the side of the EU. His second article has received noticeably less attention than his first.

Dara Murphy, the Minister for European Affairs, Irish Times, 25 Jan '17, article: 'Ireland should not take itself 'hostage' over Brexit concerns'

"Mr Murphy said he was concerned about arguments that 'because the Brexit negotiations are likely to be difficult, and because there was so much at stake for Ireland, that we should threaten to leave the EU if we don't get what we want'.

'Taking yourself hostage is a really strange way to guarantee your future wellbeing', Mr Murphy said.

'Let me be crystal clear. Ireland is a committed member of the European Union. Ireland's interests, economic, social and political are best served by our continued membership of the European Union. Our economic future prosperity depends on our membership of the single market.'

The Minister added: 'We are all aware of the very significant potential negative impact of a hard Brexit on our economy, but that would be in the half-penny place compared to the economic devastation that a withdrawal from the EU would cause.'

Mr Murphy said we needed open discussion and debate on our policy options, but that it should be 'serious and informed'.

UK dependence

'The consequence of leaving the European Union would inevitably be a return to a greater dependence on the UK, and without any of the input we have around the European table', he said. 'This would reverse the trend of the past 40 years and the great strides we have made in

diversifying our economic and political relationships', he said.

A close relationship between the EU and the UK, which placed the minimum possible barriers to continuing trade, was a key objective.

'But we also recognise the importance of the continued diversification of our export markets, especially for our indigenous companies', Mr Murphy said. 'This has been a long-term strategy, but work on delivering it is being intensified. This is a priority for our State agencies, our embassies, and the whole of Government.'

Brexit negotiations would be 'difficult', he said, and there were 'huge Irish issues and interests directly at stake'.

Mr Murphy said the Government was carefully preparing itself 'issue by issue and sector by sector to achieve the best possible outcome for Ireland and for the EU in the upcoming negotiations'...'' (Reporter: Elaine Edwards).

SOME CONCLUSIONS

Ray Basset's article provoked a revealing exchange of views. The debate, which extended over most of January, showed the extent of pro-British sympathy among a number of Irish media commentators including a columnist considered to be close to the leadership of Fianna Fail. It also shed light on the mindset of officials working in the Department of Foreign Affairs. Behind a smokescreen of concern for Irish interests, much of the media commentary was fixated on promoting a close connection with Britain that may be characterised as 'British nationalist'.

In the course of the debate the pro-EU case was argued in a relatively measured and coherent fashion, culminating in a robust appraisal of Irish national interests from the Minister for European Affairs. An appeal that the debate should be broadened beyond the terms of the UK exit was made in the contributions from Joe Mulholland and Catherine Day. A well-informed public debate about Ireland's place in the EU would certainly be timely. Hopefully it will happen during the process through which Brexit is realised.

Dave Alvey

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Commemorating Casement

—events, a song and an observation

VOICE OF THE VOICELESS

—NATIONAL MUSEUM, KILDARE ST

This modestly-sized but memorable one-room exhibition opened appropriately on August 3rd, the exact centenary of Casement's execution. It consists firstly of diverse objects he acquired in the tropics and from time to time provided as donations to the museum's collection.

There are a number of native African ritual objects; also a small seated human figure, described as a 'power figure', originating from Angola, and an intricately woven rectangular basket used for carrying medicinal herbs. Along with this are a finely crafted wooden handled steel dagger and a wicker shield.

There are also reminders of the cruelties of slavery-based rubber-gathering by way of wooden hand cuffs and a basket for carrying natural rubber, freshly collected from tropical forest trees.

It is the exhibits from Africa which prove the most interesting. However, a display case of preserved giant South American multicoloured butterflies is not easily overshadowed.

There is one display case dealing with Africa, one dealing with South America and another for the butterflies.

A wall display outlines the history of the rubber boom in the Congo Free State at the beginning of the 20th century, along with Casement's part in calling attention to the horrific abuses. This leads into a related display concerning slavery today and the fraught existence of contemporary indigenous tribal peoples. Slavery has by no means disappeared from the world. Pygmies in the Democratic Republic of Congo frequently lead lives of enslavement today. It is not uncommon among them for families to live as slaves for generations.

There are approximately 150 million tribal people in the world across 60 countries. Their rights are not respected. Their lands can be stolen by mining companies, ranchers or illegal loggers. The text ends: "*Casement worked as the voice of the voiceless. His work remains unfinished as long as slavery and abuse of indigenous peoples' rights continue.*"

This unpretentious, informative and eminently sensible exhibition, according to museum staff, will be in place for at least another year and, needless to say, is well worth a visit.

IMAGINING HOME

—NATIONAL CONCERT HALL, DUBLIN

This series of seven concerts was described as inspired by the 1916 Proclamation. The concerts took place from Monday 28th March to 3rd April 2016 and were intended to speak of Ireland's cultural journey over the last 100 years, its place in the world today and its shared future.

Each concert featured a mix of performers from diverse genres and traditions and each concert answered to a given theme, these being; *America, England, into Europe, on Revolution, The Literary Imagination, This is Ireland* (celebrating Ireland), *Out of the Tradition* (traditional music and the Irish language).

The March 30th concert (into Europe) featured two world premieres. The first was *Treason on Trial* by George Bernard Shaw. This was a text Shaw wrote for Casement to present to the jury at his trial as an apologia for his alleged treason. The core idea was that, as a committed nationalist, he had simply behaved as his patriotic instincts had dictated and so there had, from his point of view, been no treason. In the event Casement had decided not to employ Shaw's text and, instead, to go with the advice of his legal team.

The second world premiere was *The Nightmare of Empire/The Dream of Europe* by Fintan O'Toole. This dramatic monologue was performed by the acclaimed actress, Olwen Fouéré. It was essentially a meditative essay on the rubber industry at the turn of the last century in its many-sided global manifestations, presented in theatrical form. It was conceived as a dramatisation of Casement's ongoing perceptions of the larger picture of what was afoot. As a piece of theatre it worked reasonably well.

The March 31st concert (on Revolution) featured another Casement-themed world premiere. This involved the 16 minute piece *The Dark Places* composed by Dubliner Donnacha Dennehy for baritone and bass with instrumental backing from *The Crash Ensemble*. The libretto is by Colm Toibín. Casement met with the Polish-born writer, Joseph Conrad, in Africa in the 1890s. The piece is based on an imagined reconstruction of the encounter between the two men. *The Crash Ensemble* is a new music ensemble originally formed by Dennehy in 1997. Having not attended the performance, and lacking

an interest in this *genre* of musical expression, this writer has no comment to make on the quality (or lack thereof) of what was presented.

THE BLACK DIARY WALTZ

As mentioned in a previous piece in this series, a pleasant upshot from the centenary is a song from the up-and-coming Irish alternative folk group, *The Mariannes*. The song is *The Black Diary Waltz (Ode to Roger Casement)* released in March this year. Composed by band-member Lisa Loughrey, the subtle, catchy melody has the power to grow on you.

She explained to me that she knew little about Casement until a few years ago when she attended a play at a gay theatre festival which was called *Eirebrushed*. This play and the centenary got her thinking about him and inspired the song. She sees the Diaries as fully his and sees them as critical in undermining the campaign for clemency.

She said the song celebrates his faithfulness to his humanitarian and political ideals and his (gay) sexuality.

Here are the first three verses (by way of correcting a misquotation in a previous piece (...!)):

The Black Diary Waltz

(Ode to Roger Casement).

"It's handsome I am, a red blooded man
Stand for what's right as off' as I can
Stripped of my honours, though no
crimes were mine
Now a name to forget with the passing
of time

Foiled by my pen and the ending was
grave
Shunned by the men I had wanted to
save
And the gallows care not for the good
that you've done
Hanged on a comma 'fore the war had
been won

But now I can see all that has passed
The battle was lost 'fore the judgement
was cast
Though, I'd change not a thing if you
asked...
I'd still pin my colours to the mast."

AN OBSERVATION

I was struck by an observation from an interviewee on a radio programme at the latter end of last year. This man remarked quite categorically that there have been more books written about Casement than books about the fifteen other executed 1916 rebels all put together.

Casement, for a variety of reasons, a century after his passing, is able to claim an impressive amount of attention.

Tim O'Sullivan

Deux: *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*

"Since in the domain of foreign affairs Great Britain spoke for her whole Empire, and since the seas of the world were controlled by the unchallenged strength of the British Navy, the influence of Europe was predominant over the whole globe, while at the same time no world war was possible without British intervention" (G.M. Gathorpe-Hardy, *A Short History of International Affairs, 1920-1939*, p.7).

This blunt statement of fact in a book "*Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*" (Round Table/Chatham House) is pretty clear: There would have been no World Wars without England and they were Britain's Great Wars.

It is rather surprising, however, to see it from the horse's mouth.

Actually this book, a survey of the events leading to Britain's Second World War on Germany is remarkably candid about the origins of the First Great War:

"The Balance of Power, as it was understood from the days of Castlereagh and even later, is correctly defined in the Encyclopaedia Britannica as the 'maintenance of such a just equilibrium between the members of the family of nations as should prevent any one of them from becoming sufficiently strong to enforce its will upon the rest'..." (p.5).

Now it is clear that Britain is an absent subject from this rule. It stands apart from it, above "*the family of nations*", "*sufficiently strong to enforce its will upon the rest*" but immune from the sort of collective action it organised periodically itself, to sanction any offender to the rule.

It made the rule, was the sole judge of when it was broken, and became chief executioner when collective action was required to enforce the equilibrium. And it then took the property of the executed as reward for its duty in the service of "*the family of nations*" and a restoration of the equilibrium!

Looking back from 1934, when the Balance of Power was needing to be applied again to Europe, through a coalition led by England, the book had this to say:

"The Balance of Power says, 'Thou shalt not grow formidable'... Now the Balance of Power broke down, just as the

post-War substitute is at the moment of writing threatened with break down, through isolation and reluctance to join in collective action. Bismarck launched the German Empire on the course leading to disproportionate power by means of three wars, with none of which was there any general interference. It grew so great that, like the sun, it attracted satellites into its system, and the final stage before the Great War was not the application, in any real sense, of the principle of the Balance of Power, but a frantic and hopeless attempt to catch up with a lost opportunity, and to redress a balance for which no sufficiently powerful counterpoise was available. The essence of the situation was the might of Germany... What the Great War really discredits is not the Balance of Power, but short sighted isolationism" (p.6).

The lesson for 1934 was that action within the Balance of Power needed to be prompt: Germany needed cutting down to size as she formed herself into a state from 1871. Waiting until 1914 had been too late and it had resulted in a messy operation:

"Great Britain, indeed, remained blind or indifferent to this threat to European equilibrium, until in 1900, Germany embarked on the creation of a large navy. This woke her at once from her dreams of 'splendid isolation'. In 1901 came the Anglo-Japanese alliance, and in the following years the beginnings of an approach to France, which gradually developed into the Entente. A stage had been reached when the preservation of peace was seen to be no longer ultimately possible, and the main consideration of the Great Powers was that the inevitable contest should not find them unprepared. Two or three more dangerous crises were successfully negotiated by the old diplomacy—Algeciras, Bosnia, Agadir—and then the end could be no longer postponed" (pp.6-7).

This is all rather refreshing in its honesty: The equilibrium of the world was conceived in the exclusive interest of England; Germany had to be cut down to size once it had been judged to have disturbed the equilibrium and the Balance of Power principle needed to be put into operation.

The organising for war had been done through the Committee of Imperial Defence, established around 1902 for the job, and a coalition was then assembled of the willing against Germany and her "*satellites*". Meanwhile the old diplomacy had to be given its last chance to prove it

was inadequate to maintaining the equilibrium whilst further preparations were made. But by that time it was too late, Germany had grown too strong, so . . . catastrophe!

It was hoped by the writer that lessons had been learnt for the Second round with Germany. But apparently not—*Appeasement!*

Andre Siegfried's 1931 book *England's Crisis* is very relevant to all of this and it contains the following observation:

"One cannot help remarking that England usually looks abroad first for the causes of her difficulties—always they are the fault of someone else... It is magnificent, the way she can preach a sermon to the rest of the world, expose their weaknesses, and point out their duties... Her instinct is to try to restore the conditions which suited her, instead of revising her own standards and adapting them to a world in which they are now out of place" (pp.47-8).

Restoring the equilibrium was the most fundamental of all British requirements of Europe. So why revise your standards and adapt them to the world when the world can be adapted to you? That was the point that Arthur Balfour, England's premier statesman, made to the US Ambassador in 1910 when questioned about Britain's intentions toward Germany:

"*Balfour*: We are probably fools not to find a reason for declaring war on Germany before she builds too many ships and takes away our trade.

"*White*: You are a very high-minded man in private life. How can you possibly contemplate anything so politically immoral as provoking a war against a harmless nation which has as good a right to a navy as you have? If you wish to compete with German trade, work harder.

"*Balfour*: That would mean lowering our standard of living. Perhaps it would be simpler for us to have a war.

"*White*: I am shocked that you of all men should enunciate such principles.

"*Balfour*: Is it a question of right or wrong? Maybe it is just a question of keeping our supremacy" (Henry White and Allan Nevins, *Thirty Years Of American Diplomacy*, p.257).

Andre Siegfried did not know of this conversation and he probably did not want to know. He was a French Alsatian and a great admirer of Britain. He realised from around 1924, at least, that Britain was in decline, regretted this, and he urged its leaders to indulge in economic reform and self-correction. One gets the feeling he was making a plea, understanding that it would be ruled out by instinct. And

England did just muddle through and follow her instinct "to try to restore the conditions which suited her." Result—World War II.

Back to Chatham House. Britain blamed a number of things for the catastrophe of its First Great War: Number One, Nationalism:

"an extension of the democratic ideas of the French and American revolutions, which introduced an entirely novel factor. It cut clean across the hitherto accepted organisation of Europe or the world, and immensely complicated the problem of control" (G.M. Gathorpe-Hardy, p.7).

It was, as Siegfried noted, always the foreigners who were to blame (and the Americans who wanted to act like foreigners through a state of their own). The national, democratic revolutions were a complicating factor for the operation of the traditional British policy of Balance of Power and its hegemony over the continent and the world. It produced a problem of volatility: something that was much harder to handle than in the past. The object of policy, being now subject to the whim of the ignorant masses, became unpredictable for a ruling class, not to mention the effect it had on its own subject population, which could not be used as simple cannon-fodder, as in the past. Balance of Power wars could be prepared for and the diplomacy organised but then they had to be revealed to the Democracy. Democratic wars were messy.

After the Great War was won things became even more messy because President Wilson—an ultra-democrat beholden to the ideology—attempted to import nationalistic principles, universal democracy and self-determination into the settlement, making it unstable. And then the US withdrew from the mess it saw, wishing not to be entangled in it, and leaving England to pick up the pieces. That was how it was seen at Chatham House, anyway.

There is an inference in the Royal Institute of International Affairs book that President Wilson had insisted on a full democratic form of government for Germany or complete surrender. The latter conclusion to Britain's Great War would have meant an American military push on Berlin which would have placed the U.S. at the heart of Europe, and the object of the Balance of Power. To prevent U.S. military power at the heart of Europe Britain agreed to a removal of the Kaiser and instead, a turning of the screw on the Germans by the Royal Navy Blockade.

By doing this Britain ruled out a replacement of the Balance of Power by an alternative policy. It blamed the U.S. for failing to follow through on this despite the fact that it was its actions that deterred the Republic.

Britain was already doubtful about the imposition of a full democracy on Germany:

"The effect of this concern for forms of government was that, in a time of unprecedented upheaval, peace could only be secured by revolution, and that large parts of Europe became committed to a political regime, in the working of which they were wholly without experience, and which ran counter to all their historical traditions" (p.14).

That was a very sensible argument: US exporting of flat pack democracy could only end in tears. But, whilst that was sayable in 1934, it was not once the Balance of Power became operable toward Germany just afterwards. It is just an interesting insight that the British State had that it chose to suppress.

But with regard to the principle of "self-determination", on which John Redmond recruited the Irish for Britain's Great War, the Chatham House book is even more informative:

"An even more disastrous doctrine (than universal democracy) perhaps, when erected into an almost immutable principle, was that of the right to racial self-determination. Like other principles to which the *maxim corruptio optimi pessima* applies, it is sound enough when not carried too far. The trouble was that in the President's mind it was the key to the whole solution, and an infallible, universal panacea... English opinion as a whole had never accepted the principle: under the terser synonym of 'home rule', it had long been vigorously repudiated by a large section of the population; the British ideal was to give to a whole diversity of races so just and impartial a government that they should become loyal and contented citizens; it was not her practice to admit the claims of each subordinate fraction to independent sovereignty" (p.17).

Britain dealt with the emergence of democracy and notions of racial self-determination by using them as instruments to disrupt the regions of its rivals whilst suppressing such notions as utterly impossible/Treason in its own Empire. The result was a Home Rule movement in Ireland rather than one for Irish independence. But even Home Rule was unacceptable before the Great War to the substance of Britain.

Notions of self-determination were

dangerous if applied to the mass of humanity by ignorant Americans:

"The idea of self-determination... causes unrest by the fatal fascination of its appeal to primitive races, quite unfitted, except in their own estimation, to play the part of sovereign states. But the cardinal inherent vice of the doctrine lies in the fact that to apply it in practice inevitably involves its violation. In the racial and linguistic jig-saw of eastern Europe there are no clear cut lines of demarkation... However impartially the principle might be applied, millions of Europeans would necessarily be left with a rankling grievance, which they could justify by an appeal to that principle itself" (pp.16-17).

Blaming President Wilson was handy, particularly when he was done and Congress had repudiated his policy. But had not Liberal England dabbled extensively in such things in its "war for small nations" and "self-determination" when these ideas had helped its Great War effort abroad. Had it not encouraged such notions amongst the Irish, the Italians, the Greeks, the Armenians, the Arabs and the Jews? Was this not part of its Janus Head, with the Liberal face winking at the gullible to make cannon fodder of them in the Great moral War?

After looking at the Great War for over a decade and from a variety of angles I have come to the conclusion that the cataclysmic nature of it originates in the hinterland between the Balance of Power war that the British State organised itself for and the English Democracy that came to make the War its own when confronted with it. That hinterland was largely occupied by the Liberal Party and its ally Redmondite Ireland. That element—which became fused in the Irish Home Rule struggle—threw itself into War which it had initially opposed and then declared that it was something that it wasn't and hadn't been intended to be, in the course of joining it.

But, in altering the banners of this Great War, it did not alter its substance. The substance of the British State attempted to retrieve that essence at the conclusion of the War. However, perception is very important in such things and the settlement had to be a compromise, and a disastrous one at that.

The ruling substance might have rescued its kind of War at the cost of alienating Liberal England in the waging of it, but then the US had to be procured to win it all and that led to President Wilson. President Wilson merely enhanced the problems that Britain's Great War created for Europe and the world as England

attempted to rebottle the genie it had let loose to achieve a satisfactory conclusion.

Things then became very complicated and difficult in the aftermath, in the world Britain had won through its Great War.

Andre Siegfried's 1931 book *Britain in Crisis* describes how England was, despite being the predominant Power in the world, floundering in this post-War world that it had carved out, due to its moral pronouncements and their reinforcement by its Anglo-Saxon ally. Now Britain was caught between Europe and the Anglo-Saxon world it had itself spawned across the globe—Greater Britain plus the US. Poised between the two, with its economic power seeping away, it could not decide what it was, what it should be and what it should do: *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*.

Andre Siegfried wrote in 1931:

"The old British disdain for the foreigner has increased considerably since the Treaty of Versailles, and in any case no Englishman ever feels that an Italian, a German, or a Frenchman is quite his equal. Politeness forbids his saying so, but he would hardly know how to conceal his humiliation if he were included in that rabble, so he makes up his mind to steer clear of them... When Continental affairs are not going to England's liking, her natural reaction is to fly in the opposite direction, and seek refuge among the Anglo-Saxon peoples" (England's Crisis, p.232).

Siegfried, although an Alsatian French Protestant admirer of the British and their Empire, described England in a way that would be as true today as it was nearly a century ago.

He noted that England's culture was European in origin but, because of her island insularity, her customs had become distinct from the Continental mainland. These peculiar customs that had developed and been reinforced by the English Reformation had been spread across the world to Greater Britain/America. So England lived in two worlds: one which she disdained and periodically interfered with for her own interests and the other that she sought to pull along with her, again for her own interests.

Siegfried was clear that England, despite appearances, was fundamentally Nationalist—but Nationalist in a racial rather than territorial sense:

"British nationalism is based more on racial feelings than on attachment to the soil... The racial appeal, therefore, has always exerted a powerful influence on the British" (p.233).

As Roger Casement noted:

"The idea of 'Empire' was preached in place of patriotism and those who dared think first of England and the home necessities of Englishmen, were scornfully termed 'Little Englanders'..." (Continental Times 18.10.1915).

Imperially, Britain was about "*kith and kin*" fundamentally, and this was summed up in Lord Milner's remark that "*England means nothing to me*", and his description of himself instead as a "*British Race Patriot*". It involved the understanding that race meant everything and there was a racial hierarchy in which the English Anglo-Saxons stood top. Territory was just a means to an end, the end being supremacy. If England fell one day, as a result of miscalculation in the Balance of Power, its Government could be withdrawn to Canada, for example.

As Siegfried noted, Britain drew away from Europe after its Great War had made it a "*mad house*". It looked outward to its Greater Britain and to the US—a kind of semi-lost territory of Greater Britain, with regard to which hope had not been entirely lost of regaining in some form or other.

Britain had begun to attempt to bind Greater Britain/Empire/Commonwealth closer to itself, even imagining the development of an *Imperial Federation* based on Race, with the First Class White Anglo-Saxons races governing on an equal basis and the lesser breeds of the Empire perhaps being brought up to the level of civilisation necessary to take up such responsibility, over the centuries. The lighter the skin the more quickly, in all likelihood, that would be achieved given the relationship between whiteness and civilisation. The blacks, at the lowest end of humanity, would probably never reach such a stage and would need ruling for the foreseeable future.

But the White Colonies disappointed Britain. The War propaganda infused them with a nationalism of their own, the conduct of the War gave them second thoughts about being ordered into battle at England's whim and they began to stop taking England's excess/surplus population because it was mostly composed of unemployed proletarians when hardy rurals were required for development. The Great War began to fade the dream of Imperial Federation and the Chamberlain proposal of 1903 became the lost opportunity.

But, as Siegfried noted in his 1924 book *Post-War Britain*, the relationship

between the Empire (including Irish Free State) and Mother England was still one of Imperial obligation:

"The Dominions run the risk of finding themselves suddenly confronted with the alternative either of being dragged into a policy or even a war of which they disapprove, or of letting Great Britain get out of it alone as best she can. The result... is that the situation practically remains that of a mother country ruling her colonies" (p.221).

Siegfried advised the British Colonies to "*simply demand that Britain should limit her role to that of managing director of an Imperial concern*" (p.222).

Siegfried's *Britain in Crisis* has large sections devoted to England's decline, from 1880 onwards, a decline which bolstered the case for a Great War in 1914. But Siegfried, in describing England's instinct "*to try to restore the conditions which suited her, instead of revising her own standards and adapting them to a world in which they are now out of place*" never puts two and two together. Although perceptively understanding Britain's character and the situation it obviously wants to reverse, he cannot draw the conclusion that its statesmen were forming a view of there being a simple way out of the position of difficulty: Rather than losing ground on the existing playing field why not send a plough through it?

Siegfried notes that Britain's decline began to be noticed around 1880 when economic rivals appeared to England's industry and trade—something that was natural but which Britain was unwilling to accept, or do anything about through a reform of itself:

"She enjoyed a complete monopoly not only in distant countries, but even in Europe, where industrialism was still backward and, without realising it, she was accustomed to all that this monopoly entailed. She honestly believed that she was competing internationally under normal conditions without guile and according to the rules of free trade. In reality, however, her commercial victories were less important than she thought, because she had not encountered a dangerous rival until she met the Germany of William II. Insular temperamentally as well as geographically, she is apt to consider all foreigners—even Europeans—as second-raters, living on a plane inferior to her own. The legendary Englishman who remarked that 'The negroes begin at Calais', was only joking no doubt but in his heart of hearts he meant what he said" (p.21).

It was Winston Churchill, I believe,

who remarked "*The wogs begin at Calais.*" But it was a very popular phrase in England well before the Labour MP for Woodford attributed it to him in a 1949 Parliamentary debate.

Siegfried attributes England's great economic advantage to its coal and the development of the steam-engine. England's mines enjoyed a quasi-monopoly in the world until late into the 19th Century and coal was the only fuel used by industry. So Britain's industries enjoyed low manufacturing costs because of coal, despite higher labour costs in the actual making of things. But the industrial revolution in Britain began to create a proletarian society like no other in the world and this working class had to be sated by higher wages, cheap food and Democracy/Imperialism to be kept in order.

The situation of British economic predominance/monopoly could not continue. An example had been set of 'progress' in the world and the rules of the game were established by Britain. It could not remain that other countries would be content with an international division of labour that directed all wealth to a small island off the coast of Europe. As other countries began to mine coal and combined this with the lower wage costs of peasant, non-proletarian societies England's competitive edge began to erode. And England could only sate its proletarian mass by cheapening its food, to sustain its standard of living, engaging it in its Imperial mission, finding territories for its excess to be redistributed to and democratising its political structures. It could not do the necessary, as Siegfried saw it, from a French peasant point of view, by tightening the belt and lowering the standard of living in order to compete.

With its economic predominance/monopoly England developed the principle of Free Trade (sacrificing the Irish surplus population to it in the 1840s) and the Liberal economic dogma flourished:

"Under these conditions the doctrine of Free Trade was particularly apt; it seems to have been conceived especially for England by a Providence at once attentive and partial. Liberal doctrines and self-interest coincided so exactly that selfishness and disinterested humanitarianism became indistinguishable" (p.13).

This was English Liberalism, united by the doctrine of Free Trade, from its Nonconformist Conscience to its Liberal Imperialists, the generator of the Great Irish Famine/Holocaust and the Great War

of 1914.

Sir Robert Peel's famous speech justifying the Repeal of the Corn Laws and the removal of Tory opposition to Free Trade in January 1846 explained that the pre-eminence of coal and iron, along with England's maritime supremacy, made it possible to sate the masses with cheap food to prevent instability. Twenty years later Stanley Jevons noted:

"Unfettered commerce, vindicated by our political economists, and founded on the material basis of our coal resources, has made the several quarters of the globe our willing tributaries. The plains of North America and Russia are our corn-fields; Chicago and Odessa our granaries; Canada and the Baltic are our timber-forests; Australasia contains our sheep-farms, and in South America are our herds of oxen; Peru sends her silver, and the gold of California and Australia flows to London; the Chinese grow tea for us, and our coffee, sugar, and spice plantations are in all the Indies. Spain and France are our vineyards, and the Mediterranean our fruit-garden; and our cotton-grounds, which formerly occupied the Southern United States, are now everywhere in the warm regions of the earth" (p.15).

The Free Trade policy with its low-cost imports resulted in a foreseen decline in British agricultural production and a dangerous dependence on imported food. It also meant that industrialism had to be pursued to its utmost limits so that the purchases from the world could be paid for by exports. Britain was proletarianised and could not be economically independent in the division of labour it was creating. It became dependent upon it.

Britain required supplies for her expanding proletarian population and its industry. If these were not forthcoming her population, no longer capable of living in a functional relationship with nature, would starve and her industry would go into paralysis. Providence had not provided the small island that dominated the world with such supplies. Free Trade provided a system by which these supplies could be taken at their cheapest price without the need of any unnecessary expenditure in blood and treasure. But if they were not forthcoming there was always the Royal Navy to encourage supply.

As Siegfried noted, the problem was that this global economic creation of Britain, in which there was a great worldwide specialisation of labour, to facilitate England's prosperity and pre-eminence, depended upon "*hypotheses which are not necessarily permanent. England's*

success was due to the coincidence of a variety of exceptional circumstances" (p.17).

This situation, on which Britain depended for its prosperity, meant that it over-industrialised and over-proletarianised itself, concentrating the world's productive forces on a few square miles of the British island with an accumulating and dense population—

"which in the last resort must depend for its existence less on the products of the soil than on the margin of profit realised by the exporting industries. There was no guarantee that the new countries would not one day wish to manufacture their own raw materials, nor that England's costs of production would always be lower than that of her competitors. This last consideration is really key to the whole problem" (p.18).

This situation was bound to be temporary.

It depended upon the Liberal Free Traders being able to maintain labour as a mere form of merchandise and for the Free Market to be able to lower its value, and its wages, if required by economic conditions, as competition emerged. Siegfried saw that if the Free Market could not accomplish this after other countries began to mine coal and develop industrially: "*This would bring the menace of unemployment to an England over-equipped and over-populated. The only course of action open to her would be mass emigration or a permanent lowering of the standard of living*"(p.20).

Mass emigration was encouraged to the waste-spaces of Greater Britain, areas depopulated by the extirpation of the lesser, useless races. This was a condition of supremacy, either in sending an elite to govern native colonies or by installing entire populations to dominate them. But it was not enough. And "*a permanent lowering of the standard of living*" was inconceivable within the developing popular Imperialism/Democracy.

It had to wait until 1900, when the writing appeared on the wall with regard to Germany, for a simple solution to emerge to an intractable problem. As the Prime Minister who founded the Committee of Imperial Defence suggested to the US Ambassador in 1910 reform was unthinkable but there was another course possible:

"Balfour: That would mean lowering our standard of living. Perhaps it would be simpler for us to have a war."

Pat Walsh

State Funeral for Martin McGuinness?

What the media did NOT report.

The church service on 23rd March 2017 had some of the aura of an Official State Funeral. President Higgins was present with military *aide-de-camp*. Also ex-President McAleese, Taoisigh present and past, ex-President Clinton, Secretary of State Brokenshire, and local political leaders of various stripes, including former First Ministers of the Stormont Executive.

A large part of the Long Tower church event was conducted by senior Protestant religious figures with whom McGuinness had a close personal and working relationship. Unlike some such performances elsewhere, there was nothing smarmy, hypocritical, mawkish, forced or jarring about these contributions. Or so it seemed to me, anyway.

People from around 50 countries came to pay their respects, including Palestinians and American-Indians in full head-dress.

The "state funeral" aspect was less striking than the political aspect. That was because the funeral procession was also a parade in which the coffin was not driven, but carried shoulder-high from the McGuinness home to the Long Tower Church, and afterwards to the graveyard about a mile distant, through the streets where he grew up, and from which he sniped the British Army with deadly effect.

This procession involved a significant feat of crowd and ceremonial management. It was accomplished by an extensive, disciplined and effective Sinn Féin stewarding operation, including unobtrusive security control and checking of cars both parked and moving, up to some distance from the event itself. No police were involved, and the whole thing was strangely reminiscent of pre-1970 Civil Rights days in which whole communities turned out *en masse*, stewarded by Trade Union volunteers like Len Green.

The other aspect was the friends-and-family side of things which went on continuously from death to burial, including a wake of the corpse in the family home. This was open to anyone who wanted to come, and was a traditional, open house, cordial event.

Dignified and purposeful but not solemn, the whole occasion was plebeian-democratic rather than pomp-and-circumstance. In some ways Derry is more village than city. In speech, conduct and deportment, McGuinness was just like everybody else, and no particular deference was expected or granted to him when he was alive. In death his rituals conveyed respect and regard rather than adulation or deference.

The McGuinness household sustained itself economically by running a café in William Street where you were as likely as not to have your burger and chips cooked and served up to you by the wife of an international statesman/peacemaker and world-famous guerilla fighter. Nobody ever thought anything of this.

Funerals like those of Daniel O'Connell and Parnell played a notable part in Irish history. From what one reads about them these were very grand ceremonial affairs, perhaps not unlike Churchill's or Margaret Thatcher's. In contrast the McGuinness funeral came across as momentous but informal. Somehow, the right notes were struck.

Was it a political masterstroke like the O'Donovan Rossa funeral in 1915 when Patrick Pearse gave his famous oration: "*The fools, the fools, the fools ...*"?

Time will tell.

Pat Muldowney

STANDING UP

You said it with munitions
you said it with words
yet
over peace grows the lichens
and the word is no longer second
but third
in the mouth of the dishonest
interloper
as the votes are counted in the
political torpor
it was in that house on the hill
where so much debt was rung up
and paid with bullets
with hard truths pushed down
reluctant gullets
a man of war without delight
his joy at peace gave him height
his success begrudged
though he gives body and soul
his wisdom fudged
and the toll
exhausted martyred through
daily routine
he has been more than most
and when he dies
humanity has been his host
what he will leave grows
on a new horizon
on a new coast
grows
from out of past sighs

8 March 2017

TRUE NORTH

It's the Great British Bake Off
with Red Hugh's land once more
as dough
in the age of the Kalashnikov
pummelled and kneaded
the green land battered
and seeded
the mixing bowl of nationality
shattered

16 March 2017

Wilson John Haire

President Trump's proposed increase in US military budget is more than Russia's entire 2017 military budget

The U.S. government spends around \$600 billion dollars a year on its military—more money than the next seven biggest spenders combined, including China and Russia.

On 27 February 2017, President Trump proposed to increase US military expenditure by \$54 billion. If the US Congress were to endorse this proposal, the US military budget would account for nearly 40 percent of global military spending in 2017.

That increase alone is roughly the size of the entire annual military budget of the United Kingdom, the fifth-largest spending country, and it is more than 80 percent of Russia's entire military budget in 2015.

See *Trump's Proposed Increase in US Defense Spending Would Be 80 Percent of Russia's Entire Military Budget* (The Intercept, 27 February 2017) [1]

On 16 March 2017, Jane's Defence Weekly reported that Russia planned to reduce its military spending in 2017 by 25.5% from \$65.4 billion to \$48.2 billion (see *Russia announces deepest defence budget cuts since 1990s* [2]).

If this comes about, President Trump's proposed increase in US military budget will actually exceed Russia's entire military budget in 2017.

It seems that Russia prepares for the Invasion of Europe with massive cuts in military spending!

(Contributed by David Morrison)

[1] <https://theintercept.com/2017/02/27/trumps-proposed-increase-in-u-s-defense-spending-would-be-80-percent-of-russias-entire-military-budget/>

[2] <http://www.janes.com/article/68766/russia-announces-deepest-defence-budget-cuts-since-1990s>

Why cashless society is a dangerous idea

Report

Conor Pope bemoans how Ireland lags behind Sweden in moving away from cash in favour of electronic payments without considering whether this is truly the path we should be taking ("Money walks: Ireland readies to go cashless,

Mansergh and the Major once again

In an obituary piece on Ronan Fanning, *Phoenix* magazine (10.2.17) described his finding in 2000 of British Ambassador Andrew Gilchrist's famous report on his meeting with Major McDowell, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the *Irish Times*. In this report McDowell described his Editor, Douglas Gageby, as a "*renegade or white nigger*" (2nd October 1969).

It was only after I discovered the letter and published it in the *Irish Political Review* and elsewhere, that Fanning admitted finding and suppressing the letter. His excuse for the delay was that it was only "*historical gossip*".

Phoenix went on to comment that the excuse "*hardly explains his withering putdown of McDowell's behaviour three years later*" when McDowell attempted to deny that he had so described his Editor.

In a letter to *Phoenix* (24.2.17), Martin Mansergh came to McDowell's defence (yet again) by casting doubt on the words attributed to McDowell by Ambassador Gilchrist when reporting to his superiors. Mansergh, without any evidence, questioned whether Major McDowell had ever described his Editor as a "*white nigger*". He suggests that the words are Gilchrist's own.

However, what Mansergh overlooks is McDowell's own background. The 'white nigger' epithet has been described as an example of barrack room banter and surely it is safe to assume that the Major, as with

all military men, was familiar with barrack rooms and their banter.

In fact, it was reportedly noted at the time by a colleague of the Major's that the whole exchange was credible *because* of the colourful language. Apparently the Major spoke in this way when among close friends. It rang true.

Mansergh praises Fanning for withholding his finding of the 2000 report "*attributing offensive and sensational expression to a person still alive*". However, it has been revealed that, during the three years before I made the letter public, the letter featured as a party piece of Mr. Fanning's amongst his coterie. So it was certainly well known amongst an element of the Dublin intelligentsia.

After the letter was made publicly known through the *Irish Political Review* in January 2003, Fanning made it quite clear that he believed the Major said what the Ambassador had reported. He had no doubt been confirmed in his opinion by the response he had got from those he had told about the report confidentially over the years. It had rung true for them as well.

Apparently, if Mr. Mansergh had the power, he would not allow any reporting of State Papers "*attributing offensive and sensational expression to a person still alive*". That would certainly limit the release of official papers and the reporting of them. As if they were not vetted and curtailed enough at present! Mr. Mansergh

PTO

eventually", November 14th).

Cash has a major advantage over debit cards in that it is completely anonymous and untraceable. Any electronic payment leaves a log on the servers belonging to the companies who manage the transaction, which is a major problem for those of us who care about privacy. Furthermore, these same companies have absolute power to decide where we can and cannot spend what is supposedly our own money. Visa and MasterCard have already removed people's choices in how to spend their own money in December 2010, when they blocked all donations to WikiLeaks.

If cash is completely abolished, our spending will be at the mercy of a handful

of financial companies. If they are willing to completely block payments to any one entity, what is to stop them from blocking all payments to companies or individuals who they have not pre-approved, which you just know would require substantial fees that small businesses can barely afford? Major credit card firms could easily decide to partner with major retailers to offer special reduced transaction fees, thus granting those companies a significant pricing advantage and moving ever closer to monopoly.

For the sake of what freedoms we retain under capitalism, I hope that cash never goes away.

Chris McCrohan (Co. Tipperary)
(*Irish Times*, 15.11.16)

would have records and reports so sanitised as to make them completely worthless.

He tries to discredit Ambassador Gilchrist by describing him as having got into a number of "*diplomatic scrapes*" and refers to him as "*jaunty.... provocative and controversial and as a most entertaining controversialist*". That may be so, but it does not make him a liar when reporting to his Government.

Mr. Mansergh never mentions Gilchrist's real claim to fame, his role or "*scrape*", in Indonesia in the 1960s where, as British Ambassador, he helped change the course of history during the Cold War. There was a USUK plot to overthrow President Sukarno with the help of the Army, under the guise of destroying the Communist Party, events in which there was a bloodbath of Sukarno supporters: the '*Father of his country*', was being too independent-minded. Gilchrist reported to London: "*I have never concealed from you my belief that a little shooting in Indonesia would be an essential preliminary to effective change*" (5/10/65). This helped to trigger, literally, a '*change*' during 1965/66—a military *coup* led by Suharto.

On the numbers killed, by April 1966 the US Embassy was able report that "*we frankly do not know whether the real figure is closer to 100,000 or 1,000,000 but believe it wiser to err on the side of the lower estimates, especially when questioned by the press*". The 1,000,000 is now accepted as being the more accurate number.

But Mr Mansergh seems to have missed this in his survey of Gilchrist's career, concentrating instead on his fun and games in Iceland. Finding trivial flaws in Gilchrist is so much more important to him when trying to defend the Major's reputation. It is clutching at straws.

He says "*The substance of McDowell's offer to help the British remains embarrassing and shocking*". Shocking? Mr. Mansergh is not surely so naive, or believes his readers to be so naive, as to be shocked at such a revelation. Shock, horror—the owner of the *Irish Times* requesting "*guidance, in respect of which lines were helpful and which unhelpful*" from the British Government!

The only shock is that it was recorded in this instance. In normal practice such a thing need not even be said or recorded as that attitude is in the very DNA of the paper.

Jack Lane

In Denial About Major McDowell's 'White Nigger' Remark

It is perfectly understandable that Ronan Fanning would give a wide berth to a diplomatic report attributing offensive and sensational expressions to a person then still alive (see *The Phoenix* 10/2/17). I would have some doubt that Major McDowell, then managing director of the *Irish Times*, when criticising his editor Douglas Gageby over his coverage of the outbreak of the Northern Troubles in 1969 to the British ambassador, actually called him "a renegade and white nigger", particularly the latter. Gageby was of northern Protestant extraction, very supportive of the civil rights movement, and made frequent reference in editorials to United Irish ideals.

In evaluating all this, some account needs to be taken of the character and track record of the ambassador, Sir Andrew Gilchrist, a jaunty individual, whose career began in the colonial service, and who got into a number of diplomatic scrapes in various postings. He recorded his time in Reykjavik in a book called, *Cod Wars and How to Lose Them*. An Icelandic commentator, Johannesson, in 2003 describes him as often provocative and controversial, as a most entertaining conversationalist, and as a little too fond of the world-turned phrase. "White nigger" might well have been his, and McDowell's denials of ever using such language, though not believed, may be true. The substance of McDowell's offer to help the British remains embarrassing and shocking. Whether the ambassador's promised to "exploit" it had any sequel or resulted in any change in the paper's tone and coverage would not be obvious. Perhaps the main significance of the report, which did deserve to be highlighted, is that the old order was changing rapidly and losing control, while the paper continued its transition under Gageby from a minority niche to the mainstream."

Martin Mansergh
Phoenix 24.2.17

The following letter was submitted to *Phoenix* on 8th March, but not published

Mr Mansergh is sceptical that the late *Irish Times* Director Major McDowell used the phrase "white nigger" in a conversation with the British Ambassador in 1969 (*The Phoenix*, 24/2/17). But when the controversy erupted in 2003 following publication in the *Irish Political Review*, Professor Fanning asked the then British Ambassador about the chances of his predecessor lying to his superiors (whatever about other people). The diplomat replied "nil" (*Sunday Independent*, 2/2/03).

Mansergh suggests that the old order as represented by McDowell was "losing control" after 1969. But in 1974 McDowell with the aid of the political adviser to Prime Minister Harold Wilson, Lord Arnold Goodman, set up a Trust to control the newspaper. This gave McDowell extraordinary powers.

As *The Phoenix* magazine has frequently pointed out the "newspaper of reference" has never dealt with the evidence that—through McDowell—it came under British State influence. In 2009 the then editor of the newspaper Geraldine Kennedy conducted an interview with him over two days. The interview was never published.

It is very noticeable that the newspaper which requires accountability for other institutions in Irish life does not apply the same standards in matters relating to itself.

John Martin

Irish Times: Past And Present, a record of the journal since 1859, by John Martin. Index. 264 pp. ISBN 978-1-872078-13-7. BHES 2008. €21, £17.50

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

THE MEDIA VERSUS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

"The evil that men do lives
after them,
The good is oft interred with
their bones."

Mark Anthony.

"The notion of race was even
more to the fore in the thought of
the eugenicists, an influential
current of opinion in the birth
control movement of the 1920's,
as also, in child welfare. Under
the optic of 'race hygiene', the
poor were mental and moral
defectives, a hereditary selection
of the unfit—the 'sub-normal
types' who fascinated the imag-
ination of inter-war social
investigators—and whose
compulsory sterilisation a
Parliamentary Commission in
1933 was solemnly pondering."

*'Patriotism: The Making and
Unmaking of British National Identity'.
Vol. 11: Minorities and Outsiders. Ed. by
Raphael Samuel. Routledge. London and
New York. 1989.*

"Man without mercy, of mercy
shall miss;
And he shall have mercy, that
merciful is."

Catholic invocation.

I had the good fortune to be out of
Ireland on holiday on a Spanish island
when the Tuam babies had what must be
regarded as a very well timed re-run. In
fact, the only non-Spanish paper our hotel
provided was the English *Daily Mail*. And
they had over a number of days flagged up
an enormous *contemporaneous* scandal
involving *abortion* with one headline
stating "*Cleared for Abortion—On word
of Call Centre Staff*". This story of 6th
March 2017 was well researched by the
paper's own Investigations Unit, staffed
by reporters Katherine Faulkner and Sara
Smyth. It again featured the Marie Stopes
Clinics, "*the second largest abortion
provider in the country*", which had already
"*featured in a damning report in 2016 by
the health watchdog, the Care Quality
Commission (CPC)*".

The paper also carried a story by Dr.
John Parsons, a retired Consultant Gynaecologist who had worked in a Marie Stopes
Clinic, under the banner headline: "*The
Abortion Conveyor Belt*". He alleged that
"*bullying, cost-cutting and pressure to
rush through up to 35 terminations a day*"
caused a "culture of fear".

There was also an accompanying horror
story by a young woman who at 19 had a
botched abortion which actually led to a
very heart-warming ending, as the baby
stayed in the womb and was born healthy.
There also was another astonishing report
that nowadays "*70% of babies born at
only 23 weeks survive*". Abortion can still
be "*accessed up to 24 weeks, but after that
they can still abort babies in grave
circumstances if there is a threat to life or
of severe foetal abnormality*". Dr. Vimal
Vasu, Consultant in Neonatal medicine at
East Kent Hospitals Trust, told *The Sunday
Times*:

"It is a reflection that views have
changed a little bit, as they did when the
cut-off was 28 weeks. If you look at the
data, they resuscitate down to a lower
limit of viability and they report better
survival rates."

Naively I wondered how this story was
faring in Ireland, given that the so-called
Citizen's Assembly was winding its way to
a conclusion that was already a given—
there would be a recommendation for a
referendum to Repeal the 8th Amendment
to the Constitution which the pro-
abortionists had wanted all along. Well
did I get a land? Once we arrived home—
it was wall to wall wailing and gnashing of
teeth about the Tuam Babies. Now if one
media outlet or even two were carrying a
story that related to a historic era, I would
have wondered what was going on! But
RTE, *The Irish Times*, *The Irish Inde-
pendent*, *The Irish Examiner*, *et al* were
indulging in an orgiastic feast on the bones
of dead babies. It seemed to me to have
been a well planned and executed orches-
tration of feeding/prompting *the emotional
responses of the people* or at the very least
a vocal minority of them to be so enraged,
so targeted at the nuns who ran these
Homes.

To even suggest a cool-down and an
engagement with the facts of the matter,
never mind the historical consequences,
resulted in such a public pummelling that
one got rather frightened for anyone
associated with the Catholic Church. And
that leads me to suppose that something
very ugly is afoot. It is all so well-
orchestrated that I tend to believe that a lot

of money is involved somehow.

As the State itself is implicated and
statements by Taoiseach Enda Kenny
(Fine Gael) himself, along with Children's
Minister Katherine Zappone (Inde-
pendent), Minister for Health Simon
Harris (Fine Gael), etc., indicate that is so.
I do not believe we can get an independent
answer into whose finances are involved.
But sources already revealed that former
outside interference in our society came
from two American billionaires—George
Soros and Chuck Feeney and there is
nothing to say that these two individuals
have stopped in my assumption.

In front of me I have many press
clippings going back to the original Tuam
scandal—one of them is written by
Michael Clifford, *Irish Examiner*, 7th June
2014. Under the heading: "*We've become
indifferent to dead babies*" and highlighted
in the middle of the article is this extract:

"Is it possible that the drip, drip of
these scandals has left the national psyche
jaded, or even exhausted? ... Then, along
come another. It says a lot that it took the
glare of the outside world, and the primal
details of infants discarded in a septic
tank, to awaken national outrage."

The *Sunday World*, 16th June 2014,
published the "*full death list of 796 children
in Tuam*". Of course what is interesting
about this article is the fact that deaths
only began to be recorded in the mid
1920s, apparently **in accordance with a
new law requiring County Registrars
to record all deaths**. A further claim in
this *Sunday World* piece is that this Act
was brought in—in 1935 which doesn't
make sense—it must have been 1925, the
year the Tuam deaths started to be
recorded.

The deaths of course did not start in
1925, and it must be assumed that this
high child mortality was a feature of these
Homes from the start (i.e. in late 19th
century).

Of course one heard again from the
politicians, this time Enda Kenny and
Brendan Howlin. The latter spoke "*of our
dark past—going back to the early years
of the state*". The only one who dared
contradict this was Bishop Diarmuid
Martin who in a radio interview pointed
out that the system pre-dated the state and
was inherited from the British Administra-
tion. Pre-antibiotics and other modern
drugs it must be accepted that the death of
poor people especially was very high and
indeed, in society as a whole, there was a

deadly range of diseases that killed in huge numbers. So a certain degree of caution must surely now be exercised in our debate about "our past". After all, the Workhouse system nearly collapsed in late 19th century Ireland, such was the demand on the institutions. Destitution and its management by the public administration were the working out of the legacy of the Famine/Holocaust.

Of course this frenzy being whipped up nicely buried the story of Garda whistleblower Maurice McCabe and that whole political storm that was just about—perhaps (?) to topple the Government and there was the very neat bonus of vilifying the Catholic Church—thus trying to hobble its justified stance against killing babies by abortion. There is an irony there though when one thinks about it—the very progressive lefties who most want abortion on demand now howl their outrage about babies who died for a variety of reasons in our impoverished past. And why is it only the Catholic Church that keeps getting kicked? The **Swedish Government** published a **Report** in January 2010 which:

"catalogued child abuse in the country's State-run institutions and in foster-care in the past 50 years alone."

And not a Catholic nun/priest in sight!

And here in Cork there is a huge print sign hanging over the Grand Parade boasting about 'Henry Ford in Cork'. Never mind that he got out of Cork when it suited his profit margins and left huge swathes of industrial Cork completely empty. But I do hope that there is at least some information being put out to the people of Cork that Henry Ford was a benefactor to at least one cause. People attribute to Hitler policies that were coming to the fore in the US and in the UK—where the likes of Margaret Sanger were able to persuade the Ford Foundation to give large sums for birth-control in India and other under-developed countries. Marie Stopes in England promoted birth-control as a means to keep down the world population but, as Julian Huxley explained, what they really hoped was to sterilise "*unsuccessful and stupid people of the lower classes and prevent them from breeding*". They looked forward thus to "*the possibility of mankind's genetic improvement*". And look at what Ireland's pro-abortionists want here—is it any different from the Darwinian policies of Sanger, Stopes, Huxley and H.G. Wells? Foetal abnormality anyone?

So to go back to the nuns—exactly

what charge is being made against them? They took in unmarried women and provided a safe place to have their babies and some of those babies and indeed the women unfortunately died. The nuns kept records and when they were requested to hand over their records to the local Council in 1961—they did just that. Departments of State, like Health, Justice and Education, all knew what was going on. After all, many Courts handed children over to these Homes which were inspected by the Health Department's Inspectors.

Finance was the big problem, or rather the lack of it. It is important to know that the Nuns got no wages; they were volunteers doing their best in rather harsh conditions. Ireland was the same as every other country that was trying to do the impossible in an impossible situation. Give me one statistic from other countries that suggest otherwise? So dial down the bile and *faux* outrage!

As regards the paucity of finance, I can give personal evidence of the niggardly and stingy manner in which the public service doles out money for the welfare of unfortunate non-voters. About thirty years ago I acted as negotiator on behalf of a private hospital with the Southern Health Board. My client, the private hospital, had about thirty patients who were mostly non-ambulant (there are these non-emotive descriptions—the patients could not walk unaided) and these patients were paid for by the Southern Health Board (SHB). The wing of the hospital occupied by the SHB patients was losing money and my job was to negotiate a fair rate per bed-night with the SHB. The cost per bed per night is the yardstick by which hospitals are compared. So I obtained from a manager in a SHB hospital a copy of the SHB costings for the SHB's own hospitals.

I was amazed and delighted to find their bed/night costs ranged from six times to thirteen times my client's bed/night costs. No problem here to get an increase I thought. **I was wrong.** At the negotiation meeting I met a stone wall. In vain I argued for money for "*comforts*", such as cushions/curtains etc prescribed for the patients by the SHB's own gerontologists.

When I came to explaining that these elderly patients could not get out of bed to relieve themselves and my client could afford only one night nurse at the present rates and the patients had to lie unchanged all night, the SHB Manager who was, I suppose, a decent man, put one of his fingers in his right ear and the index finger

of his other hand in his left ear and, nearly crying, said "*stop stop, there is nothing I can do about it*".

We told him our bottom line. We could not keep the SHB patients any longer. He said that was not his Department. "*I am finance*", he said, and "*I have no money for you*". We came away defeated and dejected. My client was stunned. She could not put the SHB patients out. She looked after them at a loss for the next ten or so years until she sold the hospital. Her patients were fortunate because she looked after them until they passed away.

People nowadays have short memories about how different society was thirty or forty years ago. As far as I remember the use of corporal punishment—i.e. beating—was only finally abolished around 1995. When I was in Primary School we were taught by lay teachers. I do not remember any punishment in Infants Class but from First Class to Sixth Class we were slapped on the hands with sticks every day and most days we were slapped twice or three times. It was routine physical punishment and we felt at the time that it was torture. In retrospect I know these teachers did it so as to educate us. We needed it and we were well educated. None of the teachers were sadistic. We ended up with a healthy respect for ourselves, for others, and for authority. But there is no doubt we were assaulted on a daily basis. That is the way things were done back there and we were not surprised by it. We accepted it.

"The past is a different country, they do things differently there", as the great writer Leslie Hartley wrote.

And so I think the Law Courts should not entertain claims for damages in respect of any events which occurred more than six years ago and the Statute of Limitations should be restored. Otherwise there will be chaos.

Soros, who hides under his Liberal left credentials like so many others of his kind, really is a staunch anarchist and look at the fruit of modern society with family breakdown, self harm, self mutilation, casual murder (of even a 90 year old poor man in his own derelict home), pornography, sexualisation of the very young and suicide statistics that are ever climbing—this is what should be exercising our political/media elite but where is the raw sewage of emotion in that? Where the click bait? But it seems we cannot stop till society topples over and the way we are going that won't be long in coming. ■

FASCISM continued

generally described as Fascist.

Pilsudski's successor repudiated his Treaty with Germany by making a military alliance against Germany with Britain and France. This led to war between Poland and Germany, in which Britain and France did not honour their commitment to Poland. Realistically considered, the Anglo-French Military Guarantee to Poland was only a device which Britain used to make world war against Germany. The Versailles arrangement of nation-states was swept away.

Germany was defeated by the Soviet Union in the World War. When the War ended, most of the states of the 1919 Versailles system lay within the sphere of the Communist International.

Cold War followed, from 1945 to 1990, between a world Communist system, policed by Russia, and a world Capitalist system policed by the USA (which restored functional Capitalism in Western Europe post-1945 by means of massive financial aid).

The course of development in Europe that was disrupted by British action in 1938-9 did not resume until the 1990s.

When nationalist development resumed in Eastern Europe, apart from Poland, it was everywhere in the Fascist form which it had taken in alliance with Germany and in resistance to the Soviet Union in the early 1940s.

The European Union averted its eyes from these phenomena in Croatia, the Baltic States and elsewhere. And, most recently, in the Ukraine, the EU allied itself with fascist elements to enact an anti-Russian *coup*—even though Communism was no longer an issue, Russia having become capitalist and bourgeois-democratic.

The development leading to the formation of the EU had come about, under American encouragement, in order to find a way of restoring Germany to effective and prosperous statehood, from the ruins to which it had been reduced by mass bombing of the populace by the British and US Air Forces in 1944-45.

It was possible to restore the German state so quickly, and put a good appearance on it, because of the existence of Christian Democracy (a Catholic movement) as a substantial force which had survived through the period of the Nazi regime without becoming part of it.

The Christian Democracy restored a

viable German state by minimising the rupture between the Nazi period and the democracy of the Federal State. Konrad Adenauer, the Christian Democratic leader, could do this with a good conscience, because he had refused collaboration with the Nazis, and, as Mayor of Cologne, had experienced the irresponsible conduct of the triumphalist British in 1919 and the early 1920s, and had observed how in the 1930s they had helped Hitler to break the Versailles conditions and build up Nazi military power—before suddenly deciding to make war on him after giving him the Czech arms industry.

If the project of 'de-Nazification' had been implemented in earnest by Adenauer, Germany would have been disabled socially and politically amidst the physical ruins brought about by Allied bombings. Nazism was an integral development of German society, as Imperialism was of English society.

Adenauer engaged in token de-Nazification while establishing a democratic superstructure on the foundations established by the Nazi reforms.

A similar development took place in Italy under De Gasperi's Christian Democracy. There was a comparable development in Belgium. These elements, along with French Gaullism, which has often been condemned as Fascist, set the EU development in motion.

Britain held aloof from the European Union at first. When it proved to be functional, and the British Empire began to fall apart, it applied for entry but was refused. A later European generation admitted it in 1972. When admitted, it set about diverting it from its original purpose and protectionist philosophy. It is now leaving, having largely succeeded in the operation.

An Editorial in the London *Times* around 1990 said that Britain would be left without a foreign policy if it could not subvert the political development of Europe. The basic British foreign policy was the balance-of-power manipulation of European states.

How the EU would have developed, if it had not admitted Britain to membership, it is impossible to tell. The present position is that Brexit will either encourage nationalist erosion of the EU, or it will be countered by a European political development in defence of the Euro.

It is very rarely that the Irish state has the opportunity for significant foreign policy action. Brexit presents it with the

necessity of foreign policy decision. Will it follow Brexit, or adopt a policy for EU development?

Brexit isolates Ireland physically from Europe. Will it commit itself to Europe by demanding extensive and economic ferry communications with it?

Britain shaped its Six County region into the strange Northern Ireland system, which is an integral part of the British state in many respects, but is entirely cut off from it in its political life. It is an arrangement that makes no sense for the purpose of "good government". What it produced politically was a war. It must therefore have been set up for an entirely different purpose. The purpose for which it has been used is to exert a retarding political influence on developments in the Republic, and to blame it for 'Troubles' in the North.

The obvious thing for Britain to do today is to try to persuade the Republic to follow Brexit, in pursuit of a united Ireland that would in fact be a restoration of the old United Kingdom—the British Isles.

Trump has put it to Europe to show what it is made of.

He is denounced as both a Populist and a Narcissist, as well as a Fascist, by the stratospheric layer of cosmopolitans, because he was not content to see the US working class reduced to misery as a necessity of American Globalism.

That a successful capitalist should be concerned with the condition of the working class is greatly ridiculed. It is historically-ignorant ridicule. The British welfare state was pioneered by a manufacturing capitalist, Joseph Chamberlain, in the 1880s, at a time when Gladstonian Liberalism was committed to *laissez-faire*. Chamberlain, living in the raw economic reality of things, wondered how the working class put up with what was being done to it. He was certain it would not continue putting up with it indefinitely. He split the Liberal Party on the issue of social reform to protect capitalism, and made an alliance with the Tory Party to take the first steps towards the implementation of a welfare state.

The working class has, unfortunately, not been very competent at tending to its own affairs politically.

Look at the Irish and British Labour Parties—both disappeared into the middle class during the past generation.

Arthur Griffiths' Sinn Fein maxim still holds good: "*Between the Individual and Humanity stands, and must continue to stand, a great fact—the Nation*".



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Protectionism And Fascism

Fascism is on the march again! At least that is what our media cosmopolitans tell us. Donald Trump is the second Hitler. How is he to be stopped? It won't be easy if he is in earnest, because at the start of his political career he controls far more power in the world than Hitler ever came close to doing.

The only weapon that has been used against him so far by the terrified world is vulgar abuse. Even mild-mannered Pat Kenny, with the carefully modulated voice, has been doing his bit in that line of resistance. Words have been uttered by him that we thought his lips would have refused to frame.

But there's no doubt about it. Trump is the second Hitler. He vetoed Free Trade at the G20 Conference, and restored Protectionism to respectability.

In March 1945, when Hitler knew that German was beaten again, he dictated his Testament. In it he wondered why England, which had been so helpful to him for so long, and enabled him to build up disarmed Germany to the status of a major European military Power, had suddenly turned against him, and had used its vast Imperial resources to raise up a World War against Germany. He concluded that the reason was that he had reconstructed Germany economically by withdrawing from the World-market.

At first sight that seemed a rather weak explanation. But it is lent credibility by the barrage of cosmopolitan hysteria launched against Trump on the issue of Free Trade.

The cosmopolitan Free-Traders have brought 1930s Germany out of the wonderland of ideological demonisation and restored it to the sphere of intelligible

history, in which it can be thought about in terms of cause and effect, by making an equation between Trump and Hitler.

There was a Fascist Party in Ireland in the 1930s. It was called Fine Gael. But the pioneering revisionist historian, Professor Tom Garvin of University College, Dublin, said that the real Fascist Party in Ireland in the thirties was not Fine Gael but Fianna Fail. Fine Gael said it was Fascist, and it introduced the Leader cult, the Shirt, and the Fascist salute, but it wasn't Fascist at all, not really. And Fianna Fail held out for the preservation of Parliamentary Government by parties, and resisted Fine Gael pressure to recognise General Franco's Fascist rebellion in Spain as the legitimate authority in Spain until it had established itself as a Government in actual control. But Fianna Fail was the actual Fascist Party because it was building up the national economy behind a Protectionist shield.

Fine Gael, the British Empire party, was only imitating the externals of Fascism. Fianna Fail, by asserting its nationalist power to preserve party-

democracy, was the effective Fascist party.

It gets very confusing. How else could it be when a major political development in Europe is placed outside the bounds of rational thought and is addressed only by meaningless vulgar abuse.

Was James Connolly a Fascist? Incipient cosmopolitans from the Left have in recent times been steeling themselves to denounce him as such because he did not base his socialist movement on Imperialism. He associated Socialism in Ireland with Nationalist development. And the only European Socialist Party that he consistently expressed agreement with from the 1890s until he was killed by the Empire was the Polish Socialist Party, led by Joseph Pilsudski, who sought Polish independence through military alliance with Germany in 1914, as Connolly did likewise in Ireland.

Pilsudski's national Socialism was condemned by Lenin. In 1920 Pilsudski, as a military leader, defeated Lenin's attempt to extend Bolshevism into central Europe by means of an invasion of Poland. And in 1934 Pilsudski made a Treaty with Hitler, stabilising German-Polish relations. This lasted until, after his death, his successors accepted a British offer of a military alliance against Germany, enabling Britain to begin another World War on the trivial issue of Danzig.

National socialism was the normal form of Socialism in the new nation-states formed in Eastern Europe after Britain and France destroyed the multi-national Hapsburg state in 1918. And it was there that the Communist International was the serious opposing force.

The conflict between national and international Socialism came to the point of war in Poland in 1920, and the Polish regime of Pilsudski in the 1930s was

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