

IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

February 2017

Vol.32, No.2 ISSN 0790-7672

and **Northern Star** incorporating **Workers' Weekly** Vol.31 No.2 ISSN 954-5891

Shadow Of A Gunman

Martin McGuinness is the IRA man that it is difficult for even the most blinkered Constitutionalist to hate.

They all hate Gerry Adams, who denies having been a member of the Army. They hate him because they cannot pin Army membership on him, and because he has not confined himself to Northern politics but has built Sinn Fein into a substantial political force in the Republic.

If Adams retired, there would be rejoicing in Leinster House, but there is almost sadness that McGuinness is retiring.

A very effective division of political labour has been operated between the two of them. It is extraordinarily difficult for a political party to operate effectively in two states. Sinn Fein has managed it under their leadership.

Insofar as a dimension of Irish unity has actual existence, it is in the existence of the Sinn Fein Party as an all-Ireland party.

The 1998 Agreement might be called the Hume/Adams/Haughey Agreement. The 'Constitutional' hope at the time was that Republicanism would fade away as the SDLP operated the Agreement along with David Trimble's Unionist Party. But Hume, who had been under siege within his party because of his collaboration with Sinn Fein, retired. And Trimble, who had been coerced by Whitehall into going along with the Agreement, wouldn't play. Seamus Mallon, who seemed to live in a doctrinaire dictionary-Republicanism of his own imagining, floundered. (He probably hated sharing power with Sinn Fein as much as the Unionists did.) And the actual Republicanism that had fought the War that brought about the Agreement flourished instead of withering—and became an all-Ireland party in earnest.

The SDLP failed to make a working arrangement with Trimble under the Agreement. McGuinness made a working arrangement with Ian Paisley. This was disconcerting to the Unionist community which eighty years of political isolation from its beloved Britain had

continued on page 2

T. K. Whitaker

On January 11th the *Irish Times* editorialised on the death on T.K. Whitaker:

"There are perhaps only two figures that can be said to have defined an era in the life of the State. One was Éamon de Valera, a revolutionary hero and formidable politician who stirred visceral emotions of loyalty and disdain. The other was a cerebral civil servant, quietly charming but with a carefully restrained public persona. In some respects, Thomas Kenneth Whitaker's achievement is even more remarkable than de Valera's. He created the paradigm for the Ireland we now inhabit without a political machine, without ever standing for election and without polemics, rancour or divisiveness. And if the age of de Valera came to an end, thanks in no small measure to Whitaker, the age of Whitaker is still with us. The basic ideas that shape the State in the 21st century are his."

These words are reminiscent of the days when the *Irish Times* pined for 'government by experts', rather than the messy democracy!

There could not be a more ridiculous claim than to suggest that Whitaker did more for this country than De Valera—

continued on page 2

Trump, Trump, Trump

The change of American world policy formally signified by the defeat of Obama—because what was Clinton but the ventriloquist's dummy?—will have far-reaching consequences for the world if carried through—which it probably won't be.

Trump's election policy was revolutionary. It recognised the existence of a world that was not just the United States, and that had interests that were different from the interests of the United States, and that was entitled to pursue those interests.

Obama had said, in effect, that the world consisted of the United States and its interests.

Obama's outstanding achievement was the abolition of FIFA, which had made soccer into an autonomous global culture—a form of global activity over which US influence was negligible. The authority which he asserted for interference with FIFA was the use by FIFA of dollar-based money.

If the use of dollar-based currency carries with it an implied submission to

USA sovereignty, then the undoubted policy of making all currencies depend ultimately on the dollar must be understood as a US drive for mastery of the world. And the right of the US to mastery has long been accepted by much of the world. And it has often been said, with reason, that the US destruction of the Libyan State, for example, had its source in a Libyan aspiration to carry on its dealings in a gold-based currency.

Mastery exercised by means of a money system whose source is the United States

continued on page 3

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Shadow Of A Gunman. Editorial	1
T. K. Whitaker. Jack Lane	1
Trump, Trump, Trump. Editorial	1
Readers' Letters: Casement: Missing The Point. Paul Hyde	
United Kingdom—Constitutional Change. Ivor Kenna	3,5
Len Green. Pat Muldowney (Obituary)	5
History Not Politics! Dave Alvey on Maurice Manning	7
The February/March Revolution. Editorial	8
Sinn Fein's London Meeting. Wilson John Haire	8
Sinn Fein Irish Unity Conference. Dave Alvey	9
The Limits of History . Barry Keane (Tribunal Hearing Report)	10
Casement not a homosexual!. Jack Lane	11
Transcendental Politics?. Brendan Clifford (Part One)	12
Centenary Of The February 1917 National Democratic Revolution. Manus O'Riordan	14
Winding Up The Clock. John Morgan (Lt. Col., retd.)	19
Hubert Butler: The DVD. Julianne Herlihy (Part 5)	21
That 1841 Census Again. Jack Lane	23
Apprenticeship Reform in Northern Ireland. Dave Alvey	24
L'Angleterre d'Aujourd'hui. Pat Walsh	25
Getting Casement backwards. Tim O'Sullivan (Part One)	27
Biteback: Irish Times Reporting Of Sex Abuse in Church Of Ireland Dr. Niall Meehan (Unpublished <i>Irish Times</i> Letter)	29
Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Commemoration of the Battle of Kilmichael)	30

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

Eugene V. Debs On 1916

(back page)

CETA vote in European Parliament ENVI Committee

Ming Campbell

(page 31)

made unused to practical politics. When Paisley was pushed aside by fundamentalist Unionist resentment, McGuinness managed to preserve the working arrangement with his successors. He made many *de facto* concessions to Unionist sentiment along the way—so much so that Arlene Foster thought she had him in the bag and overreached herself.

Many years ago Fr. Faul, who had the reputation of being a Republican priest, told us that the Provos bewildered him. He had taken the game of hurling to express the Irish spirit. It was fast and furious and quickly ended, but the Provos seemed to have the mentality of cricketers.

Another way of putting it would be that they showed the spirit of De Valera rather than Collins. They could apply themselves purposefully in war over a long period, with tactical flexibility, without losing sight of the purpose of it all. And then they could apply themselves in the same manner in the peace that was brought about by war.

And they ensured that, in the transition from war to peace, the Collins episode that many hoped for did not happen. There was no civil war this time around. ■

T.K. Whitaker

continued

whose true worth remains unacknowledged. There is still no substantial memorial to him in the Irish capital. The editorial was the culmination of the praise heaped on Whitaker on his death and for a long time previously. It could only come from a source that tries, and always has tried, to belittle de Valera and everything he stood for—for the simple reason that he personified Irish independence. No other politician has been able to stand on his own ground deal with the British ruling class from a position of equality, with the possible exception of Charles Haughey.

One aspect of that independence was the Protectionist policy of the 30s and 40s, which was essential to create an industrial base. Those economic policies enabled Ireland to survive during WWII, when Britain limited its exports. They also laid the basis for subsequent economic development. *The Irish Times* saw the whole thing with horror—though plenty of its

social base was more than happy with Protectionism and were past masters at building their *niche* roles within it.

A different policy was considered necessary from the early 50s onwards but it entailed as much political determination and ability as the implementation of the protectionist policy. That policy had been so successful that naturally enough it created a myriad vested interests and the real problem was the political adjustments needed. And naturally enough the person who implemented Protectionism, Lemass, was the most effective at implementing the new policy.

Elements in all parties saw the need to develop away from reliance on Protectionism alone but only one party had the political will and power to do so, Fianna Fail. The political difficulties were made that much more difficult because of Proportional Representation, where every and any well-organised group could determine the outcome of an election in some locations. Fianna Fail's democratic '*steam roller*' was essential to deal with this problem and only they could have done it. They were also the unashamed industrial development party.

As early as September 1949, de Valera's spokesman, Frank Aiken proposed at the Economic Committee of the Council of Europe an:

"Agreement on the most practical means of putting an end to the compulsion exerted on nations which are anxious to export as much they import, to protect their monetary reserves by high tariffs, low quotas, oppressive restrictions, competitive current depreciations, or any of the modern trade and other devices for price-cutting and subsidisation."

He went on the propose an amendment to the IMF rules

"which shall provide that nations with annual credit balances shall spend, lend, or invest, up to the amount of the balances anticipated, thus maintaining international circulation of money at a level adequate for the full and fair exchange of goods and services" (2.9.1949)

It is easy to forget that the post-Bretton Woods's world was very protectionist as it was designed to protect the Western economic system from the ongoing crisis of Capitalism and prevent it from falling victim to the Soviet model. It was based on tariffs, fixed exchange rates, rules, regulations and financial restrictions. It was 'free trade'. highly and strictly organised, as all free trade systems always are. The controls on the export of capital were ferocious in Britain, as they were all round the world. It was a protectionist policy to

preserve the Western world against the threat of the Soviet alternative.

De Valera's attitude was hardly the attitude of some person hidebound by protectionism, a leader that needed some civil servant to tell him what to do—ten years after the event! He was supporting the lowering of tariffs and the creation of a European trading area. Britain opposed it vigorously at the same meeting. De Valera saw the need for exporting as a basis for economic progress. This was revolutionary in the context of the time. At the time both *Fine Gael* and *The Irish Times* saw agriculture as the basis for economic development and, in exporting terms, that meant only the exporting of live cattle to the UK—a practice which, to de Valera, was a curse on the Irish economy.

It was another decade before *Fine Gael* and the *Irish Times* saw the light:

"The Irish Times finally changed sides in 1959, specifically rejecting the view that agriculture was the necessary basis for economic progress. On 9 May 1960 The Independent finally went to Canossa and accepted openly for the first time that Ireland's industrial development would have to be given priority over agriculture in Government policy and economic leadership" ("*News from a New Republic*" by Tom Garvin, p. 68).

To put the situation in context. *Fine Gael's* attitude to industry might be gauged from the fact that the party shelved a transatlantic air service as a waste of money. In 1948 the *Fine Gael* Minister for Finance cancelled a transatlantic air service as planned by Fianna Fail. Five Lockheed state of the art planes that had been bought with hard-earned dollars were sold for a song to the British Overseas Airways Corporation which used them to revive its transatlantic service. That company thought all its Christmases had come at once. Lockheed pulled out of its servicing station at Shannon as a result and ruined the prospect of a whole new international service industry.

In 1950 *Fine Gael* closed down the CIE heavy engineering project at Inchicore that Fianna Fail had instigated with work for 500 people and as a base for heavy engineering nationally. Machinery was returned to Britain in unopened boxes.

This was the economic lunacy and backwardness that de Valera and Fianna Fail had to deal with. They did not have to wait for a civil servant to advise them about an alternative to this. They did the necessary work—he wrote the tune.

This was a civil servant who was quite reactionary on social policy: Whitaker deploring free secondary education and free travel for senior citizens. As to be expected, both were implemented by Fianna Fail.

Jack Lane

Casement: *Missing The Point*

To the several thousand pages written by Casement's biographers which lack any instance of the bound volumes being shown, Mr. O' Sullivan has now added about 2,400 words which also fail to cite a single instance of such a showing (*Irish Political Review*, January 2017). He therefore endorses the principal thesis of *Précis of a Proof* but also claims the thesis is "untenable" as per his title.

The thesis of *Précis of a Proof* is that "an impartial person" would conclude that there were no bound volumes to show at that time since none were shown. That impartial person might, of course, be wrong but his/her conclusion is nonetheless rational. The conclusion becomes irrational only when he/she refuses to accept irrefutable independent evidence that the bound volumes were indeed shown. HM Government conceded in 1959 that they held no such evidence and the various authors have found none either. Mr. O' Sullivan appears to believe that a photograph referred to in a secret telegram of 1916 will serve as indirect evidence of the showing of the bound volumes. This is difficult to ~~Review~~ and but he is welcome to send a scanned copy of this photograph to the decoding-casement website (or to *Irish Political Review*) so that this perplexity can be cleared up.

Paul Hyde

In *Irish Political Review* next month:

Anatomy of a Lie by Paul Hyde

Abstract: this essay analyses the origins of the homosexual allegation in the Casement controversy. This aspect appeared suddenly when Casement arrived in Christiana on 29th October 1914 and it appeared in a document prepared in the British Legation and sent to the Foreign Office that same evening. In the last 102 years no Casement author has analysed this document.

The document, a purported memorandum, is demonstrated as the invention of two Legation officials, Lindley and Findlay; its factual content amounts a mere 7%. To support the allegation in the 'memo' Findlay later invented the Olsen story which came in two contradictory versions.

Both the 'memo' and the Olsen story alleged that Casement was homosexual. A year later when Casement was in prison, the British authorities circulated typescript pages which they said were copies of diaries written by Casement; the content recorded homosexual activity over several years.

The 'memo' and the Olsen story are phase 1 and the typescripts are phase 2; they are related by a common allegation which was intended to destroy Casement's reputation. The relationship is demonstrated to be one of sufficient causation; the allegation in phase 1 is the same allegation in phase 2 and this is not a coincidence but is the result of a shared strategy. The document in phase 1 is demonstrably false and cannot produce truth in the phase 2 document. The harmful outcome derived directly from the phase 2 typescripts and indirectly from the phase 1 'memo' and that outcome was both intended and reasonably foreseeable from the start. The phase 2 typescripts are as false as the phase 1 'memo'.

Trump

continued

carries with it an immense power of destruction. The first well-known demonstration of it was the compulsion applied to Britain in 1956 to withdraw from its Egyptian adventure so that Egypt should enter the US market system. Washington threatened to destroy Britain without firing a shot, by financial means, if it did not withdraw. The US anti-imperialist policy of destroying the Empires so that the world should become its market began to be implemented within the Roosevelt/Churchill alliance during Britain's 2nd

World War. Churchill, the romantic Imperialist, greatly admired by Garret FitzGerald, was much disillusioned, but there was nothing he could do about it. He had insisted on continuing the War after Britain had lost it, nine months after declaring it, so that others could be got to destroy Germany for it. But the others destroyed Germany for themselves.

It was in the shambles to which Europe was reduced by Churchill's war that the foundations of US mastery were laid.

Within only a few years of 1945 capitalism was booming in the Western Occupation Zones. But it was American Capitalism.

Left to itself, or to Britain, Western Europe would probably have gone Communist. America, with the immense wealth and production capacity built up during the War, restored functional capitalism in Europe, and even financed socialism in Britain, providing itself with markets and debtors. The capitalist half of the world was American.

Britain's irresponsible and bungled war accelerated the process of world unification that the British Empire had begun. After 1945 the world consisted of only two parts: the capitalist/American part and the communist/Russian part. Each maintained order in its own half by active interventions and re-making of Governments, the Americans much more than the Russians.

The post-1945 capitalist world was an American creation. It was therefore not unreasonable for Obama to declare that the US held an exceptional position within it, and was the only indispensable nation within it. All US Presidents since 1945 had acted on that assumption, but preferred not to rub it in.

The only great change in the structure of the world that happened between 1945 and 1990 was that China, an American client state in 1945, shrugged off the American client regime of Chiang Kai Chek's Kuomintang and became Communist.

The defeated Kuomintang Army retreated from the mainland and conquered the (Chinese) island of Formosa/Taiwan, and with US support it declared the Government in Taiwan to be the legitimate Government of China too. China and Taiwan were claimed to be one nation. The actual Government in Peking was prevented by the US Veto from taking the Chinese seat on the Security Council all through the 1950s and 1960s.

Peking agreed with the US position that Taiwan was part of China and asserts sovereignty over it. After Washington's Veto on Peking reduced the United Nations to an absurdity for a couple of decades, the White House, in the form of Trump's great reactionary precursor, Richard Nixon, recognised the Peking Government as the Government of China. But Taiwan, by American insistence, was part of China! Not any longer, Washington said. Taiwan was now a separate nation. There was a stand-off, which continues.

The orderly world of the post-War era was thrown into disorder by the break-up of the Communist system in Russia and the establishment of Western-oriented and capitalist-oriented regimes in the countries

that had been freed from Fascism—or is it conquered from Fascism?—in 1944-5.

An eminent German politician of the War generation suggested at the time of the break-up of the Soviet Union that East European states should be treated as a distinct economic block, retaining a modified form of the Comecon system. But Washington insisted that they should be incorporated immediately into its world economic system and its world military system, NATO. The EU quickly fell into line with US policy.

Europe until 1990 was two armed camps. NATO was one of them. In 1990 the other camp dissolved. The enemy against which NATO was organised ceased to exist. NATO was then changed into a military alliance for use anywhere in the world.

In the 1990s Russia was all that remained of the Soviet system of state, and it was no longer Soviet. It became a capitalist democracy. It was assumed by US ideology that Capitalism springs into being out of human nature, if a socialist State is not actively preventing it, and likewise with bourgeois democracy—but that is not what happened in Russia. Its capitalists were a small number of billionaires who took possession of State assets with the complicity of a corrupt President. They had nothing in common with the likes of Donald Trump who clawed their way to the top in the jungle warfare of the free market. And the bourgeois democracy consisted of a flux of ephemeral political parties which could hardly even limped along from one election to the next. And, when a political grouping in Parliament did try to assert a role for Parliament in government, President Yeltsin sent the Army to fire on the Parliament building.

Those were the golden days of Russian Democracy, which were ended by Putin. During the decade of Yeltsin anarchy, Putin tended to the military basis of the State and then developed a political movement capable of long-term existence, and therefore of contesting a series of elections with a coherent policy and of implementing its election policies as a government, making Russia a functional State again.

Obama's crazed ideologist, Cork-woman Samantha Power, described Putin's Russia as Authoritarian and Nihilist. She said: *"Having defeated the forces of Nazism and Communism, we now face the forces of Authoritarianism and Nihilism.*

Russia was apparently willing to be absorbed into the Western system in the 1990s but it was rejected. Was it that the loss of the enemy would have been too disorientating? Anyway, Washington preferred to maintain Russia as a place apart, but a place, a very large place, where American capital could be invested freely, a franchise target, and an outlet for American goods. And the Russian capitalist oligarchs who acted with the American multi-nationals were contemptuous of Putin at the start. They had all been members of the Communist elite—that is how they got possession of State assets as private property—and therefore they knew that the Economy determined Politics: and they were the Economy.

But they were not capitalists at all. They were only the corrupt possessors of stolen goods. And doing deals with US multi-nationals was all they knew how to do with their stolen goods.

They could not be capitalists because capitalists can only exist in a medium of capitalism, and capitalism did not spring into being just because the Communist State collapsed. Capitalism is something that needs to be constructed, and a political framework is necessary for its construction. (And durable Socialism, in Marx's conception, can only be constructed on the basis of developed Capitalism.)

We assume that Samantha Power only repeats what she heard said in Obama/Clinton circles—though she expresses it crazily. And Obama has only continued the line of American policy towards Russia that was in place when he came to Office. He is, after all, only a hot-house growth.

Trump, who has had extensive experience of the world, recognised the insanity of the priority given to anti-Russianism in American world policy. He treats as an accomplished fact the restoration of Russia as a functional State by Putin and is willing to live with it. He also apparently sees that, by invading the disabled and harmless state of Iraq, the US brought about a considerable increase in the power of the declared enemy of the USA, Iran. And he came to Office by undertaking to deal with the destructive consequences that American Globalism has been exerting on the American working class.

Trump has noticed that, since the US won the Cold War with Russia in 1990 but could not let go of it, China has slipped into place as the global rival of the USA, and a stronger rival than Russia ever was.

*

Obama leaves Office as an entertaining fantasist who made great speeches. Commentators on *Newstalk* radio have repeatedly remarked on how Trump speaks in simple sentences which could never amount to an oration. *Newstalk* remains firmly in the Clinton camp. It is part-owned by hated Irish billionaire Denis O'Brien. But the leaks about Clinton revealed that O'Brien was a large contributor to the Clinton Foundation and to her Election Fund. That was disconcerting. There has been no formal rehabilitation of O'Brien amongst the Irish *bien pensant* classes, but certain changes of behaviour are noticeable.

*

Obama, in a final futile gesture, did not Veto a Security Council resolution critical of Israeli settlement activity in its conquered Palestinian territories. In Office he might have done something to curb these Israeli colonising activities but chose not to. In leaving he allows a resolution to be passed—not a Chapter 7 resolution requiring action but a resolution that is merely an observation: a gesture. That about sums up his two terms as President. Can Trump do worse?

United Kingdom—*Constitutional Change*

Dave Alvey's article in January 2017 *Irish Political Review* was most impressive.

However, it is as well to have a closer look at how the present situation has come about.

The United Kingdom has four constituent parts, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Scotland is being forced to sacrifice an advantageous membership of the European Union simply because there are far more voters in England than in Scotland.

Northern Ireland is being forced to sacrifice an advantageous membership of the European Union because there are far more voters in England than there are in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland is not part of Britain.

The Isle of Man and the Channel Islands are being forced by a vote in the United Kingdom to give up advantageous relationships with the European Union although they are not part of the United Kingdom and have been given no opportunity to vote on the matter.

The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom has stated her intention of triggering the irreversible process which will lead to the above before 31st March, 2017.

The Prime Minister's negotiating position is not at all clear. Continued access to the EU Single Market appears to have priority followed closely by migration. Business and the trade unions want some input.

At present the Prime Minister is unable even to say anything about future farming subsidies.

Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands will not be high on her list of priorities.

Then there remains the problem of convincing all the 27 remaining members of the European Union.

It would be nice to believe that the 27 will all bend over backwards to accommodate Ireland's border problem.

Ivor Kenna

Chairman, England Branch, Celtic League

Obituary

Len Green

Leonard James Green (born 1930, died 15 January 2017 aged 86) came from Salford near Manchester, served as submariner in the Royal Navy, and married in Derry where he spent the rest of his life.

Traces of a "Red Army"-type sentiment were not uncommon among the post-War British forces. Not that Len's calmly practical, rational and independent social outlook was particularly influenced by romantic revolutionary posturing. Having grown up in Salford in the Hungry Thirties before the social welfare reform, he was much more serious than that. His father died before he was born. He retained an interest in military matters, but it was his experience of the everyday life of his own people which made Len a life-long Socialist of the practical kind.

As an ex-serviceman he was able to get employment in the telephone service, then part of the Post Office. He continued to work for British Telecom until retirement. Paul Grace from Tipperary, also ex-British Forces, worked for the Post Office. Len and Paul met two sisters in Derry, whom they married.

Len and Paul took an active role in the Civil Rights campaign of the late 1960s. As Trade Union activists they were accustomed to democracy, due process, rules, and organisation. And as former British military they were accustomed to rank, order and discipline. Both of them played leading roles in the vital stewarding and coordination of Civil Rights marches and demonstrations which showed the world that the Catholics were not a destructive, disorderly rabble; that they had something to say, and that they intended to be heard.

In the 1969 Stormont elections, John Hume, standing as Independent Nationalist, slew the giant, Eddie McAteer who was leader of the old Nationalist Party. Eamonn McCann of the Derry Labour Party made a reasonably good showing. Defeat of the Nationalist Party cleared the way for the formation of the Social Democratic and Labour Party.

At the time of that election Len Green was a member of the Derry/Northern Ireland Labour Party. Some of the

membership supported John Hume's campaign. When the dust of the election settled, the Labour Party tried unsuccessfully to recover. Members who had backed Hume in the decisive struggle to overthrow McAteer had to stand up and confess their delinquency.

In Derry the SDLP was formed out of the social ferment of the 1960s, recruiting from Tenants' Associations, housing and unemployed campaigns, and the "*university for Derry*" agitation. It also inherited some of the personnel and outlook of the old Nationalist Party which it displaced in the midst of the chaos and fury of 1969.

Len was active in the SDLP until the 1990s. Subsequently he supported the election efforts of the Foyle Labour Group, and later the Irish Labour Party.

The FLG was allied to the Campaign for Labour Representation which held the British sovereign power responsible for the conflict in the Six Counties, and which sought a remedy by making this arbitrary and untrammelled British power subject to democratic accountability; by making the governing parties of the sovereign British state stand for election in the Six Counties and seek a mandate to govern from the

voters there—something they had hitherto spurned.

Though the campaign brought this fundamental reality into the public spotlight, it failed in its primary objective and the underlying political reality of the Six Counties remains now as it has been since 1921. While nobody in their right mind would want the current political arrangements in Northern Ireland to revert to another 1969-type crisis, it should never be forgotten that managed instability, permanently teetering on collapse, was and is the sovereign power's deliberate choice for this area.

While maintaining his home in Derry, Len Green's wife's brother-in-law Paul Grace became a full-time national official of the Post Office Trade Union in England. Though not personally connected to the Northern Ireland-based Campaign for Labour Representation, Paul independently pursued this cause up and down the highways and byways of the Trade Union movement in England where it was vehemently opposed by strongly entrenched, ideology-bound political factions which were quite influential behind the scenes in those days.

With his broad Tipperary accent and formidable personal presence, seasoned Civil Rights veteran Paul Grace single-handedly ground down the opposition by relentlessly asserting the obvious brute fact of British Government power and agency in the Six Counties, and the need to bring it under democratic control, and by resolutely refusing to be lured into ephemeral ideological doctrinal disputes which led nowhere.

Unlike Paul Grace, Len Green was not born Catholic and he had no Irish national heritage in his Salford background. When I first met him he had completed a political career in the SDLP. Being well accustomed to the outlook of the SDLP, I was surprised when Len responded favourably to the Labour Representation message about the cleverly camouflaged role of the British State at the very heart of the structured conflict in Northern Ireland, and how this could be stopped by democratising the British State in the Six Counties.

In 1921 the British State, which had governed the place for centuries, delegated powers in the Six Counties—including the power of policing a defenceless, unarmed Catholic minority—to what resembled an irate, excitable crowd of Rangers supporters, after first arming them to the teeth.

When you reflect on it, this seems crazy. There were numerous ways of organising government and policing in the Six Counties, most of which could have produced a semi-civilised outcome. So why did Britain, in 1921, freely and for no good reason change the system which had been in operation there for decades previously? Why did it freely and for no good reason impose the worst possible system that anyone could possibly devise for the Six Counties?

Of course it was not crazy at all. Britain retained, and still retains, complete freedom of action in the Six Counties. When it suited it, it shut down its stooge parliament in Stormont overnight. Likewise its B-Specials and any other local band of goons which had served their purpose. What constantly and permanently serves Britain's purpose is to pose as the sane, rational, well-intentioned mediator between violent, malicious local factions who, if only they could get at each other, would destroy each other Balkans-style if Britain was not around to prevent it.

So—crazy like a fox. Why does Britain go to such lengths?

Measured instability and tension are Britain's lever of control and management of its historic Irish backyard. When it separated from Britain the southern Irish state proved to be unexpectedly stable and successful, ever more so as separation increased in scope and depth, from 1922 through to the present. The Irish Government laid claim to a form of authority in the Six Counties. With the prize of peace and stability in Northern Ireland at stake, the Irish could be lured into closer alignment whenever Britain could present itself as a benevolent actor in the Northern situation, while disguising its own fundamental role in aggravating community relations there. Not to mention the worldwide international need to prettify the unpleasant actuality of British power in Northern Ireland.

Len Green had a strong practical sense of the meaning and power of the State. He had been a member of the Citizens' Defence Committee which sought to protect unarmed Catholic Derry from aggressive incursions by armed loyalists. The threat increased massively on the occasion of the loyalist Apprentice Boys activities in August 1969.

There was great public apprehension but little in the way of practical defence. A construction project was under way in the Bogside at that time, and there was a

supply of scaffolding, building material and rubble available. With a military eye to the practicalities, Len undertook a personal survey of the area and its various entry points and weaknesses, and he organised a squad of volunteers to blockade the whole area by constructing barricades from the available materials.

The expected onslaught came right on cue, backed by the police. Len's improvised barricades enabled the effective resistance known as the Battle of the Bogside. This was ended by an agreement with the British Army's Colonel Todd, that no State forces would be allowed to enter the barricaded area. There was palpable shock in Parliament that the Queen's authority had ceased to operate in a part of the Queen's domain.

While Paddy "Bogside" Doherty was the public face of the Citizens' Defence Committee in Derry, its effective leader was veteran Republican Seán Keenan who worked closely with Len Green and others. Len did not subscribe to Irish Republicanism which anyway was marginal at the time. Keenan had the confidence of the public on personal grounds, and did not seek advantage in the situation for his own political cause. His immediate aim was to damp down the trouble, not inflame it.

Despite his best efforts, the situation deteriorated over the next couple of years. Keenan then oversaw the development of the Provisional movement in Derry, though he rejected the 1986 Provisional departure from traditional Republican orthodoxy.

It is almost beyond belief that the Catholics remained passive for several generations after 1921. Being unarmed and defenceless probably had something to do with it. Also, the Irish Government claimed authority in the Six Counties and posed as *champion of "the minority"*, an ultimately empty and bogus posture which proved illusory at the critical moment, causing an immeasurable amount of harm.

The latest Balkans catastrophe had not yet happened at that time. But a Balkans loomed, and anybody who cared to know about it could see it coming. Britain had sown dragons' teeth in 1921. When would the armed men spring up out of this seed, and how far would the horror go?

Could this looming catastrophe be stopped in its tracks and reversed? Delegations of responsible individuals such as Paddy "Bogside" Doherty of the Citizens' Defence Committee ran in desperation to

their defence of last resort, the Irish Government which had postured as the champion of the unarmed, defenceless minority.

But when the Irish Government was challenged by Britain, it promptly turned tail, and instead of mustering its considerable legal and diplomatic resources to stabilise the situation into high-level prevarication, parleys, talks, mediation, negotiations—any one of a myriad ploys that a Government can use to cool things down—it panicked and made things immeasurably worse by effectively closing off all such peaceful avenues.

The CDC even went to the bat-shit crazy Dublin IRA, only to be regaled with juvenile fantasy. At best they were merely useless. At worst they threatened to add a Red Terror to the already toxic Balkans mix.

So by default, the Catholics were forced back on their own meagre resources including Len Green's piles of rubble, and such negligible armaments as could be improvised on the ground.

The primary cause of the catastrophe was the criminal machinations of the sovereign British power. But looking beyond the primary cause, the irresponsible conduct of the Irish Government makes it the most reprehensible of the secondary parties. We are talking about grown-ups here, so there is no need to weigh up the Stormont stooges, the useful idiots, the fall guys who mindlessly accepted the poisoned cup handed to them by the sovereign power in 1921.

In the aftermath of the Battle of the Bogside and the negotiations with the British Army, the Citizens' Defence Committee took its responsibilities seriously. Len Green's Civil Rights stewarding operation became a police force for Free Derry, with its own due process and system of detention for offenders. Improvised local policing continued for several decades.

The CDC held regular meetings with the British Army to ensure that the terms of the agreement were adhered to. One issue was whether Army helicopters could enter the air space over Free Derry.

But there is more to a State than defence and policing. The law of the land extends into every area of everyday life. The CDC could not build a school or open a hospital. If you wanted to make a claim on your car insurance, the insurance company would not pay out without an official police

report. A statement stamped by the Citizens' Defence Committee got you nowhere.

After six weeks or so the Queen's authority began to take effect again, although "*Free Derry*" was never fully re-absorbed. Everything had changed, and the first major battle of a long war had been strategically masterminded, in part, by a somewhat staid and proper and non-Republican British ex-serviceman.

The 1969-94 war was primarily the fault of the sovereign British State, with a case also to be made against the Irish Government of the period. But, without minimising the real and terrible tragedies of that war, why did the Balkans catastrophe which loomed in 1969 never actually happen? Why was 1969-94 not infinitely worse?

It is now quite a long time ago, but in hindsight all the Balkans ingredients were present. Anybody who was around at the time knows of neighbours, relatives, friends, acquaintances who were ready to kill and be killed in an uncontrolled war of all against all. Microgroups and individuals took up arms wherever they could get them. Young men who had previously knocked about together now set out to kill each other. This was the Balkans scenario.

The key is the Provisional movement which, out of sheer necessity, was extemporised by Seán Keenan and his contemporaries. The Provisionals exerted control over the very dangerous mavericks who emerged out of the 1969 crisis, such as the Official IRA and others, by marginalising them, by eliminating them, or by absorbing them under its own discipline.

But, most of all, the Provisionals kept their focus on the sovereign British organ-grinder which bore responsibility for the situation.

True to organ-grinder form, Britain pursued a policy of "*Ulsterisation*" throughout, pitting the locals against each other while seeking always to remove itself from the spotlight of responsibility. It presented itself, not as the sovereign power which had created the whole mess, but as the benign outside mediator, protector and peacemaker between implacable local factions.

But the Provisionals, on the whole, were not diverted into making war on the local Orange monkey. In a peculiarly British fashion, they kept their heads while all about were losing theirs. By resolutely keeping British responsibility in the frame,

the Provisionals averted a Balkans-style catastrophe. The Irish people—and indeed the British people—should be eternally grateful to them for this.

The same can not be said for the British State which, in 1921, prepared, planted and primed the bomb which exploded in 1969, and whose policy throughout was finely calculated to inflame local animosities for its own purposes. Nor can the same be said for the Irish Government which dropped the ball right at the critical moment in 1969, and which, with a few honourable exceptions, danced to the British tune in the ensuing decades.

After the Battle of the Bogside the Northern crisis went into a new phase, and Len Green's sober, thoughtful and humane contribution to public life resumed in the SDLP. In 1973 he was elected to the City Council, and was re-elected in 1977, 1981 and 1985, serving as SDLP Mayor in 1983-84. In municipal affairs he was a devoted and assiduous representative of the people.

Goodbye, Len, and rest in peace.

Pat Muldowney

History Not Politics!

This quotation from Maurice Manning speaks volumes:

"the 1916 commemorations could be regarded as a success, as they were not politicised and the public accepted they had been programmed "in good faith—people began to see it as history rather than politics"... (One event enough to mark Civil War, says chairman of advisory group, Irish Times, 29.12.16).

Separating history and politics! What an admission of ignorance! As if history can be de-politicised.

When Croke Park was being used for international rugby matches some years ago John A. Murphy said of a small group of protesters that they needed to grow up. Actually it is revisionists like Maurice Manning, Eunan O'Halpin and John A Murphy who reduce public discourse to a childish level by the paternalistic way they approach commemoration. Political history is the only history. The Irish public are well capable of celebrating the War of Independence for what it was: a political event that had political causes and which must be viewed in its political context.

Dave Alvey

The February/March Revolution

A hundred years ago, in February or March 1917, the Russian State collapsed. It was in February according to the Papist calendar but in March according to the Orthodox—or was it *vice versa*—

The Tsarist despotism, depended on by Britain and France to defeat Germany so that liberal democracy and the rights of small nations could be established as a world order, collapsed under the strain of European war.

Tsarist Russia straddled Europe and Asia. In Asia it was a European civilising power. Shatto Adair of Ballymena, who delivered lectures on strategy at Sandhurst, urged that Britain should make an ally of Russia in the work of civilising central Asia. But Britain preferred to treat Russia as an enemy in Asia (Afghanistan) and to make an ally of it in Europe by offering it Constantinople (Istanbul) for the taking. When Russia was defeated in war in 1905 by the new Asiatic Imperial Power, Japan, which Britain cultivated as an ally, it took up the British offer of Istanbul and it joined the Anglo-French *Entente* in preparing for war on Germany, the ally, of Austria, which would have to be defeated on the way to Istanbul.

This *Entente* was a kind of Treaty of Understandings. It was not made public. It was not even put on paper. Britain's slipperiness in such matters was well known. It was intent on destroying Germany—a purpose made clear in ruling class publications—but it needed France and Russia to do the fighting. So it awarded Alsace-Lorraine to France—which had lost it in its aggression against Prussia in 1870—and Istanbul to Russia, which stood in need of a warm-water port.

When the opportunity to activate the *Entente* suddenly appeared in July 1914 France and Russia were concerned to ensure that Britain could not step out of the *Understandings* once they had committed themselves. Russia in particular watched Whitehall like a hawk during the critical days.

They were helped by the predicament that Britain had got itself into over Home Rule. It was without a War Minister to implement the war plan that had been made. The War Minister had had to resign in March because of the assurance he had given to the officer corps at the Curragh to ward off a mutiny—assurances which breached Government policy—and no

senior Liberal figure who knew about the war-planning was available to replace him. Furthermore, the governing Liberal Party was faced with an Opposition that seemed determined to contest Home Rule by war if the Bill was enacted, and the virtual certainty of losing the Parliamentary support of the Home Rule Party, which was essential to it, if it did not enact the Bill and implement Home Rule.

In these circumstances a full commitment to war on Germany, as promised to France and Russia, also seemed to be the only way of warding off a civil war. Thus Britain launched itself into a kind of war

it had never fought before, and which it had not envisaged until the moment it began: totalitarian war with mass armies. (25 years later, during preparation for the next World War, the 1914 War was generally referred to as "*totalitarian*" by influential British publications.)

The Tsarist State collapsed under the strain of the war effort. What happened is called a *Revolution* but there was no revolution. The State was not overthrown by revolutionaries. It just collapsed of its own accord. And then, of course, there had to be a revolution in the sense of the construction of a new State.

The Grimond Room, Portcullis House, Westminster, 24th January, 2017
Subject: Sinn Fein's withdrawal from Stormont.

Sinn Fein's London Meeting

It wasn't quite the dying Summer I experienced with its selfie-tourists around the Palace of Westminster when I last visited Portcullis House to hear what action was being taken on the Louiginisland Massacre in 1994 carried out by loyalist/RUC collaboration. This time it was Winter in full health, with a few hardy tourists but mostly thick rivers of commuters converging on one another in and out of Westminster Tube.

So, through the airport-type security with police, this time, armed with sub-machine guns. I am asked by a security man where I wanted to go. All I could say, sort of self-consciously, being at the administrative hub of the UK, '*The Sinn Fein meeting*'. 'Not here', he said, with a grimace. I repeated: 'The Sinn Fein meeting'—which loud assertion seemed to bring him out of his trance. I had got there very early and was probably the first person to mention Sinn Fein. Then I was asked for my coins, my keys, my phone, my belt, and any other metal, in an Arnold Swartzenegger tone and a wink.

Pat Doherty, abstentionist MP for West Tyrone, along with Paul Maskey MP for West Belfast, eventually arrived to open the meeting. By then the room named in the memory of Jo Grimond, former Liberal leader, was full. A screen said:

'NO RETURN TO STATUS QUO STORMONT'

Another two, smaller, screens described themselves as the House of Commons Enunciator. It pinged on occasions to announce something happening in the chamber of the House.

The meeting got under way with an

explanation of why Sinn Fein withdrew from the Stormont Government—cash-for-ash, disrespect towards the Irish language, a foiled museum re-development of what was once The Maze Prison (its more realistic brutal description being the H-Blocks, and previously to that Long Kesh of the corrugated iron huts). Martin McGuinness's resignation and his illness were also mentioned, which drew a long tribute from the Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Dave Anderson MP. Such a loving and too-sweet-to-be-wholesome speech: surely it was harvest time for the Irish vote with emphasis on a once Labour notion of an United Ireland. It brought prolonged applause from the mostly curmudgeonly section of ancients from the Republic. Indeed, the subject was so much turned towards a United Ireland, without thought of the Northern Protestant, there were times I imagined myself at an early Connolly Association meeting. The two MPs went along with this and even fed into it, with one saying a couple of DUP MPs had (no names, no pack drill) quietly told him that, if it came to an United Ireland, he/they would vote for it as long as that vote was democratic.

Thus the meeting continued on the same theme of a United Ireland with some English-with-the-best-intentions contributing to the same United Ireland optimism.

Pat Doherty did try at one point to explain the difficulties with dealing with the DUP members at Stormont. He cautioned against jumping to conclusions about what he was going to say which was: many of the DUP are very religious with one member telling him he took his political instructions from God. He also

said he had to be careful about subjects like a United Ireland or they were gone. He mentioned this several times that they wouldn't tolerate some subjects 'or they were gone'.

Unfortunately at this meeting Sinn Fein's former low-profile good-boy style continued. Pat Doherty, I thought, made the mistake of labelling Sinn Fein as a left-wing party, saying, the DUP was right-wing. It made it seem that the people of NI was one people. It could be his idea of firing the first shots in the battle against the People-Before-Profits wolf at the door.

Also attending was a rep from the Communist Party of Britain, with the usual United Ireland message and a rep from a Kurdish organisation who told us that the Kurdish nation was very aware of Sinn Fein. Next a rep from the Scottish National Party spoke. She was more Edinburgh English than Glasgow Scots. A bit on the arrogant side, rallying more with the anti-Brexit axis. This took the meeting away from the illusory United Ireland to the fight to stay within the EU. Pat Doherty and Paul Maskey became motivated to such an extent you wondered if the meeting had been held solely to explain Sinn Fein's withdrawal from Stormont, or was it really about Brexit. Eventually the slogans began with the main one being a demand:

'SPECIAL STATUS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND WITHIN THE EU'

No attempt at the good old Republican label of NI as the Six Counties. This message had to get out to those people who barely knew where Northern Ireland was, never mind the Six Counties.

Someone in the audience did remind the meeting that the UK had voted Brexit to the tune of 18 million and it was first-past-the-post here. Not a popular thing to say by the silence, though I expect many were thinking it. Will the anti-Brexit thinking of Sinn Fein lead them to a United Ireland in commerce, a beginning at least to the real thing?. The ferocity of the SNP speaker also led me to think that the anti-Brexit tactic was to enrage the Scottish population against England and maybe lead to a better hope of a vote for independence.

My last thoughts are that Sinn Fein is leading life as a mainstream party, good in one respect for the sense of equality, but in the long run inhibiting.

Wilson John Haire
25 January 2017

Sinn Fein Irish Unity Conference

A valid criticism made of Sinn Fein during the negotiations for Government following last year's General Election in the South was that the party was making no effort to be constructive but was content to sit back in an oppositionist role. That criticism cannot be levelled against the party regarding its Irish unification campaign.

In running a campaign for Irish unity at this time, as in deciding to pull the plug on the Northern Power-Sharing Executive, Sinn Fein is forcing the pace of political events and shouldering the risks and responsibilities attaching to such courses of action. The correctness of the decision to withdraw from Power-Sharing was described in last month's Special Edition *Irish Political Review* on the Northern crisis. The unity campaign, most recently highlighted in a Conference in Dublin's Mansion House on January 21st, is also helping to set the political agenda on an issue which currently holds little public support.

What was impressive about the Mansion House Conference was the evidence it showed that Sinn Fein is serious about involving a wide spectrum of political opinion in the unity debate, and is sending clear signals that it wants the debate to be as inclusive and open-minded as possible. The significance of the Conference was duly recognised in a relatively objective report in the *Irish Times* which can be accessed at this Internet link: <http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/debate-on-irish-unity-needs-to-be-deshinnerised-1.2946387>

A conspicuous omission from that article is any reference to the participation of its own columnist, Noel Whelan. Whelan's speech was as notable for what he did not say as for what he said. He made no reference whatever to the line of argument he has been developing recently that Ireland should threaten to follow the UK out of Europe as a tactic for defending its interests in the Brexit negotiations. Whelan was at pains to identify himself as being firmly in the nationalist tradition. Apart from that, the only solid point he made was that Brexit has introduced an element of volatility into Irish politics such as has not been seen since the 1920s.

Other points not picked up in the *Irish Times* article (in fairness there is only so much that an article can cover in describing

a two and a half hour conference) were interesting points made by Gerry Adams, Brian Feeney, Alex Kane and Michelle O'Neill. Adams pointed to an innovation in the 2011 census in Northern Ireland in which new categories of national identity were introduced. These included 'British only', 'Irish only', and 'Northern Irish only'. He found it significant that in 2011 only 48% of the population of Northern Ireland considered themselves British.

Brian Feeney, a former councillor for the SDLP who writes for the *Irish News*, was adamant and persuasive in arguing that a united Ireland is now inevitable. He predicted that the unionists will resist any moves towards unity until the last possible moment. He used the analogy of the white community in the US state of Georgia, which resisted de-segregation with the black community until 1971. At that time Jimmy Carter became Governor, having campaigned on a segregationist ticket. Examining the demographic data, Carter calculated that the game was up regarding segregation and that was that; he introduced de-segregation.

Alex Kane is a journalist who writes from a unionist perspective for two main Northern papers, the *Irish News* and the *Belfast Telegraph*. He pointed out that the number of people in the North who were persuadable regarding unification was low: about 15-20 per cent. He also considered questionable the assumption that if Catholics become the majority this will equate to a majority for Irish unity.

Matt Carthy later drove home the point that Brexit changed everything. At that point, I could not help wishing that Sinn Fein leaders were more attentive to political debate outside their own ranks. A point made in the Special Edition *Irish Political Review* that the prospect of a British exit from the EU may underlie the surprising explosion of Catholic anger at the Renewable Heating Initiative scandal would have been apposite at this point. Brexit is the factor that will change thinking in the Catholic community regarding unity, but no one made the point.

The closing keynote speech was made by Michelle O'Neill, the politician who is to take Martin McGuinness's place as leader of Sinn Fein in the North. As the voice of a new Sinn Fein generation, O'Neill came across as realistic about

Orange/Green dialogue and at the same time genuinely committed to inclusiveness with regard to unionism.

Additional Note

In conversation with political contacts arising from the Conference I learned of an incident at the European Parliament that sheds light on the challenges facing Sinn Fein as a party involved in two jurisdictions. During the hearings in the

Parliament prior to the confirmation of Phil Hogan as Commissioner, Matt Carthy castigated Hogan for his role in the Irish Water debacle. Hogan replied by producing a document showing that Michelle O'Neill was one of his nominators for the position. Both Sinn Fein representatives were clearly acting in good faith but somehow the lines of communication must have got crossed!

Dave Alvey

The Limits of History

Abstract: We are slaves to the keepers of documents. At best, historians can only present a small part of the past and use their skills to interpolate (guess) the missing pieces of the puzzle. This is why history is both frustrating and such fun. A carefully constructed theory can be exploded by a scrap of paper. In *Massacre in West Cork* I had to rewrite entire chapters after I found the *Dunmanway Diary* in the Military Archives and the release of Michael O'Donoghue's Bureau of Military History statement. Though unsuccessful in this case, I was seeking information about the '*Activities of named paid informants against Irish Secret Societies 1892 [sic]-1910*'. The article both outlines the difficulties of research inside the sensitive parts of a state's anatomy and gives hope that the culture of excessive secrecy can eventually be overcome.

Barry Keane versus the Information Commissioners, Home Office, and Metropolitan Police, September 2013- October 2016

In 2013, while I was researching *Massacre in West Cork*, I requested a file in the National Archives in London entitled '*Activities of named paid informants against Irish secret societies, 1892-1910*'. Obviously, given the dates on the file there was a clear possibility that the identity of either Granite or Chalk, the two spies within the Irish Volunteers in the run-up to the Easter Rising, might be included. Along with the '*Dunmanway Diary*', which I had just found hiding in plain sight, in the Military Archives of Ireland, these identities were the Holy Grail for researchers of this period in Ireland. Chalk informed the British that the rebellion was going ahead on Easter Sunday 1916 while Granite informed the British a few weeks earlier that there was no fear of any rising. Obviously, Chalk was right but, without a name, we cannot judge about their access to information. And this is the important

point: the names are secondary to the quality of the information that the British were receiving.

I have been in this position many times previously and since: wondering whether my educated guess about a file was going to end in success or frustration. It is, after all, the thrill of these chases that make researching history so interesting. In due course, a slim file appeared. On examination, it became clear that the title was incorrect as the contents confirmed that James Carey, the informer who had revealed the details of 'The Invincibles' assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Thomas Henry Burke in the Phoenix Park in 1882 had been paid by the British Government. While his identity was long known, the payments are rarely referred to in histories of the time and this was interesting confirmation of this.

A number of other individuals, who had been low-level informers on Clan na Gael in New York, were included and the file had some interesting details about the unreliability of this type of information. The largest part of the file, however, contained yellow slips, which meant that the material had been retained by the Home Office. When I contacted the Home Office they refused to divulge these pages under Freedom of Information, on the grounds that to do so would undermine British national security and could lead to present-day informants being less willing to come forward in case their names were revealed in 100 years' time. According to the Home Office, these individuals were entitled not to be embarrassed after their death. This flew in the face of the principle that you cannot libel the dead and had to be challenged.

Thus began a process of appeal and refusal, firstly at the Home Office and then at the Information Commissioners. At each stage I was turned down with a flat

refusal as disclosure of this information could lead to difficulties for Her Majesty's Government to recruit informants in the future. After the Information Commissioners refusal I appealed to the First Tier Tribunal on the grounds that the principle of releasing information had already been conceded with this file as some of the information had, as a matter of fact, been released in 2008, so how were the Home Office now claiming secrecy in perpetuity.

At the Tribunal on 17th June 2015 Brian Leahy BL and I argued our case for disclosure. The Home Office and the Metropolitan Police (who had joined in as they actually hold the file) argued for the suppression of the information '*in perpetuity*'. The Information Commissioners didn't attend. The Metropolitan Police went even further and argued that the 2008 release was a mistake and the previously released documents which I had photographed and taken notes from had been released in error and should now become secret. At this point I knew we were entering Mad Hatter territory.

A senior member of the Metropolitan Police (Officer A) submitted a witness statement stating that he believed that national security was at risk:

"I strongly believe that disclosure of the information requested would have an immediate and significant effect in that it would undermine the trust in the whole CHIS [informants] system. As a result, the MPS, other LEA's [law enforcement agencies] and the Security Services would lose many of its existing CHIS and many people would be deterred from becoming CHIS. Equally, I believe that such an effect would rapidly extend beyond the MPS and directly undermine the ability of all UK LEA's and Security Service to recruit and retain CHIS..."

Yet, when questioned, he conceded that no informant had ever expressed worry about their activities being revealed after their death. The British Government entered a second 'ground' which suggested that the disclosure of the information might lead to harm to the descendants of the informants. His evidence of possible harm to descendants produced examples from Northern Ireland where threats made to family members of the 'Disappeared' were raised. Again he conceded that these were not strictly relevant to modern Ireland after the Good Friday Agreement. Equally, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, An Garda Siochana, and the Metropolitan Police had all failed to find anyone in the file. When asked, "*if they couldn't find them what hope is there for the rest of us?*" he demurred.

Once the opening exchange of my cross-examination began with "*Mister Keane, can I ask you a hypothetical question?*" "*No, I deal in facts*", the tone was set for a stimulating, entertaining and sometimes tetchy morning in the witness box. My dominant impression was how little our neighbours know about our society. It is almost as if we appear to be so like them they don't bother to notice us. After all, having to explain to the Tribunal that the Stormont Parliament was, in fact, pro-rogued by the British Government under Edward Heath and that the '*Troubles*' took place in the United Kingdom did not fill me with much hope.

A win for the Home Office and Metropolitan Police would seriously hamper future research in the National Archives, as this case could be used as a precedent for a blanket refusal of any requests for 'aged' sensitive information. The irony of their flat refusal to part with 105-year-old material in their own archives and their relentless pursuit of the Boston College Statements will not be lost on Irish historians.

Much to my surprise the Tribunal found against us by a majority decision. I had expected a flat 3-0 refusal. The minority of one so violently disagreed that he dismissed completely the claim to keep the documents secret. We, of course, agreed completely with him when he stated the appeal should be granted due to:

1. The lack of any evidence of any informant's descendants ever being targeted many years after an informant's death and the significantly decreased likelihood of this ever happening in the context of informants against Irish secret societies given the success of the peace process in Northern Ireland following the Good Friday agreement.
2. The lack of any evidence that any informant or potential informant had ever been discouraged from participation as an informant by the possibility of their identity being disclosed 100 years later and, indeed, the lack of evidence that such an issue had ever been discussed with an informant or potential informant.
3. The clear inconsistency of policy relating to the disclosure of the identity of historical informants between different public authorities as clearly illustrated by the fact that part of the information sought by Mr. Keane was placed, after, one would assume, a thorough and competent review (by the Foreign Office), into the National Archives only to be removed at the request of the MPS as a direct result of these appeal proceedings.
4. The fact that during the quite lengthy period that the information was available through the National Archives (2009-2015) there was no evidence of any adverse consequences flowing from its

availability even though that information identified at least one potential historical informant.

We decided to appeal on the point of law that the majority decision failed to properly apply the test which balanced my rights to scrutinise the quality of the information the Government gathered 106 years ago with the Government's rights to manage the security of the state. Surprising we were granted leave to appeal to the Upper Tier Tribunal.

At the Upper Tier I was represented by Brian Leahy and Cathal Malone both acting *Pro Bono*. On 29th September 2016 the appeal was heard before a single judge: Nick Wikeley (Emeritus Professor of Law at Southampton) and judge of the UTT since 2008. A critical point for me was to clarify exactly what '*in perpetuity*' meant to the Metropolitan Police. Any reasonable person would conclude it means forever or permanently. However, while the judgement went against us the Metropolitan Police, represented by Mr. Christopher Knight conceded that, while the "*policy of a blanket ban against disclosure by the British security services remains policy*", a Tribunal could come to a different conclusion about the disclosure of the names of informants and these would then have to be disclosed "*irrespective of the period concerned*".

In effect, the judge ruled that the information contained in this file cannot be disclosed at this point as it is "*turned on its particular facts*". Therefore, while '*the blanket ban*' remains in force it is up to any FTT to blast a large hole in the blanket if it thinks the facts of the case merit it. It logically follows that no British Government agency can guarantee anonymity to informants in perpetuity as a Tribunal can direct the release of the names. Therefore, in the opinion of the judge, and in the concession of Mr. Knight, the disclosure of names in themselves cannot lead to the nightmare scenario presented by Officer A that the MPS "*would lose many of its existing CHIS and many people would be deterred from becoming CHIS*". Clearly, it is open to anyone to return to HO 317/38 to see whether it has passed the "*borderline*". of Judge Wikeley's judgement.

While the '*tipping point*' between disclosure and exemption fell one way this time, that was only this time. In effect, if a historian comes across a file with information redacted they should pursue the information on the principle that each case must stand on its own merits.

1. National Archives Kew, 'Activities of named paid informants against Irish secret societies',

HO 317/38

2. History Ireland, 'The fate of an infamous informer', 9.2, Summer, 2001
3. M.P.s rule you can't libel the dead' <http://www.holdthefrontpage.co.uk/2012/news/mps-rule-that-you-still-cant-libel-the-dead/>
4. A First Tribunal consists of a Judge and two lay members. Costs are not awarded.
5. A. Hamilton (Judge), Decision Of The First-Tier Tribunal, Keane versus the Information Commissioners, The Home Office and the Metropolitan Police Service, 15 August 2015 http://informationrights.decisions.tribunals.gov.uk/DBFiles/Decision/i1625/EA-2015-0013_13-08-2015.pdf
6. The Guardian 25 April 2016, Boston College ordered by US court to hand over IRA tapes.
7. Nicholas Wikeley, (Judge), Decision in the Upper Tier Tribunal, Keane versus the Information Commissioners, The Home Office and the Metropolitan Police Service, UKUT 0461 <https://1woyw921roz71aldxk2unpkv-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/11/Keane-UT.pdf>
© Barry Keane, 20/11/2016

Barry Keane

Barry Keane's new book "*I shot better men than you: Cork's Revolutionary Dead 1916-1923*" will be published in 2017 by Mercier Press, Cork.

Casement not a homosexual!

It is rather remarkable to read a book review in *The Irish Times* that doubts Roger Casement's homosexuality. In a review of a new book by Frank Mac Gabhann, "*Ireland's Allies—America and the 1916 Easter Rising*", edited by Miriam Nyhan Grey, we read that

"The chapter on Roger Casement is marred by reliance on innuendo and dubious handwriting analysis to attempt to prove that Casement was a homosexual. His life as a cultural revolutionary and a fighter for indigenous peoples is not alluded to" (21/1/17).

It has always been a curious fact that none of Casement's rampant homosexuality and paedophilia is recorded in New York or Berlin—which one expect would have been primary locations for opportunities to indulge in this alleged behaviour. He was under suspicion in both places as a British agent and carefully watched as a result. In Germany it was the authorities who did so, but in New York he was under suspicion and watched closely by the Irish Americans.

They did not like what he was first famous for—the Belgian atrocities. They suspected he was a British agent and, if it was British atrocities he was keen to

expose, then in their opinion he need not go to Africa to find them! And they were doubly dubious that he happened to be criticising a Catholic country, Belgium, and it was no doubt noted that he was a Protestant. They suspected very dubious motives.

The result was that they did not trust him and had him followed, *tailed*, for evidence of scandal. This was organised by Robert Ford, who was Editor of *The Irish World*, son of one of the original Fenians, Patrick Ford, a vocal supporter of the dynamite campaign.

Padraic Colum explained what happened when the 'Black Diaries' became an issue in the 30s:

"On this subject I think I can add a word. When the Congo report was

published Casement was attacked in *The Irish World* of New York as an English agent. England wanted the Congo trade, and this report, it was alleged was preparatory to ousting Catholic Belgium from the profitable Congo domain. When he came to America in 1914 *The Irish World* had him shadowed for some months. After he had been executed and the charges against him were being whispered, the late Robert Ford, then editor of the *Irish World* said to me: 'There is nothing in these charges; we had him followed everywhere, and he behaved everywhere as an innocent and honourable man.' The time has come when the British Secret Service should withdraw these charges against him or else tell us where and how they obtained the documents they put on exhibition" ("Current History" September 1931).

Jack Lane

Transcendental Politics?

"*Future progress may depend on ability to transcend conflicts of the past*": that is the headline on an article in the *Belfast Irish News* by Martin Mansergh last August (the 11th).

Well, the past has not been transcended. And I don't see how it might have been. I can't see that the verb "*to transcend*" has any actual meaning when applied to conflict in political affairs, particularly in the democratic era. What happens is that conflicts work their way through to some kind of resolution. If they are resolved a new condition of things comes about, with new conflicts. The "*conflicts of the past*" then fall away. They are superseded. They cease to be elements of the conflict of the present, and they cease to be thought about in the affairs of the present. And that is pretty well the opposite of transcendence. The conflict is not risen above—it is worked through and left behind.

If "*the conflicts of the past*" are present in the present, that means that they are conflicts of the present too. Such conflicts are grounded in the present no less than the past. Past and present form a continuum with regard to them.

Time of itself has no effect on human affairs. That is, the revolutions of the Sun around the Earth, which we are told are revolutions of the Earth around the Sun, have no effect on human affairs. What affects human affairs is what goes on in human affairs while the stars carry on regardless of them.

The Northern Ireland system was

imposed by Britain on a conflict of the Unionist and Nationalist communities in the Six Counties. Each of these communities was detached from the larger body of which it was a part and the Unionist community was placed in dominance over the Nationalist community in isolation from the political life of both the British State which exercised actual sovereignty over the region and the Irish State which claimed sovereignty over it.

The Unionists ruled in a political vacuum while the Nationalists endured. That is how things remained for two generations. During those two generations the present was always a continuation of the past. The past was not past. There was continuous reproduction of the arrangement set up by the British Parliament in 1921 and consolidated in 1922, and of the experience that followed from that arrangement. Britain launched yet another World War, but actual relations in its Northern Ireland were unaffected by it. After the War a Welfare State was established throughout the British state. It did not alter the relations between Unionists and Nationalists in the Northern Ireland region because that great change was not enacted by the local Northern Ireland system, but came to Northern Ireland from British state politics, from which Northern Ireland was excluded.

People were made better educated—or at least more extensively educated—but they remained locked into the same administrative system, without the possibility of political life, that had been imposed on them, and therefore they remained the same. The extension of formal education to the second level may have given rise to private flights of fancy of a new kind but

it did not cause any transcending of the past which in essential respects was also the present.

(The influence of education on life is in any case greatly exaggerated, or misrepresented. The most obvious effect of prolonged education is prolonged childhood. Direct experience of the world begins with the end of childhood, and useful knowledge of the world in general is gained through experience. Zwingli, the Protestant Reformer that we will probably be hearing a lot about this year, said that the best way of ensuring a long life was to get old younger.)

A change came about in Northern Ireland. It had nothing to do with *transcendence*. It had to do with War. The Nationalist community fought a war that ended the conflict of the past—or altered the terms of the conflict of the past so radically that what now exists is not comparable, in terms of experience of life within it, with what existed before the War.

In other affairs there is no inhibition against acknowledging that wars are great forces of change. The revisionist intelligentsia that controls the academic life of official Ireland these days tells us that it was the refusal of Southern Ireland to take part in Britain's Second World War of the 20th century that caused it to be a backward place in the post-War generation. But they feel obliged to deny that the great change that came about in the North was a consequence of the War that was fought. And some of them seem to deny that there has in fact been any change, since the Nationalist community remains Nationalist. It has not transcended itself.

Kevin Myers—provincial lower middle class English with Byronic yearnings—lived for a while amongst those who launched the War. In a book of memoirs, that was much appreciated by the London chattering classes, he describes the Republican originators of the War as they appeared to his English sensibilities—uncouth, superstitious, dirty, ignorant, disgusting. A generation after the Butler Education Act not one of them had been through the Queen's University.

In other words, people who had lived according to Zwingli's advice and become old young, had taken in their world for themselves, and they acted on it purposefully.

By the times Myers published his distasteful memoirs, the British Army had discovered that the enemy they were failing to break was commanded by barmen and bricklayers. It was a war between Myers'

incompetent low-life types and Sandhurst. It was a people's war of a most literal kind—not a war in which middle class leadership mobilised the people. That was one of the reasons why the change it brought about was so profound.

It was fought through to a draw which in the circumstances was a points Republican victory. It was fought against the Army, the Propaganda, and the Patronage of the State until the State altered the terms of its Northern Ireland system, and then it was continued, by other means, within the altered system, as a conflict with what had been the ruling community until 1972.

The force that conducted the War never for a moment got above itself—never transcended. Transcendental yearnings, which would have led to disaster if indulged, were nipped in the bud.

Most Southern Universities seem to have Military History Departments these days. What Military History do they write?

What they have not produced is a history of the Great War. The State insists that it is *Our War*, because the Home Rule Party supported it and raised scores of thousands of volunteers for it, and it inflicts celebrations of it on us. But the Home Rule Party did not publish an account of that War describing its cause and its purpose, it only recycled British war propaganda.

The Home Rule Party, that failed to get Home Rule, was swept aside by the Republican movement that opposed enlistment in the British Army, and made war on Britain in 1916 as a declared ally of Germany. That movement went on to establish an independent Irish state—a thing which the Home Rule Party had declared to be impossible.

When it became a state, it did not concern itself with the Great War, for which it had no responsibility—either for the War itself or for shepherding large numbers of Irishmen into it.

The attitude, as I recall it from the 1940s, was that Britain had duped large numbers of Irishmen into fighting for it, assisted by the Home Rulers, most of whom were probably duped themselves. It was a pity, but it was just the kind of thing that Britain was good at and that it did to many other peoples across the world.

In 1970 Taoiseach Jack Lynch was frightened away from the course of action he had set in motion in 1969 with regard to the North. The British Ambassador said

"*Boo!*" to him and he panicked, cutting adrift the movement in the North which he had been encouraging for eight months. That movement was deserted and betrayed by Dublin. Its liaison man with the Dublin Government was prosecuted in the Dublin Courts for conspiracy against the state. The jury, entirely in accordance with the evidence (see *The Arms Conspiracy Trials* by Angela Clifford) found him Not Guilty. But the Taoiseach, supported by both Opposition Parties (Fine Gael and Labour), declared the verdict to be perverse. The betrayed movement in the North took its fate into its own hands, and it flourished as the Provisional IRA.

In Dublin Lynch and his incompetent cronies, in Government and Opposition, were appalled by what they had helped to set loose in the North. They had never bothered to understand exactly what Northern Ireland was and therefore could not see that its structure ensured that it could have no democratic political life, and that peace within it was never anything but stifled war.

In a state of mind that could be reasonably described as megalomaniac, they took responsibility on themselves for the War that blossomed in the North. It seems that the source of trouble was Nationalist history. It was not clear whether they meant history as it had happened or history as it was taught. Anyhow, what they did was treat written history as ideology of current politics and order it to be rewritten. (But the new history was hardly even ideology. It was only a kind of nihilist propaganda, utterly superficial, barely touching on the reality of things. But it was fed into the rapidly expanding educational system at second and third level. A generation whose parents had got knowledge of such things from living in a society, was subjected, as it was leaving childhood and would a few years earlier have entered the world, to an indoctrination system in advanced education that was designed to stop thought—so that there could be peace in the North!

The general attitude of Northern Catholics toward Dublin was one of scepticism before the betrayal of May 1970. It then became contemptuous.

If the Six Counties had been governed normally within the democratic system of the British state, when they were cut off from the rest of Ireland and held within the British state in 1921-2, it is highly improbable that the antagonism of the two communities would have been maintained in the pristine condition in which the Northern Ireland system preserved it—

the system in which the Protestant community organised as Ulster Unionism, with the Orange Order at its core, had to govern the Catholic community, outside the democracy of the state, in order to remain "*connected*" with Britain. This is not a statement in "*counter-factual*" history. It is a statement that in actual history Westminster arranged for the Six County region of its state to be governed outside the political life of the state, in a system that could only function as communal conflict. But it flies in the face of sense and reason to suppose that this exclusion of the Six Counties from the democratic politics of the state had no effect in bringing about the astonishing fact that there was a 28-Year War within the most securely-established liberal democracy in Europe.

"*Good government*", which is the normal object of government according to all Constitutional manuals, was never the object of Northern Ireland government. The actual outcome of the functioning of the system was war. War did not come out of the blue. It was always there implicitly. It was the only thing within the system that offered the possibility of amending it, if not into Democracy, at least into a substantial degree of equality. And now, as a consequence of war, there has been for almost 20 years a kind of peace that is not the stifled war that existed from 1922 to 1970.

Kevin Myers's *deplorables* availed of an opportunity to launch war out of defensive insurrection. They were a very small, committed minority, ready and waiting. But it needed only the declaration of war, and a couple of bold actions, to rouse the "*ordinary, decent citizen*" out of resigned subordination and into action.

The opportunity was provided by a few people who were not Republican at all. They were British ex-Servicemen who were Catholics. They were affronted by the condition in which Catholics were placed in that region of the state which they had served. They intervened in August 1969 to disrupt the annual routine of Royal Ulster Constabulary invasion of the Bogside by erecting barriers. Then one thing led to another. They did not approve of the War to which their strictly defensive actions led, but even so they could not see how they have acted otherwise in the situation confronting them in August 1969.

A war that came about through such apparently slight causes can only have been a war that was latent in the situation, and was waiting to happen.

Responsibility for it lies with the irresponsible system of government imposed by the British Parliament on the Six County region of the British state. But the Dail is not innocent, on account both of its political conduct at a critical period and of the assertion of sovereignty over the North which it maintained until the War ended, even though it did nothing to give effect to it during the quarter century when a war was being fought over it, and it pilloried and prosecuted those who were doing something about it.

The British Government, when it came to terms with the fact that it had failed to win the War and must cut a deal, did almost concede that what it had been engaged in was a War for which there was sufficient reason, and not the suppression of an extraordinary outbreak of criminality. It would have made this concession more openly and thoroughly if it had been under pressure to do so from Dublin. But, with a couple of passing exceptions, the pressure it was under from Dublin was on the other side.

Dublin has been devoutly self-righteous in the matter—both the Government and media. The Republican Volunteers were "men of violence", addicted to murder and mayhem for God-know-what reason. And the worst of this kind of cant has in recent years come from the leader of Fianna Fail.

Until 1998 Dail politicians were committed by the Constitution to the view that the Six Counties lay within Irish national sovereignty and that British government of them was illegitimate. It never took any account of the bizarre variant of British government that was imposed on them. Nor did it allow that illegitimate government will have consequences, and that war waged by those who were governed most illegitimately was not something that should be quibbled away.

But the Dail State, and its Military History Departments, do not acknowledge that what went on in the North for 28 years, and was then brought to an orderly conclusion, was a war at all. They are in denial, And they were on the verge of denying that what went on in the country as a whole from 1919 to 1921 was a war—though the happening of 1922 was of course a war and a most legitimate one—when the sentiment revived by the 1916 centenary made it advisable to delay for a while.

Martin Mansergh—that extraordinary phenomenon: a Fianna Fail intellectual—has been making the going in this obfuscation. This article began as a review of his *Irish News* article, which is a convoluted

argument to the effect that the Irish state—like the Czechoslovak state—was established by implementation of the policy with which America entered the Great War—rather than being established by the War that the Irish fought in support of their 1918 Election mandate to Sinn Fein; and that, therefore, the Irish in the British Army who took part in the suppression of the 1916 Insurrection were fighting for

the same thing as the Insurrectionaries. I was diverted by the retirement of Martin McGuinness, and the consequent hope of the Dublin Establishment that, with the most disarming man of violence out of the way, the *Sunday Independent* view of the North can be made to stick.

Mansergh's mode of reasoning will be returned to.

Brendan Clifford

Centenary Of The February 1917 National Democratic Revolution

The Government website "Decade of Centenaries" describes its purpose thus:

"This website is dedicated to the programme of commemorations relating to the significant events in Irish history that took place between 1912 and 1922... The period from 1912 to 1922 was one of the most eventful in Ireland's history. From the campaign for Home Rule, through World War One and the Easter Rising of 1916 to the foundation of the Free State, this was a decade of great change. Campaigns for social reforms—highlighted by the suffrage movement and the 1913 Lockout, for example—also went hand in hand with political events. The Decade of Centenaries programme aims to commemorate each step that Ireland took between 1912 and 1922 in a tolerant, inclusive and respectful way."

I must say that until rechecking this website this January, I had mistakenly assumed that the decade was 1913 to 1923, from the Dublin Lockout until the end of the Civil War. As the decade of commemorations unfolded, however, it became clear to me that the Government's purpose was primarily one of elevating Britain's Imperialist War of 1914-18 to a "parity of esteem" level with the foundation stone of the Republic, the 1916 Rising, if not even higher than that. And marking the centenary of key milestones of Irish democracy has little to do with it. Looking at the schedule of forthcoming events featured on the website for this February, not a single one of the listed events commemorates the centenary of the first post-Rising electoral defeat incurred by Redmondism on 3rd February 1917.

Redmondism had already experienced significant electoral defeats before that year in one particular corner of the country. "*The All-for-Ireland League: How Redmond's Party Lost Cork in 1910*" is the title of an article I wrote for the *Ballinagary & Inchigeela Historical Society Journal 2016*. Having cited the overwhelming defeat of Redmondism (outside of Ulster and Waterford) in the 1918 Gen-

eral Election, I continued:

"But how many people are aware that, eight years previously, the Redmondites had already lost eight of their nine Cork seats to the All-for-Ireland League (AFIL) of William O'Brien and D. D. Sheehan? ... I must say that I myself was essentially ignorant of that decisive turn in Irish political history until I read *The Cork Free Press in the Context of the Parnell Split: The Restructuring of Ireland 1890-1910*, a book by Brendan Clifford, published in 1997 by the Aubane Historical Society."

And my article concluded:

"The West Cork Brigade's (War of Independence) victories at Kilmichael and Crossbarry shook British rule in Ireland to its foundations. As the song says, *The boys who bate the Black-and-Tans were the boys from the County Cork*'. The IRA's West Cork Brigade had nonetheless been created and commanded by the former AFIL activist Tom Hales; Michael Collins's brother, the former AFIL local leader Johnny Collins, was to be involved in the planning of the Kilmichael ambush; and the former AFIL activist Seán Hales was to be a Section Commander at the Battle of Crossbarry. In fact, the boys who bate the Black-and-Tans were Continuity AFIL! The decade of centenaries was officially designated to commemorate the momentous events from 1913 to 1923 (sic). But, for Cork, it should really have commenced with 1910, and have marked the decisive political changes wrought by the All-for-Ireland League in that year."

"*Did Redmond Re-conquer West Cork in 1916?*" was the title of my analysis of the November 1916 West Cork By-Election, for the July 2009 issue of *Irish Political Review*, and my answer was a decisive 'No!' It is again necessary to briefly refer to it here, because, this January, the otherwise excellent "*West Cork History*" blog reposted a blog from February of last year, which recorded: "*Elected 15 Nov. 1916: By-election on (AFIL MP) Gilhooly's death. This was the first election after the Easter Rising and the last victory*

for the IPP in West Cork. Seat won by Daniel O'Leary. Last great clash between William O'Brien and John Redmond." It is, however, very much mistaken to view that Redmondite 'victory' as anything other than a derisively Pyrrhic one. Because of O'Brien's support for Britain's 'Great War', his All-for-Ireland League was no longer intact by the time of the 1916 Rising. AFIL activists in Cork had transferred *en masse* to Sinn Fein and the Irish Volunteers. What remained nominally AFIL was split between rival official and dissident candidates, while Cork's imprisoned Irish Volunteers leader, Tomas Mac Curtain, had issued a call to boycott the election because Frank Healy, who had originally indicated he would stand for Sinn Fein, jumped ship to become the official AFIL candidate. The Volunteers' boycott of that by-election—run on an older-male-only franchise that would persist for further two years—saw 191 fewer electors voting than in the last General Election held in December 1910. Furthermore, the 'victorious' Redmondite O'Leary's vote was down by 106 from that last outing and, even more noteworthy, his vote was lower by 255 than the combined total of the rival AFIL candidates. A farce of an outcome. No wonder O'Brien finally saw the need to follow the lead of his most able troops on the ground, dissolve the AFIL and formally endorse Sinn Fein thereafter.

So, what of real electoral contests and real election victories? And how should they be commemorated? Week by week, throughout the course of 2016, saw the publication of a 52 part series, entitled *The Revolution Papers 1916-1923*, and whose editorial advisers were Professor Paul Bew of Queen's University Belfast, Emeritus Professor John Horgan of Dublin City University, and Professor Eunan O'Halpin of Trinity College Dublin. How it moved along the calendar beyond 1916 into 1917 was distinctly odd. Part 6, covering January to 4th May 1917—and majoring on the topic "*April 1917: America Enters The War: the impact on Ireland*"—gave the first post-Rising electoral endorsement of the 1916 Rising itself only the skimpiest mention in its "*Revolution Chronicle*", as follows: "*5 (sic) February 1917—Count George Plunkett, father of the 1916 Proclamation signatory Joseph Plunkett, wins the North Roscommon by-election for Sinn Fein.*" The correct date was actually February 3rd.

The "*Revolutionary Chronicle*" in Part 7, covering 9th May to 16th June 1917—and majoring on the topic of "*June 1917:*

The Rebels Return; Easter Rising prisoners released from British jails"—went on to record: "*9 May 1917—Sinn Fein wins the South Longford by-election*". On this occasion, at least, it was accompanied by an information box—"*Rebel prisoner elected MP for South Longford*"—which related:

"In May 1917 a by-election was held in South Longford following the death of the sitting MP of the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP). Sinn Fein decided its candidate would be Joe McGuinness, who was serving a three-year sentence in Lewes Prison for his part in the Easter Rising... Sinn Fein's campaign capitalised on the widespread sympathy for those arrested after the Rising... Nonetheless the election was tight: McGuinness was declared the winner after a recount which gave him a margin of only 37 votes over his IPP opponent. It is likely that McGuinness won due to a last-minute intervention by the Catholic archbishop of Dublin, Dr William Walsh. In a sign of the changing times, Walsh had published a letter in the press accusing the IPP of leading Ireland towards partition. The subsequent by-election result, even though close, disturbed the IPP leadership. John Dillon, Joseph Devlin and many other senior party members had campaigned extensively in Longford and still they had lost the seat to an absent candidate, locked away in a British prison."

So, it was an Archbishop's crozier that had swung the election! But three weeks before polling day, that is not how the *Irish Times* had been reading it. On 19th May the organ of Southern Unionism reported that the Redmondites "*seem to have made little impression on the people*" and that "*almost everywhere the Sinn Fein colours are displayed*". It continued:

"The Sinn Fein party are motoring daily in all directions... The temper of the people appears to be such that if Mr. Redmond himself sought election in this constituency he would probably be defeated."

Noting that the local Bishop's crozier had been waved in support of the nomination of the Redmondite candidate Patrick McKenna, it reported on 5th May that "*Mr. McKenna was proposed in his principal paper by the Most Rev. Dr. Hoare, the Roman Catholic Bishop of the diocese*". On 8th May, however, it reported on a divided clergy, where the younger priests were following the younger laity:

"The more closely one gets in touch with the situation in South Longford the more one is convinced that Sinn Fein has got a powerful hold on the youth of the country... Another feature of the campaign is the activity of most of the young priests on behalf of the Sinn Fein policy... Their attitude is undoubtedly doing harm to the

Redmondite prospects, and their influence on voters is not counterbalanced by the fact that nearly all the older clergy are supporting Mr. McKenna."

It took some comfort from the fact that not only all women, but all young men were also excluded from the vote: "*If every youth in South Longford had a vote there would be no doubt about a Sinn Fein victory. But youthful fervour does not count for much at the polling booths.*" And of some others who did have the vote, it speculated: "*Individual Unionists are being canvassed, and some of them may record their votes, but as a body they will abstain from participation in the contest.*"

But did they abstain? Protestants constituted about a tenth of the population in the constituency, most of whom would have been Unionist, and it made perfect sense for a discredited Redmondite Party, that was fighting for its life, to make a pitch for their votes. Sinn Fein still won the election. On 11th May the *Irish Times* quoted Arthur Griffith's speech celebrating that victory and saying that it would also be welcomed by Archbishop Walsh of Dublin (if not by the local Bishop!). But it also reported Griffith's claim: "*Longford had beaten the combined forces of a corrupt Nationalism and a strong Unionism. The Parliamentary Party had appealed to the Unionists to support them and Sinn Fein had beaten them both combined.*" Sinn Fein already had the support of a strong majority of Longford's Nationalist population, but perhaps Archbishop Walsh made some contribution towards extending it to a sufficient degree among the eligible electorate in order to offset the Unionist vote for the Redmondites.

Any attempts by revisionist historians to portray the South Longford By-Election victory as just a narrow clerically-driven Catholic one is, however, undermined by the decisive logistical support that was provided to Sinn Fein by the Jewish community. The *Irish Times* had complained of Sinn Fein "*motoring daily in all directions*" of the constituency. Well, the key motoring intervention in the election campaign would come from a leading Dublin Jewish solicitor, Philip Sayers, in collaboration with his co-religionist Michael Noyk, legal adviser to both Sinn Fein and the IRA during the War of Independence. In his Witness Statement to the Bureau of Military History, which he headed "*legal adviser to Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins*", Noyk recalled:

"The Longford election was of great importance and the candidate put forward was Joe McGuinness who had been

sentenced to death and was serving a sentence of penal servitude. The slogan of the election was: 'Put him in to get him out'... I was at that election. I remember driving down with Griffith and Mrs. Mc Guinness on the Sunday. We were driven down by Mr. Philip Sayers. It was a very hot election, as amongst the supporters of the Irish Party were Separation Women, i.e., the women who were receiving separation allowance from the British War Office, and they were not particular to the language or references they used. I remember seeing the Irish Party procession headed by John Dillon looking very gloomy, and Joe Devlin with a green flag in front... This was a very close election as Longford was a very small county and the young men had no votes. The Irish Party candidate was a cattle dealer named McKenna, he had all the cattle dealers and ranchers behind him. At the time the adult suffrage had not yet come into existence."

A formidable Sinn Fein victory in such circumstances!

By Part 8 of the *Revolution Papers*, covering 24th June to 17th July 1917, there was a change of emphasis. Here the theme was indeed "July 1917: East Clare Landslide; Just out of jail, Eamon de Valera wins the by-election". The interpretative essay was by Professor David Fitzpatrick of Trinity College Dublin, which included the following remarks, replete with Fitzpatrick's characteristically pejorative adjectives and adverbs:

"Eamon de Valera's emphatic victory in the East Clare by-election, by 5,010 votes to 2,035, was widely accepted as proof that John Redmond's Home Rule movement was on the way out. Though many potential supporters, such as women and adult dependants, were still excluded from the register, Sinn Fein had secured the election of an obscure mathematics teacher of dubious Spanish-American-Limerick origins over the 'well-connected' Clareman Patrick Lynch, KC... His credentials as a spokesman for the 'republic' already seemed impeccable: snipers under his command at Boland's Mills had massacred a party of Sherwood Foresters... De Valera showed particular skill in mollifying the Catholic clergy, who had overwhelmingly condemned the rebellion and the use of violence to secure Irish freedom. His measured tone and air of respectability encouraged many local clergy, especially curates, to participate in his campaign, and even Bishop Fogarty of Killaloe became an initially unspoken supporter... Priests and shopkeepers, hitherto stalwarts of the Home Rule movement, were crucial to the rapid multiplication of local Sinn Fein clubs, and the piecemeal 'conversion' of nationalist councillors and organisers accelerated... The success of de Valera's populist campaign served as a model for

republicanism throughout Ireland, helping to mould the reorganised Sinn Fein that emerged under his leadership from the Ard Fheis of October 1917. His notoriously forked tongue continued to reassure both the gunmen of 1916 and former Home Rulers that the new organisation could be trusted to uphold the republican ideal, while taking account of political practicalities... Sinn Fein's overwhelming victory at the post-war general election vindicated de Valera's strategy: de Valera himself was one of dozens of republican candidates elected without opposition in December 1918."

In that same Part 8, *Revolution Papers* Editor Steven O'Connor chose to highlight one aspect of how the Clare by-election had been covered on the front page of the *Weekly Irish Times* on 7th July 1917:

"The correspondent for the *Times* expresses concern at Catholic clergy using their respected position in the community to influence party politics. He describes 'Republican flags hoisted from tree-tops in the gardens of clergymen' and young curates marching at the head of processions 'joining in the singing of 'The Soldier's Song'... When such things happen amongst the clergy, can one be surprised to see young people flocking in thousands to the Sinn Fein standard?' The correspondent elaborates further on Sinn Fein's electoral base, informing readers that the party's supporters include not just 'the young and irresponsible element' but also 'farmers and traders'."

The *Revolution Papers* commentaries from both Fitzpatrick and O'Connor suggest something akin to a Rome Rule role in de Valera's 1917 election victory. But, on actually reading the fine print of that *Irish Times* issue enclosed with Part 8, one can see that they have done that paper's correspondent—for all his prejudices—an injustice in skipping over his more balanced reportage. For what he described was not any clerical dictation in the election outcome, but a serious split—as in Longford—among the clergy themselves. De Valera's Redmondite opponent had been nominated in the first place by Rev. Stephen Slattery, P.P., Quinn, and with Rev. Wm. Grace, C.C., Ennis, as assessor. The report continued:

"As the contest develops in East Clare, **the sharp divisions amongst the Roman Catholic clergy** (my emphasis—MO'R) became more pronounced... There is hardly a meeting held in support of either candidate at which a priest does not preside or speak, and the tone of speech is not always such as would not wound 'the queenly virtue of charity', to which Cardinal Logue recently referred in his 'instruction' to the clergy."

In other words, the younger clergy were escaping back out of the Redmondite *cul-*

de-sac of the older priests, running fast to keep up with the laity, and charging up to the front of the crowd, where possible. And did it matter much whether or not Bishop Fogarty came to support de Valera in that 1917 By-Election, with Professor Fitzpatrick suggesting that it did? After all, there would be no slow-to-speak intervention on the part of Bishop Fogarty in the August 1923 General Election, in whom Sinn Fein President de Valera now found his most vicious opponent. Fogarty had been to the fore in excommunicating members of the anti-Treaty IRA on the commencement of the Civil War. As Gearoid O hAllmhurain related in his 2016 book, *Flowing Tides: History and Memory in an Irish Soundscape*:

"In Clare ... Republicans found in unauthorised possession of arms were quickly shot by firing squad... Bishop Fogarty denounced his onetime political idol Eamon de Valera ... as 'a deep-eyed villain' who reminded him of the horned monsters in the Apocalypse of St. John. Fogarty ruled his diocese ... like a mediæval monarch. His moral and social power was ubiquitous. Following the Treaty, he supported the new Irish Free State, even to the point of refusing to appeal for clemency for teenage Republicans executed in Ennis on May 2, 1923—the last callous act of the Civil War in the area—which took place two days after the IRA had declared an official ceasefire."

The Cumann na nGaedheal Free State Government called a General Election for 27th August 1923. The Civil War was over. On 7th August, the Southern Unionist *Irish Times*, still bridleing at the mandate for the Republic given by the 1918 and 1920 General Elections—even though, as we shall see, it had foretold that mandate back in February 1917—had the following to say of the forthcoming 1923 General Election:

"The Government's spokesmen have declared that all active resistance to the Free State has been broken, and Mr. de Valera has proclaimed that the 'war' is at an end. Both these statements will be put to the test during the election. The elections of 1918 and 1920 in Ireland were little better than farces. Last year's appeal was based on the ill-fated Collins—de Valera 'Pact', and could not be regarded as a free expression of the popular will. The present election, however, ought to be absolutely free."

Well, the Free State Government didn't think it should be. A week later, it was to arrest de Valera as he commenced speaking at an election rally in Ennis on 15th August, and would keep him imprisoned in Kilmainham Prison for the best part of a year, until July 1924. (When Dev next came to

Ennis, he commenced his speech: "*As I was saying, before I was interrupted...*"). De Valera's imprisonment did not see any abatement in Bishop Fogarty's ferocious election campaigning against him. On 20th August the *Irish Times* reported on the Ennis meeting held the previous day by the Free State Government, Executive Council President W.T. Cosgrave, in support of the candidacy of Government Minister Eoin MacNeill. The report's third sentence was particularly significant: "*The feature of the Ennis meeting was a letter from the Bishop of Killaloe (Most Rev. Dr. Fogarty) urging strong support of the Free State Government and denouncing Mr. de Valera's conduct during the past year.*" Constance Markievicz decided to tackle Bishop Fogarty head on—and immediately—in letter to the *Irish Independent*. Under the heading of "*Reply to the Bishop of Killaloe*", Sinn Fein itself published that letter on 21st August. Markievicz strongly argued:

"When a priest descends from his high position to try and lead his flock on one side or another, in a political election, he puts himself in the position of being a party politician, and every layman has the right to criticise him as a politician and to protest against dragging the Church we all love and revere down to the hustings for the purpose of influencing voters. Dr. Fogarty states that '*the Government has raised Ireland from anarchy*'. I challenge that statement, as untrue. '*Anarchy*' was created in Ireland when the '*Pact for Peace*' was broken, the mandate of the people for peace ignored, and directly after the election, before any Parliament at all had been summoned, the clique of Free Staters took over the English guns and attacked the Four Courts, under orders from England. Dr. Fogarty goes on to tell the people that if they want peace and ordered government '*they will only get it by setting up a strong Ministry*', i.e., the present Murder Ministry. He is therefore standing for Mr. Blythe when he says, '*the prisoners may stay in till they rot*'. For Mr. Walshe when he declares, '*If the present Government is returned you will have iron rule for the next half-dozen years*'. For Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald who states that '*Mr. de Valera and all like him will be kept on the run*'... No bishop has raised his voice against the shooting of prisoners... They have refused the sacrament to men and women because they stood true to their principles... We regret these actions of theirs, for a long-suffering and patient people have not lost their faith, although Fr. John Murphy was excommunicated in '98, although the bishops helped to pass the Union, broke up the Young Ireland movement, hounded Parnell to death, and excommunicated the Fenians. I write this letter fully understanding the responsibility I take on me when I speak in critical terms

of a bishop. I speak as a Catholic, with regret, but as a simple duty, believing that the Church is best served by her children standing for truth and honour, and forcing their clergy to conform to the principles laid down by the Holy Father during the Great War."

Subsequent to the election, on 21st September, Markievicz's letter was reprinted in a publication called *Eire*, but this time under the heading of "*Comments on the Folly of Dr. Fogarty*". For folly it had been. In the very first sentence of its detailed report of the Ennis meeting at which Fogarty's letter had been read out, the *Irish Times* had ominously noted on 20th August: "*Scarcely more than 500 people were present at any time during the meeting which was addressed by President Cosgrave.*" The Clare electorate had defied Bishop Fogarty's belt of the crozier, by placing de Valera at the top of the poll, with Dev further winning more than twice the number of votes secured by his Free State Government opponent, Eoin MacNeill.

But back to the key By-Election that the *Revolution Papers* and Trinity College Professor David Fitzpatrick decided to treat as being just one step short of being a non-event. In its "*On This Day*" column, the January/February 2017 issue of *History Ireland* recorded:

"February 5 (sic), 1917—In the Roscommon North by-election, Count Plunkett, father of Joseph Plunkett (1887-1916), who was endorsed by Sinn Fein, defeated T. J. Devine (Irish Parliamentary Party) by 3,022 votes to 1,708."

But, by way of contrast with the *Revolution Papers*, *History Ireland* did at least go on further to publish a full page feature article by Joseph E. A. Connell Jr., entitled "*100 Years Ago: George Noble Plunkett Wins Roscommon By-Election*". Beginning with a biographical profile of Plunkett, the article continued:

"During the early months of 1917 the recently released prisoners set about reorganising Sinn Fein... An opportunity to put these new and radical policies to the electorate soon presented itself when a by-election was called in Roscommon North following the death of the sitting Irish Parliamentary (IPP) MP. Plunkett ran as the Sinn Fein candidate. The new politics was indebted to its youth wing's vocal support: they gathered in numbers at Carrick railway station to cheer on Plunkett's campaign. Amongst the crowds were the women of Cumann na mBan, '*a big percentage of youth... large numbers of young men... (and) more curious still for those days, young women*'. On 3 February (at last, the correct date!—MOR), Plunkett won Sinn Fein's first by-election... Even though Plunkett had won

the seat in North Roscommon, many people believed that his victory was a fluke. In May another by-election in South Longford was thought to be the real test for Sinn Fein. The candidate was Joseph McGuinness ... who ran under the slogan: '*Put him in to get him out*'. The IPP threw all its resources into the battle. Despite the fact that the election was fought on an incomplete register and the franchise had still not been extended to women, Sinn Fein received 1,498 votes compared to 1,459 for the IPP. Narrow though the Sinn Fein victory was, the *Manchester Guardian* declared it to be '*the equivalent to a serious defeat of the British Army in the field*'."

The *Manchester Guardian* had correctly read the significance of the South Longford By-Election. But there were two missing elements from Connell's account of the North Roscommon By-Election itself. The first was his failure to even mention the name of the incumbent Redmondite MP whose death on 22nd December 1916, had occasioned that By-Election—James J. O'Kelly. Far from being a nobody, O'Kelly had, in fact, been the architect of the "*New Departure*" of 1879—the triple alliance formed between the Fenian movement in the USA led by John Devoy, the Home Rule Party led by Charles Stewart Parnell, and the Land League founded and led by Michael Davitt. O'Kelly also had a most impressive anti-Imperialist record—championing Cuba's first War of Independence (1868-78), the 1879 Zulu revolt against Britain in South Africa's Natal province, and the 1883-85 Mahdi revolt against Britain in Sudan. But then he undid it all in 1914 when, hand-in-hand with John Redmond, he championed Britain's Imperialist War against Germany.

Far from my hostility to Redmondism resulting in a failure to ever give credit where credit is due, in 2009 I took the initiative to seek out O'Kelly's grave in order to propose what was probably the only wreath-laying ceremony in his honour to be held in the century since his grave-stone was first erected. But that was on account of a promise made by the pioneer of Afro-Cuban studies, Fernando Ortiz, when he wrote in a 1930 prologue to a new Spanish-language edition of O'Kelly's 1874 book on Cuba's first War of Independence:

"His remains lie in Dublin's Glasnevin cemetery, under a monument erected by his political associates. Some day the people of Cuba will place a bouquet of flowers on that grave, remembering him with both affection and gratitude."

And so, in a ceremony on 4th June

2009, Cuba's first resident Ambassador to Ireland, Noel Carrillo, finally fulfilled that 1930 Cuban promise. And that is why SIPTU also published a selection of O'Kelly's writings, edited by myself, in a book entitled *Irish Solidarity with Cuba Libre—A Fenian Eyewitness Account of the First Cuban War of Independence*, and available from Athol Books.

The reason why James J. O'Kelly's reputation had already taken a plunge by the time of his death in December 1916 was summed up in John Devoy's 1929 *Recollections of an Irish Rebel* where, under the heading of "*His Espousal of England's Cause in the World War a Sad Finale*", the veteran Fenian leader wrote of O'Kelly's championing of Britain's Imperialist War:

"It was a sad ending to all his splendid work for Ireland. I had been out of touch with my boyhood friend for many years. The last I heard of him was in a published communication ... replete with fulsome eulogy of the gallantry of the English at Ypres which utterly disgusted me. O'Kelly and I had never before been on opposite sides."

But there was also a more significant omission from Connell's article on Plunkett's electoral triumph. Connell wrote that "*many people believed that his victory was a fluke*". But why did he not write of the most astute contemporary analysis of the Roscommon By-Election that regarded it as anything but a fluke, but recognised it as the first step in the National Democratic Revolution, the overwhelming national endorsement, by the electorate, of the Irish Republic that had been proclaimed by the 1916 Rising? On 8th February 1917, this Southern Unionist assessment was published in its organ, the *Irish Times*, under the heading of "*How Count Plunkett Won North Roscommon—The Inner Story Of The Contest (By One Who Was Through It)*". As much an opinion piece as a report, it observed that those who had benefitted most from the "*New Departure*" strategy of their previous MP, James J. O'Kelly, in eventually winning the Land War for them, were precisely those who had now voted for the Republic, thereby overthrowing the sway of Redmond's IPP.

The *Irish Times* highlighted the key role played by one Sinn Féin leader, Father Michael O'Flanagan, and recognised that such initiative and leadership would see Irish democracy go on to sweep away Redmondism nationally at the polls, outside of Ulster. Furthermore, the Plunkett vote had also been a powerful protest against the Imperialist War that O'Kelly had opted to champion, as well as being a

retrospective mandate, a mere nine months after its occurrence, for the 1916 Rising itself. That sharp Southern Unionist analysis from the *Irish Times* ran as follows:

"Count Plunkett won North Roscommon on the anti-conscription cry plus the appeal to the people's sentiments in connection with the Rebellion of Easter Week. The Rev. Michael O'Flanagan, the Roman Catholic curate of Crossna, was the main driving force behind the candidate. For twelve days and nights he was up and down the constituency, going like a whirlwind and talking in impassioned language to people in every village and street corner and cross-roads where he could get people to listen to him. It was he who delivered the address at the public funeral given to O'Donovan Rossa in Dublin. (This was at the City Hall removal. At Glasnevin cemetery O'Flanagan went on to say the final prayers, before Pearse gave his historic oration—MOR). The burden of all Father O'Flanagan's election speeches was the same. He argued that conscription would have been applied to Ireland last year were it not for the Rebellion of Easter Week. Count Plunkett's son had been shot as one of the leaders of the rebellion, and two more were in penal servitude serving the court-martial sentences. By voting for Plunkett they were warding off conscription from Ireland. As Father O'Flanagan put it in all his speeches, it would be better and easier for the young men in Ireland to carry their fathers on their backs to the polls to vote for Plunkett rather than have to serve as conscripts in the trenches in Flanders. This appeal went straight home to the parental instincts of voters with sons of military age. Mr. Redmond's formidable election machine was powerless against such impassioned appeals like this. His MPs and United Irish League organisations found themselves unable to hold public meetings. The young men who feared conscription were abroad day and night in noisy gangs... Then Mr. Redmond's party found themselves faced with a curious change in the attitude of the younger clergy. At the Party Convention held in Boyle, where Mr. Devine was selected as Mr. Redmond's nominee, the older priests were present in goodly numbers, but the younger men were absent. As soon as Father O'Flanagan began his campaign he was joined by several young curates. From the moment this change took place it merely became a question of the size of Count Plunkett's majority."

"The significance of the contest is to be found in the light which it throws on the mind of rural Ireland at this moment. Here is a constituency where three-fourths of the electorate are peasant proprietors under the various Land Purchase Acts. They were never getting better prices for their produce, and they were never better off. The Post Office Savings Book deposits and the local banks are eloquent proof of this. Yet 3,023 of these men

record their votes for the candidate who was recommended to them because he was the father of one of the leaders who was executed in Easter Week... The result of the election is a portent. It means that, if Mr. Redmond's party join the Liberal soreheads in forcing a General Election, they will be swept out of three quarters of their seats in rural Ireland by the same forces that carried Count Plunkett to victory in North Roscommon, believed to be so peaceful and so free from Sinn Féin and the rebellion taint."

A mere nine months after the 1916 Easter Rising, but a good twenty-two months before the December 1918 General Election, that perceptive Southern Unionist analysis from the *Irish Times* foretold the democratic outcome facing British Imperialism, even though it was not just three-quarters of their seats that the Redmondites would lose to Sinn Féin, but nine-tenths of them. Now, given the pre-occupation of the *Revolution Papers* and Professor Fitzpatrick with Archbishop Walsh here and Bishop Fogarty there, their failure to address the February 1917 By-Election might at first appear all the more puzzling, if only for the opportunity to highlight the very election that saw the most active and effective intervention of a priest in ensuring its victorious Sinn Féin outcome. The problem for revisionist historians, however, is that the secular Republican Father O'Flanagan is the very last person that they could ever caricature as a Rome Ruler. Quite the contrary, as was made crystal clear in the excellent 1993 biography by Denis Carroll, *They Have Fooled You Again—Michael O'Flanagan, Priest, Republican, Social Critic*.

Not only would Father O'Flanagan defy the belts of the Bishops' croziers in standing by the Irish Republic during the Irish Civil War of 1922-23, he would even more outstandingly do so in standing by the Spanish Republic during the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39. Moreover, O'Flanagan had been a uniquely perceptive and farsighted Sinn Féin leader, as Carroll particularly detailed under the sub-title of "*two nations theory*" (pages 44 to 50). It was Father O'Flanagan who had argued, over the course of a series of articles between June and October 1916:

"The island of Ireland and the national unit of Ireland simply do not coincide... Geography has worked hard to make one nation out of Ireland, history has worked against it... The Unionists of Ulster have never transferred their love and allegiance to Ireland... We claim the right to decide what is to be our nation. We refuse them the same right... After 300 years, England has begun to despair of compelling us to love her by force. And so we are anxious to start where England left off and are

going to compel Antrim and Down to love us by force... If anyone wishes to know another's nationality, the ultimate test is: Ask him... The only sense in which I am partitionist is that I claim the right of the people of East Ulster to decide whether they are to throw in their lot with the Irish Nation or not. That there should be any doubt about their doing so is at least as much our fault as it is theirs... We have to come to an agreement with the Ulster Covenanters, even though it be only an agreement to differ. We have to begin to treat them as fellow men. If we go a little further along the road, we may find that after time they will be willing to treat us as fellow countrymen... The Ulster difficulty is Ireland's opportunity. When we solve the Ulster difficulty we shall realise the dream of past generations of Irishmen... When we are in a position to assert that such double interference (of Church in State and vice versa) has not merely ceased but that we have provided against all reasonable possibility of its recrudescence, then we shall stand upon that clear and solid ground... for us to educate and win Ulster".

For uttering such heresies O'Flanagan drew the particular ire of IPP leader John Dillon, who denounced him as a partitionist. And yet in February 1917 it was to be O'Flanagan, in his native Roscommon, who would drive the first post-Rising nail into the coffin of Dillon's own Party, by initiating, organising and masterminding the victorious Plunkett by-election campaign. Small wonder, then, that when Cathal Brugha presided over the inaugural meeting of Dáil Éireann in January 1919 and began by calling upon Father O'Flanagan to open the proceedings, he hailed him as *"the staunchest priest who ever lived in Ireland"*.

It was in the Marxist-Leninist tradition to "christen" the upheaval of 7th to 16th March 1917 in the Russian capital of Petrograd (which was dated 22nd February to 3rd March under the old Russian calendar) as the February Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution. That first Russian Revolution of 1917 did indeed overthrow the Tsar of Russia and establish a Republic, but, by drawing Russia still deeper into the Imperialist War, it would self-destruct, necessitating *"All Power to the Soviets!"* and the Great October Socialist Revolution of 7th/8th November 1917 (which was dated 25th/26th October under the old Russian calendar).

Ireland's Easter Rising of 1916 had been precisely that—a Rebellion but not yet a Revolution. Ireland's National Democratic Revolution, however, commenced within the year, and matured from the Sinn Fein By-Election victory of 3rd February 1917 to its nation-wide victory in the General Election of 14th December

1918. Yet, by not only democratically endorsing the Irish Republic proclaimed in 1916, but by also resolutely repudiating and opposing the Anglo-Russian Imperialist War from the word go, by way of contrast with Russia's February 1917 Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution, Ireland's February 1917 National Democratic Revolution incrementally consolidated itself, chalking up the election

victories that would see the first meeting of Dáil Éireann take place on 21st January 1919.

British imperialism, of course, refused to accept that democratic outcome, and sought to suppress the democratic institutions that had been established. Hence the need to fight a War of Independence.

Manus O'Riordan

Winding Up The Clock

The people had risen. Friday evening, Easter Week 1916, presented many problems. British tentacles were squeezing the Republican positions in the GPO area. The net was tightening. Falling masonry tumbled. Shapes were being altered. British artillery was wrecking buildings. The city centre lay in ruins. Comdt. General Pearse looked about. Devastation everywhere.

The light was leaking from the sky. Flames illuminated the rubble streets as Patrick Pearse organised a withdrawal. In small groups the GPO Garrison stole into Henry Street. They faced the unknown. Fate no longer lay in their hands. The worst was to come. From where would come the next blow? There no longer appeared a fixity of purpose. It was 'make your mind up' time.

When to lift his artillery fire, was the British Commander's dilemma. How far forward had his lead elements reached? He should not endanger his own. He should provide them cover, yet be sparing. British direct fire from machine guns and small arms was cutting down any intrusions. The streets had become shooting galleries. Ammunition was whistling about. No one was safe. British Infantry came like spacemen, picking their way along roof-tops. Making for the final objective. The end was near. Still the commander delayed. There would not be a last hurrah. No final charge. *"Surrender"* was his objective.

Around the city, other Republican garrisons, powerless, could only watch. The skies were alight, alive with thunder. Their redness left them to wonder. Inter-garrison communication was no longer possible. Rumour had taken wings. They had their local problems too. Isolation exaggerated all that was worst. They would secure their own position.

Patrick Pearse was the Commander, Republican forces, in the whole of Ireland.

Their forces in Dublin were commanded by Comdt. James Connolly. Now Connolly lay badly wounded and severely incapacitated. Yet still defiant. People were looking to Pearse. Stamina, like ambition, was running low. Humans can withstand so much.

It is a human phenomenon, though without any military pretensions, he was being chosen by those in his proximity. It can happen at critical moments. People begin to look upon one in particular. Some indefinable characteristic influences them. It seems he had fallen into this role. There was no official pronouncement. But it happened.

He had spent the week as a subordinate in the context of command in the GPO. In extremis, now the mantle fell upon him. The mutuality of the situation—from him to the Volunteers and back from them to him—was intuitive, but real for all that. Now they would have to enter this new, strange, outer world. What next? What to do? Where to go? All about, people were being felled. Some wounded. Some died quickly. Some slowly. Rifle fire cracked like barking dogs.

Below the pounding, screaming sky, in all its glaring colours; amid the screeching cries, the blood bath began to overflow. What to do? Who'd act first? Or, best? Despair hung in the air. Who would bring order to chaos?

In Henry St., people were looking towards Pearse. *"Sir, what will we do?" "Where will we go?" "What next, Sir?"* When all is falling apart, soldiers may seek a steadying influence. They need a Command. A Direction. An anointment or a benediction.

There had to be a loud mouth. Heard later and only see afterwards. Recognised, too, when it is over. Cast blame about, but remain in the shadows. But, more seriously, there may be more involved. Longterm ambitions may dominate. Even enemies may be used—or misused.

Possibilities have few limits. Strange bed-fellows can emerge.

Later, in Frongoch, resentment grew and festered. One had become fixated. Ambitions grew and grew. Was this all? Was this the beginning or the ending? Or was it over? A fall guy was required. Especially a dead one. Anyway, a long road lay ahead, with many bends. The surface was badly pot-holed. A single bullet, from some unidentified gun, may end it all. Wherefore art thou? Friend or foe? Who writes what to whom? And why? Not to mention, how?

*

Perhaps Kerry's most prominent activist in the Rising was The O'Rahilly. He was responsible for the most acute observation appertaining. Originally dubious about its timing, he had opposed it. Now, however, standing outside the GPO, before making entry, he observed:

"I helped to wind up the clock and now should listen to it strike."

He then entered the GPO, his place in history, glory and his death. He hailed from Ballylongford in North Kerry, where the Shannon Estuary enters the sea. He belonged to a well-known, very reputable, family. He would die slowly in the street, near the GPO, after he led, at Pearse's behest, a break-out party of Volunteers. Felled in the attack, his riddled body lay there, in agony before its release from pain into his final reward in death. Not before managing a good-bye note to his wife at the end.

Before the charge, on the Friday, he had drawn his sword and inspected his men. They moved up Moore Street, creating a diversion in Moore Lane. They numbered some 30 Volunteers. They were met with blistering fire. In a short while, 21 lay dead. The diversionary force in Moore Lane had to take cover. This was all a prelude to the final withdrawal that Friday. Easter week was coming to a strangulated end. The British grip was firm. They were using street barricades as firing positions on the streets leading to the GPO. No one, nothing, was spared. They had the wind to their back. It was all a matter of time.

Kerry, though not militarily involved, had deep connections with the Rising. A U-boat had helped land Roger Casement in Banna Strand, in Tralee Bay. He was accompanied by Capt. Robert Monteith and by Bailey (AKA Beverley). Near Fenit, close by, the Aud, a German arms ship, had been intercepted by the British Navy. Later, in Cork Harbour, its Captain scuttled the ship, in order to achieve some

parity. In an unfortunate, though related event, a car accident occurred at Ballykissane Rise, at Cromane/Killorglin. This added to the debacle which included the arms-ship and the submarine. The fates were unsmiling. Roger Casement had taken shelter in Banna.

Monteith made his way to Tralee to contact Austin Stack, the IRA leader there. It appears Beverley had been enmeshed in his own tangled web.

The Royal Irish Constabulary were alerted at Ardfert, alongside Banna. Casement was found and arrested; lodged in Tralee RIC Barracks, brought to Dublin, imprisoned, tried for treason in the Old Bailey and hanged in Pentonville, London. Monteith evaded capture and was brought to USA.

The Rising failed to spread, as the arms and ammunition sank with the Aud. Irish hopes were dashed. The Aud lay at the bottom of Cork Harbour, its contents unsalvaged.

Mercilessly, after having his name besmirched and his great contributions to mankind devalued in typical, ruthless, British fashion, Casement was pilloried. Then they hanged him, buried him in yet another quick-lime prison grave, in Pentonville. In 1966 his remains were re-interred in Glasnevin. The Railway Station in Tralee was called after him. Neither Kerry nor Ireland could sufficiently pay tribute to him. Nor could the world. Only in Africa, above all, does his name cause hearts to jump. Or by the Amazon River in South America.

Kerry's tragic links continued. Four Volunteers from there were to die in the Moore Street area, in what became *The Kerry Charge*. They were members of *The O'Rahilly Break-out party*: all had faced insurmountable odds. All had raised a hand and answered *"Yes. I'll go"*. Their blood would flow and redden the gutters. They were named:

Michael Mulvihill (Ballyduff Hurling Club later was named after him).

Patrick Shortis, had been a clerical student, before going to London.

Patrick O'Connor, a member of a well-off farming family, he had a future ahead.

The O'Rahilly (Michael). The head of a Ballylongford well-established family of business people, known throughout North Kerry.

Patrick Shortis was from Ballybunion. His people had a pub in the main street. He was training to become a wireless operator. Patrick O'Connor was from Rathmore. Michael Mulvihill came from

Ballyduff. All were well-educated. All had been in London prior to the Rising. (Mulvihill and O'Connor had been working in London Post Offices.) All these had come to Dublin. Word of the Rising had spread. O'Connor had been in Rathmore prior to the Rising for a family funeral. He then returned to Dublin. Revolution was in the air. Now, come Easter Week, all three, along with The O'Rahilly, were in the GPO. It all was yet to unfold. They would not see the sun rise again.

The British had moved an artillery-piece into Parnell Street. They were now able to fire directly on the GPO. Fires were now spreading: the Volunteers would have to evacuate. Pearse gave a final exhortation, *"Win it we will, although we may win it in death"*.

Now they were ready to attack the British barricade in Moore Street. A diversionary attack at Moore Lane would coincide. They exited. The attacks were mounted. The O'Rahilly, Mulvihill, Shortis and O'Connor all fell, to die on the streets. All within minutes. All about them others were falling too. But the four are still honoured in their native habitat. They lived honourably. Now they died with honour. The GPO had to be evacuated.

The Military Council met in No. 16 Moore Street. They decided to surrender. It all ended on the path at the Moore Street/Great Britain Street junction. Where stood Patrick Pearse, alongside Elizabeth Farrell, facing the British Commander, General Lowe, and his aide-de-camp. There Pearse handed his sword to Lowe. It was all over. Round One, that is.

Meanwhile, in the Irish corner there was furious flapping of towels. Round Two would follow.

Pearse looked serene, like one on a trip to the zoo. Elizabeth was an ideal companion.

Fourteen of the 1916 Rising leaders would die before British Firing Squads in The Stonebreakers' Yard in Kilmainham Goal. Another in Cork. In an intended full-stop, Roger Casement would be hanged in Pentonville Prison, London. Number Sixteen. But punctuation never halted the Irish flow, though it might leave the British to stutter.

Footnote:

Beverley (AKA Bailey) was a mystery man. Full name Daniel Bailey. Later known also as Beverley. Born, Dublin 1887. Joined British Army. Served in India. Later in France, in WW1. Imprisoned in Germany. Joined the Irish Brigade, recruited by Casement. Came back to

Ireland in U-Boat. He went to Tralee with Monteith. Later arrested by Brits. Ended up in jail in Wandsworth. Enigmatically, Bailey returned to British Army. Served in East Africa. Moved to Canada in early 1920s. Lived with his family in Ontario. Died there in 1968.

Meanwhile Casement had been hanged after a Show-case Trial in 1916, but Beverley/Bailey remained, mysteriously, untouchable, until the Grim Reaper interviewed him.

He must have participated in the Casement affair to a much greater extent than became obvious later. The land of John Bull has left its finger-prints all over the place. No tears have been shed over Beverley, anywhere. Not in Africa or in the Amazon Basin, I believe. No laments

are sung to him in Kerry. Or anywhere. Casement, meanwhile, is hallowed. Civil Rights, forever, are associated with his name. He has become a by-word for justice and for those who pursue it. In Kerry, Bailey's name is never mentioned. Save in disgust. He was a rogue. Maybe the greatest of all.

The Irish Brigade, founded by Casement, consisted of British Army Prisoners of War in German Camps in WW1, who were recruited to serve in the search for Irish freedom. The scheme failed in its intent, as so few enlisted. Casement had recognised its failure. He had, however, failed in his judgement with regard to Bailey. This was to prove a serious fault, though Bailey, it would appear, had the

ability to dupe others too.

British Intelligence, of course, had its dirty hands all over the matter. At what moment had Bailey come to a realisation of his ability to intervene? When and where? Who made the first move? The cycle goes around and around: the approach, the moment, the sparring, the courtship, the fulfillment. The old story, repeated and repeated again. And the principals involved alter. Never the principles. The last laugh will usually remain with the mandarins of British Intelligence. They are at work, unceasingly, around the clock. In peacetime or wartime. But, always, it is wartime. Somewhere, somehow. Some why? You may stop to inhale. They won't.

John Morgan (Lt. Col., retd.)

DVD Review: Hubert Butler. Witness to the Future.... but silenced in his own country.

DVD Filmed, Directed and Produced by Johnny Gogan. Bandit Films Ireland. 2016.

Part 5

Hubert Butler: The DVD

VO: *Rev. Rob Tobin (continued)*

"Owen Sheehy Skeffington raises the point of the boycott in the Senate so that forces the hand of Eamon de Valera to come out and say that he considers the boycott unfortunate."

VO: Chris Agee.

'The Artukovitch File' (1966) is put up on the screen.

"In the long run remorseless truth-telling is the best basis for ecumenical harmony. Hitler once explained to Herman Rauschling, he intended to use the Churches as his propagandists" (shots of Baltic scenes). "Why should we quarrel? They would swallow anything provided they can keep their material advantages" (Shot of State Funeral—captioned 'Funeral of Marshall Tito 1980') "yet Hitler never succeeded in corrupting the Churches effectively as did Pavelitch and Artukovitch who professed to be Christians. We shall not be able to estimate the extent of their success" (Shots of poverty-stricken people fleeing with their few goods packed onto their own backs) "and how it might have been resisted while a single fact is diplomatically forgotten." (It seems the people fleeing are Muslims and may be from the recent Balkan Wars though without any captions—this has to remain mere surmise on my part JH). "It is well known that those who suppress History have to relive it" (Shots of crowds crouching in response to sounds of bombs—Massive bombardment—time line on screen 8-11-1993.

VO: CA.

"If Father Chok in his orthodox parish church destroyed by the NDH" (?) "policy of forcible conversion could be called Act 1, then Act 2—we might say is this

very church" (shot of destroyed Church with someone in the foreground walking past it) "with its relatively modern windows" (Now CA walks into the shot) "and shiny door" (shot of façade of Church is crumbling and weeds trickle out of it and door is steel and badly banged up with an Orthodox Cross cut into the top of it.) "almost certainly destroyed during the recent war in this part of Croatia. Here we are at the end of the day" (Shot of CA—sunbathing against this backdrop of blue/green coloured forested hills) "in Alecka" (?) "Village ravaged by ethnic cleansing and war. This is the Balkan writing of Hubert Butler as prophesy. This is what might be called in the perinap-scription of trauma—the way terrible historical experience goes underground for a period and then emerges undimmed and undaunted in new historical circumstances."

VO: *Lara Marlowe.*

(Shot of warriors very well armed and laden lying down on desert ground)

"I have a hunch Hubert Butler might agree" (Shot of black ISIS flag atop a soldier laden white truck) "when I say that nationalism and religion so often the scourges of humanity in the past are in danger of blighting our young century." (Shot of Paris terrorist's attacks—2016.)

VO: CA.

(Shot of CA signing document ..)

"So you are publishing new in November this year important book 'Hubert Butler's Balkan Essays'" (Shot of man in glasses has a caption underneath his picture but it is indistinct—eventually after much to-ing and fro-ing with my remote control I finally was able to read:

"Seid Sedarevic—Fraktura Publishing, Zagreb" (who is talking and though his English is quite good, all the following is put on text on screen) "there are issues about what happened here in the Balkans area—not only in Croatia but all over the Balkan area and ex-Yugoslavia ... which has really connections between World War 2 and the War in the 1990s. It would be great if these books from Butler encourage scholars to come here to investigate and maybe find things that we who live here don't see with our own eyes or are as important" (all this is said to a quite smug CA. (Shot of them leaving a room—book deal sealed between Seid Sedarevic and CA.) (Shot of Hubert Butler smiling in his old age with his hands hanging over a closed and rusted gate.)

VO: *RT.*

"In the 80s' when I knew him he had the most seraphic smile, beautiful smile literally lit up his face and very charming voice with a wonderful sense of humour and a terrific double act with his wife Peggy" (Photo of the two of them sitting in armchairs side by side) "extremely intelligent and very very funny. The House slightly down at heel" (Shot of very comfortable room—fireplace, lamps, books and lots of antique bric-a-brac) "shabby books everywhere—a kind of Eastern European feel about it I always thought because some of the books were of Europe from Eastern Europe with overgrown meadows and neglected orchards—slight sense of something sinking into itself" (Shot of outhouse roof with decaying apples on it) "and sound of bees buzzing around."

VO: *Fintan O'Toole.*

"I think from Ireland there is a certain tragedy in the marginalisation of Hubert Butler particularly when you think of the 1960s and the 1970s when he was still incredibly active and he was still at work. He knew so much and he had such deep—not just technical expertise but a moral expertise—he really understood Europe

—he understood its History in very very profound ways and here we—as a small nation—you know—joining Europe as we saw it ourselves—going into the European Union trying to remake these kinds of relationships and here was this extraordinary public resource available to Ireland—you have to remember that Butler was an Irish patriot—he—he wanted to be seen as a good Irishman and the fact that nobody ever talked to him—nobody ever used him, nobody ever tried to place him in a position where he could be that bridge between—you know—an Ireland that had been very insular on the one side and an Ireland who wanted to be internationalist and European on the other side is really sad—not so much for him because I think he got over it by then but I think it is sad for Ireland."

VO: Anthony Farrell.

"This is a contract with Transword" (?) "publishing Donal Ryan. I need a signature on that ... " (Shot of men reading in a well stocked book room with lovely light) "so outside of Irish society—not an outsider" (very posh accent—slurring words like upper class Englishmen and very hard to understand).

"I was sent away to be educated in England, Hubert Butler was" (finally caption reads Anthony Farrell, Publisher, Lilliput Press) "I missed very much my home and so forth and I was—um ... hungry for an Irish identity I suppose being a sad little public school boy and here was somebody who spoke to me in a language that I thought was wonderful and he appreciated the divisions in our society between Protestants and Catholics. My mother was a Protestant, my father was a Catholic, I was baptised one way, my brother was baptised another so I kind of appreciated that bifurcated world that I embodied" (outside Shot of Lilliput Press—a down at heel establishment) "myself and Frank McGuinness were Séamus" (surname undecipherable) "readers and we read mainly fiction but I read" (Shot of AF putting out sign: "Books Live Here") "a collection of essays and I wrote a very strong report telling Séamus that he had to publish this one and Séamus was very gracious—he said its Anglo/Irish stuff—this doesn't sell and if you want to do something with it yourself—you are welcome so I picked up the phone to Hubert Butler and I rang Maidenhall and I found the number" (if any of my readers find this familiar—it was already documented and therefore scripted in former *Irish Political Revue* articles – JH) "and this voice answered which was Hubert Butler—and I said can I speak to Hubert Butler and there was a pause" (AF nervously laughs) "and a voice said do you mean Mister Butler and I said Yes of course—and it was Hubert and it was uncharacteristic—he was the most un-pompous man you can imagine." (Photo of Hubert Butler having a picnic sitting in the back of their Volvo) "It was a poignant start to a very long relationship. I went

down the following weekend and I was welcomed by him and Peggy. It developed from there as he showed me more and more extraordinary material." (Shot of book cover 'Escape from the Anthill'. With a foreword by Maurice Craig.)

VO: FOT.

"When the first collection of Hubert Butler's essays was published which was 'Escape from the Anthill' in the mid 1980s—I remember opening it up and starting to read and starting to realise this is one of the great essayist" (FOT laughs heartily) "but ... that this man was in our midst which was obviously very important—but just this is stylistically, intellectually, morally in terms of the essay form he is doing with it" (Photo of Séamus Heaney and Hubert Butler) "he is—really is one of the great figures in the history of this form—you find very many essayists who have a body of work that is as brilliant, as prescient, as compressed, as morally complex and as a morally important as Butler's work is."

VO: John Banville. Author.

(Shot of said author, glass in hand looking very dapper sitting on a beautiful cushioned sofa)

"I wish and a few others like me wish that people like him had continued to contribute—that more people like him had contributed to Irish life because what we were left with was an Ireland ruled by very small minded people as Hubert Butler learnt later on to his cost." (Shot of book cover 'In the Land of Nod' with a foreword by Neal Ascherson.) "I would dearly like to read Hubert on" (and knock me down if dapper John doesn't now talk like an Anglo himself!-JH) "our present predicament in Ireland. I would dearly like to have read him during the Celtic Tiger years. He would have been a wise voice of course" (here John gives an extravagant shrug!) "we wouldn't have listened to him having - as we were all having - *such a wild wonderful party on non-existent money*. But it would have been marvellous to read Hubert on—he would have been so funny and so—ahem ... it would have brought out the best of his wit I think and the best of his lamentation for the stupidity of human beings." (I cannot let this pass –even I have my limits! Certainly 'The Irish Times' where John Banville was then working had endless glossy *property supplements* with their attendant huge surge of advertising revenue which certainly brought John and his ilk rich pickings. No doubt the parties he talks about were "wonderful" but they were only for the elite who now have the cheek to *preach to us* about their "wild" good times!)

VO: Roy Foster.

"I brought out a review of 3,000 words long I think - it was cut savagely down to 1,000 words and I made such a fuss about this that the Editor for the Times Literary Supplement (TLS) read the book himself and said this man is absolute gold dust."

VO: AF.

"So that review in the TLS alerted the intellectual world to Butler. We then went on to publish two subsequent volumes. 'The Children of Drancy' and 'Grandmother and Wolfe Tone' in the late 80s again happily during Hubert's life time and we were approached by Ferris Strauss" (?) "and Giroux in New York where there was a wonderful editor called Elizabeth Siften who again apprehended exactly where Butler was coming from—she did a gathering of the essays from our existing books and Roy Foster did the same for Penguin." (Shot of book cover 'Independent Spirit. Hubert Butler's Essays.'

V): Olivia O'Leary.

"The wonderful thing for people of my generation was to pick up a book of essays" (Shot of book cover 'The Subprefect should have held his Tongue and other Essays' with foreword by R.F. Foster.) "was just so fresh it could have been written in our own day. This man was 50 years ahead of his time".

VO: FOT.

"The funny thing somehow—maybe he escaped the fact that he—he was not part of the Irish world means we can now see him not just as an interesting Irish figure. I think he is a world figure—that's the payback in a sense for the kind of neglect he went through for so long." (Shot of book cover 'L'envahisseur est venu en Pontoufles Anatolia.'

VO: AF.

"I was rung up excitedly by a small French publisher. The above is the French edition of 'The Invader Wore Slippers.' And he was called Samuel Bruckell" (?). He had read Hubert Butler's essay on Graham Greene in which he in a very quiet way eviscerated Greene's moral élan to literature and Graham Greene is God in France and Samuel was so thrilled that he rang me from a phone box in the Quai d'Orsay saying that he wanted to publish this man. Butler became international—his time had come." (Shots of people shaking apple trees and all falling down in great plenitude.)

VO: RT.

"He seems to have taken it in his stride—one of the wonderful things about Butler is although he struggled often to know where his place was, he never seemed to lack for a calm inner confidence." (Shots of boxes and boxes of apples being carted away) "He knew he was a gifted person, he knew he had important things to say. It was a case of everybody else taking note though I obviously think he delighted in getting some recognition." (Shot of HB sitting in a sunlit porch). "But in a lot of ways I think he took the greatest pleasure in noting that Ireland itself had begun to ask some of the same questions he had been asking and that in many ways the more open and pluralist society that he hoped for seemed to be emerging."

VO: AF. JB.

"It was a very admirable position that he took. I think he had admitted to the fact that he has not had the reputation that he should have here and abroad. He should be seen as a major Irish writer I think—part of the difficulty I think is the Anglo/Irishness. The English think he is Irish and the Irish think he is English. I like that he really did think that the local life was the life to lead.

VO: OO'L.

"He always held that Ireland needed the Dissenter tradition—that we needed it very badly and we were suffering from being so monotheistic in terms of the Catholic domination of everything." (Photo of Mary Robinson and Ruairí

Quinn in background).

VO: RT.

"There is this wonderful scrap of paper I came across in his files when I was researching and he had receipt of his postal ballot from 1990 Irish Presidential Election and he and Peggy had sent in as quite elderly people their votes for Mary Robinson. By this point Butler knew that someone like me was going to come along and want to know more about him so he wrote in his rather spider-like handwriting: P and I voted for M. Robinson—she got in and this was sort of right at the end of his life and I think he felt that that was a kind of vindication in some ways of the ideas that he had espoused for the previous 50 years. So there is a lovely

symmetry in a way that he dies shortly after she is elected President of the Republic". (Shot of Julia Crampton—Hubert Butler's daughter - driving a fine load of apples with two men helping out.

As the film fades out over the Kilkenny countryside, Irish tunes pipe in.

Filmed, Directed and Produced

Johnny Gogan.

Editor: Patrick O'Rourke.

Acknowledgements.

Julianne Herlihy ©

NOTE

This is the final instalment of the transcript of the DVD. Next Month *Irish Political Review* will feature Julianne Herlihy's analysis of the DVD.

That 1841 Census Again

The current *History Ireland* (Jan/Feb 2017) has a letter by David Parker that is a critique of an article in an earlier issue of two years ago: May/June 2015, by the late Michael Moroney that queried the accuracy of the 1841 Census figures.

Moroney drew attention to rarely noted but quite significant aspects of that Census. For example:

"The choice of the local constable as enumerator must have created its own problems. His visits to collect information would not have been welcomed in many abodes. The peasantry would generally have had little respect for authority and a natural reluctance to be registered. Furthermore, they would have recognised that by being registered they were more likely to be made answerable to the laws of the land and liable to the imposition of taxes."

This is putting the situation as mildly as possible. The constabulary was then a paramilitary force that was in effect at war with the majority of the population, as had just been well illustrated in the Tithe War. In other words, the first requirement for taking a reliable census—trust between those being counted and those doing the counting—did not exist. And without trust the whole procedure of census taking was and is problematic.

Trust was so absent in 1921 that the Census was abandoned as it would have meant that the RIC and Auxiliaries would be the enumerators—aided no doubt by the expertise of the Black and Tans. The situation in 1841 had similarities. If it had been held in 1921, I am sure our current academics would be quoting from it in all seriousness.

Irish Censuses run by the police was always an Intelligence-gathering exercise

and everybody knew that. Parker does not comment on the significance of this basic fact that Moroney highlighted.

Moroney then noted a problem with which the Commissioners had wrestled: according to their figures there had been a dramatic decline in the rate of population growth in the 1830s compared to the 1820s: from 14.25% to 5.25%. Parker says that the "*Commissioners were themselves struck by the abrupt fall*" but he then seems to accept it as being a proven fact. The Commissioners to their credit realised that they needed to explain this startling fact which defied all common sense. What could explain this dramatic decline between the 1820s and 1830s?

Their main contention was that emigration caused the decline but they could not prove it. By a series of assumptions about emigration and recruitment to the army during the decade of the 1830s they proposed adding an arbitrary total of 572,464 to the Census to account for the decline (of which only 104,814 had emigrated to Britain in the decade according to their calculations).

They temporarily forgot that it was a nonsense for a Census to cater for people who had left the country in the previous decade! But they were desperate to explain an awkward question. (Moroney made a mistake with this extra figure but we all make mistakes—in his reply Parker and/or the Editor of *History Ireland* misdated Moroney's original article by a year and a half!).

The Commissioners did not convince themselves that their assumptions and strained calculations would explain the sharp decline and concluded in their Rep-

ort that "*we trust that these calculations, though in a degree hypothetical, will not be thought wholly irrelevant*".

They then considered the number of immigrants and conceded: "*But we have no means of arriving at knowledge of their amount*". It does not seem to have occurred to them that the very prevalent seasonal migration meant that much of the emigration also became some of the immigration. (I often wondered how this factor has been taken into account in calculations about emigration before and since. I grew up with farmers' sons who would emigrate for the Winter and return for the rest of the year—with spending money and supplies of artistic material and other items from Soho!)

The Commissioners also came up with the idea that the 1831 Census was too high because enumerators were paid according to the numbers they counted. Professor Joe Lee refuted this argument some time ago in "*On the accuracy of pre-Famine Censuses*" (*Irish population, economy and society*) by Goldstrom and Clarkson, 1981). Lee's article remains the most sensible academic treatment of the subject.

The Commissioners also considered cholera outbreaks in 1832 and 1833 but had to conclude these did not have an impact that would in any way explain the rate of decline. They were "*scraping the bottom of the barrel*" to explain the inexplicable.

In summary this major factor of the 1841 Census was not explained then and, as it has not been explained convincingly ever since, it can hardly be accepted as a fact which Parker does.

Parker also challenges an assumption drawn from a report by the West Clare Inspector, Captain Wynne, who found the population in his area a third greater in 1846 than that stated in the 1841 census. Parker says this was a specific migratory

increase to the part of Clare that Wynne reported on and that there is no reason to believe the people concerned had not been counted in 1841. This is a convenient but not a convincing way to dismiss Wynne if no further evidence is produced to do so.

But Wynne was not alone in his assumption. Cecil Woodham Smith notes that:

"Officers engaged in relief work put the population as much as 25 per cent higher; landlords distributing relief were horrified when providing, as they imagined, for 60 persons, to find more than 400 'start from the ground.'"

Would these people, desperate for food in 1847, have been as willing to "start from the ground" and rush to tell the Constabulary the most intimate details about themselves in 1841? Not bloody likely!

The Census-taking scared people in all walks of life for all sorts of reasons. Elizabeth Smith in Dublin recorded in her diary in 1841:

"June 7. Busy filling in the Census papers which are very complete as to information, the use I don't exactly know, the poor people here are all terrified that they were to have been kidnapped or pressed or murdered on the night of the 6th. Half of them were not to go to bed & had barricaded their doors" (*The Irish Journals of Elizabeth Smith 1840-1850*, 1980).

For a host of reasons the official 1841 Census figures remain suspect and even if correct they are not the relevant figure for calculating how many died in 1846-49. They are not the relevant figures for the pretty obvious reason that the Irish did not stop breeding from the night of 6th June 1841 onwards.

Jack Lane

tage and because the surge in the supply of graduates can be used to fill technician level jobs.

No industrial policy

The lack of an industrial policy in the UK has led to a decline in many of the heartlands of apprenticeship, especially in manufacturing. Elsewhere in the world advanced manufacturing, together with the supply chain it requires, is a mainstay of apprenticeship.

"Unlike European nations that have strong links between employers, unions and the government, the UK operates within a deregulated labour market and voluntarist training system that does little to foster employer engagement with training" (Payne and Keep 2011).

"The lack of a national industrial policy, combined with the government's strong belief in the free market as its own solution to skills development, means employers are left to their own devices in terms of training for the skills they believe they need" (page 59).

Apprenticeship Reform in Northern Ireland

To get a clear picture of recent developments in the apprenticeship system in Northern Ireland it is necessary to see them in a UK context stretching back to the 1980s. A recent document on the Northern Ireland system, *'Review of Apprenticeships—Interim Report and Consultation Document'* (January 2014), uses a source that aptly summarises the main developments in the UK: a 2011 essay by Ewart Keep and Susan James entitled, *'Employer Demand for Apprenticeships'* from *'Rethinking Apprenticeships'* published by the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR). Whereas British policy on apprenticeship has been the subject of much criticism over the years, a body of research produced by a number of British authors working in the field is highly regarded internationally; and the essay by Keep and James is representative of that body of research.

UK CONTEXT

The key point made by Keep and James is that apprenticeship policy in England hit a roadblock following the launch of the Manpower Services Commission's *'New Training' initiative in 1981*, a roadblock that continues to hold back progress. The problem is that the enthusiasm for work-based training felt by politicians, parents and many young people is not shared by employers. Between 6 and 13 per cent of English employers employ apprentices. The position of antipathetic employers is expressed by Keep and James in the form of a question that employers may ask: why would you provide finance and

training for an asset that you do not own or for an investment for which you cannot extract a return? But employers in other European states clearly do consider apprenticeship a worthwhile investment.

Since employers have not responded to Government training initiatives in adequate numbers, various British Governments have resorted to schemes that massage the statistics. Thus the English supermarket chain, Morrisons, are recorded as employing 20,380 apprentices, 85 per cent of whom are over 25 and members of the existing workforce. Keep and James describe the average duration of these 'apprenticeships' as 28 weeks, a miserly duration compared to apprenticeships in Europe which last for between 2 and 4 years.

Having identified employer resistance as the main obstacle to government policy on apprenticeship, Keep and James drill down for the underlying causes. They list seven sometimes overlapping causes of low demand for apprenticeship. These seven factors show how the establishment of work-based learning or apprenticeship as a system depends on certain structures in society; they also have direct relevance for apprenticeship policy in Ireland, North and South.

CAUSES OF LOW DEMAND FOR APPRENTICESHIP IN ENGLAND

Low importance of skills to employers

Skills are less important to employers than the political world perceives because many firms use offshoring, outsourcing and marketing strategies based on low-priced goods to gain competitive advan-

Why train when education will do it for you?

By providing a variety of further education and training routes for career preparation and workforce up-skilling, Governments are letting employers off the hook with regard to training. The mass expansion of further and higher education in the UK over the last 30 years has weakened the need for companies to organise themselves to deliver apprenticeship, as flexible graduates with a capacity for quickly acquiring new skills can be recruited into technician positions for which they are over-qualified and often poorly suited.

A single EU labour market and migrant labour

In some occupations and sectors, well-trained, well-educated workers from EU accession states like Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Romania, are readily available. Their training comes free of charge to UK employers.

Lack of licence to practise

In apprenticeship-friendly countries like Australia, Canada, New Zealand and large swathes of northern Europe, occupational regulations require that workers have vocational certification. In the UK, where there is an emphasis on occupational 'flexibility', occupational licenses are much rarer, although official policy may be changing in this area.

Lack of collective employer organisation

Collective organisation for employers, necessary for apprenticeship systems, is weak in the UK.

Conceptions of skill—the missing middle

Under this heading Keep and James maintain that in the UK the conception of the breadth and depth of skills needed to do many jobs is much narrower than corresponding conceptions on the Continent. This relates to forms of work organisation and job design, showing how apprenticeship is related to a distinct social vision. The intermediate level of skills is where apprenticeship is pitched, whereas in the UK labour market high and elementary level skills are in greater supply.

Keep and James conclude their analysis by pointing to various examples of vocational excellence in the UK and alluding to how a more successful model of apprenticeship has been pioneered in Scotland—reserving the title of apprenticeship to courses resulting in Level 3 skills being a key initiative there.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland has a long tradition of apprenticeship going back to the ship building and engineering industries of the nineteenth century. That traditional system of apprenticeship declined with the decline of manufacturing industry. The most recent development has been *'ApprenticeshipNI'*, launched in 2007 to take advantage of European Social Fund (ESF) funding. Between 2007 and 2013 43,376 people started apprenticeships under the scheme, of which 68 per cent were at Level 2, 10 per cent were at Level 2/3 and 22 per cent were at level 3 (the level at which most EU apprenticeships start).

The number of starts on ApprenticeshipNI increased from 4,282 in 2007 to 6,345 in 2012. Taking the figures for one year, the percentage of apprentices achieving an NVQ Level 3 qualification in 2014/2015 was 62 per cent of leavers, for Level 3 Full Framework it was 60 per cent of leavers (these figures are below UK 'apprentice success rates' which are usually nearer to 70 per cent but the comparison may not be like with like). Regarding the range of subjects offered under ApprenticeshipsNI the Review of Apprenticeship Interim Report states:

"The most popular sectors in terms of numbers of starts since the launch of the programme in 2007 are: health and social care (6,764), catering and hospitality (5,251), retail (3,964), management (2,504), engineering (2,485), customer service (2,020), business and administration (1,839), construction (1,762), child care, learning and development (1,702) and team leading (1,532)" (Page 20).

From a political perspective the most recent development is that the Alliance Party Minister for Employment and

Learning in the previous administration, Stephen Farry, initiated in February 2013 a review of apprenticeship and youth training. As part of the review Farry convened a panel of experts representative of interested parties to guide the review. The Interim Report of the Review of Apprenticeship was duly published in January 2014.

The Interim Report is interesting in that it refers specifically to the Keep and James essay and takes on board some of its ideas, e.g. that only Level 3 frameworks should be considered as apprenticeships and that apprenticeships should be confined to new entrants and existing employees that have been allocated new jobs. The report is a competent piece of work by its own lights but does not seem to have been followed up by a final report.

Following the 2016 Assembly Election the number of Government Departments was reduced. One of the axed Departments was Farry's Department of Employment and Learning which was subsumed into the Department of the Economy, under DUP Minister Simon Hamilton. At the time it was claimed that all policies and

programmes of the terminated Departments would be continued in other Departments. In the new Assembly the SDLP, UUP and Alliance parties refused to take up Ministerial positions, choosing to form a parliamentary Opposition. It remains to be seen whether Simon Hamilton will be held to account over the reform of apprenticeship that he has inherited.

The Northern Ireland economy, having low numbers employed in manufacturing, a large number of small companies and a large public service, is not the most fertile ground for the development of an apprenticeship system. In recent years it has followed the English rather than the Scottish model of apprenticeship. Nonetheless the existing system has been moving in the right direction and Stephen Farry's report put down realistic markers for how the system should develop.

In conclusion it seems that the apprenticeship systems in both parts of Ireland have much in common at the present time, not least in that both seem to be at a critical stage at a time of Government change.

Dave Alvey

L'Angleterre d'Aujourd'hui

"When circumstances alter, the British have the gift of adapting themselves very quickly to new conditions without dwelling upon what is past. Old principles, old ideas, old memories do not influence them. It is, however, very disconcerting to those of their associates who cannot change their attitude with the same facility" (*L'Angleterre d'aujourd'hui*, p.19).

So wrote Professor Andre Siegfried, an Anglophile Frenchman from Alsace, in 1924. Siegfried was Professor at the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques in Paris. He specialised in the development of the British Empire and concluded another book in 1931, *England's Crisis*, which I will deal with in a separate article. The main thread of both books is economic history, but party politics, the British political system and international policy are all commented upon with the perception of an admiring but concerned outsider.

His 1924 book was translated by H.H. Hemmings with the title *Post-War Britain*. In the Translator's Introduction it is stated:

"The value of the book is enhanced by the fact that it was written with the sole object of explaining to the French nation the tremendous economic and political upheavals taking place in Great Britain during the last ten years."

It is written with France rather than

Britain in mind, as Siegfried had no intention of there being a translation. And the translator notes that it could not have been written by an Englishman, who would be too close to the action and could not have taken the position of the "disinterested aloofness" of an "observer".

Siegfried was certainly correct in noting that Britain seamlessly moves on from its dark deeds. It was the prime rogue state on the seas—the Pirate Empire; it has been the greatest slave state in the world, organising a trade of industrial proportions in humanity; it was the champion extirpator/genocidal force of mankind, wiping more races off the face of the earth in the name of progress than any other; it was the most racialist state in the world, producing Social Darwinism to justify the racial hierarchy it established in its territories; it was the chief persecutor of homosexuality. But England moves on, turning over a new leaf and, unabashed, goes on to redefine the morality with which the rest of the world is judged—even if that involves a shameless 360 degree turn of position. No problem!

The main burden of Britain's Great War on Germany had been borne by France. The Great War had been trumpeted

by Britain as a great moral crusade against an unprecedented Evil that had emerged in the world, in the shape of Germany. But in the post-War world, having got Evil by the throat at great expense of blood and treasure, England suddenly changed its position to the consternation of her allies in the "war for civilisation".

Lord Esher, a representative of the old Whig aristocracy which had governed the British State and made it what it was in the world, knew that the propaganda was a lot of guff. He saw it as positively dangerous if taken in earnest, and thought that it was being taken like this by some. He understood the constancy of British policy in the world and saw the danger of the democratic age in potentially disrupting it. He remarked in his diary in 1918 that it might be a bad thing if the US Army, which Britain required to win the Great War it had declared, pushed the Germans back to Berlin. A comprehensive victory achieved by American arms over Germany would have consequences for British world-domination. (Extracts from Lord Esher's Diaries have appeared in *Irish Foreign Affairs* in 2016.)

It was better to have an Armistice, with the Royal Navy turning the screw on Germany through a starvation Blockade, than a comprehensive defeat of the German State. *Germania Delenda Est?* Germany was not to be destroyed, after all!

It followed logically from the War propaganda that Britain would seek a dismantling of the German State upon its defeat. France hoped for an insistence by its ally of a separation of the Rhineland and perhaps Bavaria from the source of all evil—Prussia. There were movements for separation in both regions and Germany had been a state, after all, for only just over a generation. It could be easily dismantled and disabled, given British agreement.

But Britain felt that weakening Germany by creating a Rhineland state would strengthen the position of France and remove the counter-balance of a German State from the Continent. Along with the creation of many small states to the east of Germany out of the former Austrian Empire, this would leave France hegemonic in Europe, something England had fought three great wars prior to its latest in 1914 to prevent.

So, whilst Britain collaborated with France in the humiliation of Germany in 1919 it refused to disable the German State, to make it incapable of future war.

The humiliation was sure to regenerate a future move to reverse the provisions of the Treaty imposed on Germany, and the

fact that the German State remained largely intact gave it the weight to eventually pose a threat against France.

France, unlike the island of Britain, shared a border with Germany and expected that, once she had made such a great sacrifice in defeating the Kaiser, she would be allowed to make provision for her future defence. This was especially the case since her ally had ended Conscriptio at the end of the War and scaled back her army to pre-War levels. But Britain reverted to its traditional policy of Balance of Power.

This is the context of Andre Siegfried's 1924 book. Britain could radically change its position and policy and expect the world to follow. But others found they could not afford to be as politically volatile as the island and its overseas Empire. They could not forget and get on with things as if nothing had happened and get back to business as usual, as Britain could, from its island fastness. As Siegfried noted in 1924:

"It has always been said that England's traditional policy has been to uphold the second strongest nation of the Continent against the strongest. It appears as if this point of view has half-unconsciously and half-instinctively reasserted itself since the victory. It is with astonishment that Frenchmen who visit Britain run up against a host of ancient prejudices which they thought were entirely extinct. Daily one hears of the ambitions of Louis XIV or Napoleon..." (pp.313).

Arnold Toynbee, the famous historian who indulged in propaganda work for the British State in service of dismantling the Ottoman Empire, immediately upon the conclusion of the Great War wrote a book in praise of Turkey in which he ridiculed the Greeks, who Britain had used as a catspaw in its Great War on the Turks. And who after all remembers the Armenians, whom Britain used as an instrument against the State they lived in—and who were then let bear the consequences of their collaboration with the enemy—and then did not get the state promised to them for their enormous sacrifice?

Siegfried made this perceptive comment on the British view of Europe and the origins of English morality:

"In their attitude toward Europe the British people have been impregnated with the spirit of Protestantism, with its official idealism, its way of treating all questions from a moral point of view, its love of laying down the law, its conviction that Protestant Britain is the salt of the earth, and finally its unconscious phariseeism which persuades the British that they are doing their duty when they

are really serving their own interests" (p.227).

Siegfried noted that over a third of the Parliamentary British Labour Party had preached at church or evangelical meetings. The Protestant impulse was present right across the English political spectrum.

Britain always acts in a moral fashion because what Britain does is always moral action. What it has done in the past is not always moral according to its current attitudes but the past is of no consequence to it when it judges itself. The past is for others to ruminate over at their leisure and it has a liberal intelligentsia to remind them of it. It has even been helpful in assisting those in other countries to examine the consciences of their nations and provided them the use of its academic institutions to further such study. Then it watches as they disseminate their agony back home and presumably is very glad to be of assistance!

England nationalised its Christianity in the 16th Century, making its King its own Pope and itself its own God. In doing so it adopted a superior moral feeling to Catholic Europe. But it was a Protestant Power without Protestant interests. It saw no problem in allying itself to the most reactionary of Catholic Powers to do down fellow Protestant Powers if the Balance of Power required it.

When England began to undermine its own Protestantism in the 19th Century, it retained the moral part of it for secular usage. Britain was moral rather than religious. There was a last flurry of religious enthusiasm to bolster the Great moral War of 1914 for its Liberal Nonconformist doubters in their metamorphosis into warmongers. It was an exercise in moral enhancement to cover all the angles and to bind the country's elements together as it embarked on a great struggle.

It is no wonder that Andre Siegfried wrote that "*the underlying inspiration of British policy remains a closed book*" (p.227).

Siegfried noticed something else about Britain that was unusual for someone who admired it so much. Perhaps it was because he remained a Frenchman in all his admiration or perhaps there was enough of a mixture of nationality within him as an Alsatian that he could be a detached observer with continued powers of perception:

"... despite all the transitions Britain remains unchanged. And even while she preaches with renewed enthusiasm the internationalism of trade, the peace of nations and the pardoning of political

sins, is it possible to imagine any people more exclusively and more narrowly nationalistic? In the light of this no one should be astonished at her profound incapacity to sympathise with any point of view that is not her own" (pp.235-6).

The idea that it was not "*possible to imagine any people more exclusively and more narrowly nationalistic*" than the British would seem to be odd to those in Ireland who have gravitated towards it to escape the restricting confines of Irish national culture. The English vote for Brexit must have been a great shock to them! Just when they thought they were becoming cosmopolitan by moving beyond the Irish island, they found that the place in which they were looking for an expansion of their horizons was pulling up the drawbridge in a thoroughly effective exhibition of nationalism.

Siegfried also noted that Britain conducts its way in the world with reference to itself, barely noticing the presence of others, except when they present any imagined form of challenge to British power and interests:

"The British are usually described as egotistical, but though this is perfectly true, they are honest and unashamed in their egoism. They simply are unable to look at a question from the point of view of anyone else, and that is all there is to it. Remind them that you are there and they will take account of you. Otherwise you do not exist,—for they are really very little concerned over what lies outside their interests. They are, in fact, much more 'ingenu' than 'perfid'... Slow to follow complicated reasonings, the Britisher arrives at his decisions almost entirely by instinct, without analysing the inner workings of his mind or being able to explain his motives. He is not bound by any logic or system of thought, and when baffled he does not try to persevere, but simply alters his attitude of mind with astonishing rapidity" (p.306).

The Germans are a great philosophical nation; the British did not bother their heads with such a thing. The Germans constructed a system of philosophy that was distinctly German even before they became a nation. The English became a state and then expanded it, securing the British island, and the neighbouring Irish island, against any possibility of a playing of a Balance of Power against her.

The German sense of political powerlessness felt at not being a state motivated them to construct a system of universal morality through their thought. Britain judged such a thing as positively disabling and concentrated on building the fact of Greater Britain across the globe and

controlling the seas with its Navy. The German philosophical morality disabled them when they came up against Britain as an enemy. Britain understood very well that morality is a consequence of power in the world. Power is the context of morality since it enables morality to be defined and applied in specific situations.

At the end of his 1924 book Siegfried, alarmed by Britain's post-War behaviour, and attempting to explain it to his fellow countrymen, asked a pertinent question about England which he was very able to answer himself:

"It is only a few years since Germany was Britain's most redoubtable rival. Is there no risk that tomorrow Germany

will again become a dangerous competitor? Truly the British ability to forget is extraordinary! The danger of yesterday is already forgotten. No one wishes to think of it anymore. Did they ever fear Germany? They don't remember it. The business is passed, happily passed, so why waste time over it? The peril may crop up again you say? God forbid. But if such things must be, then old England will once more manage to defend herself and triumph in the end..." (p.311).

The "*War to end all wars*" was nothing of the sort. Siegfried understood that there would be an interlude between the First and Second World Wars and England would take the next one in her stride—as she does.

Pat Walsh

Getting Casement backwards

(Part 1)

Adult female interviewee:

"I have absolutely no idea what they are doing or on about. For a family night out with children with fellows with their arses hanging out, I think it is ridiculous. We are just here hoping it will be finished soon" (*Kerry Today* - Radio Kerry – 25th July 2016 – recorded live at *Féile Fáilte* event at Banna Strand – about 10:00 PM Sat 23rd July 2016)

Extracts from an email letter read out on the *Kerry Today* programme, Tuesday 26th July 2016 from a Tralee family which had attended the event:

".. I had travelled with my family to Banna and was very impressed with the car parking, the security and how this event was to be a non-alcohol and a family fun event. We had a wonderful experience in the afternoon with hundreds of Irish, French, African and Arabic people all enjoying the dancing and singing from the wonderful *Siamsa Tire* and watched how young and old got involved in the big ceilí.

"My children wanted to see the fireworks display in the evening. As such we returned later that evening to enjoy what was touted to be the midnight re-imagining of Casement's ill-fated landing.

"And what a landing we got!

"This dance routine by Fearghus O Conchúir began quite innocently with six dancers on stage. However after about 15 minutes one male dancer took off his pink and black lycra leggings and top to reveal his completely tattooed body—which we could clearly see from his 'underwear' which had the word "addicted" written on the back and had two large holes cut out to reveal his bare buttocks. Is this what they see as "family friendly"?

"It was highly sexualised and in the

majority aimed at a homosexual audience with long extracts being read aloud from what appeared to be an autopsy of Casement's body.

"The intention was to highlight Casement's homosexuality and references to 'anus, riding, "deep to the hilt", etc as well as men dancing and groping with each other on stage.

"This was totally inappropriate for an audience with young children. It was not family friendly and you could sense the unease of people watching. The final straw came with the mention of the word "erection".

"We left in disgust..."

In response to criticisms the organisers released a short statement which was broadcast on the *Kerry Today* radio programme:

"We want to thank the Arts Council and Kerry County Council for their support. There were many different kinds of families represented at the event across the day. While we appreciate that the content of *Butterflies and Bones* challenged a small number of the audience who were present for the later part of the night the majority of the feedback we have received has been overwhelmingly positive. Roger Casement's life is 'a multi-layered story'. The content and words in that performance came from Casement himself... *Butterflies and Bones* celebrates that story and all that comes with it" (*Radio Kerry*, 26 July 2016).

Féile Fáilte (Festival of Welcomes) was advertised by poster as "*A day long dance celebration on Banna Strand, Co Kerry ... from 3pm to midnight.*" It was further described: "*FREE EVENT for all the family and families of all kinds.*" A number of companies of musicians, actors and dancers were listed to perform on the day.

Butterflies and Bones, Fearghus Ó Conchúir's 70 minute long, interpretive dance piece, was scheduled as the last featured performance before nightfall. It was followed by a fireworks display, a Hip Hop group and finally a disco on the beach. It was the only performance on the day which was concerned directly with Casement as a historical figure. As such it reserved for itself a special and climactic position among the events of the day.

This was the premiere of the dance piece in Ireland but the real premiere had happened, appropriately, in London, the previous month, June 11th to be precise.

The London Correspondent for *The Dance Insider*, Josephine Leask, commented in her review:

"The dancers flirt and tease in duets, slapping and tickling each other while the naked and tattooed body of Matthew Morris writhes on the floor. They carry Morris downstage, pointing suggestively to his bottom as medical details about Casement's over-used anus are heard on the voice-over. The queerness of Casement is the aspect of his identity which is presented most forcibly in the work..."

The controversial *Butterflies and Bones* was only one of an array of events and activities at *Féile Fáilte* which included performances from a variety of dance, theatrical and musical groups along with opportunities for public participation and a ceili on the beach.

THE CASEMENT PROJECT

The *Casement Project*, of which the above was part, was the brain child of Fearghus Ó Conchúir, an interpretive dance choreographer originally from the County Waterford Gaeltacht village of Ring. Ó Conchúir studied English literature at Oxford and has fashioned a creditable reputation for himself in the arts world in Britain. He is an openly gay man now in his early forties. It is clear from interviews he identifies to a degree with Casement based on a view of him as a historically significant homosexual.

Dance played an important role in the project. Ó Conchúir explained in interviews and on the project website that he sought to encourage in Ireland, articulate-ness via the body. Articulate-ness via words is well developed here, he believed, but there is a lack via arts of purely physical expression; a worthy and worthwhile insight.

In an interview on the *Raidio na Gaeltachta* noontime magazine programme *An Saol ó Dheas* (Life down South) he made a revealing admission on the day before

Féile Fáilte took place on Banna Strand. He explained his understanding of Casement's arrival at Banna and how he conceived of the celebration he was organising:

"I think at the time there was not a welcome for him— for him personally, and for the sort of person he was, perhaps on account of his sexuality and so on. I feel that we, as a country, are after moving forward a good distance over that hundred years and I want to celebrate the sort of country that we are now, a country that is able to be more welcoming to the stranger who reaches port here but also to the stranger who is amongst us already" (This writer's translation).

After he had landed by rowboat from a submarine it was the awkward reality of the Royal Irish Constabulary who sought his arrest and of supporters of the Irish Parliamentary Party led by John Redmond who saw his active association with Germany as a form of betrayal that gave Casement cause for worry. At that time, April 1916, in Ireland, no sexual associations or innuendos of any sort were attached to Casement's name. Local people in Kerry, at that time, would not have associated him with what was then considered a form of sexual deviancy. That Ó Conchúir would think otherwise reveals a naivety on his part; almost a childlike innocence.

The main sponsors of *The Casement Project* were the *Irish Arts Council, Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme*, and *14-18-Now*; the official British World War One arts commissioning body. There was an exotic collection of additional sponsors. All this will be discussed at a later date.

The already mentioned especially composed dance piece on Casement, *Butterflies and Bones* takes its name from his penchant for collecting samples of tropical butterflies and the return of his bones to Ireland in 1965 for the state funeral and re-interment.

SYMPOSIUMS

The project was many faceted. It involved two symposiums.

The first took place on 25 Feb 2016, at NUIM, National University of Ireland, Maynooth. The title was *Bodies Politic*. It consisted of discussions with a number of Irish artists, working in different modes of expression, who were creating works to mark the 1916 centenary under the auspices of the Arts Council. The format had the artists undergo a public interview concerning their project with a relevantly qualified academic. A one page descriptive document contains an introductory paragraph:

"There is a clear focus upon metaphorical and physical bodies in several of the proposed artistic engagements with the commemoration of 1916. 'Bodies Politic' is a symposium that brings together artists and academics to discuss the bodies of individuals and the body of the state in the context of the 1916 commemorations".

Another academic event *Hospitable Bodies: the Casement Symposium* was organised to take place at the British Library, Euston Rd, London for 3rd June 2016. Here the emphasis was less on the arts and more on history. A moderator of one of the discussions was one Prof Roy Foster, Oxford's glittering star of Irish history writing. What was strikingly noticeable was the absence of any contributor who had expressed doubts let alone opposition to the notion of the authenticity of the alleged personal Casement diaries. Such an individual was one for whom this symposium was distinctly inhospitable!

KILKENNY ARTS FESTIVAL

On the succeeding 6th August, as part of the Kilkenny Arts Festival, a panel discussion occurred, moderated by Fintan O'Toole, the intellectual jack of all trades of *The Irish Times*. The panel consisted of Ó Conchúir, Barbara Dawson, Director of the Hugh Lane gallery which hosted recent Casement connected art exhibitions and the inevitable Prof Roy Foster. More than any other *Casement Project* event this was an attempt to probe into the historical Casement. Foster, a most gifted raconteur entertained the audience with an account of a tragic-comic figure who came from "a deeply dysfunctional family" whose mother, during his childhood, "died alone in a boarding house of cirrhosis of the liver".

When O'Toole opened the discussion to questions from the audience, a lean middle aged man near to the front put his hand up and spoke out: "O'Toole, I pray you sir, a dissenting voice...". O'Toole told the man he was meant to ask a question and presented him with the mike. The man walked up from his seat to just beside the panel and remarked "I see there is no dissenting member on the panel." "Dissenting of what?" asked O'Toole. "Dissenting (pause) the consensus that you are putting out here".

The man went on to address his words to the main *Casement Project* organiser who he called "Mr O'Conner".

In reference to the alleged autopsy on the body after the execution which "Mr O'Connor" had referred to earlier in discussion with O'Toole and which had mentioned the probing of Casement's

dilated anus "to discover whether he had the sex he claimed to have had in his diaries". The man explained "if you were hanged, sir" the very same symptoms would be exhibited. Ó Conchúir sat numb and motionless. Before the man could say much more he was interrupted by O'Toole who demanded he ask a question. After some audience heckling the man was allowed to say a short few extra words and then due to pressure from O'Toole and more conservative elements in the audience he was forced to sit down.

I was to discover later that this man had driven all the way from near Tralee, Co Kerry to Kilkenny, to make his views known, to speak truth to power and to protest at the lopsided nature of the *Casement Project*. Indeed, the fact that nowhere in the official programme of the so-called *Casement Project* was there the least scope offered for the articulation of a dissenting vision to the dogma of the *queer Casement* is shameful on account of the undemocratic, illiberal and anti-intellectual values which underlie such a stance.

On the night previous to the *Body of Evidence* discussion, occurred the *Wake for Roger Casement* event. The choreographer main mover behind the *Casement Project* described it online as *something that could happen late at night and could honour the contemporary relevance of Casement's legacy with queer seriousness and sass*. The website of the Kilkenny Arts Festival enthused:

"100 years—almost to the day—since Roger Casement was executed for his part in the Easter Rising, this unique club night with a twist wakes this rebel, human rights pioneer and queer icon in a fusion of dance, music, word and song."

The night began with a garishly costumed drag artist prancing through the streets to the venue to open proceedings a half-hour before midnight. It was part cabaret, part public dance event, part serious, part energetic escapism.

A highlight of the night was the reading out by English actor and gay man Simon Callow of the text of the alleged autopsy report on Casement's body from the prison medical officer Dr Mander. This was the *leitmotiv* or keynote of the *Casement Project*, which kept recurring again and again.

Tim O'Sullivan

TO BE CONTINUED

The Irish Times failed to publish the letter below, submitted on 28th December

Irish Times Reporting Of Sex Abuse in Church Of Ireland

On 23 December 2016 the *Church of Ireland Gazette* published a letter from me. It was in response to a letter from 1999-2012 St Patrick's Cathedral Dean Robert MacCarthy. The subject matter was the Church of Ireland, St Patrick's Cathedral, and child abuser Patrick O'Brien.

A similar letter was refused publication in the *Irish Times*. That makes five turned down since O'Brien's conviction on 10 November. Two appeared in *The Examiner* newspaper and two in the *Gazette* (the other one was dispatched only to the *Times*).

Last night, I watched for a second time the film *Spotlight*, on the *Boston Globe's* investigation of widespread abuse by Roman Catholic clergy and that Church's delinquent cover-up strategy. A significant sub-theme was on a failure by the newspaper to follow up information on clerical abuse, that it possessed some years prior to commencing its investigation.

Amongst other things, the *Irish Times* is uninterested locally in following up separate self-contradictory assertions from St Patrick's Dean Robert MacCarthy. He stated: a) that he was unaware prior to 2004 that Cathedral volunteer O'Brien was an abuser; b) that a woman whose son was abused by O'Brien kept "agitating" him about O'Brien's presence.

The paper appears uninterested generally, in that it did not cover O'Brien's trial and conviction in October. I wrote and asked why not. Readers Representative Eoin McVeigh told me they had intended doing so, but encountered unexplained "capacity problems". However, the *Times* intended covering O'Brien's 10 November sentence hearing.

Though the information appeared in a small article at the bottom of page 8 on 11 November, the paper's religious affairs correspondent Patsy McGarry cited Dean MacCarthy on being agitated by the mother of an abuse victim. The importance of the point, that should have been front-page news, was further diminished when the paper refused to follow up or to accept a letter on the topic. Instead, the Editor was "satisfied", as he put it in an email, with its one-day coverage of one of Ireland's more prolific child sex offenders. Kevin O'Sullivan's exact words were, "I remain satisfied with the coverage that we have given to the failings of the Church of Ireland over the years and may decide to return to it in due course".

Furthermore, McVey stated that it was policy not to discuss non-publication of letters, apart from stating that to be successful they should meet criteria that included "topicality, erudition, brevity, originality and clarity".

An indication of lack of interest is the fact that the paper has not contacted Kerry Lawless, the person mostly responsible for O'Brien's November 2016 13-year sentence, who O'Brien was convicted of molesting in 1989. In 2010 Lawless contacted former St Patrick's Grammar School classmates and successfully encouraged them to speak to gardai.

Lawless and the clergyman Canon Stephen Neill strongly criticised the Church of Ireland's attempt to absolve itself of responsibility, on RTÉ's *This week* radio programme on November 20th. The *Irish Times* newspaper refused also to report that. A brief, anodyne, late evening irishtimes.com report appeared, that failed even to mention the radio source of the information.

Luckily, the *Church of Ireland Gazette* had the necessary news sense to follow up.

Robert MacCarthy had stated to the *Gazette* that successive Cathedral deans were not informed officially about O'Brien's history, and hence he was unaware of it. As a result of contact from the Cathedral Administrator, Dean MacCarthy then issued a correction by way of letter. In 1999 Dean MacCarthy was told officially of O'Brien's 1989 abuse conviction. He then removed O'Brien from a list of Cathedral volunteers. This was ineffective as, inexplicably, O'Brien remained a Cathedral volunteer. In 2004 Dean MacCarthy met with Kerry Lawless who finally and successfully insisted on O'Brien's removal.

Dean MacCarthy further reported that his 1991-99 predecessor, the late Dean Maurice Stewart, was told also but did nothing at all about O'Brien's Cathedral presence.

Stewart's predecessor, Dean Victor Griffin, was in office in the 1980s when O'Brien's abuse was brought to his attention. No evidence has emerged, in light of this knowledge, that anything specific was done to safeguard St Patrick's Grammar School pupils, Cathedral choristers, and others assaulted by O'Brien at that time.

Only a newspaper or broadcasting organisation has the resources necessary to investigate what happened thoroughly, to stimulate public awareness, and thereby to encourage more victims to come forward. Unfortunately, it appears as though the *Irish Times* intends not to emulate the *Boston Globe*. Its irresponsibly minimalist reporting instead discourages awareness.

Currently, the *Irish Times* is agitating against fake news on the *Facebook* platform. It might reconsider its no news stance on Patrick O'Brien and the Church of Ireland.

Dr. Niall Meehan

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

Commemoration of the Battle of Kilmichael

The 96th Commemoration of the Battle of Kilmichael, Co. Cork took place at the Monument at Kilmichael on Sunday 27th November 2016 in the presence of a great attendance of over one thousand people. Those present included Monsignor Caoimhín O Cealleacháin; Séan O Céileachair, Honorary Secretary (son of Tom Kelleher); Séamus Lantry, Chairman of General Tom Barry National Commemoration Committee; and many public representatives.

The Oration was given by Liadh Ni Riada, Sinn Féin, MEP:

"A chairde,

It is 96 years since Tom Barry's Flying Column changed the trajectory of the War of Independence. A week prior to the Kilmichael Ambush Michael Collins' Squad dealt a devastating blow to the British Government's Intelligence operations in Dublin, executing more than a dozen agents and informers across the city. The British may have been prepared to write this off as an anomaly, a freak incident in which they were caught on the hop. However, when the Third West Cork Brigade wiped out a convoy of Auxiliaries at this spot seven days later, the reality must have dawned on them that they were facing a new challenge. A reinvigorated and fearless guerrilla army.

Kilmichael was quite unlike anything that had come before in the War of Independence. This would not be a hit and run operation. Barry had deliberately picked a spot that gave good cover and vantage points but no route of retreat. This would be a fight to the death. In his own words the British had *"gone down in the mire to destroy us and our nation and down after them we had to go"*. After a ferocious battle, which involved everything from rifles and grenades to hand to hand combat, all but one of the British convoy lay dead. Three IRA volunteers; Jim O' Sullivan, Michael McCarthy and Pat Deasy were also killed in the fighting.

The ambush had been an outstanding military victory for the IRA and it marked the beginning of a series of large scale encounters with the British that continued right up until the end of the War of Independence, with similar successes for IRA units at Dromkeen, Coolavokig,

Crossbarry, Clonbanin and Carrow-kennedy, to name but a few. More important than any military victory, however, Kilmichael sent out a message to the world that what was happening in Ireland was not an inexplicable crime wave; was not *"unrest"* or *"Troubles"*. Ireland was at war. The British were fighting to hold onto their Empire and the Irish Republic was fighting for its very existence.

It sent a message to IRA units across the country that the Auxiliaries, believed to be the elite of the British Army, practically invincible, were far from it, and they responded accordingly.

So why do we gather here every year? Certainly not to revel in the deaths of 17 Auxiliaries, loathed though they were by the local population for their brutality. We, of course, remember the sacrifices of those revolutionaries who risked all for a better Ireland and in particular we honour Jim, Michael and Pat who made the ultimate sacrifice. However, the reason this battle holds such significance, the reason we continue to remember Kilmichael 96 years on is because it was a turning point in the birth of our nation.

The Irish Republic was proclaimed in 1916, ratified by the people in 1918, its vision laid out in the Democratic programme of the First Dáil in 1918 but it was here, in 1920, that it firmly asserted its right to exist in the face of aggression; that it showed the world that it was determined to survive. It was no longer an academic exercise, nor the romantic aspiration of poets and playwrights. It was here, now, alive, as real as the ground we are standing on and any jackboot that attempted to come down on it was going to find itself booted right back.

There are those who talk about the War of Independence as if it were a civilised and dignified occasion. A gentleman's disagreement sorted out with all the civility and ceremony of pistols at dawn. It was not. It was a dangerous time to be alive, in which brutality was an everyday fact of life and could be visited upon you whether you were involved in the war or not. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the people who endured such times for us and in doing so it is worth remembering what they endured it for. They did not endure it so that we could let people sleep in doorways and alleys while entire estates of houses lie empty.

They did not endure it so that working Irish families could scrape through years of austerity in order to pay off a debt that was not theirs. They did not endure it so that the country they fought for could be, in Connolly's words: *"cut to pieces as a corpse upon the dissecting table"* and her

sovereignty sold off.

The War of Independence occurred because the British Government ignored the democratically expressed will of the people of Ireland. Now, having apparently learned nothing in the intervening 96 years, the British Government has once again ignored the clearly expressed wishes of the people of Ireland. In June 2016 the people of the North East of this country voted very clearly to remain with the rest of Ireland in the European Union. Regardless of what your views on the EU are, Ireland must make decisions regarding it as one unit. Having one part of Ireland in and one part out will spell disaster for the entire island; it will effectively repartition the country. Partition was a bad idea in 1921; to entrench it after 95 years of actual failure is utter madness.

Financially, it will be an enormous setback to a fragile economy that we are told is in recovery but has yet to share the benefits of this supposed recovery with the low and middle income families that make up the bulk of our population. It will affect trade, not just internationally but within the island and the imposition of a physical border will have effects that will spread far beyond the border counties. Partition has stunted the growth of this island's economy for almost a century. We must make it clear to the British, Irish and European Governments that we, the Irish people, reject borders, hard or soft, British or European in our country. The reunification of Ireland is the only realistic achievable and permanent solution to the problem.

There are those who only pay lip service to reunification. They tell us now is not the time. Now is exactly the time. The current political landscape does not only present an opportunity for reunification, it demands it. They tell us we can't afford reunification but every major study carried out in the past few years tells us the exact opposite; that we can't afford partition. That we can't afford the duplication, bureaucracy, inefficiencies and barriers caused by having two competing entities on our tiny island.

They tell us it's not realistic; but how realistic was the prospect of an Irish Republic at a time when the British Empire was at a peak of its powers? How realistic was the prospect of a largely untrained underground guerrilla army taking on the strongest military force on the planet?

The Good Friday Agreement provides a peaceful and democratic pathway to reunification. Unity is not in the gift of the British Government; it now rests in the hands of the people north and south to be expressed in concurrent referendums. We

need to secure a vote for the people and to win the vote for unity.

This week Sinn Féin has launched a series of campaigns on our vision for a united Ireland. They cover a broad range of issues, from the price of partition and the possibilities opened up by reunification to our proposals on national reconciliation and an all-Ireland health service, free at the point of delivery. On Monday, we will publish a discussion document based on these campaigns and more entitled *'Towards a United Ireland'*. The document will outline the case for unity and show that a united Ireland by definition must be a new Ireland. It is more than the sum of its parts.

The document highlights that a new, united Ireland makes sense in terms of economy, reconciliation, inclusion and equality, public services, investment and exports, agriculture and agrifoods, policing and justice and even sport. While the document highlights the case for unity, the type of New Ireland we build is still very much up for discussion and debate.

A lot has happened since the flying column set out for Kilmichael. Much of which was unseen by the volunteers. Time has divided republicans. However, all republicans from our many traditions share the common objective of Irish Unity and the building of the hard fought for republic.

Reunification is not, indeed cannot, be the responsibility of Sinn Féin alone.

If we mean to build an Ireland for all the people then we all have a responsibility to plan, to act and to deliver unity.

So, to those who have yet to get involved in the discussion on reunification, I say now is the time to make your voice heard. To those hard working activists in other parties, now is the time to play a meaningful role in the discussion that will shape a New Ireland. To our Unionist brothers and sisters, I say your input is as essential as everyone else's. Take part in the conversation, even from an opposing point of view. Share with us your hopes, concerns and ideas and we will share with you our vision of a fair, free and progressive country that cherishes all the children of the nation equally.

This is a fine monument. A fitting tribute to the nationally significant event that happened here and the brave people who made it happen. But if we really want to honour their memory and live up to their ideals, then the only fitting memorial we can build is a free, sovereign, united Ireland. Let us come together to build it".

Michael Stack ©

Press Release, Luke Ming Flanagan MEP

CETA Vote In The European Parliament ENVI Committee

A Treaty most of you have never heard of but one which will have a major impact on all our lives on this island came a step closer to ratification last week with a decision by one of the most powerful Committees to recommend its acceptance by Parliament at a Plenary session next month.

CETA (Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement) is a proposed deal between Canada and the EU and its Member States that was negotiated entirely in secret, behind closed doors, in consultation almost exclusively with big business. It emerged into the daylight, fully formed and ready for translation, only when people began to learn about a similar but even bigger proposed deal, TTIP (Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership), between the USA and the EU, which likewise is being negotiated in secret.

Despite the tag, CETA is not about Trade, it's about big business and standards—labour standards, environment standards, food quality standards, healthcare standards—and it's about big business and access to and potential private ownership of what are normally seen as public utilities—water, power, transport, communication, etc. etc.

In its push for these massive intercontinental agreements, big business speaks lovingly of 'removing barriers to free trade'; those so-called barriers, however, are society's hard-won protections against the greed of those same big global corporations.

The report on which the ENVI voted this week was what's called a Draft Opinion from ENVI on its concerns about CETA, to the Committee on International Trade (INTA), the committee responsible for such deals.

In its *'Short Justification'* that report stated the following:

CETA crosses the following red lines of the ENVI [European Parliament Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety] opinion (paragraphs 2, 5, 7, 9, 14 and 17):

- o the precautionary principle is not reflected—instead precaution is conditioned by reference to international agreements—none of which include this principle,
- o regulatory cooperation—while being voluntary—is not limited to clearly specified sectorial areas where the US and the EU have similar levels of protection or where one could expect upward harmonisation, but is all encompassing,
- o it has provisions on
 - 1 public healthcare services—provisions that *de facto* limit the freedom of governments to take policy decisions,
 - 2 GMOs—provisions moreover designed to undermine EU GMO laws, their application and their future development,
- o it includes cooperation on chemicals—thus involving one of the strongest opponents to REACH in its implementation,

- o it includes public and social services subject to a negative list,
- o has no binding provisions on animal welfare—instead promotes an increase in trade without any proper safeguards for animal protection,
- o it includes ICS, a dispute settlement mechanism that grants foreign investors a parallel jurisdiction to challenge states, fundamentally undermining the sovereign rights of the EU and its Member States.

Application of CETA risks undermining *inter alia* the following standards that ENVI considered fundamental (see paragraph 8):

- o non-approval of active substances and EU maximum residue levels for pesticides,
- o regulatory measures with regard to endocrine disrupters,
- o the EU's integrated approach to food safety,
- o the achievement of EU climate and energy targets.

Contrary to ENVI demands (see paragraph 10), CETA:

- o only partially protects geographical indications,
- o has no provisions on the reduction of antibiotics in livestock farming,
- o does nothing to implement the UNECE Agreements from 1958 and 1998 on cars,
- o does not promote renewables,
- o uses negative lists with regard to the right to regulate in the energy sector.'

In its summary final paragraph, it said: The Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on International Trade, as the committee responsible, to recommend that Parliament *decline to give its consent* (my emphasis) to the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada, of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part.

And yet it fell. Why? Because the dreaded Grand Coalition of the European Parliament, the EPP (Fine Gael), S&D (Socialists & Democrats—Labour) and ALDE (Liberals) has decided that the free market and big business and neoliberalism is all that matters, and the people and the environment be damned. They put in just one amendment—removed those two vital words in that final paragraph, *'decline to'*, so that it then read *"recommend that Parliament give its consent to the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)"*.

It's still not too late to fight this, but time is running out. I would urge people to please contact their local MEPs, their Fine Gael MEPs specifically but no harm to let the rest of us know also, and urge them to vote against this deal.



LABOUR

Comment

ISSN 0790-1712

VOLUME 35 No. 2

CORK

ISSN 0790-1712

Eugene V. Debs On 1916

The British government has eternally disgraced and damned itself by the brutal and cowardly murder of the leaders of the Irish revolt. Granting all that can be justly charged against them their motive was of the purest and their attempt to establish a republic and liberate their people as brave and patriotic an act as ever sent heroes to martyrs' graves.

The Sinn Fein movement consisted of liberty-loving Irishmen who were brave enough and grand enough to offer up their lives to speed the day of freedom and self-government for their long-suffering fellow-countrymen. The leaders may have miscalculated in the making of their plans and been precipitate in executing them but they set the example of heroic self-sacrifice and paid the penalty with their lives.

Pearse, the provisional president, was one of the most cultured of men and one of the bravest that ever gave his life to the cause of freedom. Skeffington was eminent as a humanitarian and though he had not even an active part in the outbreak, he was shot like a dog without even the semblance of a trial.

But one of the commanding figures of the Sinn Feiners, and one of the most heroic was our Socialist comrade, James Connolly, whose fate will make Great Britain blush for a thousand years to come.

James Connolly was well known to the Socialists and working people of the United States. He addressed them by

thousands and often they were stirred to enthusiasm by his eloquence and his inspiring appeals. He was a man of extraordinary ability and power, magnetic personality, and a natural leader of men, and his foul taking off, the eternal disgrace of his royal murderers, is an irreparable calamity to the labor movement.

In the first outbreak between the Irish rebels and the British soldiers Connolly was severely wounded and it was while he was in a semi-unconscious state as the result of his wounds that he was dragged forth to be shot. Limp and almost lifeless this heroic comrade of ours was propped up against a dead wall and while trying with glazed eyes to look his assassins in the face the firing squad riddled his great heart with bullets.

James Connolly is dead and yet does

he live and speak to the oppressed and as he never lived and spoke before.

The seed that James Connolly sowed in the brains and hearts of his enslaved countrymen will germinate now that his precious blood has fertilized the soil and in due time the social revolution will accomplish what the Irish rebellion failed in, and sweep landlordism and capitalism and every other form of oppression from the Emerald Isle and from the face of the earth.

(EUGENE VICTOR DEBS (1855-1926) was born in Indiana, USA of French parents. He became an engine fireman. He took a leading part in the formation of the American Railway Union in 1893. Joining the Socialist movement in 1897, he helped establish the Socialist Party of America of which James Connolly was a member and a national organiser.

Debs stood for the US Presidency on five occasions. In 1920, whilst serving a 10-year sentence for his opposition to World War I, he polled almost 1,000,000 votes, which in 1921 resulted in his release from prison.

The US author Irving Stone wrote a remarkable book titled "Adversary in the House" (1947), a biographical novel based on the life of Eugene V. Debs and of his wife Kate, who was opposed to Socialism.)

Subscribers to the magazine are regularly offered special rates on other publications

Irish Political Review is published by the IPR Group: write to—

1 Sutton Villas, Lower Dargle Road
Bray, Co. Wicklow or
33 Athol Street, Belfast BT12 4GX or
2 Newington Green Mansions, London N16 9BT
or *Labour Comment*, TEL: 021-4676029
C/O Shandon St. P.O., Cork

Subscription by Post:
12 issues: Euro-zone & World Surface: €40;
Sterling-zone: £25

Electronic Subscription:

€ 15 / £12 for 12 issues
(or € 1.30 / £1.10 per issue)

You can also order from:

<https://www.atholbooks-sales.org>