

IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

April 2018

Vol.33, No.4 ISSN 0790-7672

and **Northern Star** incorporating **Workers' Weekly** Vol.32 No.4 ISSN 954-5891

Some Bizarre Theatre From Britain!

A British spy—who spied on Russia was found out and convicted of treason in Russia, but was repatriated to Britain in an exchange of spies—was poisoned in England at the military town of Salisbury within a few miles of the British military poison centre of Porton Down. The substance was said to be a rare military poison invented in the Soviet Union.

There is an international organisation with responsibility for the monitoring of such poisons. Britain did not initially refer the matter to it. It identified the poison very quickly, presumably because it possessed some itself, and suggested that poisoning of the repatriated spy was done by the Russian Government either by direct action or by criminal negligence in letting it out of its control. It put out a public challenge asking it to say which it was, or else to give some other explanation.

When Moscow did not comply with the 48 hour ultimatum, the British Government said that this proved that the Russian Government was likely to have done the poisoning and it expelled 23 members of the Russian diplomatic body, but not the Ambassador, and the British Foreign Secretary said that all the expelled diplomats, or virtually all of them, were spies, and that the expulsions would disrupt Russian espionage in Britain for a generation.

Washington, after some hesitation, said that the British opinion that the Russian Government did the poisoning was “*plausible*”.

Why did Putin decide to try to execute this British spy whom he had pardoned in 2010 when offering him in an exchange of spies? Was it that he had reason to think the Spy Sergei Skripal had, in breach of an agreement, become dangerously active again? Nobody in the British Government, Opposition, or media, had even hinted at such a thing.

The only motive suggested for Putin doing it just now is that he was fighting an Election and wanted to make sure he would win.

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Illegal Settlement Goods

US Rules, OK!

On 22nd January last a Bill entitled *The Control of Economic Activity (Occupied Territories) Bill 2018* was presented to the Irish Senate by Senator Frances Black. The Bill proposed to make it illegal “*for a person to import or attempt to import settlement goods*” into the Republic of Ireland. Similarly, those who “*assist another person to import or attempt to import settlement goods*” would be guilty of a crime under which they would be liable to up to five years imprisonment.

The Bill was due to have been debated on 30th January 2018 but, before it could be voted on, it was announced that it would be frozen. In the interim, pressures were put on the Irish Government to oppose the Bill. Indeed, the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu summoned the Irish Ambassador to lodge his protest against the Bill. But there was much more effective, but covert, pressure applied—one that undoubtedly proved the most convincing, resulting in the decision to freeze the Bill before it could be voted on.

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Ireland, Brexit and the future of the EU, Part 2

The flaw in Stiglitz

US economist Joseph Stiglitz is the most cited source in Sinn Fein's discussion document on the future of the Eurozone. His book on the subject has been influential: it exposes the ideological foundations of the Euro and provides a critique of how the EU and International Monetary Fund treated Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain during the Euro-debt Crisis. However, Stiglitz's analysis arises from a long-

running debate about the Euro within the Economics profession and is marred by a weak understanding of the politics and economic history of the EU. If the hard Left grouping in the European Parliament to which Sinn Fein is affiliated, the GUE/NGL, bases its strategy on sources like Stiglitz, it will end up making debating points on the sidelines as Macron, Merkel and others shore up the neo-liberal

architecture of the Eurozone.

This article makes note of some useful insights provided by Stiglitz in *The Euro and its Threat to the Future of Europe* (Allen Lane, 2016), especially regarding the European Central Bank (ECB). It summarises further insights into the ECB from Emma Clancy's document for Sinn Fein, *The Future of the Eurozone* (2017). A common weakness in the analyses of Stiglitz and Clancy is then identified and an alternative strategy proposed. The article concludes by pinpointing the major defect in the Stiglitz approach. Following

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Irish Labour and the Bolsheviks

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Redmond Centenary Conference in Waterford

Eamonn de Paor

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But all other British (and Irish) comment on the Russian Election ridiculed it as a faked affair that Putin could not possibly lose.

Another suggestion was that Putin wanted to let it be known how traitors abroad would be dealt with. But a discreet assassination by some other method, which could not be sensationalised as the rare military poison has been, would have achieved that purpose: the message would have got through to those to whom it applied.

Why did Whitehall only refer the matter to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons after being challenged to do so? An international indictment would surely have had more weight. Was it not confident of getting an OPCW indictment?

A number of factual assertions have got into circulation, without factual contradiction, from beyond the British information/propaganda system, which do not fit well with the British line. One is that the inventor of the poison in the

Soviet Union went into the service of the United States as the Soviet state was breaking up (as Nazi personnel with anti-Communist expertise of various kinds did in 1945), and that he published the recipe for the poison.

It is also asserted without contradiction that the poison was made in a Soviet factory located in Uzbekistan—and that the factory was decontaminated by the United States, which means that the US took possession of it.

The few spokesmen for the Russians interviewed on the BBC reject the assertion that the poison is a Russian invention. It was Soviet. This is treated as an absurd quibble. And so it is from the view the UK and EU have chosen to adopt towards the Russian remnant of the Soviet Union that has unexpectedly proved to be viable. But the Russian State knows very well that it is not the 'Soviet Empire', and it is determined to make a go of itself on different foundations.

Baroness Chakrabarti—a Labour peer with a civil rights background—has become part of the British Establishment,

and she appears to be of the opinion that it is legally of no consequence that the state in which the poison was invented no longer exists. She shares the Government's view that responsibility passed on to Russia as a kind of successor state.

Russia founded the Soviet Union, but it is not a successor state in any meaningful sense. It is only a survivor that was not intended to prosper by the forces that pulled the Soviet Union apart.

Russia now appears to be developing as a nation-state. It was not a nation-state when Home Rule Ireland went into ecstatic alliance with it in 1914, as a willing component of the British Empire, for the destruction of Germany. It was a miscellany of peoples of various kinds in an Empire autocratically governed by the Tsar. The Bolshevik Revolution took command of the Empire and subjected the various peoples to hegemonised national developments. In 1941-45 it extended its power by defeating Nazi Germany—which Britain had collaborated with for five years before suddenly deciding to make war on it and bungling that war. When the Soviet Union broke up in 1990, the national developments it had fostered all proved to be more viable politically than did the Russia that had fostered them. What Putin has done is develop a national body politic in Russia.

Capitalism was established in the Russian region of the disintegrating Soviet state by transferring State assets into the private ownership of President Yeltsin's friends, making them Oligarchs. These Oligarchs were not capitalist entrepreneurs. Their idea of enterprise was to affiliate with, and sell out to, Western multi-nationals. For a period there was in a real sense no national government in Russia. That was the era of 'democracy' that preceded Putin's 'tyranny'. Social welfare collapsed and the population declined.

In the course of pulling Russia out of plutocratic anarchy and forming it into a nation state capable of electing a government, Putin has made wealthy enemies, tacking his way amongst the Oligarchs, allying with some in order to curb others. There are many immensely wealthy Russians in London, some still having connections in Russia and at least tolerating the national system and others entirely hostile to it. The latter have been given time on BBC to explain that the Kremlin is run by a gang of criminals.

Twenty years ago, in the period of anarchy, there were a dozen or a score of

political parties contesting Russian elections. They were parties with no continuity from one election to another. There were many ephemeral parties, but there was no party system and therefore no national body politic. Practical democracy requires a small number of major parties with some degree of history behind them, so that voters are in a position to make a choice to some purpose.

There is now a national system of state that is likely to prove durable. For that system to be governed by means of an effective electoral choice between parties, there needs to be a choice of parties with programmes designed to function within the established system, aspiring only to make marginal differences to it. The parties opposed to Putin's party are fundamentally opposed to the system which he has established and are therefore not competitive within it.

It was accepted in Britain (the prototype party democracy), during the party crisis following the collapse of the Liberal Party in the Great War, that elected government in a Parliamentary system required a basic ground of consensus between the parties. The Labour Party may have had a different idea to start with, but it soon shaped itself to the requirements of the system.

In Ireland after 1932, Fine Gael shaped itself to the post-Treaty system introduced by De Valera. This was after losing a series of elections over fifteen years, during which it had described Fianna Fail rule more or less as the rule of Putin's party in Russia is now being described in the West by his party opponents.

*

English democracy is unique in the world—and it is well aware of the fact. And yet it treats itself, paradoxically, as the norm to which the world should shape itself. Ireland has in recent times absorbed English assumptions and prejudices, and its elite displays English reflexes in their attitude towards the world. It should have been sympathetic towards Mugabe's repatriating to Zimbabwe of the land stolen by Rhodesia within living memory. But it wasn't.

It would have been if its members lived in the history of their own development. But they don't. They set about discarding their own history about forty years ago. That was their bizarre response to the War in the North.

They entered Europe along with Britain, in the Joycean spirit of escaping the nightmare of history that they had become for themselves. They became European

Israel complains about violation of its sovereignty while being a serial violator

In the 4-month period from 1 July to 30 October 2017, Israel violated Lebanon's airspace 758 times for a total of 3,188 hours.

Since 2012, Israeli aircraft have violated Syrian sovereignty on about a hundred occasions in the course of bombing targets in Syria.

On 10th February 2018, a single unarmed Iranian drone entered Israeli airspace from Syria (and was shot down by an Israeli helicopter). It is not clear that the entry into Israeli airspace was deliberate. The Director General of Israel's Intelligence Ministry said that the incursion "was not an attack".

David Morrison
5 March 2018

in the British medium. Britain was at the heart of Europe (subverting it), enabling West British yearnings to disguise themselves as Europeanist. Brexit shocked them, but they still have a very long way to go before they let go of the false understanding of Britain which they devised for themselves and are able to see England as it is.

The objectionable methods by which Putin is trying to develop a Russian national body politic are as nothing compared with the methods of total nationalism by which England constructed itself throughout the 18th century and in the 19th, within the security of Imperialist world power under which it phased the populace gradually into the Parliamentary franchise.

Imperialism was the context of democratisation. It was within the context of populist Imperialism in the 1880s that the ruling class began to see democratisation of the Parliamentary franchise as a safe political project. Functional democracy was based on Imperialism in Britain, and not only in Britain. And what led to the subversion of formal Empire was not the democratic opposition from within but the loss of power suffered in two unnecessary and badly-managed World Wars.

About fifty years ago there were mainstream English historians who described the reality of democratisation as being connected with Imperialism. That is no longer done, but the Imperialist mentality has a deeper grip on the popular mind now than it had then. In those times it was widely recognised that there were very different ways in which humans might live legitimately. But no longer. Milton's injunction that England must teach the nations how to live has taken root, and the English fashion of the moment becomes a

universal human right warranting interfering with all who do not follow it.

The leading fashion of the moment in this regard is homosexual marriage. Only fifty years ago, homosexual practice was a crime punishable by imprisonment with hard labour, and there was a suggestion that the beastliness of Nazism had its source in the homosexuality that was rife among the Brownshirts. But, if action is ever taken against Putin, "gay rights" will figure in the indictment. (This is even though homosexuality is legal in Russia and there are homosexual venues: however, homosexual 'propaganda' is not permitted. Does anyone remember Mrs. Thatcher and her textbooks now?)

Members of the Irish elite are very British in this respect. But, if one of them appears on the BBC's *Question Time*, it is immediately clear that their Britishness is spurious. They don't fit in. They are a novelty. Any Northern Sinn Féiner would fit in much better. And Ulster Unionists, out of the backwoods, fit in perfectly, as to the manner born.

Maread McGuinness MEP of Fine Gael, the 1st Vice President of the European Parliament, appeared on BBC *Question Time* on 15th March, and was made much of. Had it been proved beyond reasonable doubt that Putin had poisoned Skripal? Well, she knew nothing about it really, but she was sure nevertheless: "Look, I'm no expert in these issues, but I have to believe what you [turning to Tory Minister Chris Grayling] are saying in terms of the security services".

Of course the Russians denied it:

"I listened to the Russian Ambassador to the UN, and he didn't pull his punches last night... And used some very harsh words about the British Intelligence

Service... But, if not Russia, who else?"

She didn't know, but couldn't admit, in the presence of British certainty, that she didn't know.

At the same time she didn't want there to be any consequences of the certainty that Putin did it. If there was action on that certainty, the affair would not blow over quickly—and a renewed Cold War would not be a nice thing—

"and you know that the European Union, because of the Crimea, put sanctions on Russia. In a sense we had to do that. But it has emboldened, perhaps, the Russian spirit. Europe took a hit at the time, with products not allowed into Russia. I'm not sure what will happen next because of this incident."

Why did the EU have to put sanctions on Russia because of the Crimea? Because it had enacted a *coup d'état* against the elected Ukrainian Government—whose election was not disputed at the time of the election—because it made a trade agreement with Russia along with one made with the EU. There was a strong Irish presence in the *coup d'état*. The embers of Ukrainian Fascism were fanned into flame. When the EU began to have doubts about what it had started, it was brushed aside by Victoria Nuland, Assistant Secretary of State to the *de facto* President of the World, Barack Obama, who said "*Fuck the EU!*", and she gave anti-Russianism its head. The *coup* Government, fuelled by the revived fascism, announced extensive anti-Russian measures. If Putin had let the thing run on, NATO would soon have been surrounding the Russian Naval Base in the Crimea, and post-Soviet Russia would possibly have become a "*failed state*"—like Iraq and Libya. What Putin did was enable the predominantly Russian population of Crimea, in the face of the generalised anti-Russianism of the *coup*, to attach itself to Russia.

The EU swallowed its pride over being fucked (raped?) by Washington, and became self-righteously indignant over the Russian breach of the democratic 1945 settlement of Europe—that was made possible only by the Russian defeat of Fascist Europe. Hitler had about a dozen European allies in his invasion of Russia, and the conditions under which Europe settled down for forty-five years under 1945 arrangements was the extensive nationalist ethnic cleansings, and population movements in European countries to the east of Germany, that were carried out in 1945-6 under the authority of the United Nations—which in practice meant Mos-

cow and Washington.

It is only now that these extensive national-democratic ethnic cleansings are beginning to be written about—by academics only. Political Europe remains in denial about it.

The *Question Time* panel also included Afshin Rattansi, a *Russia Today* presenter with his own programme, *Going Underground*. He was there to demonstrate British fairness. His comments were strictly curbed by Chairman David Dimbleby, while Mairead was encouraged to ramble on—but he did succeed in mentioning the Ukrainian *coup*. And he angered Mairead by suggesting that the EU demanded a hard border in Ireland: "*Europe has not threatened—do you understand anything about the Customs Union and the Single Market?*"

The Chair did not want this point to be developed and so it was lost. Rattansi possibly meant that Britain after Brexit could leave its trade borders with the EU open—why not?—and that the EU as a Protectionist body could not agree to this and would insist on borders. What other meaning can there be in Britain's insistence that it would have no interest in establishing a trade border in Ireland after Brexit, and would not do so?

The grand theatre about Russia's nerve gas invasion of Britain—and that has been the tenor of media commentary in Britain—served the useful purpose for Theresa May of eclipsing controversy over Brexit, unifying both her party and the nation across party lines, with a few honourable exceptions. When the body politic recovers from its nationalistic, xenophobic anti-Russian binge, the controversy over Brexit terms will not seem so important any more.

PS

One of Putin's defeated rivals, Ksenia Sobchak, was brought on BBC's *Newsnight* to add another voice of certainty to the opinion that Putin poisoned Skripal. Introduced as a Russian Reality TV personality who stood "*as a Liberal protest candidate*", she said that she admired British justice very much, and therefore she was astonished that Theresa May could have come to her verdict so quickly. She was sad to see May descending to Putin's level.

The critical thing in the incident appears to have to do with a state reaching to kill enemies who have been given refuge in another state. To our knowledge, Israel was the first state which did that system-

atically. It scarcely bothered to pretend that it was not doing it. And we do not recall that Britain, or the EU, or the UN ever made an issue of it.

President Obama murdered Ben Laden in another state in preference to kidnapping him and putting him on trial.

Britain de-legitimised the Syrian state a few years ago and urged its overthrow. Many British citizens went there for that purpose. Now that Russia has prevented Syrian from going the way of Libya, some of them will be coming home. And there has been public discussions in British parliamentary circles about whether it might be more expedient to find ways of killing them in Syria instead of having to cope with them when they come home.

US Rules, OK!

continued

Within days of the Bill being published, it was made clear that its terms would infringe the laws of the United States. The matter was taken up in the online version of a newspaper specialising on Washington politics, founded by the political 'insider' Jerry Finkelstein but since his death is owned by his son, Jimmy Finkelstein. On 29th January, in explaining the ramifications of the Irish Senate Bill, it pointed out that:

"If enacted, it could put leading U.S. companies with Irish subsidiaries to a choice between violating the Irish law or violating the U.S. Export Administration Regulations, which require U.S. firms to refuse to participate in foreign boycotts that the United States does not sanction.

"In addition to running afoul of U.S. federal law, the bill would subject companies to U.S. state-level sanctions, violate European Union and international law, threaten Ireland's vital economic links to the United States, and hinder the prospects for peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

"The bill, titled "Control of Economic Activity (Occupied Territories) Bill 2018, would make it a violation of Irish criminal law for Irish persons and companies to import or sell items, or to provide services, produced in the Israeli settlements. It would punish violators with up to five years in prison. The senator who introduced the bill, Frances Black, previously signed a letter calling for a boycott of all Israeli products and services.

The article further pointed out that:

"The bill, if enacted, would gravely undermine Ireland's economic links to the United States, which are vital to Irish prosperity. U.S. investment in 2016

accounted for 67 percent of all foreign direct investment in Ireland. Yet this bill would make U.S. companies with subsidiaries in Ireland, Irish companies with subsidiaries in the U.S., and their employees who are Irish or resident in Ireland, choose between violating the Irish law or violating the U.S. Export Administration Regulations. Violations of these U.S. antiboycott laws are punishable by fines and by imprisonment for up to 10 years.

"According to the American Chamber of Commerce Ireland, some 700 U.S. companies employ over 150,000 people in Ireland. The companies include Apple, Dell, Facebook, Google, Hewlett Packard, Intel, Johnson & Johnson, and Twitter. In addition, some 227 Irish companies employ an estimated 120,000 people in the United States.

"These companies would also be forced by Irish law to run afoul of some or all of the two dozen U.S. state laws which impose sanctions on companies that boycott Israel. For example, Illinois law requires that Illinois' state-funded retirement systems divest from 'companies that boycott Israel'. 'Boycott Israel' is defined to include:

'Engaging in actions that are politically motivated and are intended to penalize, inflict economic harm on, or otherwise limit commercial relations with the State of Israel or companies based in the State of Israel or in territories controlled by the State of Israel'."

The fate of Senator Black's Bill, and in particular the intimidation which led to its being put in limbo, has implications for all who accept that the Settlements in Israel constitute an infringement of International Law—that is to say law endorsed by the United Nations.

Economic activity is one of the main means through which an Occupying Power consolidates its occupation. Therefore, if the Settlements are considered illegal under international law, then surely any economic activity undertaken on these territories by the Occupying Power or its agents (and settlers deliberately employed in such areas must be *ipso facto* considered agents of the occupying power) should also be illegal.

By not doing all they can to obstruct the success of such economic activity, Sovereign States become complicit in this illegal action.

The reaction in the United States to the Irish Senate proposal is extremely interesting, as it reveals the attitude of the United States to the rest of the world. In the context of previous action by the United States what it boils down to is that, if the United States wishes to arbitrarily impose

Sanctions on another Sovereign State, then the rest of the world must comply—or it will use its economic reach to administer heavy punishment.

If, as the article in *The Hill* implies, another Sovereign State decided to impose sanctions, even against goods produced in an area of the world that is considered by the international community to be illegally occupied, then the United States will also use its economic reach against that Sovereign State in order to undermine such sanctions.

This is the reality of Big Power politics. This Irish Senate Bill has been extremely useful, even if it goes nowhere, for exposing the reality of United States bullying in the world.

So much for US complaints at the way in which China is using its economic weight to further its interests in the world. But the Chinese do not force countries trading with it to conform to its economic, political or social model. They remember the unequal trade to which they were subject by multiple European Imperialist Powers and America. Their foreign policy is in a different league to that of the United States.

Eamon Dyas

happened that a number of large German and French banks were the sellers of CDSs while the buyers were smaller financial institutions.

According to Stiglitz, the ECB insisted that the restructuring be done in a way so as *not* to trigger the CDSs. He states "*a good regulator would want the banks who hold risky bonds in their portfolio to have insurance and that the insurance pay off*" (p. 160). He concludes:

"The ECB was more interested in the big banks that were selling insurance—essentially gambling and speculating on whether Greece could pay off its debts—than in the ordinary banks that had bought insurance" (p. 160)

The general case Stiglitz makes against the ECB covers ground that is familiar but still worth re-stating. I summarise it in the next five paragraphs.

The idea of leaving monetary policy in the control of a technocratic body independent of the political system is flawed in the sense that decisions made by central banks inevitably have distributive implications and are thus political. Investors, creditors and wealthy individuals have an interest in keeping inflation low, while working class communities have an interest in keeping unemployment low. A monetary policy focussed on inflation can increase unemployment by pushing up interest rates and constraining the money supply (p. 147).

Of course the context in which the ECB came to be the most independent central bank in the world was that, when it was designed in the early nineties, the prevailing orthodoxy was market fundamentalism otherwise known as neo-liberalism. Persistent high inflation can certainly wreak economic havoc and irresponsible Governments can contribute to the creation of inflation but, as we now know, inflation is less damaging than financial crises. On that ground alone the liberal view that Central Banks should confine their activities to the maintenance of a low inflation rate has failed the test of history. Responsibility for financial stability was immediately added to the objectives of the US Federal Reserve following 2008. Stiglitz cites the US Employment Act (1946), which assigned responsibility for inflation plus employment to the Federal Government, as further evidence of his case. He also holds that the flexibility of other Central Banks around the world renders the inflexibility of the ECB problematic. In 2011 the ECB raised interest rates twice,

The flaw in Stiglitz

continued

this brief detour, the series will return to the topic of the EU response to the sovereign debt crisis in Ireland and generally, in the *May Irish Political Review*.

THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

In an interesting chapter on the ECB, while arguing that before 2008 the Central Banks in both the US and Europe had been "*captured*" by the financial sector, Stiglitz brings up the restructuring of Greek Bonds that occurred in 2012 (the largest debt restructuring in the history of sovereign defaults). *Restructuring* means that the repayment period for the Bonds gets stretched out and the old Bonds get replaced by new bonds with a lower nominal value. In such restructuring owners of the Bonds suffer a loss, sometimes a major loss. To cover themselves against the possibility of such losses, many financial institutions take out a form of insurance called Credit Default Swaps (CDSs). However, while some banks buy CDSs, other banks sell them. In the restructuring of Greek bonds in 2012, it

due to concerns about inflation, while the US Fed kept its rates low; this caused the Euro to become overvalued in relation to the Dollar thereby giving US exports to Europe a competitive advantage in a time of recession (p. 150).

The neo-liberal orientation of the ECB was compounded by the influence of German monetary conservatism (although Stiglitz doesn't delve into it, the prevailing German economic orthodoxy, *ordoliberalism*, has been rightly described as Hayeckian i.e. it is based on the liberal ideas of August von Hayek). German liberal-conservative influence over the ECB manifested itself as a staunch aversion to any hint of the financing of Government debt or deficits through monetary policy, which in turn translated as strict limits on the purchase by the Bank of Short Term Bonds. The German position did not survive the Great Recession, however (p. 164). The ECB engaged in the purchase of Short Term Bonds and this eventually gave way to the purchase of Long Term Bonds—Quantitative Easing—when Mario Draghi replaced Jean Claude Trichet as ECB President. In response to the crisis the ECB became more active in the supervision of the Eurozone's financial institutions and authorised bailouts for Member States that were cut out of international money markets. All of this went against the principles of ordoliberalism and in 2011 the German representative on the ECB, Axel Weber, resigned, followed months later by his German colleague, Jurgen Stark, effectively the Bank's chief economist.

Stiglitz worked as an advisor to the Government of Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero in Spain. He recounts how Trichet exerted a secret pressure on that Government by threatening to withhold financial assistance to Spanish banks unless labour market flexibility measures (i.e. policies leading to lower wages) were introduced; this, Stiglitz affirms, is testified to by Zapatero in his memoirs (p. 155). We in Ireland are also aware that secret pressure from Trichet was responsible for preventing the 'burning' of senior bond holders in the bank bailout.

The picture that emerges of the ECB (my summary makes Stiglitz's account appear more coherent than it actually is) is of an institution that, not only acted technocratically to implement neo-liberal or ordoliberal policies, but also worked in the interests of the more powerful Eurozone banks (as shown in the Greek

restructuring of 2011), and that pressurised political leaders into pursuing a neo-liberal agenda. Far from being an institution independent of the evil influence of politics, the Bank became an undemocratic authority pushing its own political agenda. The political arm-twisting seems to have ended with the departure of Trichet, but the bias in favour of large German and French banks has almost certainly continued under Draghi. Pursuit of liberal economic policies caused the international financial crisis of 2008. As part of a desperate struggle to contain that crisis, the ECB fell back on protecting big corporate interests and interfering in the affairs of democratically-elected Governments. The Bank was eventually forced to abandon its own liberal-conservative Mandate in order to impose controls on the financial sector of the Eurozone; late in the crisis (2015), it began to implement Quantitative Easing.

EMMA CLANCY'S DEBT TO STIGLITZ

The superior tone often adopted by media writers when reviewing documents issued by political parties is, to my mind, unwarranted. Like all of the parties represented in the European parliamentary grouping, GUE/NGL—or indeed any political party—Sinn Fein represents a specific constituency and must cater to that constituency's often complex needs in formulating policy. Notwithstanding such constraints, Emma Clancy has made a detailed 70-page study of the Euro, drawing on a wide range of sources including a number of reports from EU bodies. Most of the source authors, especially Joseph Stiglitz, Yannis Varoufakis, Martin Wolf, Paul Krugman and George Irvin, are antipathetic to the Euro, as might be expected given Sinn Fein's traditional perspective. However, the sources are used well in explaining the context in which the Euro needs to be viewed.

Taking one example, the use made of Varoufakis, in describing the history of monetary policy from the Gold Standard through the Bretton Woods system and the aftermath of its collapse, is informative, even for readers familiar with that topic (p. 24). Another source—*Minimal conditions for the survival of the Euro* by Barry Eichengreen and Charles Wyplosz—bolsters the case Clancy is making on one point, the need to leave control of fiscal policy at the national level, but is otherwise supportive of controls being centralised at the supranational level (p. 21). Eichengreen and Wyplosz state:

"In the case of financial supervision and monetary policy, centralisation is

unambiguously the appropriate response. In the case of a fourth condition, debt restructuring, either approach [national or centralised control] is possible, but the authors prefer a solution that involves centrally restructuring debts while allocating costs at national level" (published by Vox for the Washington based think tank, Center for Economic Policy Research, 2016)

This shows that Clancy is prepared to use sources that conflict with her general position. In a chapter on the ECB Clancy builds on the Stiglitz position as shown in the following summary:

The Bank remains fixated on achieving low inflation despite all the lessons of the financial crisis. Its Mandate contrasts sharply with that of other central banks in having a low level of democratic accountability. Its de-politicisation of economic policy is aimed at creating "*external constraints*" which help to impose neo-liberal policies at national level. Clancy alludes to the ECB's threat to cut off emergency liquidity to the Irish banks unless the Irish Government agreed to request a bailout in 2010 when Trichet was in charge, but also to the cancellation of emergency liquidity to the Greek banks in 2015 under Draghi's leadership, as evidence of its blatantly political role (p. 52).

Despite the billions of euro handed over by the ECB to banks in the Eurozone, its financing operations have failed to generate anything like the recovery that has occurred in the US. The Quantitative Easing (purchasing of government and corporate bonds) that commenced in March 2015 together with the Corporate Securities Purchasing Programme that dates from March 2016, have been widely criticised for lacking transparency and assisting industries associated with fossil fuels (p. 55).

A crisis is also currently facing the European banking system brought on by a chronically low level of profitability that has persisted since 2008 (p. 56). The Banking Union, hailed at a meeting of EU Finance Ministers in 2013 as the end of the "*too big to fail*" problem, has so far failed to deliver (p. 58). An exception clause in the relevant legislation, referred to as "*precautionary recapitalisation*", has meant that the funding of bank bailouts from public funds has proceeded apace. In 2016 8.8 billion euro of public funds was pumped into the Italian bank, MPS. According to Clancy, the European Banking Authority is lobbying for state funds to be used to write off the high level of

non-performing loans in European banks (p. 60).

Allowing for some complexities which Stiglitz ignores, like the threat that both the Irish bank collapse and the restructuring of the Greek Government Bonds once posed to the international financial system, the analysis of both Stiglitz and Clancy, as I have summarised them, are basically sound. But a problem arises when it comes to the question of deciding what reforms now need to be proposed. That problem is that Stiglitz—and Clancy taking her cue from Stiglitz—are torn between demanding reform of the Eurozone and arranging for a smooth exit from it.

Writing in 2016 Stiglitz concluded that there was a "significant probability" that the political will to remain in the Eurozone would break in one country or another (p. 307). When that break happens, he predicted, the risk would be very great that others would follow and that the floodgates would come crashing down on the currency, causing dramatic political and economic consequences "not just for Europe but for the world" (p. 308). His solution is a bet-hedging exercise: a root and branch reform which he outlines in Chapter 9 or an orderly dismantling as described in Chapter 10.

Writing in 2017, Emma Clancy states: "Rather than focus on the question of whether the Eurozone is a viable arrangement in the long term, this paper aims to discuss solutions to pressing problems in the short and medium term during a period of political crisis in Europe" (p. 63). But, if she wishes to park the question of the zone's viability and leave it hanging as a future possibility, how serious are her short-term solutions? When she gets down to specifying reform proposals she states: *In the current context, the deepening and expansion of the Eurozone should be resisted by the Left. If this sounds like a defensive position, that's because, unfortunately, it is*" (p. 66).

AN ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY

I would propose a different strategy to the Stiglitz approach, one that may be more obvious in March 2018 than it was in 2016 or even 2017. Given that the Eurozone has survived the worst ravages of the financial crash and the ensuing sovereign debt crisis, given that some of the measures adopted by the Brussels institutions in response to the crisis—the creation of the European Stability Mechanism, supra-national level supervision of banking, the process initiated through the Banking Union which will eventually result in

deposit insurance at European level—have been moves in the right direction, given the phenomenon whereby popular fear of leaving the Euro has forced radical parties like *Syriza* in Greece, the *Front National* in France and most recently the *5-Star Movement* in Italy to soft-peddle their opposition to the Single Currency—given all of these factors, the Left should face the reality that the Euro is here to stay.

Rather than adopting a stance of doctrinaire intolerance towards the mainstream, the Left should set about winning over centrist, environmentalist, conservative, and even centre-Right, political movements to the need for greater control of market forces. The failure of neo-liberal ideology has occurred on such a scale that the Left now needs to forsake its Ghetto mentality.

THE FLAW IN THE STIGLITZ APPROACH

A criticism of Stiglitz made by Hermance Triay of the French think tank, *AlterEcoPlus*, posted by Guillaume Duval on the *Social Europe* website on 13th September 2016, is apposite. Triay's basic point is that Stiglitz is approaching the Euro from the vantage point of theoretical economics and has been doing so since the 1990s; that the Euro could never have met the requirements of an *optimum currency area* until it had existed in actual social life for several decades. What he means is that the political will and an appropriate institutional configuration must necessarily precede the successful achievement of monetary integration.

Triay dismisses the idea that the Eurozone could be dismantled without undermining the entire European project. He argues that the severely distressed countries leaving the currency would be forced to devalue their new currencies in efforts to grab their neighbours' share of export markets. The dynamic of competing Nation States would quickly displace the cooperative model of the EU. Triay asserts that Europe has no alternative but to gradually close up the loopholes and fix the failures of monetary union. The rest he says, referring to Stiglitz's book, is "*merely literature*".

While arguing against the German position that a failure to enforce fiscal discipline caused the Euro crisis, Stiglitz states: "*Our analysis has argued otherwise: it is the very structure of the eurozone itself, not even the failings of the individual countries, that is to blame.*" (p. 122). This shows a preoccupation with theory at the expense of attention to the particular

experiences of individual countries. In Part One of this series, based on a definitive study of the Irish Crash by Donovan and Murphy, I identified local factors in Ireland—irresponsible banking practices, inadequate financial regulation at national level, political policies that helped to buoy up the property boom and implement public spending levels that were unsustainable—as the main causes of the Crash. Such empirical details fall beneath the notice of Stiglitz because he has an axe to grind related to a dispute within theoretical economics.

The Euro and its Threat to the Future of Europe is a 452-page door-stop of a book that still takes pride of place on the bookshop shelves and is the first item to appear in Internet searches on its subject. Early in the first chapter under a heading "A note on the history of the Euro and the scope of this book", Stiglitz states, "All this history is important, but much of it is beyond the remit of this book" (p.7). Indeed in the body of the text a systematic economic and political history of the currency is conspicuous by its absence.

Why, in a work centred on the Euro, is its history beyond his remit? I would suggest that, notwithstanding his practical experience as Chief Economist of the World Bank, member of Bill Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors, and advisor to many European Governments, Joe Stiglitz retains a fatal prejudice of his profession: he fails to add sufficient weight to politics and history in the study of economic phenomena. In that way he continues to look at the world through the prism of theoretical economics and shares a key flaw of the neo-liberal exponents he decries.

Dave Alvey

DUPED

Who are they who live under malfunction.

Cut-off from the mainstream of politics.
Drawing sustenance from a bag of tricks.

Are the engineers of extreme unction,
Props up the prop that props them up to sin.

Has Old Testament views of their neighbours.
Posture, arrogance, cutting like sabres.

Hopped out of isolation from the bin.
But it all had to stop, it couldn't go on.

It spilt its share of blood for the empire.
Adopted old Holland's colour for the throng.

Ran death-squads, moralises 'neath church spires.
Seems to think they have never done much wrong,
whilst continuing to plot and conspire.

Wilson John Haire

2 December, 2017

Karl Liebknecht's betrayal of Connolly's ally, the "English traitor Sir Roger Casement"

On 7th April 1916, just two weeks before the Easter Rising, the German radical leftist and Marxist internationalist, Karl Liebknecht, speaking in the German Parliament (*Reichstag*), denounced Roger Casement as an "English traitor" and the members of the Irish Brigade as "English prisoners" engaged in "treasonable service against their own country". Thus a report in the *Berliner Tagesblatt* (08.04.16), which continued:

"Dr. Liebknecht (Indep.): 'I repeat, I have documents to hand verifying that a treaty was concluded between Undersecretary Zimmermann and the English traitor, Sir Roger Casement, according to which at such [military] training grounds English prisoners of war would be trained for military service against England' (*Stormy interruptions and calls to stop*)."

The Speaker of the Reichstag, Dr. Paasche, sought to rule Liebknecht's intervention out of order on the basis that he was raising a wider issue which had nothing to do with the budget allocation for barrack construction under debate. But Liebknecht persisted, broadening the charge further:

"Mohammedan prisoners of war are also being systematically press ganged in these prison camps into service against their own country."

When the Speaker again called on him to speak to the budget item, Liebknecht wailed: "You are systematically muzzling me!" (ibid.).

The official record of the Reichstag gives further detail of Liebknecht's intervention. Speaking to a minor budget allocation of 58,300 Marks for the "*Extension of Accommodation and Equipping on Military Training Grounds*", he declared:

"In these German prison camps, and on the basis of a carefully constructed plan authorised at the highest level, prisoners of war—Frenchmen, Russians and Englishmen—are systematically being press ganged into treasonable military service against their own country.' (*Vehement objections*) 'I have the documents to prove this in my hand! Similar activity by Russia was recently described in the press as a gross violation of international law...' (*Speaker's Bell*)."

"The point is that propaganda is... being conducted at these military

training grounds... Among other things, an Irish Brigade has been formed under a treaty signed by Undersecretary Zimmermann with Sir Roger Casement, the English traitor, at the end of December 1914. I have the text of it here. Under this treaty, English prisoners of war are to be recruited and trained in German prison camps for military service against England...

'... Mohammedan prisoners of war from the French, English, and Russian armies, Georgians, Ukrainians, etc., are also being systematically press ganged and forced in these prisoner-of-war camps into military service against the state to which they belong...

'... These matters deserve serious attention; I protest at you silencing me when I bring them up, as they are a stain on Germany, on German culture'..."

(*Reichstagsprotokolle*. 41. Sitzung. 7 April 1916, pp. 920-22).

Thus did Liebknecht express the antagonism of the 'internationalist' tendency in German socialism, not only to Roger Casement and Irish soldiers in the British Army who wished to serve with him in support of a rising in Ireland, but also to Pilsudski's Poles fighting for independence from Russia and England's "*Mohammedan*" subjects from India and elsewhere fighting against "*the state to which they belong*". Support for such endeavours was "*a stain on Germany, on German culture*". Thus did he express the German internationalist 'left' position on Irish Republicanism and other independence movements during the 'Great War'.

CONNOLLY, CASEMENT AND THE WAR

The Irish Left has persistently portrayed European Marxist internationalists as supporters of the Irish revolutionary cause, and the two as being different strands of the same thing. As the above quotations from Liebknecht demonstrate, this was far from the case.

The internationalist position prior to the World War, as represented by the Socialist International, was to prevent the outbreak of war through working class civil disobedience, a General Strike. But when the war got underway—a more accurate description than the sleepwalkerish "*broke out*"—Socialists were forced to take a stance on what had actually happened. Some became conscientious objectors or pacifists,

believing no political conflict justified armed confrontation; others participated in protest movements to seek negotiations to end it; a small number, following the line advocated by Lenin, organised clandestinely to transform the war into a revolutionary class "*civil war*". But the great majority opted in varying degrees to support their own state's war efforts. Those who followed Lenin's advocacy of a European class civil war became the new "*internationalists*", a group to which James Connolly decidedly did not belong.

Connolly was a Socialist Republican—indeed he invented the term. He regarded Britain as the power-house of global capitalism and advocated Irish Independence and adherence to socialist forces internationally. He was an admirer of German Social Democracy and the influence it had had in shaping the highly socialised form of capitalism developed in Germany. During the July 1914 crisis, he sided with the Socialist International's position, and when war was declared initially continued to advocate a socialist response to halt it, approvingly quoting an anti-war speech by Karl Liebknecht. But within two weeks, as the war became reality, he assessed the actual issues involved and, in an article in *The Irish Worker* on 28th August, '*The War Upon the German Nation*', sided explicitly with Germany and the pro-war reformist/revisionist wing of the SPD, that supported the war as one of national defence against a strategy of encirclement and destruction by the British-led '*Entente*' Powers. Not only was Germany being attacked by a "*pirate*", but the future of socialism itself required a German victory.

Connolly continued to articulate this position in issue after issue of the *Workers Republic* right up to April 1916, often reproducing texts by pro-war German socialists and never again referring to the "*internationalist*" anti-war tendency in German socialism or quoting Liebknecht.

As the war continued, Connolly asserted the Irish interest to require an armed rising against Britain to seek independence, carried out in alliance with Germany. He involved himself and the Irish Citizen

Army from January 1916 in the Irish Republican Brotherhood's concrete planning for the Rising in alliance with Germany. He ensured the Rising went ahead despite Eoin MacNeill's countermand order following the loss of the German arms shipment aboard the 'Aud', which had been organised through the Irish-German alliance forged by Casement in 1914.

The independent nature of the alliance with Germany was precisely described in the 1916 'Proclamation': that the Irish revolutionary movement was striking for freedom, "supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength".

Connolly's view of the war was precisely that of Sir Roger Casement, who since 1911 had set out in a series of articles a meticulous analysis of British world strategy based on its control of the seas. Until British control of the seas was ended, all other states would be at its mercy. Britain was bringing about a war to eliminate the new industrial and commercial challenge of Germany. It was in Germany's interest to break Britain's monopoly control of the world's seas, and the key to ending Britain's key position of naval dominance was an Independent Ireland, as Napoleon had realised too late.

Casement knew the British ruling class intimately, being personally acquainted with Sir Edward Grey and many others in the upper echelons of the Establishment. He knew how they worked and the power of their narrative and method of spinning it. His writings were widely read, appearing in *The Irish Review* and in the US in the *Gaelic American* and *Irish Freedom*, as well as his best selling 1913 book, *The Crime Against Europe*. Foreseeing the war being engineered against Germany by Britain, he wrote in March 1913:

"As an Irishman I have no fear of the result to Ireland of a German triumph. I pray for it; for with coming of that day the 'Irish Question', so dear to British politicians, becomes a European, a world question" (*The Problem of the Near-West*).

Casement became an absolutely central figure in the independence movement. He joined the Irish Volunteers the day they were founded in 1913 and, as a highly respected figure, was immediately appointed to its Executive. Within a few weeks he activated a committee of mostly high Establishment Anglo-Irish liberal Home Rule sympathisers in London to fund and organise the arming of the Volunteers. Once the Howth gun running of July 1914 was successfully organised, he went to America to link up with the

IRB-related Clan na Gael to realise the practical alliance with Germany.

GERMANY FOR IRISH INDEPENDENCE?

At the start of August 1914, Casement, Devoy and the Clan na Gael leadership met with the German Ambassador in Washington and drafted a Petition to Kaiser Wilhelm, calling on Germany to publicly commit in its war aims to an Independent Ireland. Recognising "the German cause" "as their own", they stated that while "We should hope for a German triumph over an enemy who is also our enemy", an Ireland liberated from Britain would also be a "sure gage for a free ocean for all who traverse the seas".

The Irish leaders requested that the German Government issue a Declaration stating its commitment to Irish Independence. Supported by a letter from Clan na Gael stating its "fullest confidence" in Casement and his "authority to speak for and represent the Irish Revolutionary Party in Ireland and America", Casement travelled to Germany to negotiate directly. He finally succeeded in having Germany issue the Declaration on 20th November 1914, its wording largely drafted by Casement, committing Germany to Irish Independence and stating that, if the fortunes of war brought German troops to Ireland, they would act fully in accord with that commitment. This was a major diplomatic triumph for the Irish Volunteers, Casement telling MacNeill it represented the first "international recognition of Irish nationality".

"IRISH BRIGADE" AND ARMS FOR IRELAND

Casement also pursued two other objectives in Germany, likewise in agreement with Clann na Gael and the IRB: the raising of an "Irish Brigade" from Irishmen captured as prisoners of war, and the organising of arms for the Irish Volunteers. The Irish Brigade proved to be a shambles. Most of those captured in the early months of the war were long-standing recruits who had been in the army long before Redmond's Home Rule recruiting. From 2,000 Irish PoWs assembled at a camp in Limberg, just fifty volunteered, most, according to a German report, "physically healthy but of the lowest moral calibre", "the dregs of the city proletariat", still clinging to their loyalties as British soldiers (from reports reproduced in Karin Wolf, *Sir Roger Casement und die deutsch-irische Beziehungen*, Berlin 1972, p. 35). This was also Casement's experience. His travails in Germany are now well known since Angus Mitchell's excellent edition of his German diary was published in

2016: *One Bold Deed of Open Treason: the Berlin Diary of Roger Casement 1914-16*.

What most comes across in Casement's diary is his growing exasperation with the German authorities. As a well-known international figure and former British diplomat, he enjoyed access to and socialised widely among the upper echelons of the German foreign policy Establishment. But his exasperation was not at a lack of German willingness to meet their obligations under the Irish-German alliance, but rather at their continued naivety regarding the British and inability to grasp the nature of British strategy. The German elites remained incorrigibly Anglophile!

As regards the Irish Brigade, at which Liebknecht was so outraged, Casement was emphatic that its function was to fight in Ireland. He concluded a formal 10-clause secret "Treaty" with the German Government in December 1914, signed by Arthur Zimmermann for the German Foreign Office and by Casement as the "Irish Envoy", specifying its role. The raising of the Brigade had been agreed with Clan na Gael and the IRB in August 1914 as a key aim under the German alliance. Though the Brigade remained secret and the agreement was never published, its full text is reproduced in German and English by Wolf (pp. 31-4).

This specified that it was "to fight solely in the cause of Ireland, and under no circumstances shall it be employed or directed to any German end", that its members would be unpaid volunteers, and only if it proved not possible to get it to Ireland could another deployment be considered. Any such deployment, which Casement personally had to approve, might be to assist Egyptian patriots "to expel the British from Egypt", as "a blow struck at the British invaders of Egypt... is a blow struck for a kindred cause to that of Ireland". Casement was a true internationalist!

Connolly, in joining the IRB revolutionary leadership in February 1916, also committed to the Irish-German alliance central to the planning of the Rising, one he had in any case advocated since 1914. The failure of the Brigade led the Germans to decide not to publicise it and to cease recruitment to it altogether in July 1915, though it continued in existence to the end of the War. Casement grew despondent and was often ill, spending much of 1915 in a sanatorium near Munich. But he continued his writing, particularly in the *Continental Times*, focused on the nature of British strategy and the issue of naval dominance, while the organisation of arms for Ireland passed back to Clan na Gael

and the IRB. Robert Monteith arrived from America and Joseph Plunkett from Ireland, and precise arrangements for the arms shipment to the Kerry coast to coincide with the Rising were agreed in February 1916.

Connolly also sought to activate a Citizens Army group in North Kerry as part of the plan. The shipment, aboard the 'Aud', was to be lost at Cork on Holy Saturday after Wilson's America, despite its ostensible neutrality, betrayed German Embassy papers, revealing the location of the ship, to the British.

Casement himself sought to return to Ireland to have the Rising aborted, convinced it faced catastrophe, and was facilitated by the Germans who provided a submarine that landed him at Banna Strand where he was captured. The Germans, in other words, fulfilled their commitments under the Declaration of November 1914 secured by Casement.

THE GERMANS

The Germans in 1914, and particularly the Chancellor, Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, sought to avoid war with Britain. When Darrell Figgis and Erskine Childers arrived in Hamburg to purchase arms for the Irish Volunteers with the funds raised by Casement's London committee, they were confronted by an extreme reluctance to sell them weapons. As Figgis recalled:

"Later I learned the cause of their reluctance. I little thought when I learned it how strangely I should afterwards remember it, when the whole world was at war. For, a few weeks before this, Carson had run his rifles at Larne, and these rifles had been bought in Hamburg. Germany, I was told, believed that Britain was looking for a cause of war, and the German government had therefore warned all firms that they must under no circumstances sell arms to Ireland. Another affair such as Larne, with its noise and alarm, might bring serious consequences that Germany was anxious to avert. This, be it remembered, was told me before our affair at Howth, and two months before the European war. I thought it fantastic then, though I soon had cause to know that the fear was genuine" (*Recollections of the Irish War*, London 1927).

The Irish negotiators ultimately got around the problem with the pretence that they were acting for rebels in Mexico not Ireland, but the incident is telling.

The Entente strategy of 1914 foresaw the forces of Tsarism—what London called "*the Russian steamroller*"—crushing Germany from the East and disabling it in confronting the Anglo-French-Belgian forces mobilised in the

west. In 1914 Oxford historians (in *Why We Are At War*)—and Tom Kettle of the Irish Party—declared that Germany's democracy was a sham veiling an essence of "*Prussian barbarism*". The War was a matter of the "*democracies*" confronting this brutish "*autocracy*". This was, of course, a propaganda fallacy, but it has become commonplace to hear it repeated again. In the *Irish Independent* on 24th March last, John Bruton claimed that Britain had "*made supreme sacrifices to protect the European order in 1914*". The reality however is that Russia, which British policy sought to facilitate advancing deep into Europe, represented the extreme reactionary autocracy in Europe and the German Reichstag, which, unlike the French or British Parliaments, was elected on a full adult franchise including, since 1912, women, had evolved under the German constitution to include parliamentary scrutiny of the military budget. It is interesting that Karl Liebknecht himself regarded Germany as a democracy, if a flawed one. In the debate on the 1916 military budget he complained that the attempt to railroad the budget through with only two hours' debate and the Minister being given the final word, was a "*castration of Parliament*" "*almost without precedent in parliamentary history*"! (*Reichstagsprotokolle*. 7 April 1916, p. 919).

At a time when British Labour was still a small grouping trailing the Liberals, the SPD was already the largest party in the Reichstag. The military budget was the centrepiece of debate each year and this continued in dramatic form during the War. Following Germany's declaration of support for Austria over the Bosnian Serb assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, the Tsar mobilised his vast army, confident of Anglo-French intervention on the basis of his 1907 Treaty with England. Having opposed "*militarism*" up to the end of July 1914, and threatened a General Strike should German action precipitate a conflict, on 4th August the SPD Reichstag party changed course and, in the face of the Russian mobilisation, voted unanimously for the War Credits, its spokesman, Hugo Kraas, declaring: "*we will not desert our fatherland in its moment of danger*". In their mind, what had occurred was not an outbreak of "*German militarism*", which the SPD would have prevented, but a defensive response to a long planned assault on Germany now being actioned through Russia.

Even after Britain declared war on Germany, Bethmann-Hollweg clung to

the hope of achieving an understanding with it. Karin Wolf, in *Sir Roger Casement und die deutsch-irische Beziehungen* (1972), reproduces much German material regarding Casement. This included cables between the German Foreign Office in Berlin and its Washington Embassy. From the start, Berlin was reticent about Ambassador von Bernstorff's talks with Devoy and Casement, advising him as late as 28th August to proceed with caution and not commit German support, as a Declaration supporting Irish Independence might "*forfeit sympathies of English population and of America*"! The Chancellor himself, as Wolf relates, continued to the end of 1914 to hope for a reconciliation with England and eager that Germany not do anything to further exacerbate Anglo-German tensions! Bernstorff initially delayed committing to the Irish, but recommended to Berlin that "*should Great Britain nevertheless choose a fight to full mutual exhaustion*", Germany should consider accommodating the Irish proposals. Three weeks later, on 28th September, he wrote:

"The decisive point appears to me to be whether there is any prospect of coming to an understanding with England or whether we must prepare ourselves for a fight to the life and death. In the latter case, I would recommend meeting Irish wishes, assuming of course that there really are Irishmen prepared to help us" (*ibid.* p. 25).

As Wolf shows, when Casement arrived in Berlin in October, and told them of the assassination plot against him organised by British Foreign Office officials (the famous Finlay Affair), Undersecretary von Jagow, in a secret report to Zimmermann, expressed his barely-concealed incredulity that British gentlemen could contemplate such a dishonourable thing! In this own diary, Casement constantly recounts meeting with upper class Germans pining for a reconciliation with their beloved England, noting of Count zu Leiningen:

"He is most unhappy—he would really prefer to be in England! I can see that. He does *not* sympathise in his heart with Germany—or shall I say, his true feeling is with England and he wants only peace between them" (Mitchell, p. 105).

The blindness of this love, Casement often recounted, disabled the Germans from understanding British policy or behaviour. Of the German ruling class he wrote:

"The more I see of the 'governing classes' in Germany the less highly I estimate their intelligence. They are 'not in it' with the English—that is certain... I do not think the German Govt. has any

soul for great enterprises—it lacks the divine spark of imagination that has enobled English piracy... These people, whose supreme interest it should be to have complete freedom and equality at sea, will not take the necessary steps in the direction needed beyond mere ship-building. That is an essential but other things, too, are needed to free the seas besides ships—just as other things are needed to hold them. England supplies all the necessities—ships *and* brains—Germany thinks to do it by ships alone, without brains and resolute, far-seeing purpose. A fixed, unchanging Irish policy is essential to freedom at sea of every power competing with England. That is the first rule to master...

"I got a better impression of the German official world from Solf [Dr. Solf, German Minister for the Colonies—POC] than from any of them. He confessed, too, that they had *all* been deceived by English 'nice manners' and 'hearty hospitality' and cited his own reception in Nigeria many years ago and the speeches of goodwill and 'cousinship' exchanged—or professed by the Br[itish] officials. I assured him that was all part of the game—and said it would have paid Germany well to have engaged a few Irishmen as guides to the British character in international affairs! An Irish Imperial Chancellor would not have let John Bull wall up the German 'Michael' as we now see him" (Mitchell, pp. 111-3).

The same German reticence rooted in this misplaced awe of the English contributed to the messiness surrounding the creation of the Irish Brigade, as Karin Wolf revealed. The Foreign Office dragged its heels on the proposal, von Jagow agonising that the whole project "*would seem questionable under international law*", but ultimately relented as from a German point of view at least "*it would be enough that the willingness of Irish prisoners to fight at our side against England became known*" (Wold, 1934). Although Devoy and Casement pressed from the very start of the war for a German 'Declaration' supporting Irish Independence, it was to take nearly four months to achieve. As Casement wrote in his diary, Dr. Solf confided to him that the 'Declaration' was an "*entirely new departure in German foreign policy*" as Germany had never before contemplated "*anything that implied a desire to meddle in the 'internal affairs of another country'...*" (Mitchell, p. 114).

By the end of 1914 it was clear that Britain, as Bernstorff had put it, was resolved "*on a fight to the life and death*", and Germany committed to the Irish cause on the terms Casement sought. The 'Declaration' on Irish Independence of

20th November was largely as worded by him. Casement's message to the Germans—repeated by him *ad nauseam* in articles in *The Continental Times* and in meetings with officials—seemed finally to have paid off. In December he met with Bethmann-Hollweg himself, who welcomed him warmly and wished him well in his endeavours. Following a new tone of realism in a speech in December, Casement wrote: "*It is a fine speech—but too late. He recognises now, after the event, that England made the war!*" (Mitchell, p. 109).

The Germans met their commitments to Ireland following the 'Declaration'. In arranging the arms shipment in 1916 in support of the Rising, the Germans, as Devoy later stated, met Irish demands precisely, including in terms of arms and the timing of the rebellion, and "*did everything we asked*" (quoted by Wolf, p. 44). Following the Rising and Casement's execution, German connections continued with Devoy and Clan na Gael, despite America's declaration of war, and the military on occasion considered sending agents to Ireland. Interestingly, as Wolf records, in June 1918, as Sinn Féin leaders were being rounded up in Ireland and Irish organisations were being suppressed on the basis of an actually fabricated "*German Plot*", the German Navy did propose re-connecting with the Volunteers in Ireland. But General Ludendorff vetoed the proposal, voicing his strong "*political reservations*":

"We must avoid any steps taken by our side that would compromise the Irish movement in the eyes of neutrals, America and especially England" (Wolf p. 58).

"INTERNATIONALISTS" AND IRELAND

As the World War relentlessly ground on, the number of SPD Reichstag members refusing to vote for the war budget, and being expelled from the party, gradually grew. These finally formed themselves into the "*Independent SPD*" (USPD) in 1917. But it would be inaccurate to describe this as a split between "pro" and "anti"-war factions, for what distinguished the Independents from the majority SPD was not any proposal for a revolutionary class war, but the terms on which the war might be brought to an end. The two wings divided over whether to accept US President Wilson's "*14 Points*" war platform as really being the peace formula the President purported them to be. The USPD fell into the Wilson trap, accepting the liquidation of the German state as a prerequisite for peace, and thus laid the basis for the subsequent rise of German fascism.

The small, actual revolutionary 'anti-war' group that emerged in 1914-15, the Spartakus Group, included a few prominent SPD members, notably Karl Liebknecht, a Reichstag member and famous campaigning lawyer, and Rosa Luxemburg, a leading SPD Marxist politician and newspaper editor. But contrary to what Lenin proposed, Spartakus did not engage in the clandestine organisation of a revolution, but instead in the propaganda of "*revolutionary defeatism*", advocating a collapse of the German war effort. In a well known leaflet, *Our main enemy is in our own country!* Liebknecht exclaimed:

"The main enemy of the German people is within Germany: German imperialism, the German war party, German secret diplomacy. The task for the German people is to fight this enemy in our own country, by political struggle, working together with the proletariat of the other countries, who are also fighting their own native imperialists" (*Der Hauptfeind steht im eigenen Land!*, May 1915)

This was part of the context of Liebknecht's denunciation of Casement and the Irish Brigade, and his betrayal of Irish plans by brandishing a copy of Casement's secret agreement with Zimmermann on the Brigade in the Reichstag. The other part was the rejection of Irish national rights embodied in his depiction of Casement as the "*English traitor*" and members of the Irish Brigade as "*English soldiers*" engaged in "*treasonable service against their own country*". To the "*internationalist*" Liebknecht, a national revolution was an aberration and Irish Republican revolutionaries like Casement and, if he had known of him, Connolly, mere "*English traitors*". To him, as he made clear to the Reichstag, the same applied to England's "*Mohammedan*" subjects in India and elsewhere who were being "*press ganged*" to fight against "*the state to which they belong*".

This conformed with the thinking of Rosa Luxemburg, the other German internationalist revolutionary often cited. Before moving to Germany in the 1890s Luxemburg had been active in Poland, which had been split since the 1790s into provinces of Austria, Russia and Germany. She vehemently opposed the Polish Socialist Party's (PSP) programme for the re-establishment of an independent Polish nation state on the basis that nation states and "*national self-determination*" were obsolete concepts outside of a socialist revolution, and that Polish socialists in the Russian area of Poland (which included Warsaw) should make common cause with

Russian radicals in seeking to transform the Russian Empire.

Rejecting the Polish Socialist Party as "nationalist", she supported instead the "internationalist", but in fact Russia-oriented, "*Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania*" (SDKPiL). This grouping was eventually absorbed by the Russian socialist movement (though it later re-emerged as the "Communist Party of Poland"), while the PSP went on under the leadership of Josef Pilsudski to assert an independent Polish nation state, first in alliance with Germany and the Central Powers and then, after their defeat in the war, with France, against

Bolshevik Russia. Liebknecht and Luxemburg had as little *grá* for an Irish revolution, such as proposed and practically organised by Casement and Connolly, as they did for Pilsudski's socialist movement and its fight for Polish Independence.

Liebknecht's statements in the Reichstag on 7th April 1916 betray the absolute antagonism in World War One between the resolutely anti-national position of European Marxist internationalism—a position fundamental to that "*internationalism*"—and the pro-German Irish Republican socialism of Casement and Connolly. The internationalist 'left' was their committed enemy.

Volume Two of Roger Casement's *Crime Against Europe*, featuring unknown and unpublished articles, is in preparation.

Roger Casement: *The Crime Against Europe*. With *The Crime Against Ireland* Introduction by B. Clifford. 184pp. £15

Roger Casement: A Reassessment Of The Diaries Controversies by Mairead Wilson. 32pp. €6, £5

The Casement Diary Dogmatists. by Brendan Clifford. 68pp. €8, £6

Traitor-Patriots In The Great War: Casement & Masaryk by Brendan Clifford. 56pp. €6, £5

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Ms Donnelly's Judicial Activism

The *Sunday Independent* editorialised (18.3.18) on the decision by High Court Judge Aileen Donnelly to refuse an extradition request from Poland in respect of a Polish national living in Ireland who is accused of drug dealing. Instead she has referred the European Arrest Warrant request to the ECJ for a view on whether the Polish judiciary were fit to judge the case. The editorial said:

"At the heart of the decision is the very future of the EU in the form of a union of countries 'founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights', as outlined in Article 2 of the establishing Treaty."

This is a fair assessment of the issues at stake.

The problem is that there is one value missing from this list which is most pertinent to the case at hand and a myriad others involving the EU at the present time—the value of national rights. And the "*very future of the EU*" is indeed at stake on how that value is handled.

But how will the EU be able handle such a value when its very existence is made invisible, indeed is non-existent for it? How can any problem be dealt with if its very existence is denied? The EU includes the most long established nations and nation states in the world. The creation of, and relations between, these nations is the history of Europe and quite a lot of an unwilling world "*where respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the*

rule of law and respect for human rights" was in very short supply by the same European states that now laud these values.

Judge Donnelly's decision is based on an assumption that national rights in this area should be subsumed under the values outlined in Article 2 of the Treaty. But such values have to be, and can only be, exercised in a context and not as abstractions. And the context must be a *demos* that accepts these values. And without a relevant *demos* they remain abstractions and impositions insofar as they are acted on.

But a European *demos* does not yet exist. The people associated with this magazine have supported the European project for about 50 years and every realistic effort to promote it. This was a new experiment in European politics and it was always likely to take as long to create a necessary *demos* as it did to create any of the national democracies of Europe. Being a unique effort, it needed a unique instrument and the Commission was that instrument.

Its purpose was to initiate policies, practical proposals and laws that made sense right across Member States and were based on a consensus of needs laboriously established across the Member States. It was the *communitaire* method. That was a realistic means to create a *demos*. Insofar as it created divisions, they were horizontal divisions encompassing Member States and the vertical, national, divisions were thereby mediated.

But that instrument was blunted and made ineffective for its original purpose by the European Liberals led by Pat Cox nearly 20 years ago.

The Council of Ministers now dominate and this had led to a version of what we have come to know and love as '*power sharing*', in that the national divisions are accepted as the only reality and of course that confirms those divisions as anybody can see it does in N.Ireland. The divisions remain vertical along national lines.

Nation states exist to assert themselves or they are nothing—or they soon become nothing. This is done individually by the UK, or collectively by the *liberal* EU states acting against those deemed to transgress their values. That is now being manifested by the pressure being exerted by liberal Europe against Poland and other member-states.

But Poland and the accused states have every confidence that they are as European as their liberal accusers. These states are acting with a democratic mandate to enforce popular values on a judiciary that is out of kilter with the society.

There is every indication that the European Liberals will continue on an ideological crusade—one which may well continue the wrecking they succeeded in doing with the European Commission. Justice. Donnelly may join Pat Cox as a heroine in this historic work!

Jack Lane

es ahora *

"They thought they had buried us.
What they did not realise was that we
were seeds."

An old Mexican proverb quoted by
Monica Lewinsky.

"Mistrust all in whom the desire to
punish is imperative."

GOETHE.

FEMINISM AND THE POLITICS OF HYPOCRISY

(CONTINUED)

In last month's *Irish Political Review*, I wrote about the new *#Me Too* and *Time's Up* feminist movements, showing how they began as the voices of two relatively unknown Hollywood actresses, Rose McGowan and Alyssa Milano and how 'the star system' quickly took over the show, with it becoming the *vehicle* for Hollywood women "stars" in particular, highlighting their "virtue signalling". I have thought this through and now find that the speed of the up-take on this issue is not what it seems. Watching the BAFTAS on the 18th February 2018, I saw that the women "stars" all wore black (it now transpires that they did get a memo from a group urging them to show "solidarity", more of which later) and because my article went to press before further information appeared in the following day's papers—I am only now able to tell the full story. The *Irish Daily Mail*, 19th February 2018, had as its heading: "Latest A-list red carpet accessory—an activist!"

And indeed nearly all the A-listers arrived with their *plus one*—usually activists unknown except in their own specialist field. Thus, as the *Irish Daily Mail* summed up, "emphasising their campaigning credentials by arriving with an activist on their arm". Oscar winner Angelina Jolie arrived with Loung Ung whose memoir formed the basis of her film 'First They Killed My Father', about a girl who suffered the horrors of the killing fields in Cambodia. This was during the Pol Pot era and not the carpet bombing by Nixon/Kissinger of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam *et al.* Jolie, who is also a UN Goodwill Ambassador, is often seen in various Refugee Camps around the globe, smiling her benedictions on the benighted natives who have been bombed by USUK

It Is Time

and what President George Bush Jr called "The Coalition of the Willing"! Of the six children she has with estranged husband Brad Pitt; three have come from the following countries—Cambodia, Vietnam and Ethiopia—the other three are their biological children.

The English actress Gemma Arterton came with two women in their 80s, Eileen Pullen and Gwen Davis, who "were involved in the equal pay protests at Ford's Dagenham East London plant 50 years ago in 1968". Andrea Riseborough's guest was Phill Opoku-Gyimah who co-founded "UK Black Pride in 2005 to showcase black gay culture in Britain". Beat that—sisters who only dressed in black! The BAFTA organisers said that they did not request their attendees to wear black but accepted "that a letter was circulated in advance from "a collective of UK-based female film and television industry leaders who stated: "We feel it is important to make a statement to show global solidarity"..."

It is unclear who this *collective* is, but polishing halos has surely a nice feel-good factor—yeah?

The only downer—boo—was that the pregnant Duchess of Cambridge choose to wear dark green but, as the *Mail* went on to state, that "it is tradition among the royal family to avoid anything that could be construed as a political statement, but there had been speculation Kate could wear a patterned black gown to demonstrate she backed the movement, but also respected royal protocol". What tosh! Only a few days ago the most popular royal, Prince Harry—an ex-Officer himself—said something to the effect that soldiers needed more tribute and community support and there were no howls of outrage from the *Daily Mail* and others saying the Royal Family should **not** interfere in politics.

I always loved reading about and then watching the Oscars on my Sky Planner but honestly who could be bothered when now it is all about political point-scoring. And, asking around my friends, they too—all huge film/TV *aficionados*—likewise boycotted the ceremony. One of my friends has an app on her i phone which takes a picture of all the *gunas* and we all met for lunch and went through them and then decided which was the best by far and the worst—opinion on the latter was definitely unanimous, Frances McDormand, winner of best actress for *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*.

One of our gay friends said that Mc

Dormand's hairstyle looked as if she had put her head out in a storm—but then she does that American thing called "kooky" so well. How one pines for the days of Bogart and Bacall, Taylor and Burton, beautiful *gunas*, jewels, hair and make-up, smoking, rascals and just the sheer gorgeousness of a famed place that was as mythical as it was illusory.

The female "stars" in particular, who are surrounded by their PR and legal teams, are now out to show solidarity but only because they have collaborated and have been seen to collaborate with the reviled Harvey Weinstein and his ilk and they were a lot of them because that kind of power, that money, attracts predators. A lot of male actors have gone into purdah because they are so afraid of getting targeted themselves. I felt very disheartened to hear that last year's best actor Casey Affleck (brother of the mighty Ben) dare not turn up this year to give the award as is customary for best actor because of rumours floating around that he has been sexually inappropriate with unnamed women.

In our sister magazine 'Church and State' First Quarter, 2018, No. 131, Cathy Winch wrote a superb introduction to a translation of 'Open Letter from Catherine Deneuve and Others' that was published in *Le Monde* 9th January 2018. That letter was signed by over a 100 women from all walks of life and was co-written by five French women: Sarah Chiche, writer/psychoanalyst, Catherine Millet, author/art critic, Catherine Robbe-Grillet, actress/writer, Peggy Sastre, author/journalist and Abnousse Shalmani, writer/journalist. What troubled Winch and Deneuve and the others was the continuous flow of name calling, the silencing of men who were outed as (alleged) abusers on social media and then all media outlets and the immediate closing down of any option of address by these men. Most have fled to Clinics—Harvey Weinstein is in one in some American State as is Kevin Spacey, others have gone underground and into hiding if they haven't the funds available like Weinstein for top clinics. There is such fear that there can be no doubt that we are witnessing a totalitarian society emerge. There is a striking quote from Winch:

"Women are not victims, or defenceless prey, mere children with adult faces, who need protection."

What the French-woman, Catherine Deneuve, understood—that so many others have failed to grasp—is the USUK

Puritanism that has always lurked under our Western much vaunted sexual liberation 60s generation of Free Love and all its attendant freedoms. Women got the Pill; we were on *that* train—in the Irish case literally from Belfast to Dublin! Abortion, Divorce, Family Breakdown, Suicide became the new norms and other freedoms began to force themselves into Rights and here is where we are right now. It doesn't feel so good, does it? The agenda-setters are never the ordinary people really. I know many women who hate what is happening but are publicly afraid to say so.

If the great feminist writer Germaine Greer can be *No-Platformed*—as was the Human Rights activist, Maryam Namazie—then what hope can we have? What does this say about Western Universities where students will *no-platform* anyone they don't agree with or who makes them feel uncomfortable? As the writer Claire Lehmann stated: "*while the stated aim is to reduce harm, the end result is enforced ignorance*".

Allowing a studentship the rights to do such things and giving them their "*safe spaces*" is not only allowing, but endorsing, adolescent behaviour. There have to be adults here who just say No—otherwise we are all up the swanee.

Hilary Clinton, on the other hand, will never be *no-platformed*. Yet, in my opinion what she and her powerful feminist friends did to a young woman—I mean Monica Lewinsky of course—was of such snarling menace that it really deserves utter condemnation. Clinton called the young intern "*a narcissistic looney tunes*", as she stood by her husband President Bill Clinton and, as the **remark was recorded** in the private diary of her friend Diane Blair, she couldn't disown it, saying in 2014: "*I am not gonna comment on what I did or did not say back in the late 90's.*"

But then Hilary was all for condemning the women who ran into Bill Clinton, calling them *en masse* "**bimbo eruptions**". (Looking up my Chambers Dictionary, "*bimbo*" is cited as "*contemptuous*" for a woman "*especially one who is young and physically very attractive but dim, naïve or superficial; a youngster*".) On 1st March 2018, the *Guardian*, in an article on Monica Lewinsky's calling out of President Clinton's abuse of power, stated:

"Prominent feminists, all of them Democrat supporters," dismissed Lewinsky "*as a piece of junk sex.*"

Nearer to home, recently we had the spectacle of former President Mary Mc

Aleese lashing the Catholic Church as none other than "*an empire of misogyny*". But in 2004, after her first stint as President of Ireland, and her self-proclaimed great bridge-building initiative, she went behind doors and got the Establishment to endorse her as the next President without an election. Yet there was one woman who really tried everything, on a minuscule budget, to go forward and secure a nomination and that was fellow Northerner Dana Rosemary Scallon. A Cork plumber, Harry Rea, failed in the High Court to get more time for Dana to seek further endorsements for her nomination. Rea told the court that the denial of his rights to vote meant that the country was under a tyranny. He applied for an injunction to suspend the midday deadline for nominations, but Mr Justice Paul Butler insisted that he had no

case. Later, the Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal. Independent Senator Shane Ross, who signed Dana's nomination papers, said there should have been a contest but that the Establishment prevented one.

Senator Ross maintained it was unfair that Dana had to secure nomination by four County Councils or 20 Oireachtas members, while the President merely nominated herself. Mayo Fine Gael TD Michael Ring, Dublin TD Finian McGrath, and Green Party TD Eamon Ryan all supported making it easier for a non-party or small party nominee to go forward in a Presidential Election. Did McAleese care about women's rights back then when she was protecting her political career? Did she?

Julianne Herlihy ©

G F A R I P ?

Is the Good Friday Agreement dead?

It has certainly been successfully nullified by the DUP at Westminster.

When the Agreement was signed 20 years ago there were two unionist responses to it. The then majority of unionists represented by the Ulster Unionist Party of David Trimble reluctantly signed up to it and attempted to obstruct its operation from within. The then minority of unionists represented by the Rev. Ian Paisley did not sign up to it and attempted to destroy it from within. An element of the first group of unionists who were not happy with the terms of the Agreement acted as a kind of hand-brake on it within the majority group before deciding the game was up and joining the second group in outright hostility. Chief amongst them was the current leader of the DUP, Arlene Foster.

Over the course of the operation of the Agreement the minority unionist group replaced the majority group and decided to operate the Agreement with the element in nationalism that they detested most—which had been the minority party, but which had become the majority party after the original majority had bungled the Paradise of their own making.

The DUP did a deal with the devil, despite the devil's refusal to repent or wear sack cloth and ashes in repentance for his past sins. And the pact with the devil proved much more fruitful for all than the effort of the fallen Angels.

The Rev. Ian Paisley then conceived a

masterly strategy to draw the devil away from his wicked ways and his carnal desires so that he might even embrace Heaven. The devil was to be brought into God's House and be treated with an element of respect so that he would forget his yearnings for another place.

Although Paisley was got rid of by his former acolytes after conceiving such a radical plan, his successor, Peter Robinson, initially embraced it and gave it its fullest expression in his famous/infamous Castle-reagh Speech of 2013.

But, by then, unionism had become unsettled by some mortal blows in the communal battle. The 2011 Census result revealed an impending Catholic majority—and the restriction on flying Union Flag struck at unionist symbolism in the former citadel of City Hall, which had become overrun by Fenians as the Protestants retreated to its hinterlands.

And so Robinson sounded the retreat from the Paisley strategy and things began gathering momentum in the other direction. Not *feeding the crocodiles* became the mantra of unionism, instead of fattening them for contentment, as Robinson gave way to the UUP deserter, Arlene Foster.

However, another blow was in store for unionism. At the start of 2017 the political majority that it had held over the nationalists in the territory of its choosing—the Six Counties carved out of the Province of Ulster—was smashed by a resurgent Sinn Fein, buoyed up by Catholic discontent at not being fed. This made the Agreement

very problematic for the DUP. The historic, inbuilt majority that unionism had used to frustrate nationalist advance could no longer be relied upon to do the job in the future. The goal posts needed moving.

At this point came the Brexit Opportunity. Brexit unfroze the stalemate in the communal grind by introducing an element of flux. It was all to play for again after the last offensive had become bogged down in the mud.

The new British Prime Minister, flattered at being portrayed as Iron Lady II, and believing she could enhance her predecessor's small majority, decided on a snap election, whilst the Labour Party was tearing itself asunder. This was despite an Act of Parliament recently passed by her party, in coalition with the Liberals, establishing 5-year set terms. The fundamentals of British politics proved too strong for the mere constitutional reform of fixed-term elections. The old Constitution was restored by the Government, and May exercised her Prerogative Power in going to the country.

But the election proved a disaster for Prime Minister May. Labour, which was to be humiliated, was made more cohesive in the election campaign, and its leader's position was enhanced both in his party and in the country. And May found herself with no overall majority and dependent on the DUP to obtain the required parliamentary arithmetic to govern. She negotiated a Confidence and Supply agreement with the DUP to support her Government during the Brexit negotiations—which have proved to be negotiations within the Conservative Party rather than with the EU.

The newly enhanced position of the DUP MPs has had an effect within the DUP. Foster, who was wounded by her incompetent handling of the Renewable Heat Initiative scheme, has joined the British Prime Minister, as a leader who remains on sufferance.

When Foster became leader of the DUP, this was an unexpected turn of events. It was generally thought that Nigel Dodds would follow Robinson. But, once Foster threw her hat in the ring and availed of the current fashion for having leaders without testicles, Dodds decided the game was not worth the candle. He held fire, withdrawing from the contest, and laid low for another time.

Dodds, being the leader of the phalanx of DUP MPs, found himself at the axis of the new power. It was already in the interest of the DUP that power move away

from Stormont, where the unionist majority had been nullified, to Westminster, where they were now omnipotent. The parliamentary arithmetic made them feel as powerful as John Redmond had felt a century previously as a result of May's miscalculation. They went to bed with Theresa while Arlene, not being an MP, froze in the outhouse.

Speaking of the outhouse—In the negotiations to restore Stormont, it appears that Sinn Fein gave most of the ground and seemed the most desiring of the two parties for a new accommodation. Foster herself seems to have been at least favourable to an accommodation, with some allowance for an Irish Language measure, and gave reason to believe a deal was done. But the new axis of power—the strong DUP presence in the House of Commons—seems to have decided that the frolics around the outhouse were now inconsequential, compared with the walking of the corridors of power during the Nation's moment of destiny. The power lies in Westminster and even a little bit of

it was not to be given back to Sinn Fein.

The success of the McGuinness/Paisley period of government at Stormont unfortunately had the effect of enabling London, and Dublin to withdraw from overseeing the Six Counties, to make sure the GFA arrangements continued to function smoothly. But the Six Counties is a garden that quickly gets overgrown with weeds if it does not receive careful tending.

Brexit has made the Good Friday accommodation problematic in a number of ways. As usual, instability in England has had detrimental effects in Ireland.

Surprisingly, after all the dissident republican criticism of the Agreement and Adams over the years, the dissidents have had little to say at their moment of destiny. But surely, if Good Friday is dead, they were right all along and they are suddenly back in business? Perhaps they were not all they seemed to be?

We shall see. We live in interesting times.

Pat Walsh

Book review: *'One Party Dominance. Fianna Fail & Irish Politics 1926-2016'* by Sean McGraw, Eoin O'Malley. Published by Routledge, 2018.

Fianna Failing !

This book costs £115, or ₣130, and consists of 197 pages of material that has been published already in *Irish Political Studies* last year. It is a book by academics on the subject of Fianna Fail, about other academics' views on the subject, and clearly for academics in that field, and I would reckon its market will be strictly—hopefully—confined to them. If the words such 'ambiguity', 'pragmatism', 'centrist' were banned, it could not have been written. It is a useless book to understand its subject.

It reminded me of an encounter some years ago with one the academics often quoted in the book, Professor Brian Girvin. Brian was planning to do a study of the origins of Fianna Fail and, to assist him, I suggested that I could introduce him to some people who actually founded the party. He looked at me with a mixture of surprise and pity with a remark to the effect 'what could they possibly know about it?' It made me realise that academia and political practice operate on different planets and this book and many, many others amply confirm that.

The first chapter is titled *'Fianna Fáil: the glue of ambiguity'* and sets the tone.

Fianna Fail succeeded because "*Fianna Fail out-manoevred Fine Gael through its use of symbolism, rhetoric, leadership to cement its nationalist credentials*" (p.2). Clever PR did it! And "*Once in power reimagined the Irish state without actually changing it fundamentally*". (p.3). Ignore abolition of the Oath of Allegiance and all Oaths, the new Constitution, getting the Ports back, industrialisation, winning an economic war launched by Britain, saving the country from the world wide depression, defeating the attempt at a Fascist takeover, the Presidency of the League of Nations, etc. etc.

"*Studies that have attempted to explain the Treaty split in 1922 have failed to explain any significant variables, including poverty, emigration, land agitation or rural/urban divide, as important. Personal loyalties rather than systemic or cleavage differences seem more relevant in explaining the sides in the civil war*" (P. 4.). The 'Treaty' debate could not, or should not have been about the 'Treaty' at all! It seems all were operating a false consciousness in those meaningless debates and conflicts about it!

In other words the 'studies' do not have a clue as to what the 'Treaty' was about and therefore they could not have a clue as why Fianna Fail was formed.

De Valera, we are told, was successful because "he used imprisonment to build a myth about him" (p. 6). He also had "the aura of an electoral genius" (p.6). Not the reality of an electoral genius who was Head of Government on 11 occasions and twice as President. But this was just an aura of electoral success!

"At its core, Fianna Fail was deeply committed to maintaining the Treaty division" (p. 10) And there was poor me believing the party wanted to get rid of the so-called 'Treaty' and the divisions it created and went into the Dail to do so and thereby prevent the Government of the day maintaining and exacerbating the divisions.

"Of the original aims identified in the first Corú,(Constitution) one could reasonably say it failed in all seven goals" (p12). De Valera "Maintained an illusion of neutrality" in WWII (p.15), and "overall, the effects of Fianna Fail's protectionist policies hindered rather than helped Irish economic growth" (p.15). We are in parallel universes here.

A result for our author is that "the form of the Irish Party system is one of the enduring puzzles of Irish politics and as a result, an ongoing puzzle for comparative political scientists" (p.3). Such a puzzle is strictly in the eye of the beholder.

All this is supposed to explain that a political party, which effectively achieved nothing, encouraged divisions in the country, and was an obvious failure in everything it touched, nonetheless remained the dominant party for about 80 years. In this scenario the real 'puzzle' is not Fianna Fail but the electorate that allowed them to continue to exist! That electorate must have been one of the dumbest in the world—to put it a mildly as possible—to vote for such wasters and chancers decade after decade.

The authors show their disconnect with their subject in not even contemplating that this is an obvious question that would occur to anyone outside academia who reads this book—and needs to be answered. What they say is simply verbiage on every issue they tackle. But paper never refused ink and I will not waste more ink on it.

But what the authors say is not as important as what the current leader of Fianna Fail says about they say. At least

we are in the real world with him. He obviously considers it very important as he launched the book, issued a long press statement about it, and did a review for the *Irish Times* (17.2.2018).

He claimed that:

"This excellent collection, edited by two of our foremost political scientists, with contributions from a mixture of well-established and new academic voices...is especially impressive in taking on perhaps the interpretation most resistant to acknowledging contrary evidence—the idea that everything can be explained by using the two short words 'civil' and 'war'.

Don't mention the war is Martin's message. The impression created is that the party has always been trying get away from its origins and that its success and radical policies were in some way at variance with its 'civil war' position. This is saying it was successful despite itself. The opposite is the case. Fianna Fail in its heyday was proud of being a party of the 'civil war'. It was the party that had always insisted on the achievement of full national independence as the top priority by any and every means. It was that or it was nothing. And that was the reason that it had the spirit, courage and the motivation to adopt radical social and economic policies as and when necessary—be they left, right or centre or even if they defied any definition at all. They were all for a greater purpose than any particular policy. And the Party eventually won the 'civil war' by getting rid of the humiliations of the 'Treaty' and establishing real independence in WWII.

But for Martin this is not the case and "Many of the contributors to this book show ways in which there is a much more complex and evolving reality to be seen." Again, this 'complexity' is in the eye of the beholder. Elections are not won on the basis of a "complex and evolving reality".

But to the Fianna Fail leader the party was successful, despite its origin. And of course there has to be a bit of mandatory sniping at de Valera. He tells us that "Dorothy McArdle's... influential history of the republican cause was subject to many manipulations by Éamon de Valera". I wonder what these were? Mr. Martin does not say and I doubt if he knows, as he published a book on the 'civil war' a few years ago, 'Freedom to Choose', in which he said that he did not consult de Valera's papers when writing it. A book on the 'civil war' that ignores de Valera!

I doubt he has done so since. McArdle was not the type of person to be manipulated by anyone and she did disagreed with de Valera leaving the Dail after the

'Treaty' vote and told him so when writing her book. But disparaging de Valera is obligatory when aligning oneself with our "foremost political scientists"!

Martin is a party leader in the mould of Tony Blair and David Cameron in that they do not really like the parties they lead—they are there to be managed. And where are they now? They were replaced by people who clearly do like their parties. It's a big advantage for any party leader. Martin should try it sometime.

Jack Lane

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**Letter sent to *Irish Times* on 5th
March but not published**

Between You And Me And Harold McGee!

Harry McGee is a political correspondent for the *Irish Independent* and a native of Galway who writes also for the *Connacht Tribune*.

As I only get email copies of the *Irish Times* and never see the *Connacht Tribune* his work never came to my notice until March 1 a mere for days ago.

He was writing about political spin and a spat between Fine Gael and one or both of the other Dublin establishment parties.

For some reason he wrote—

"Many years ago the Republican movement decided it would bypass the Traditional media in getting its message. It went for the modh direach, firstly with the establishment of a propaganda newspaper, An Phoblacht/Republican News "

I can imagine the shock horror of citizens, used to objective and honest reporting and informed comment from disinterested writers who expect no remuneration, promotion or office for their efforts, nor syndication in the organs of other powers nor decorations from alien princes.

As it happens I've been reading the *Irish Times* since Douglas Gageby earned it a place in the homes of citizens who had no reservations about their citizenship and those who made that status possible. But for nearly twenty years previously I frequently read the *Irish Press*, *The Irish Independent*, *Evening Herald*, *Evening Mail*, and later the *Sunday Press* and the *Evening Press*. And I listened to the BBC most days.

The party political preferences of those papers were apparent but not often bitter. The BBC was not generally offensive. Its News announcers had the air of Victorian schoolmasters who had the onus of flogging

children for their own good, when they recorded the mass hangings of Kikuyu at Thompson Falls, or the bombing of Alexandria and Port Said. One couldn't help feeling sorry for those shouldering The White Man's Burden amongst ungrateful natives.

I also, occasionally read Sinn Fein's *United Irishman*, and later *Republican News* and *An Phoblacht*. I didn't share every opinion published in them, but I never detected a deliberate falsehood nor an opinion dishonestly held. And I appreciated that they were part of an honourable tradition going back through Connolly, Griffith, John Mitchel, Thomas Davis, and the *Northern Star* in the days of Wolfe Tone. I don't think any one of them earned a living from their endeavours.

Imagine my feelings on the 3rd March

when I read Professor Diarmaid Ferriter's historically skewed article on the virtues of the Royal Irish Constabulary in the Irish Times.

They were feelings of disgust rather than surprise, because the article was typical of most of the Irish media these past four decades.

Your paper has published in its *"Rite and Reason"* column the falsehood that Daniel O'Connell had never shot a man. Irish schoolboys of my generation knew that he shot a Mr d'Esterre dead in a duel in Co. Kildare in 1815 and that in the same year he had been arrested on the way to Ostend to duel with Sir Robert Peel who had challenge him. The falsehood was uttered by Father Seamus Murphy SJ, a Professor of Philosophy.

Donal Kennedy

To this point, a quick online search turns up a video from a 2012 session in the Dáil, in which Adams and former Taoiseach Enda Kenny engage in a back and forth exchange, completely in Irish. In the clip, which lasts nearly ten minutes, Kenny commends Adams for his introduction of Irish into the debate, before lightheartedly noting that, while he agreed with his choice of language, he wasn't so sure about his opinion on the matter at hand.

This scene presents a stark contrast to Dudley Edwards' unfounded claims that Kenny's superior level of Irish had all but snuffed out Adams' attempts at its use since his move to the Dáil in 2011.

Furthermore, she erroneously claims that Kenny and his colleagues in *"the south"* interpret the use of Irish as a *"discourteous"* attempt to *"put non-Irish-speakers at a disadvantage"*, which eventually resulted in Adams reserving his use of Irish for the Sinn Féin 'faithful'. Though, again, this assessment doesn't stack up factually.

Surely Dudley Edwards recalls the 2015 instance in which Kenny, not Adams, was accused by TD Mick Wallace of intentionally embarrassing him by refusing to speak English during a session for Leaders' Questions? Kenny defiantly answered the claim of the bewildered Wallace by reminding his colleague that *"this is our national language"*, before reiterating that he should make use of the available translation headset if he can't comprehend it. Yet, I suppose this example was less *"discourteous"* or *"aggressive"* because it was delivered in what she deems the *"musical"* sounds of Kenny's Connacht dialect.

Turning her focus to the Irish-language community more generally, Dudley Edwards went on to discuss the fact that, in the Northern context, those who spent time in prison tend to have a solid working knowledge of the language. In many cases, this is true, especially for those who were on the Blanket Protest. Although, one thing should be made clear. Their embrace of the language was not a result of the *"generosity of the Prison Service"*, as Ms Dudley Edwards states, but rather in spite of the abuses and inhumane treatment endured by many on a daily basis.

Though perhaps her most curious claim is that, in terms of Irish, *"those we might call the civilians tend to have the least"*. If this is the case, are the 6,000 students currently enrolled in Irish-Language-medium schools in Northern Ireland not counted among those that we *"might call civilians"*?

A response to an article in the *Belfast Telegraph* (19 February) by Ruth Dudley Edwards

Don't Curry The Yoghurt*

—learn the Irish language and beat cultural sectarianism

Some years ago, I read about an anonymous former participant of the Blanket Protest who recalled a visit from an RTÉ Irish language reporter. He remarked upon her *"terrible elitist attitude toward the language"* and, in particular, her claim that the brand of Irish which developed in the H-Blocks made her shudder.

He quickly retorted,

"When you hear the Gaelic in here you're hearing it as a living language. It's spoken and evolving in a natural environment. Your Gaelic is put in a glass cage as a showpiece. We have a living language. Yours is an artificial thing. For you it's an academic achievement, while for us it's something that lives, and that comes from our day-to-day situation".

I was reminded of this short anecdote not long ago as I, for lack of a better term, shuddered reading Ruth Dudley Edwards' take on the politicisation of the language in the *Belfast Telegraph*. The inherent elitism of that unnamed RTÉ reporter from the late 1970s wafted over the words of Dudley Edwards' column like the *curried yoghurt* that her headline warned us against.

Yet, unlike that reporter, Dudley Edwards' apparent lack of proficiency in Irish embraced a number of head-scratching assertions and historical blunders. Taking the liberty to speak for all Irish speakers with *"southern ears"*, she quipped about the ugly, harsh sound of the Ulster dialect in comparison to the more melodic sounds of Connacht or Munster. As an Irish speaker, I don't think I've ever come across such rubbish from anyone who actually speaks the language regularly, no matter their location.

The bulk of her ire, however, tellingly appears to be reserved for Gerry Adams, whose Irish she says, *"isn't good enough to do a substantial interview"*. She further points out his linguistic deficiencies by asserting that *"Even Leo Varadkar, who learned it only recently, speaks it better"*. Now, no disrespect to Leo Varadkar, because whatever his level of Irish may be, he has made a laudable effort recently to bring about an awareness of the language as an inclusive rather than exclusive medium. That being said, anyone with even a passing interest in the language is aware that Adams can, and indeed has, done a number of interviews in Irish language media over the years, and is well able to hold his own. By comparison, Varadkar has given few if any off the cuff *"substantial interviews"* in Irish.

*An allusion to DUP MLA Gregory Campbell's sneer at the Irish language in the Northern Ireland Assembly on 4th November 2014, when he started his speech in the Stormont Assembly, *"Curry my yoghurt can coca coalyer"*.

Regardless, Dudley Edwards' framing of the language along the antiquated lines of decades gone by is a gross oversimplification of the Irish-speaking community today. In the last week of February, for example, a diverse cast ranging from drag-queen Ru Paul to actor John Connors showed their support for the language. But hey, maybe this unlikely duo too has 'sashayed' its way into the IRA leadership, and is now involved in some elaborate new republican language scheme!

On a hopeful note, Dudley Edwards commended Linda Ervine's ongoing work in teaching Irish to east Belfast loyalists, remarking that this will hopefully lead to their "*taking ownership*" of the language. While Ervine's efforts should undoubtedly be commended, it is time that we move past this sort of rhetoric to describe her group. The language, now, belongs to no one. Contrary to what Noel Whelan said in a recent *Irish Times* article, it is simply incapable of being '*weaponised*'. It's the native language of this island and it cannot belong to anyone more than anyone else.

Has it been politicised in the past? Absolutely. Since the time of the Fenians, and the Young Irelanders before them, the language has been present in the political arena in one form or another. It has also simultaneously existed outside of that arena, in everyday interactions.

While combing the archives recently, I came upon a fascinating letter from a Protestant antiquarian, George C Mahon, to the Gaelic scholar and militant nationalist founder of the Fenian Brotherhood, John O'Mahony. Written in the mid-nineteenth century, the majority of the exchange deals with Mahon's curiosity at the origin of his surname and other Irish language words. Yet, in the opening of the message, he addresses the elephant in the room—his counterpart's political activities.

He notes with great *angst* that many Protestants in Ireland, himself included, fear that the proposed policies of the Fenians, if successful, would lead to their demise. Historically, there is no way of knowing O'Mahony's response, as the return letter has been lost to time. Yet for years the two men, who had little to nothing in common, aside from their interest in the Irish language and its preservation, kept up a warm correspondence with one another. Modern Irish history is littered with such exchanges, and no, O'Mahony never tried to subversively dupe Mahon into becoming a Fenian.

As the example of their unlikely friendship conveys, the language has the capability to build mutual understandings

and bring about dialogue where it mightn't otherwise exist. This is the sort of historical framework in which Ervine's work could, and should, be viewed. Not through the sort of tit-for-tat lens of cultural superiority peddled by Dudley Edwards.

In both playing upon long-held tropes of elitism and stoking the current flames of discordance, Ms Dudley Edwards has done an equal disservice to not only Irish speakers in 'the south' but also both communities of the north. Echoing the earlier anecdote, her

views should be placed back in a glass cage as a show piece.

Though, in a nod to her final suggestion to Gregory Campbell, "*if he had any imagination*", that he should engage with rather than dismiss the language, perhaps she should brush up on her own Irish and start a column with an Irish language news outlet like *tuarisc.ie* or *nos.ie*? You know, as she says so easily about Campbell, just to "*give us all a good laugh*".

Pádraig Ó Mathúna

March Brexit Summary

The main Brexit developments in recent weeks—the March summit of the European Council and the negotiations leading up to it—have brought more clarity than previous summits to the process, although uncertainty regarding the UK's eventual relationship with the Customs Union and Single Market (CU and SM) and how a hard Border in Ireland can be avoided, remain. Political events consequent of election results in Germany and Italy were also important, as was a change in the stance of the British Labour Party. In Ireland Fianna Fail has become openly critical of the Government's strategy and, in the culture debate about Redmondism and closeness to Britain, Brexit continues to exert an influence.

MARCH SUMMIT

Unable to express the outcome of the December summit in a legal document, the Barnier Task Force proposed a *back-stop* in which Northern Ireland would remain in the Customs Union (CU) and Single Market (SM) and the Border between Europe and the UK would run down the Irish Sea. At the summit, while disagreeing with the wording of the EU position, the British accepted the principle of a backstop which would become operational if other arrangements to avoid a hard Border could not be agreed.

A transition was also agreed which will end on the last day of 2020. The UK will leave the EU at the end of March 2019 but will remain in the CU and SM governed by EU rules for a further 21 months during which time the it will be free to negotiate international trade deals but not sign them. A '*good faith*' clause allows the UK to have an input into EU decision making that impinges on its interests.

The agreement on the transition represents a defeat for the hard Brexiters, seen most clearly in the bitter disappointment of the UK fishing industry. Unfazed

by the setback, Michael Gove and Jacob Rees Mogg have exhorted their followers to remain focussed on the ultimate prize that will come in 2021.

The surprise development at the Summit was the sudden hardening of support for the UK in its dispute with Russia over the Skripal poisoning. This may have the effect of making it easier for Theresa May to sell a soft Brexit to her party, but at the time of writing it is too early to assess its implications.

DEVELOPMENTS ON THE CONTINENT AND IN BRITISH LABOUR

Now that Germany finally has a Government, Merkel's influence on the Brexit negotiations has become discernible. A reference to the official leading Germany's Brexit team, Peter Ptassek, appeared for the first time in Open Europe's blog recently. German influence may have been instrumental in causing the EU's close alignment with the UK regarding Russia.

As for German support for Macron's EU reform plans: much depends on the stance of the new Finance Minister, Olaf Scholz, a Social Democrat. According to Derek Scally of the *Irish Times*, Scholz is "*wary of deficit spending and shares Merkel's caution towards French euro reform proposals*" (IT, 11 March). However, the same article reports that Scholz "*has blocked any red lines on EU reform proposals such as banking union and common deposit insurance*". So, the impetus which Brexit, among other factors, has given to a deepening of the Eurozone by the Franco-German engine will now bear fruit more likely than not.

The Italian election results were an indictment of the neo-liberal path taken by the EU. Anti-EU and anti-immigrant sentiment were behind the success of Matteo Salvini's League, which ousted Berlusconi's Forza Italia as the dominant force in the Centre-Right alliance. Similar sentiment was also a factor behind the

success of the 5-Star Movement in the south of Italy. While the results reflect a protest against neo-liberal globalisation and its attendant inequality, they cannot be interpreted, as the Brexiteers would like, as a sign of the EU's imminent collapse. Shortly after the elections Lorenzo Fioramonti of the 5-Star Movement wrote an opinion editorial for the *Financial Times* in which he argued that his party "*intend to operate within the Eurozone framework*" and that its ambition was to "*reconnect the EU with its founding values of solidarity, sustainability and peace*".

A speech by Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn made at Coventry on February 26th, in which he came out for "*a new comprehensive UK-EU customs union to ensure there are no tariffs in Europe*", has distanced Labour from the Brexit policy of Theresa May's Government. The editorial in the March edition of *Labour Affairs* was critical of this shift on the grounds that "*to trade with the rest of the world while a member of a customs union that provides similar benefits to the customs union is like having your cake and eating it*". A further point from the editorial is worth quoting. It reads:

"Labour has now distanced itself somewhat from the Tories. Its new policy may attract enough Tory remainers to defeat the government on an amendment calling for a customs union to be included in the Trade bill. This is now not likely to be debated until after the Easter recess and possibly the local government elections in May. (Elections which many Tory MPs will be watching to see if their seats are likely to be lost at the next general election). But would this be a wise move if it led to a vote of no confidence and a general election?"

The answer from *Labour Affairs* is that winning a General Election in such circumstances would be tantamount to accepting a '*poisoned chalice*'. "*Better therefore to leave things be and let the Tories sort out the mess of their own making*", it states. Sound advice I would say.

IRISH DEVELOPMENTS

Fianna Fail Brexit spokesman Stephen Donnelly claimed in the Dail that, by allowing negotiations to move on to trade and future EU/UK relations without winning commitments from London on how to avoid a hard Border, the Government was "*losing leverage*" in the negotiations. Fianna Fail foreign affairs spokesman Darragh O'Brien described Leo Varadkar's recent statement about the possible expulsion of Russian diplomats as "*rash*" and called for a "*thorough, objective and neutral assessment of allegations against the Russian Government*"

(RTE news). In both statements Fianna Fail is functioning as an effective party of opposition. Sean Crowe, Sinn Fein spokesman on foreign affairs, has also voiced concern about the lack of evidence against the Russians.

Stephen Collins devoted his *Irish Times* column of March 8th to criticising President Michael D. Higgins for not attending a symposium to mark the centenary of John Redmond's death. Like other supporters of neo-Redmondism, Collins has failed to grasp the significance of Brexit for Irish politics. Since the Redmond revival began to achieve momentum in the 90s, it has had two strings to its bow: a sympathetic interpretation of Redmond's historical importance; and, more important, a political shift towards a closer relationship with Britain. Brexit has raised a question the *closer to Britain* part and for that reason Redmondism has been left high and dry. The President was right to steer clear of a symposium devoted to a divisive, historically unsound and objectively anti-European project.

A straw in the wind that is indicative of the move away from Redmondism is a recently published book by Mervyn O'Driscoll entitled, '*Ireland, West Germany and the New Europe*'. The final sentence of a review of the book by Dr Christopher Kissane is telling. It reads:

"O'Driscoll's revealing book offers a powerful reminder that our route to true

independence has been through partnership with our friends on the Continent" (IT, 3 March)

A similar indication was an Address to the Royal Irish Academy delivered on 13th February by Catherine Day and responded to by Noel Dorr. Day is a former Secretary General of the European Commission and a concluding point in her speech, expressed in diplomatic language, was that the exit of the UK from Europe was probably for the best, especially following David Cameron's refusal to back the Fiscal Compact.

Of equal significance was Dorr's reply, especially his introductory statement under the heading of '*additional personal reflections*'. His words testify to the compatibility of contemporary foreign policy with the nationalist ideals that inspired the foundation of the State. Given the thrust of the official narrative in recent years, it is significant that a leader of official opinion like Dorr should dissociate himself from Redmondism. He stated:

"It is, I think, an interesting coincidence that, in the Spring of 2019, just as the UK is about to leave the EU, we in Ireland will be commemorating the centenary of the Declaration of Independence by the First Dáil. That was the formal act by an elected Irish Parliament asserting our independence from the United Kingdom: it ratified, and gave full democratic legitimacy to, the Republic proclaimed on Easter Monday 1916."

Dave Alvey

Editorial

The Skibbereen Eagle Returns

Ireland wasted its moment of power when it took the lead in diverting the EU from putting Britain on the spot about a Brexit border in Ireland and focussed discussion during a long day and part of a night (22nd and 23rd March) on getting token support from the EU for Britain's feud with Russia.

The EU, in exhaustion, agreed to withdraw its Moscow Ambassador for consultations, which was hailed in Britain as the EU breaking off diplomatic relations with Russia. The following day the Brexit business was rushed through the European Council to Britain's satisfaction.

Recent Irish Governments have forgotten what Ireland knew in the past—that relations between states are impersonal, and there is no reward for subservience.

John Bruton, who would have preferred that there should be no Irish state for him

to have been Taoiseach of, explained in the *Independent* the following day that what Ireland did was offer Britain a gesture of emotional sympathy against Russia, in order to help it to feel at home in Europe so that it can give up Brexit. Below are some extracts from his piece:

"...My feeling is that the decision to opt for Brexit was based on a deep seated wish to assert an English sense of identity.

Just as Irish nationalism in the 19th and 20th century defined Irishness as being in contrast with 'Britishness', Englishness today is being defined, in the minds of many in England, as being in contrast with continental Europe, as reflected in the European Union...

"In the absence of a major crisis, or of an heroic exercise of political leadership in Downing Street, rational argument, on its own, will not reverse the course towards a progressively wider gulf between the UK and the rest of Europe, during and after Brexit..."

England needs an emotional European solidarity over Russian activities is the sort of things that can help Britons feel more European reconciliation with Europe [sic].

European solidarity with the UK over the Russian activities in Salsibury is an example of the sort of thing that can help Britons feel more European [sic]...

If the UK is to reverse course, it will

need time... An extension of time under Article 50... might be considered.

One might consider if there are gestures that can be made toward the UK that do not damage the integrity of the EU, but which would make the UK feel more at home as a member..." (Irish Independent 24.3.18)

Is any comment needed ?

100th Anniversary Part 5

The Russian Revolution

The group which in the early 1960s attempted to formulate a socialist position that would enable Irish politics and history to be dealt with coherently was made up of members from the Communist Party of Great Britain who disagreed with its stifling of realistic discussion of Irish affairs, and also to some extent with its view of the Soviet Union following Khrushchev's condemnation in 1956 of what had been done in the Stalin period; and discontented Republicans who had played some part in the 1956 invasion of the North, had concluded that Republicanism needed a revolutionary social position, had gone to London in search of one through the Connolly Association which was regularly denounced as communist by Irish Bishops but discovered that it was a dependency of the CPGB and therefore stifled discussion of what they were looking for, had turned to the Trotskyist organisations (of which there were three) which were then beginning to make their presence felt; and Pat Murphy, to whom Liam Daltun turned for assistance in forming an organisation; and myself, who was brought along by Pat. And then Tom Skelly found out about the Group and came along to it.

Tom was the only member who had engaged in actual social revolt. He had led a kind of peasants' revolt in County Longford around the time of the First Coalition Government. It was from Tom that some of us heard of *Praties and Point*: family meals of potatoes, in which the fork would be pointed at a bit of bacon in the rafters. It was still well known in Slieve Luacra, however, where there were still pieces of bacon hanging from the ceiling.

I found it difficult to grasp the possibility of a peasants' revolt in Ireland in my lifetime. I grew up in a property owning democracy in North-West Cork. There

was no class of landlords that could be rebelled against. I knew that there had been a landlord aristocracy in my grandmother's time, but it had been abolished before my mother's time, leaving not a trace behind. The region was peasant only in the sense that it was not urban. But there could be no doubt that Tom Skelly was telling the truth. I later discovered that the Home Rule Party had sabotaged the anti-landlord movement in the first decade of the century, and that it was only in County Cork that the concession made to its demands was thoroughly implemented. This was due to the activity of Canon Sheehan, the classic Irish novelist, and D.D. Sheehan, the land reformer, along with William O'Brien. The land movement in North West Cork was a *Land and Labour Movement*. This was D.D. Sheehan's project. Small-scale land ownership was accompanied by a network of publicly-built Labourers' Cottages, each with an acre of land, which covered the countryside.

This is not irrelevant to consideration of Russia in the 1920s. Land & Labour was a kind of realisation of the Narodnik ideal, and Narodism was the source of most things in Russia after the Emancipation of 1861.

My interest in Russia did not begin with Communism or Revolution. It began with the 19th century Russian literature that I came across in the Narodnik democracy in Slieve Luacra.

In the Parish of Boherbue, until I was in my early teens, there was no Public Library. There was no library of any kind. And there was no bookshop. And yet there was no shortage of books. There were books all around the place.

Then a Parish Hall was built voluntary labour—a Parish Hall, but certainly not a Church Hall—and I mixed some concrete

for it with a shovel. It included snooker rooms, a Badminton Court, and, amongst other things, provision for a library.

Books were not purchased for it. They were brought in by people who had them, and they came from the Townlands (i.e., the countryside) rather than the village. And one day I glanced at a battered copy of Dostoevsky's *White Nights*, and was lured into 19th century Russia. Two other things that struck me particularly then were plays by Tolstoy: *The Power Of Darkness* and *The Fruits Of Enlightenment*. And there was an account somewhere by Dostoevsky about the pain experienced by emancipated peasants when they were required to sit on juries and pass judgment on fellow human beings in the cause of civilisation.

From the time I looked at *White Nights* English literature had little appeal for me. In the course of time I got a Russian grammar and a number of Russian poems got into my head. I could still repeat one of them, *Vnimaya Oozhacam Voini*, by the Populist Nekrassov. It is certainly sentimental and could not exist in English.

Dostoevsky peasants had to suffer the pain of passing judgment on fellow humans who did things that were human and that anyone might have done. This was necessary because what they were emancipated into in 1861 was Capitalism. They had not anticipated that that was what Emancipation meant. They resisted it. Their ideal was their pre-Emancipation life with a few improvements. And the self-sufficient peasant Commune became the ideal of the Intelligentsia. This was not in conflict with Tsarism. The Tsar, the *Little Father* of all, should be its protector. If the Tsar was to be abolished, the vaguely envisaged alteration was not the bourgeois-democratic State of Capitalism, but the Commune without a State.

There was no bourgeois ideal in progressive Russian literature of the 19th century. There was no George Elliot. The bourgeois life, as observed in the West, was rather held in contempt. Progress looked backwards—as English Socialism did for a while before it was taken in hand by Liberalism.

What the Emancipation Decree of 1861 did was break up the familiar socially organic relationships and establish the framework for capitalist development. The nobles had not been the independent owners of great landed estates until then, and the peasants had not been their individual contractual tenants. All had lived together in a Tsarist cultural web that might be seen as having something in common with the Catholic ideal of the

Mystical Body—but Orthodoxy had much more going for it in this regard than Roman Christianity.

There was of course a bourgeois development within Tsarism: St. Petersburg. Tsar Peter the Great had travelled anonymously in the West, observed how Capitalism worked and apprenticed himself to it. (There is a German opera about him: *Tsar Und Zimmermann*, Tsar and Carpenter.) When he returned home to rule Russia, he ordered nobles to go and build a city on the Gulf of Finland and practise living the enlightened bourgeois life in it. A long time later the Emancipation was decreed and it was expected of the nobility in their new role that they should make an effort, wherever they lived, to live the enlightened life. Tolstoy's play, *The Fruits Of Enlightenment*, is a mockery of it. It shows a group of peasants coming to a Big House to transact a piece of commercial business with their landlord under the new relationship. Some cultural event is going on in the house and they are told to wait in the kitchen until the landlord is free to deal with them. And so, through the gossip of the servants, they begin to see what goes on in the Enlightened life.

What was going on in the vigorous intellectual life of Russia during the two generations following the Emancipation was no cultural preparation for the triumph of Capitalism. It was a search for a way of preventing it. There was Populism (Narodism), Commune anarchism, and Socialist Revolutionaries.

I seem to recall that Marx was tempted by this Russian Populism into thinking that the Capitalism, of which he was so painstakingly working out all the financial devices, might be by-passed, but was shepherded away from that thought by Engels.

Much of Lenin's early writing had to do with refuting Populism by showing that Capitalism was developing in Russia and could not be by-passed. But then, having given primacy to proletarian class development and proletarian revolution, he devised the strategy of overthrowing the Tsarist/capitalist state by a form of proletarian revolutionary action that could enlist the support of the peasantry, and then by means of proletarian state power open up a line of development for the peasantry that was not capitalist, and thus by-pass Capitalism after all.

Another tangent: Regularly in the *Irish [née Cork] Examiner* there appear articles by two members of the former Communist Party of Great Britain: John Lloyd and Geoffrey Roberts. Roberts is a History

Professor in Cork University and writes on military affairs, but not on Irish military affairs. He is very much against Irish military affairs. And he did not contribute at all to the wide-ranging discussion published in the *Cork Evening Echo* on the centenary of the Great War. Having come from the British nationalist strand of the CPGB, he was a useful addition to the revisionist re-orientation of Cork University with which Dermot Keogh has been prominently associated. He suggested in commemoration of the Kilmichael Ambush that the names of the Auxiliaries who were killed there while engaged in the business of enforcing British military rule against the elected Government should be listed along with the IRA Volunteers who supported the elected Government.

John Lloyd, Scottish upper class in background, was briefly a member of BICO. He joined along with Professor Bill Warren of the School of Oriental and African Studies, who came from the Glasgow Gorbals. Bill had come to disagree strongly with the CPGB view of Imperialism and was attracted to the position being developed by the B&ICO. He exerted an influence of moral ascendancy over Lloyd. When Bill died, Lloyd was like a fish out of water in BICO and he soon left. He was for a while Editor of the *New Statesman*. He was also a *Financial Times* journalist, and he greatly approved of Yeltsin's artillery bombardment of the Parliament building. Parliament was trying to make itself the centre of a form of Constitutional government, but it was nationalist in spirit. (What else could Constitutional government be?) Yeltsin's ruling by decree was seen as being more in accordance with the spirit of Progress, at least while there was work of destruction that needed doing.

John Lloyd held a kind of Menshevik view for a while, because it was in the atmosphere. But Menshevism had in fact broken more radically with the Populist source of things than Bolshevism had. It lived in a systematically-idealised enclave of Marxism, comprehensively disengaged from Russian social reality. [NB: This paragraph somehow found its way, out of place, into last month's instalment.]

The Menshevik ideal was of a bourgeois democracy in which Socialism would blossom. During its brief period in Office it showed no aptitude for bringing about that condition of things. And, when it was ousted and the Bolshevik regime consolidated itself, there was no coherent Menshevik opinion on how what it saw as

Constitutionalism might be restored—on how Constitutionalism as ideal might be made in Constitutionalism as fact. (Where Constitutionalism is fact it is not idealism that sustains it.)

While Lloyd was in BICO he seemed to believe in something called *Leninist democracy*. It was the CP fashion of the time. I ridiculed it as something of which no trace could be found in actual history. Some years later I heard him on the radio declaring that Lenin was the greatest criminal of the 20th century. And he issued a statement that he had found out about the Russian Gulags, and was overcome with grief at the thought that he had been associated with them, however tenuously, through his political affiliations, and had broken down and wept.

He had clearly not been influenced at all by his period of BICO membership. He must have been inoculated against it by the fantasy life of the Communist Party.

He was Editor of a couple of issues of a magazine called *Problems of Communism* that we published, and he proposed that 'Communism' be dropped and replaced with 'Marxism'. (Marxism was respectable. Hardly anything else was allowed a voice at that time in vast regions of British academic life.)

There was a debate on the proposal. I suggested that, if there had to be a choice between *Communism* and *Marxism*, it was *Marxism* that should be dropped. After all, *Communism* preceded *Marxism*. Marx joined the Communist Party.

As to the Gulags: Lloyd must have been made immune to knowledge of them in the CPGB, and the immunity must have held good during his time in BICO.

The idea of "*Leninist democracy*" was much in vogue in CPGB and some Trotskyist circles in the 1970s-80s. I ridiculed it. When Solzhenitsyn's *One Day In The Life Of Ivan Denisovich* appeared, I treated it as escapist fiction. But, when *The Gulag Archipelago* began to appear, I saw that Dostoevsky had re-surfaced in Russia and history had resumed. But Lloyd was soon denouncing Solzhenitsyn as an obscurantist reactionary.

That put Lloyd back with the classical liberal ideology which was the ground on which Marxism was constructed. But of course he didn't see it. The different pieces of thought—the slogans—don't connect up with him. I only ever had one real discussion with him. It was about the military collapse of France and Britain in May 1940. A Fascist Fifth Column in France had opened the front to the Ger-

mans, he said. I had been searching high and low for some trace of this Fifth Column, but it just was not there. And I could not see that anything beyond the actual engagement of the military forces in place—Britain and France having had eight months after their declaration of war to put their forces in place for the prosecution of the war which they had declared—and the conduct of those forces in battle, when Germany eventually responded to the declarations of war on it, sufficiently accounted for the outcome.

But, no, it was the Fifth Column in France. That was the British story. It was the British story in 1940, told in all media, high and low. It even appeared in an Agatha Christie detective story, in 1940, and in a Tommy Trinder film. And it has been the British Story ever since. That is one of the great strengths of the British national mind: it forms ideas appropriate to its interests, regardless of facts, and treasures them as fixed points of orientation in a world that is otherwise in flux. In Dublin, by contrast, ideas are mere sparkles in the flux, dying in the process of being born. Elizabeth Bowen noted this in her wartime spy reports to Churchill:

"The stereotyped, or completely conditioned, mind seemed to me rarer in Dublin than in London. (There is also a great deal of bigotry, but this seems to be individual, not mass.) Public opinion in Dublin is almost dangerously fluid. It is, at the same time, less homogeneous than in any English city I have known" (*Notes On Eire*, 2008 Aubane edn. p15).

My fixed idea about Russia came from Dostoevsky and Tolstoy—possibly because I got something worthwhile from both of them that was relevant to the life of Slieve Luacra. And particularly the Dostoevsky who would sulk in the cellar, rather than participate in Chernyshevsky's vision of life lived transparently in a crystal palace.

Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?* follows on in a certain way from Chernyshevsky's *What Is To Be Done?* When Lenin's political structure began to crumble—about seventy years after the ousted Mensheviks had thought it *was* crumbling—I wondered if a Dostoevskian spirit could have survived the intense modernising of three generations, so that it could see the whole development from the vantage point of a Populism that had been obliged to submit to Progress for a while. When the first volume of *Gulag* appeared, I saw that that spirit had survived, and was intellectually strong.

*

Systematic description of society in terms of classes which perform economic functions in market economy began with Smith and Ricardo and was most precisely set out by Ricardo. Rent on land, Interest on money, Profit on enterprise constituted society. And each function was carried out by a social class which lived by it. English literature of the 19th century is largely about the interplay of the social bearers of these economic functions, with Wages appearing on the margin and making its way to the centre.

It was in England that the market broke free of all organised social constraint and realised itself as Capitalism, and Capitalism became society. Marx joined the Communist Party and wrote a book about Capitalism to show that it was based on an antagonism that would destroy it. But then he spent the rest of his life working out the economic devices by which it kept itself functional, while keeping an eye open for signs of a rebellious spirit that offered hope of destroying it. He wrote a pamphlet in praise of the Paris Commune, which was only a flash in the pan. (It was an act of rebellion against making a settlement of the War that France had launched on Prussia, with popular approval, and which it had lost. The war accelerated the formation of a German State, which it had been its aim to prevent, and French refusal to make a settlement when it could no longer engage in regular warfare, and the call to the French populace to rise up in military action, led to the German occupation of Paris. That war is usually presented in British history as a Prussian assault on France. Eventually the German Occupation found a French Government with which it could end the war that had been declared on it, and it withdrew. The Third Republic was established in France and it put down the Commune with mass slaughter.

The Commune, in rebellion against the State on patriotic grounds, made its own emergency arrangements but I don't know what it had to offer towards the project of constructing a Communist state. I don't recall that Lenin gave it much attention. But he gave considerable attention to the French Revolution, and to how Robespierre might have averted his fall on Thermidor by enacting his own 'Thermidor'.

I suppose the idea of a Communist State is a contradiction in terms. Lenin's book in 1917, *The State And Revolution*, suggested that the withering away of the Communist State would begin almost as soon as it was established. The capitalists had to be subordinated by an act of state,

and the intervention by the landlords, supported by Britain and France, had to be dealt with. But then, according to the course of events projected by *State & Revolution*, the withering away of the State would begin.

In fact, what happened at the end of the emergency measures connected with the Civil War, was a crisis in the relationship between the small Communist State and the mass of the peasants who had been made owners of private property by it.

A closely observing Menshevik, Miliukov, in exile in the USA, wrote at that point (1921) that the Bolshevik deviation from Marxist orthodoxy, (which in the circumstances of the time had become a kind of bourgeois orthodoxy), had run its course, made its contribution to the development of Russia, and was burnt out:

"It was necessary for the cycle of events in Russia to come to a close before its meaning could become patent and a criterion be found by which events could be judged in their unity and completion. It think this is now the case with both the 'White' and the 'Red' movements in Russia. The former ran its course with the loss of the last patch of anti-Bolshevik territory in the Crimea; the latter with the Great Russian famine. General Wrangel's defeat manifested the degeneration of the 'White' movement. The famine of 1921 demonstrated Russia's exhaustion under the Bolshevik rule. Whatever happens in time to come, these two phenomena will mark the turning point in the Russian Revolution" (Paul Miliukov: *Russia: Today & Tomorrow*. New York, 1922).

In Miliukov's view there was a necessary revolutionary process in which things like Bolshevism would come and go, contributing something along the way. The purpose was to construct the population into a political substance which lived its life in connection with the State. For centuries under the Tsar there was no interconnected national society in Russia, just a lot of particular things, with most of the people living in particular arrangements of natural anarchy. And the Bolsheviks had their part to play in bringing all the bits and pieces into cohesive social existence:

"It is important... to discriminate between the passing and the lasting substance of the Russian Revolution... While the destructive aspect of the Revolution is of necessity presented in detail in this book, I wish that the constructive processes of the Revolution should not be overlooked. We are witnessing the birth of the Russian democracy, in the midst of the rains of the past which will never return. One must not be impatient with the great and

complicated revolutionary process which in other countries took decades, if not centuries, for its completion" (vii).

"On the face of it the Bolshevik revolution of November 7 seemed to be too much Utopian to be able to succeed... Should it really happen, would it not be equivalent to refutation of Marx's doctrine?...

"We shall see... that the Bolsheviks knew all these arguments perfectly well. But we shall also see that they never intended to introduce communism in Russia. The November revolution was to be a revolution not for Russia's sake, but for the sake of the world revolution. Russia was the means, not an aim in herself" (p25).

When the Tsarist State collapsed in March 1917 the Bolshevik leaders came back from around the world: Geneva, Paris, London, New York. They were internationalist revolutionaries, knowing little about Russian realities. When they seized power their great ambition—

"was to beat the record of the Paris Commune... However, the reality defeated all forecasts. The 'communist' revolution of November 1917 proved a much greater success than the national revolution of March. The last of the four governments of the national Revolution was overthrown after eight months' duration. The Bolshevik government has now lasted four years" (p25).

The returned Bolsheviks found out enough about Russian realities to be able to continue the "*stream of revolutionary transformation*".

How did the Bolshevik regime last so long?

"...three pillars have supported the Bolshevik structure for such a long time. There are... their highly centralised system of administration, numbering quite an army of officials, controlled by the Communist Party; in the second place their Red Army; and in the third place, their secret police and espionage system, which is effectively in the hands of the Communists. Of the two aims...—preparing for communism and keeping in power—the former was gradually removed to a second place, while the latter evolved into a system of self-defence of the small minority against their own people—a system which has never been surpassed by any tyranny at any time in the world's history" (p70).

Has Miliukov forgotten on page 70 what he said in the Preface? That after four years of Bolshevism he as "*witnessing the birth of Russian democracy*"? I don't think so. Some of the Mensheviks became hard-headed in their understanding of the world after it was too late to be of any use to them.

The national revolution of March was a

democratic revolution of the people against the Tsarist autocracy, according to the ideologues. In fact it was neither national nor a revolution. The established State collapsed, taking everybody by surprise. An active nation on which a routine of democratic government might be based had no more existence in 1917 than in 1916. The Provisional Government did not do anything much during its eight months. It waited for the results of the Election it had called. During the following four years Bolshevik actions created a democracy, in the sense of an interconnected populace that was active in the affairs of the State.

The State was not in any sense a delegate of the populace. The populace was active under the direction of the State. But a populace that could act under the direction of the State was an altogether new condition of things in Russia, as Miliukov acknowledged.

Of course the regime did not fall in 1921. There was no Russian Thermidor—except the one that was organised by the regime itself to ensure its own continuation.

It was in this development, in Lenin's hands, that Marxism approached closest to the status of being Political Science.

In general terms politics can never be reduced to the regularity of a science, unless the waywardness inherent in human existence is eradicated. But, in particular circumstances, something like a scientific understanding sometimes seems to exist. It requires a combination of analytical detachment and wilful engagement. These are rarely found together. The English Revolution, Cromwell's pseudo-republic, had no understanding of itself. It was closely observed by Clarendon with a considerable degree of detached understanding as he bided his time in France, with his King in tow, waiting on the opportunity to intervene. But Lenin displayed this power of analytical understanding in the midst of the revolution in which he was thoroughly engaged, and in 1921 he redirected the revolution so as to make it encompass the bourgeois revolution, which had been skipped over, and allowed it sufficient scope under the dictatorship of the proletariat to deliver economic substance while being kept blind politically.

And so the four years, that Miliukov in 1921 took, reasonably enough, to be the whole course of the Bolshevik Revolution, proved to be no more than a preliminary phase.

Brendan Clifford

THE DAYS OF ORANGEADE AND LILIES

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
Decline

Ruled for 50 years and still wanted more.

Oh those heady days with ammo galore.

And those loyalists growing on the vine.

They pressed those grapes and produced orangeade.

Sang of past victories written in blood,

chanted of being British down in the pub,

Catholic neighbours they constantly upbraid.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
Decline.

When the corrals smashed down the gates,

no guns, whips or masons giving the sign

would recover lost ground or placate.
Keep to that side of the street. This is

mine.
No melting pot here, just go pollinate.

WHAT A NERVE!

Hitler's madness and the USSR repeated again in a new Cold War. What could it be that they abhor.

Weren't they pleased that communism went sour.

Maybe such a mighty country dies as they wished before and now wish again. Who does your fighting when you go insane.

You'll soon find out when all fries.

Plus those balance-of-power acts works some more

in this age of drones and agent-provocateurs.

Spies are decanted and wiped out with spoors.

This new game in town makes Porton Down purr.

The poisonous media on highs soars as elitist official saboteurs.

Wilson John Haire

8 March 2018

Response To A Yeatesian Regurgitation Of A Markievicz Myth

Padraig Yeates's article, "*The Irish Citizen Army*", was written for a special commemorative 2016 issue of the Irish Military History magazine *Reveille*, published for the Centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising. This February, the author has now posted that article on the academic website *Academia*. Yeates writes of Markievicz:

"ICA Captain Sean Connolly became the first fatality among the rebels after having himself shot dead the first Crown casualty, DMP Constable James O'Brien ... at the main gate of Dublin Castle... By a strange symmetry, a second DMP constable, Michael Lahiff, was shot dead by another ICA officer in Stephen's Green. This time it was Countess Markievicz. District Nurse Geraldine FitzGerald saw the incident from the nurse's home at the south-west corner of the Green. 'A lady in a green uniform... holding a revolver in one hand and a cigarette in the other was standing on the footpath giving orders to the men. We recognised her as the Countess Markievicz... We had only been looking for a few minutes when we saw a policeman walking down the footpath. He had only gone a short way when we heard a shot and then saw him fall downward on his face. The Countess ran triumphantly into the Green saying 'I got him' and some of the rebels shook her by the hand'... Nurse FitzGerald was obviously shocked, as much at the congratulations that followed the killing as the deed itself..."

One cannot avoid noting that Yeates's sympathetic treatment of FitzGerald involves a significant elision. For the police report attributed to her the following contemptuous description: "*We recognised her as the Countess Markievicz—such a specimen of womanhood*". But why on earth has Yeates regurgitated this malicious, mendacious myth? The supposed FitzGerald 'Diary', upon which it is claimed a 1917 police "report" was based, is in all likelihood a rewritten document whose original cannot be located anywhere on this earth, and should be treated as possessing no more credibility than *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

As Yeates well knows, fourteen years ago, in letters to the *Irish Times* on 19th and 28th October 2004, Claire Guerin and myself had pointed out that, not having the gift of bilocation, Markievicz could not possibly have shot Lahiff, since she

was still at City Hall at the time when Lahiff was shot at noon, at the north-west corner of the Green. Moreover, Yeates further knows that this point was once again repeated in my chapter "*The Court Martial of Countess Markievicz*", included in the booklet jointly published in 2006 by SIPTU and the Irish Labour History Society for the 90th anniversary of the Rising, *James Connolly, Liberty Hall & The 1916 Rising*. One can only speculate as to why, a decade later, Yeates is attempting to give the kiss of life to that malicious myth and, moreover, in a Centenary Year when no fewer than four Markievicz biographies dealt the story even deeper, and more deadly, body blows.

It is here that I must confess to having broken a promise made over a year and a half ago, that I should review at least three, if not all four, of such biographies. By December 2016, I had completed a review of those first three, when I realised that the fourth was of far greater significance than I had initially thought. But I had only begun writing the phrase "*so I had to read the book after all*", when I stopped, and asked myself: Why am I writing this at all? Sure, what historian would now give credence to the myth? I had other pressing arguments to write! But I have Padraig Yeates to thank for now provoking me to finally complete that previously abandoned article.

In my September 2016 article, "*Why Markievicz Stood by the Republic*", I promised to review three biographical works published in 2016: *Constance Markievicz—Irish Revolutionary* by Anne Haverty; *Sisters Against The Empire—Countess Constance Markievicz and Eva Gore-Booth, 1916-17* by Patrick Quigley; and *Revolutionary Lives—Constance and Casimir Markievicz* by Lauren Arrington. I'll begin by referring to two issues that figure prominently in Arrington's concluding chapter. The first is her devastating—and more than justified—critique of the 1934 Markievicz biography by Sean O'Faolain, although the opening phrase of what follows can hardly be said to apply either to Haverty or Quigley, or indeed to another 2016 biography by Lindie Naughton, *Markievicz—A Most Outrageous Rebel*. Arrington writes:

"Every biography since has taken O'Faolain's book as its starting point, lured in by his tantalising anecdotes and eminently quotable vitriol. The book began as a plan for a series of articles for the *Sunday Chronicle*... The biography that emerged soothed the jaded palettes... Throughout his biography, O'Faolain's tone undermines any seriousness in Constance or Casimir's artistic or political endeavours... '*Worst of all, she was, it is clear, sexually cold.*' ..."

Casting Casimir and Constance as foils for each other, O'Faolain disguised the extent of their political affinities during the early years of their marriage... To Stanislaus (her stepson), the book was an '*awful parody*'... Most infuriating for Constance's friends was O'Faolain's misrepresentation of her activism and her militant engagements...

Nora Connolly O'Brien, scathingly commented that the biography was '*up to the author's usual standard*'... She intended to publish her own account of the revolution in order '*to give the lie to the filth that is O'Faolain & Frank O'Connor's. I am not at all narrow minded about things but ... it seems tragic that those of us who were actually the ultimate friends of the lads who really did the work are silent while these outsiders are so busy defaming them.*'

She believed that O'Faolain's '*idea was to blacken everyone & so please England, sell his muck in England & make money.*' Refusing to buy a copy, she pledged to '*wait until Boots have it on their secondhand list so that sale won't help him.*' Connolly O'Brien was not far off the mark; as the Jonathan Cape archive shows, the biographies that O'Faolain published in this period were financially motivated, and his politics were fickle" (pp 270-2).

O'Faolain's caricature of Markievicz fits into the wider—gender prejudice—issue that is also raised by Arrington in this concluding chapter:

"Whether de Valera shot anyone during the Easter Rising is never a matter for public debate, whereas the singular occasion of Markievicz's shooting of the constable at St. Stephen's Green continues to plague the Irish public imagination... Major writers including W. B. Yeats, Sean O'Casey, and Sean O'Faolain have served as the architects of Constance Markievicz's legacy. Yeats wrote three poems in which Markievicz features... In 'Easter 1916', she is described scathingly as '*That woman*' ... depicted as coarse and hardened: '*Too long a sacrifice / Can make a stone of the heart*'... The image of the stone also appears in Yeats's *Autobiographies: To women opinions become as their children or their sweethearts, and the greater their emotional capacity the more they forget all other things. They grow cruel*'..." (pp 267-8).

Having rightly gutted O'Faolain, Arrington continues:

"In his (1976) study of O'Faolain's biographies, historian F.S.L. Lyons... shared O'Faolain's opinions about Constance Markievicz... and goes so far as to quote Yeats in his summation of the *'bitterness, and perhaps even the barrenness of those lonely later years (that Markievicz) spent 'conspiring among the ignorant'...* On the whole, the historiography of modern Ireland reflects Lyons's—and thereby O'Faolain and Yeats's—opinions rather than the facts of the Markievicz's lives and thought" (pp 272-3).

Referring to *"scintillating caricatures by some of Constance Markievicz's most bitter antagonists"*, she cites *Drums under the Window* (1945) by Sean O'Casey and gives as another example:

"In Liam O'Flaherty's novel *The Martyr* (1933), a satire on the Irish Civil War, Markievicz appears as the thinly veiled character of Angela Fitzgibbon, a vampiric Cathleen ni Houlihan: mystical, sexual, and above all bored" (p 274).

All of this echoes Arrington's earlier 2016 blog on the *"Irish Historians in Britain"* site, entitled *"Did Constance Markievicz Shoot the Policeman?"*, where she had argued:

"No one ever seems to ask whether MacDonagh and MacBride, Connolly and Pearse (never mind de Valera and Collins) happened to fire shots at an unarmed individual, policeman or otherwise. But whether Constance Markievicz shot an unarmed constable at St Stephen's Green is the question on which the public judgment of her character hangs... If Markievicz's death sentence had been carried out, would historians or the general public view her actions with more sympathy? Possibly. But probably not. Her execution would not have affected the account offered by W.E. Wylie of her Court Martial, which holds so much sway. Nor would it have stymied O'Casey's vitriol or changed Yeats's verdicts. A clue to the reason lies in nurse Fitzgerald's diary: *'the Countess de Markievicz—such a specimen of womanhood'...*"

Arrington's book was reviewed by Roy Foster in the *Irish Times* on 19th March 2016. Foster took issue with just this one aspect of Arrington's argument. He noted—

"the dislike felt for her by disillusioned nationalist intellectuals such as Sean O'Faolain, Liam O'Flaherty and Sean O'Casey: not to mention three powerful poems by Yeats, where her adult persona as shrill-voiced socialist agitator is set regretfully against her youth as a Sligo beauty."

But he went on to pronounce his one

put-down of the author: *"Arrington attributes these reactions to sexism, but I wonder; she was herself a good hater, and the manic, gushing, sometimes self-deluding tone of many of her letters suggest a difficult colleague"*. For Arrington had gone a step too far in also criticising the man whose name Foster here left unmentioned, but who had been one of his own instructors and heroes, the Trinity College Provost F.S.L. Lyons. On 13th September 2003, a *Guardian* profile of Foster said of him:

"He wrote of F.S.L. Lyons, a historian he greatly admired, that *'his intelligence was notably subtle, reflective, interrogative'* and these, say his admirers, are the qualities displayed in his own work."

Yet there is a more substantial weakness in the manner in which Arrington indicts such antagonists of Markievicz with charges of sexism, if not outright misogyny. For all her targets are men, and all are dead, although Arrington's own narrative points out that there was a qualitative difference between O'Casey and O'Faolain, with the playwright steadfastly refusing to have anything to do with O'Faolain's intended *Sunday Chronicle* project. On 10th August 1932, O'Casey wrote to the then arch character assassin: *"To launch an attack on the living is much more dangerous than to launch an attack on the dead, and I did this on M. de Markievicz, when she was living when she was popular"* (p 270).

This century's arch character assassin, however, is not only alive, she is a woman. In my September 2016 article I praised Arrington's book for a very effective exposure of one of the more grotesque calumnies against Markievicz that had been forged in the *Irish Times* in the very week of the Easter Rising. But, in my May 2016 article, *"Murderous' Markievicz or Malicious Misogyny?"*, I deplored the fact that Arrington had funk'd the need to confront that current arch character assassin of Markievicz, Ann Matthews, and had instead treated her with the utmost deference.

Arrington cited Matthews as the key authority on the shooting of Constable Lahiff, but made no reference whatsoever to the forensic refutation of her by Ray Bateson. By leaving the Matthews narrative effectively unchallenged, Arrington awarded her a propaganda walkover, one eagerly seized upon by anybody quite happy to see any mud thrown at Markievicz to half stick, at the very least. And so, in his review of Arrington, Foster could feel free to pronounce:

"The jury remains out as to whether or not she shot a policeman (it seems fairly certain that she winged him, and he later died from his wounds)."

However, the jury is still out only because Arrington did not do her homework by failing to consult key authoritative sources that would have given the lie to the Matthews' claim that Markievicz had gleefully killed the unarmed Lahiff.

More's the pity. For Arrington's book is otherwise an achievement of new and formidable research. If she has funk'd confronting Matthews, she has given the *coup-de-grace* to the Wylie character assassination of Markievicz in respect of her 1916 Court Martial. Arrington has provided the clearest and most coherent narrative I have yet read of those proceedings, clarifying that there was not just one trial for Markievicz in May 1916, but two, and with two corresponding records as well—the *"Preliminary Examination"*, the record of which is held in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, and the Court Martial itself, whose Home Office official record is held in Britain's National Archives. Arrington draws on both to provide clear evidence of *"the resolve Markievicz expressed during her trial"* (pp 140-142).

Arrington's other significant contribution is in her exploration of the life of the husband, Casimir Markievicz. The way had been paved, as Arrington herself—and, indeed, Foster—acknowledges, by Patrick Quigley's pioneering biography, *The Polish Irishman—The Life and Times of Count Casimir Markievicz* (2012), which I reviewed in the December 2013 issue of *Irish Foreign Affairs*, under the heading of *"Not So Much Poles Apart: The Markievicz Two Nations"*. A plus in Arrington's biography is that she commissioned translations of Casimir's newspaper writings in two languages—Russian in the case of *Russkoye Slovo*, and Polish in the case of *Rzeczpospolita*.

Adopting a 'compare and contrast' approach, Arrington demolishes many O'Faolain-generated myths about imaginary differences, where there were none, but also explores in depth those differences that were real. This particularly applies to the difference between Casimir's narrow Polish nationalism (although Casimir was also a sympathiser with Irish nationalism, but on a similar racial basis), and Constance's anti-Imperialism, which was as anti-racist as it was internationalist in her further championing of solidarity with the Indian and Egyptian independence movements.

The most significant difference between the Markievicz was, of course, that they were on opposing sides of the First World War. Casimir was a supporter of the Polish nationalist (National Democratic Party) politician Roman Dmowski, who had placed his faith in the Tsar of Russia, and Casimir himself fought, and was wounded, in the service of the Tsar. Moreover, in line with actual war fought by Tsarist Russia, Dmowski was a consummate anti-Semite. Wikipedia sums up the polar opposites of Polish nationalism:

"Dmowski believed that only a Polish-speaking and Roman Catholic could be a good Pole; his thinking marginalized other minorities, and he was vocally anti-Semitic... Throughout most of his life, he was the chief opponent of the Polish military and political leader Jozef Pilsudski and of the latter's vision of Poland as a multinational federation."

It was Pilsudski, and his wartime alliance with Austria and Germany, whom Constance's commander James Connolly championed. And it was Pilsudski's intolerance of anti-Semitism that would make him such a hero among the Polish Jewish community.

Casimir's politics remained under the influence of Dmowski for at least the first five years of the Polish Republic. Arrington provides evidence of what she describes as Casimir's "sharp turn of his politics to the right in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution", citing a couple of articles which he wrote in 1923 for *Rzeczpospolita* that are undoubtedly anti-Semitic in both approach and tone. (p237-8).

It may well be the case that this is how he remained. But we have nothing more to go on. For Arrington provides no evidence as to whether or not he retained or rejected those prejudices throughout the remaining decade of his life. This did not deter Foster's review from suggesting—notwithstanding the absence of any such evidence—that Casimir remained an anti-Semite to the very end: "He would become... stridently anti-Semitic before his death in 1932". But a reverse turn was also possible.

Take the case of Arthur Griffith. In a series of articles in the *Irish Communist* in 1970, I had been the first to undertake a systematic examination of Griffith's anti-Semitic journalism. But in 2011 I also wrote that the evidence from his close Jewish friendships during the final period of his life demonstrated that Griffith had ceased to be an anti-Semite. See www.drb.ie/essays/citizens-of-the-republic-jewish-history-in-ireland for my discussion of Griffith.

Unfortunately, Arrington does not

engage in any similar exploration of Casimir. Indeed, she also omits the evidence of his philo-Semitism in earlier years. She writes of how, as Constance and Casimir were returning from Ukraine in 1902, "they pretended that a young boy, Janko, was their servant so he could flee the country and escape conscription" (p 30). But in her biography of Constance, Anne Haverty is more specific:

"Janko was a kind of refugee, the son of a Jewish tenant (of Casimir) at Zywtowka who, to avoid conscription into the Russian military service, had been smuggled across the border to Berlin where he joined the Markievicz en route to Ireland." (p 65).

In his biography of Casimir, Quigley noted that Janko was a Polish Jew who, as a successful Dublin businessman in succeeding years, would provide Constance with financial support for workers' families during the 1913 Lockout (pp 58 and 154). Quigley had also written of the Polish Jewish tailor, Dubronsky, as one of Casimir's closest friends and associates in Dublin. (pp 71-72). But Arrington makes no mention of Dubronsky. Nor does she mention the fact that it was in Pilsudski's orbit that Casimir circulated in later years, with the commissioning of his powerful portrait of Pilsudski that is featured so prominently on pages 182 and 198-9 of Quigley's biography.

See <http://irelandscw.com/docs-Ryan2.htm> for how, in 2003, I had occasion to draw attention to Foster's predilection for suggesting guilt by association. And, since Foster highlighted Casimir's anti-Semitic remarks while staying silent on how Constance was anything but anti-Semitic, perhaps some of that mud might also stick to her in the perceptions of *Irish Times* readers. In fairness, Arrington cannot be blamed for such a Fosterian twist. She is at pains to emphasise Constance's own "resilience" and freedom from anti-Semitism, or any other form of racial prejudice, not least due the influence of James Connolly (p 238).

But Arrington seemed to feel constrained in voicing any criticism of Foster on such matters. He did, after all, provide her with the blurb on her dust jacket: "Timely, well researched and original... This is a book that needed to be written." In his *Irish Times* review he referred again to "Arrington's beguiling and thoughtful book".

There are two types of reviews of Irish books to be found in the *Irish Times*. Some are drawn from mutual admiration associations; others involve authors

reviewing the works of their competitors. In Foster's case, it falls into the former category. In 2016 Arrington had already contributed an essay to *Uncertain Futures: Essays about the Irish Past for Roy Foster*. In the Preface to her own book, Arrington's acknowledgements and thanks begin: "Revolutionary Lives would never have been completed without the enthusiasm and expertise of many people. Roy Foster first suggested the possibility of a double biography."

And in the *Irish Times* on 16th November 2016, Arrington sent another plaudit his way, when she wrote of Markievicz undergoing "a gradual process of radicalisation that was typical of the revolutionary generation, as eloquently portrayed in Roy Foster's Vivid Faces."

"What to make of Constance Markievicz? Three biographies reviewed" was the title of that Arrington review, and her tribute to Foster was all the more generous, since he himself was not one of the authors under review. Rather did Arrington's *Irish Times* outing fall into the category of a review of her own three competitors in the 2016 Markievicz books market. However, her response to each of the three biographies differed markedly, one from the other: strong praise in respect of one; superficially patronising of another; and systematically petty in the case of the third.

Arrington made passing reference to "Patrick Quigley's pathbreaking biography of Count Casimir Markievicz, The Polish Irishman", while in respect of his latest work she wrote:

"The journal that she kept in 1916-17, during this period of internment, is the basis for Patrick Quigley's double biography, *Sisters Against the Empire: Countess Constance Markievicz and Eva Gore-Booth, 1916-17*. Rather than attempt a full study of both figures, who have been so extensively reappraised, Quigley focuses on the year that was the most intense phase of the sisters' relationship. Visits from Eva Gore-Booth and her partner, Esther Roper, were crucial to supporting Constance through periods of depression and physical illness during her incarceration; between visits the sisters' psychic connection and their poetic collaborations provided spiritual nourishment. Quigley's book reproduces hand-drawn cards with poems from Eva to Constance and drawings from Constance's journal. At times one wishes the author had discussed the fascinating illustrations in deeper detail... More than 100 images are reproduced from the journal, showing Markievicz working in different genres and serving as further proof of her enduring skill."

I would concur with Arrington's tribute to Quigley, but with far more enthusiasm, for Quigley's narrative of the 1916 Rising also contains details in respect of Markievicz's role missed by Arrington. Moreover, Quigley has been more upfront in confronting that supposed account from the 'witness' residing at 101 St. Stephen's Green (south side):

"Ms. Fitzgerald did not mention more than one shot while Constable Lahiff was hit three times. She claimed to have seen Constance run into the Green and shouting: 'I got him'. In his book *The Rising Dead RIC & DMP*, historian Ray Bateson compared the many accounts of the shooting and detailed the inconsistencies. One version, popularised by Max Caulfield and widely copied, located the shooting at the main (north-west) entrance to the Green at the top of Grafton Street... There are almost as many versions of the shooting as bullets flying around the Green" (p 25).

Arrington's review of the second biography is limited to the following:

"It is fitting that this centenary year is the occasion for a revised edition of Anne Haverty's biography, first published in 1988 as *Constance Markievicz: An Independent Life* and now reissued under the title *Constance Markievicz: Irish Revolutionary*. The alteration invokes Seán O'Faoláin's dropping of the subtitle *Or the Average Revolutionary* from his biography—the first of Markievicz—for its second edition. And it was O'Faoláin, Haverty reminds us, 'who perhaps did her the most damage'. In this case the change in name also comes with a change in attire: a handsome black jacket depicts Markievicz in Citizen Army uniform, with the book's title superimposed in vibrant red type, restating her relevance. Although the reissue includes an updated bibliography, little of this work has made incursions into the narrative, but that seems inconsequential; Haverty's book remains a classic in Irish biography and a rollicking good read."

But Haverty is not just "a rollicking good read". Arrington's assertion that Haverty has not allowed extra material to make "new incursions into the narrative" is demonstrably untrue—specifically so in the case of the shooting of Constable Lahiff. Arrington's own biography swallows the trumpeting by Ann Matthews of her "find" of a supposed "diary", and writes: "One witness, the district nurse Geraldine Fitzgerald, recorded in her diary that she saw the shooting" (pp 131-132). But Haverty devotes five pages to a demolition of such Matthews / Fitzgerald 'evidence', not just in the body of the narrative (pp 163-4) but also—from the very outset—in her Introduction (pp viii-x). Indeed, she questions whether there

had ever been an actual contemporary diary involved at any stage:

"It's the cattiness that can seem to prevail. In our time Markievicz is also someone many love to hate... To be able to cast aside what most of us value so much—privilege, money, position—can cause discomfort or resentment. Her fervour and disregard for the conventions offend the prudent and the sensible... Much is made by present-day detractors of the allegation that it was she who shot a constable in St Stephen's Green... The only source for this allegation, apart from rumour—and rumours were flying about anyone or anything in that dramatic week—is the account of a Miss Geraldine Fitzgerald. This came to light since the first publication of my book and since it is so often cited against her and could be said to have passed into public lore it bears investigation. Fitzgerald's account is in the Dublin Castle files (kept in the British National Archives at Kew) marked 'Evidence Against Countess Markievicz' and stamped 14 July 1917. It purports to be from her diary, 'kindly supplied' to the taker of evidence by her mother who lived in Birr, County Offaly. Consisting, however, only of two typewritten pages this cannot be verified. It reads more like a deposition, taken down by someone tasked with gathering incriminating evidence. Constable Lahiff was shot, according to the Dublin Metropolitan Police report at about 12 pm. Fitzgerald... making her way to the Jubilee Nurses' Home on the south side of the Green adjacent to Harcourt Street... sat down to dinner... approaching 1 pm if not later: 'We heard the most awful firing outside the house... All the men with their rifles fixed towards Harcourt Street... A lady in green uniform, the same as most of the men (breeches etc)... Markievicz... There were other women similarly attired... We had only been looking out for a few moments when we saw a policeman walking down the path from Harcourt Street. He had only gone a short way when we heard a shot... The 'Countess' ran into the Green, saying "I shot him" ...'

"Apart from the crucial matters of the timing and location of the shooting (Constable Lahiff was shot at the Fusiliers' Gate facing Grafton Street), which differs so greatly from all other accounts, including the official account, there are other very questionable aspects to this testimony... The likelihood of a remark carrying from inside the Green and across a wide stretch of road noisy with the activities of the revolutionaries, onlookers, and the traffic that was still going up and down, is small. Also, Constance was experienced with guns and it's difficult to imagine her exulting like an untried markswoman in the accuracy of her shot if it was at such close range. The room adjoining the dining room would almost certainly have been on the ground floor, a vantage from which

it would not have been possible to see into the Green. And there is the matter of those other women Fitzgerald claims to have seen 'similarly attired'. Among the women revolutionaries only Margaret Skinnider may, apart from Constance, have worn breeches.. Even the very assertive and rebellious Helena Molony wore a skirt..."

"It is difficult to know what to make of this account or to say what Geraldine Fitzgerald may or may not have seen—except that it seems at the very least fanciful and based more on a year's worth of rumours than on reality. None of it would stand up in a court of law; which is probably why it did not appear on Markievicz's charge sheet in 1920. Only the obstinately mischievous, to put it kindly, can continue to cite it" (pp viii-x).

But what are we to make of Arrington's review of the third biography? Sandwiched between praising Quigley and patronising Haverty, she launched forth:

"Lindie Naughton's *Markievicz: A Most Outrageous Rebel* begins with the outrageous claim that 'Countess Constance de Markievicz has received remarkably little attention from biographers'. Eight biographies of her are then listed... Naughton's book is a poorly digested version of this scholarship, with neither the historian's commitment to detail nor the novelist's sense of plot and character. She makes recourse to stereotypes that do a disservice to a popular readership that keeps pace with the latest in Irish history writing."

Now, it had not my intention to read Naughton at all, not to mind review her book. Described on her cover as a "*Dublin-based journalist and writer*", I had assumed hers was indeed a pot-boiler, with little new to say. Perhaps, I lazily thought, she might have done little more than regurgitate the old pap that has persisted for over a century, from Max Caulfield to Ann Matthews, about Markievicz and the charge against her of "*murdering*" Lahiff. But, last November 20th, just a week after Arrington's review, Naughton was interviewed by Myles Dungan on the RTE *History Show*, and convincingly argued the case against the Matthews / Fitzgerald character assassination of Markievicz concerning the shooting of Lahiff. And, as Dungan himself put it: "*It's very hard to shoot someone dead, when you're not there!*"

See www.rte.ie/radio1/the-history-show/programmes/2016/1120/833115-the-history-show-sunday-20-november-2016/?clipid=2336506 for a recording of that Naughton / Dungan discussion.

So, after all, I now felt compelled to

read yet another book on Markievicz! There were indeed a number of Arrington's criticisms of Naughton which I would regard as valid. But why, commissioned to review all three biographies, did she devote 9 of her 15 paragraphs to a relentless assault on Naughton's work, without seeing a single redeeming feature? Haverty's term, "*cattiness*", springs to mind. Could it be that, in one key area, the investigative instincts and "*commitment to detail*" of the journalist outshone that of the professional historian? For a major source completely ignored by Arrington in respect of Markievicz's role in the 1916 Rising, but thoroughly mined by Naughton, was the 1917 memoir authored by Margaret Skinnider, *Doing My Bit For Ireland*. Naughton writes as follows of that Easter Monday, 1916:

"The actress and Cumann na mBan member Máire Nic Shiubhlaigh had cycled to her post at Jacob's biscuit factory. After she arrived... she saw an open two-seater car... Constance was on her way to St Stephen's Green with the rest of the first aid supplies. '*Go at it boys!*' she yelled. '*The Citizen Army are taking the Green!*'... When they arrived at the top of Grafton Street, the main body of rebels marched through the Dublin Fusiliers' Arch into (the **north-west corner** of) the Green... Constance arrived at (the **north side** of) St Stephen's Green between one o'clock and two o'clock, according to the pageboy at the University Club at her trial following the Rising. By the time she arrived, the Green was occupied by a hundred Irish Citizen Army soldiers... Margaret Skinnider (who had been) sent off as an advance scout by (ICA Commandant) Mallin, had arrived at (the **north-west corner** of) the Green on her bicycle. There were no soldiers in sight, all she could see was a single unarmed policeman, who paid no attention to her. He was probably Constable Michael Lahiff who, at around noon, was shot, allegedly by Constance. After he fell, Constance had run triumphantly into the Green crying '*I got him!*' according to an account, typewritten a year after the event, by Geraldene (*sic*) Fitzgerald, a nurse at the St Patrick's Nursing Home on the **south-west corner** of St Stephen's Green. Yet when Lahiff was shot, within five minutes of the Green's occupation, Constance was still on her way from City Hall, as witnessed by Máire Nic Shiubhlaigh. At her court martial, no mention is made of her killing an unarmed policeman, or indeed of killing anyone. Later, Father Sherwin of the Catholic University Church on St Stephen's Green wrote to Josslyn (Gore-Booth) to assure him that '*it was not your sister who fired the shot. She has given me leave to state that this is a fact!*'..." (pp 160-162). (The *sic* is Naughton's own; all emphases are mine—MO'R).

University Church falls within the parish of St Kevin's, Portobello, and Father Sherwin figures among my earliest childhood memories as Canon Sherwin, our rather frail but saintly Parish Priest during the early 1950s. Sherwin had a reputation of great integrity. But Markievicz had remained very careful as to what she was prepared to tell Sherwin. She affirmed to him, with conviction, that it was most certainly **not** she herself who had fired the shot that had killed Constable Lahiff. But, not being an informer, she had not fingered another who might have so done. Yet that did not involve a denial on her part of killing anybody else. It was, after all, warfare—"Kill or be killed". And although, as she has noted, Markievicz's court martial did not involve the charge of killing anybody at all, Naughton herself was sufficiently curious, as a "*mere*" investigative journalist, to determinedly research the matter in far greater depth. She concludes that Markievicz had, indeed, inflicted several casualties, if not fatalities, on the British enemy, but at the **south-west corner** of the Green, **not** the **north-west corner** where Lahiff had met his end. In contrast with the deplorable academic neglect that has failed to consult *Doing My Bit For Ireland*, the 1917 account by that super sniper and courier of the 1916 Rising, Margaret Skinnider, Naughton has drawn fully on it:

"According to Skinnider, soldiers from Portobello Barracks were sent out (**northwards**) twice on Monday to clear the Green... Then, at dusk, Skinnider was on her way back from the GPO when she saw two people hurrying from the Green. They were William Partridge and Constance. At the same time she saw British soldiers advancing up Harcourt Street: '*The countess stood motionless waiting for them to come near... At length she raised her gun to her shoulder—it was an 'automatic', over a foot long, which she had converted into a short rifle—and took aim... I was quite close when they fired. The shots rang out at the same moment and I saw the two officers leading the column drop to the street. As the countess was taking aim again, the soldiers, without firing a shot, turned and ran in great confusion for their barracks. The whole company fled as fast as they could from two people, one of them a woman!*' This episode may have been what the nurse Geraldene Fitzgerald witnessed" (pp 163-4).

That is, she may have witnessed it if there was such a Geraldene (*sic*) "witnessing" anything at all, since no trace can be found of the supposed "diary" upon which that 1917 typewritten police "reconstruction" was claimed to have been based, and embellished by a year's

subsequent myth making.

Whatever the case, Naughton proceeds to draw further from Skinnider's account, in order to determine if Markievicz had any more British Army casualties to her credit at that southern end of the Green:

"The garrison's only female casualty was Margaret Skinnider, who had spent Wednesday (on sniper duty) on the College (of Surgeons) roof (on the Green's **west side**)... On the roof of the University Church, on the Green's **south side**, was another (British) machine-gun post and, to cut off the soldiers in that post, Mallin wanted to burn out two buildings situated behind the Russell Hotel on the corner of Harcourt Street. He delegated Skinnider, William Partridge and three men to deal with one building... The British opened fire, hitting Skinnider on her right side with three bullets. Partridge lifted her up and carried her to the street, where she saw Fred Ryan, aged only seventeen, lying in a pool of blood... Partridge and another man carried her back to the Royal College of Surgeons... Soon after, Constance and William Partridge disappeared. When they returned, Constance quietly said: 'You are avenged my dear.' They had gone to where Fred Ryan lay, and to attract the fire of the soldiers across the street, Partridge had stepped over the dead boy to lift him. There were only two soldiers and they both fired, giving Constance a chance to sight them. She fired twice and hit both. Or so she told Skinnider, who was soon in a delirious state, moaning and talking incoherently" (pp 169-170).

But what of that casualty on the **north-west corner** of the Green, for whose death, most certainly, Markievicz was **not** responsible? If Markievicz herself had ever heard the name of any person who might have shot Constable Lahiff, she herself was not telling anybody else. But the curiosity of an intrepid investigator could not rest easy with that. Naughton set out to see if she could ascertain a possibility, if not a probability, and scoured the Bureau of Military History's Witness Statements until she found that of James O'Shea. She relates:

"When Margaret Skinnider arrived at the south side of the Green, she reported that she saw only a single policeman in the area that day. A few minutes later, when the Irish Citizen Army arrived, James O'Shea remarked in his witness statement that a policeman passed a comment about them playing at soldiers. He decided to get his revenge. '*We had orders not to fire until we heard firing from Harcourt Street, so that when firing was on for a minute or two, I went to the gate to fire at the policeman, who had passed the remarks earlier. He was at Noblett's Corner at the time so I had a shot at him.*' What is not recorded is

whether O'Shea's shot hit or even killed the policeman. Noblett's Corner was at the junction of Grafton Street and South King Street, facing St. Stephen's Green. O'Shea's immediate orders were to dig trenches inside the Dawson Street entrance to the Green. While digging the trench, a man stumbled up, pretending to be drunk. O'Shea decided he was a spy and, by his own account, shot him dead at close range... The police were held in contempt by many Dubliners because of their behaviour during the 1913 lock-out. Certainly O'Shea had no qualms about killing a perceived enemy" (161-162).

So, why regurgitate the Fitzgerald yarn? Pdraig Yeates can be disarmingly frank—in both private conversation and public discourse—as to his antipathy towards the 1916 Rising. In an April 2013 Liberty Hall debate on the Rosie Hackett Bridge, Yeates deplored—

"what a powerful impact 1916 has had on this country. And again I'm going to say something that is unpopular, I think that's a total disaster. And I think we've promoted values of patriotism, and romantic ideas of Irish nationalism, that have actually served us very badly. And we didn't look at important things, like social solidarity. We didn't look at things like equality or fairness in society. We promoted heroes, and that's why I'm against—if you like—heroes..."

Over three substantial volumes, Pdraig Yeates has proved to be a superb social historian of Dublin city. Moreover, an antipathy towards the outcome of a particular event in the national revolution should not necessarily rule out being a good historian of such an event. I am the very last person who might suggest that iconoclasm has not a valid place in history. But when iconoclasm turns historical facts on their head, it ceases to be history, and becomes mere character assassination and anti-historical propaganda. "*Obstinately malicious*" is how Markievicz's biographer Anne Haverty would describe it.

Manus O'Riordan

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Letter sent to *Irish Times* on 8th March, but not published

Remembering The R I C!

In his opinion piece on the RIC, Diarmaid Ferriter (IT, Saturday, 3 March), makes the extraordinary claim: "Where now lies the memory of the RIC? It was a force that had been well integrated into Irish society before the IRA targeted it for boycott."

As a Professor of History, it is extraordinary that Dr Ferriter seems unaware that it was not the IRA that "targeted [the RIC] for boycott" but Dáil Éireann, in a decision announced and justified by none other than Prof. Eoin MacNeill TD. The reason for the boycott, he said, was that force's central role is suppressing by terror the democratic institutions established by Dáil Éireann, the parliament elected by the Irish people in 1918 on the proposition of establishing an independent Republic.

Just a short generation before 1918 the RIC had been the raw end of British government suppression of the movement for land reform and political change. But in the decade or two before 1918—the heyday of the Irish Parliamentary Party—many men had joined it under the honest illusion that things had changed and that it had become a harmless force of "decent village bobbies". But the RIC had not changed its spots. Its officer corps remained overwhelmingly English/Anglo-Irish and its commanders not policemen but military men with decades of experience suppressing natives around the globe. When the British parliament decided to suppress the democratic institutions established by the Dáil by force and terror, the RIC was its chosen implement of enforcement. Unlike their police comrades in England, RIC men had always been—and remained—armed to the teeth and posted not in police stations but in what were commonly and aptly known as police "barracks". In Ireland even the census remained militarised, being collected by armed RIC men rather than civilian enumerators. RIC men were always posted to districts where they knew no-one and were known by none, for obvious reasons.

In the War of Independence British "official" and "unofficial" "reprisals" against civilians and their property were carried out by this force, including murder and the wholesale burning of homes, town centres, creameries etc. When its ranks became depleted due to the Dáil boycott and the refusal of hundreds of RIC men - who had joined to become village bobbies—to be part of the counter-insurgency, its ranks were filled out with English and Irish mercenaries known as the Black and Tans whose reputation for anarchic murder and terror need not be recounted. This considerable force were RIC recruits and formed the backbone of the force during the War. A further RIC auxiliary force—the Auxiliary Division ("ADRIC") or "Auxies"—also formed part of the RIC, operated under RIC command and was responsible for many of the worst atrocities of the period.

The Professor's notion of the RIC as "well integrated into Irish society" before the Dáil "targeted [them] for boycott" is—to put it mildly—a breath-taking distortion of the historical record.

Philip O'Connor

Letter sent to *Irish Times* on 10th March but not published

John Redmond and the path of violence

Stephen Collins associated John Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party with "those who sought to achieve independence by peaceful, constitutional methods" (Opinion, March 8th). He is surely mistaken. Redmond's enthusiasm for Irish participation in the first World War indicated support for violent constitutional methods.

One month after John Redmond died in March 1918, Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) MPs withdrew from Westminster. The new IPP policy of abstention was due to what the IPP termed a "declaration of war" by the British state on Ireland, in attempting to impose conscription.

The IPP became converted, partially, to the Sinn Féin policy of pursuing constitutional methods in Ireland, a policy realised by the foundation of the first Dáil in January 1919. British refusal to accept this peaceful Irish democracy led to the 1919-21 War of Independence. That was a conflict in which far fewer died, on any side, than was the case during the first World War.

In comparison, the republican policy was a lot less violent than the path pursued by John Redmond.

Tom Cooper

Does It Up

Stack ?

BREXIT—HOW TO AVOID IT

Brexit just won't go away. David Cameron, former UK Prime Minister, brought it upon us when he forgot that he was living and operating in a Parliamentary Dictatorship. David Cameron gave his subjects the impression that they lived in a Democracy now that they all were EU citizens. But then the Royal Court of Appeal settled that by declaring that the decision to stay in or to leave the EU is the prerogative of the UK Parliament alone.

Even the majority of the dogs in the street must know by now that Brexit will be a bad thing for the UK. The farmers in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland know very well how dependent they are on the EU grants and subsidies; and England itself has a very substantial farming lobby which knows their bread is buttered by the EU and the farmers cannot see the UK after Brexit having enough butter to go around. Fields across the UK have been becoming emptier and emptier of livestock and arable crops because of the EU largesse. The land of the UK is stuck where it is, but the farmers are not! Much of the UK land is owned by very wealthy landlords, big corporate entities and Trusts and the tenants are not glued to the land by emotional ties to the same extent as in other countries.

Farmers, particularly younger farmers are moving abroad—many to Poland, some to France and to the northern coastal regions of Spain, and there have been some who have gone to New Zealand. The skill of the farmer is one of the most portable skills in the world. Portable also is farm stock—one report is of a French Manufacturer, who uses milk raw material, has transported 50,000 milking cows to Poland so as to ensure continuity of supply.

The financial sector also is moving—in truth it has always been difficult to pin down—was it in Frankfurt or Dublin or Zurich or Milan? How much of it was in London—no one really knows because of its secrecy and fragmentation. The headquarters (?) of Nat West in London is in an iconic skyscraper designed to demonstrate the power and prestige of Nat West to all,

but in reality it is owned by RBS (Royal Bank of Scotland) and it is riven by bad lending, bad management, and bad customer management. It is a good example of an organisation that needs a new start—elsewhere.

The Big Four accountancy firms used to be the Big Five until Arthur Anderson bit the dust over the Enron swindle. But the Big Four are due for a shake up. They call themselves *Chartered Accountants* because a Royal Charter goes down well in London and they get to have a vote for the Lord Mayoralty of London—an influential and, it is said, very remunerative position. However in reality, the Big Four internationally are Certified Public Accountant Firms, most of whose partners are qualified as CPAs with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. The Big Four have got away earning hundreds of millions of £pounds and avoiding liability by stating that their job is not to identify thievery and criminal behaviour being perpetrated by their clients, and some get away with stating boldly that anything less than £xx millions (or whatever figure they like to choose) is not material to their audit. Their reports refer to "*books of account*" when we all know that books of account disappeared decades ago and all records are now computerised.

And we all know about the frauds perpetrated by banks on the clients through Tracker Mortgages—none of which was commented on by Bank Auditors. Nor did Bank Auditors comment on how many non-performing loans the Banks had. The list of sins of Banks and Bank Auditors is long. So what do Auditors do? What use are they? Perhaps the Big Four are too big. They certainly wield unseemly force in political circles in Dublin and London. This may change if their clients move to Germany and other tightly-regulated countries.

The big wheels in London are the Banks and the Insurance Companies, the Re-Insurance Companies and the Fund Managers. Any or all of these may move to other jurisdictions. The lesser hangers-on will move with the Big Wheels. Lesser are the accountants, the big international law firms, and the international auctioneers and estate agents. Many have moved already with offices in many countries abroad so as to be ready to welcome their moving clients with comforting open arms.

We can all see where Brexit is going if it is not controlled and it certainly is not being controlled now. Some time ago, a London political commentator was asked in an interview:

"How could Brexit be stopped?"

And he replied:

"Well, a War might break out which would unify Europe, or There might be an Election in which Labour got a landslide victory, or the Parliamentarians might just talk it to death until everybody realises how unrealistic Brexit is, and he added, a war is very unlikely."

When I heard that interview, I too thought that a war breaking out was very unlikely. But recent events—and in particular the internationally co-ordinated propaganda attacks on Russia, apparently instigated by Prime Minister Theresa May's use of the UK poisoning case of two Russians, have reminded me of other UK Crises which were solved or deferred by war. I was reminded of the months in 1914 when the British Cabinet—the Imperial Cabinet—was divided about the Irish Home Rule Question.* The Cabinet was seriously embroiled in this matter and newspapers were hinting at Civil War—there was a realistic prospect of civil war over the question, so seriously divided was Henry Asquith's Cabinet, and then a lifeline was seen when on 23rd July 1914 Austria decided to get quite unreasonably upset by the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand and his wife some time previously, and Austria issued an ultimatum to Serbia which Serbia could not possibly comply with.

That was on Thursday 23rd July. On Friday 24th July, before Serbians had replied to Austria, Bonar Law and Carson had persuaded Asquith the Prime Minister to postpone the further discussion of the Irish Question "*in the interests of National Unity for the duration of the War Crisis*". This persuading was done in Bonar Law's rooms in Kensington, where Carson was when Bonar Law's driver brought Asquith. Asquith had no notion what Bonar Law wanted to see him for that morning. (See Letter from Asquith to Venetia Stanley.) Asquith announced the postponement later that day to a packed Parliament. After the announcement that day Redmond told Asquith that, if the Government liked to move every soldier from Ireland, he would bet there would never be one hitch and that both his volunteers and Carson's would police Ireland with ease.

At this time there was no actual War but the newspapers were on message with

* This is not as well-known as the deep division between Government and Opposition. Editor.

War, War everywhere on Friday 24th July 1914. So the possibility of Civil War over the Irish Amendment Bill (now postponed) was on the back burner and forgotten. How convenient for Carson and Redmond.

In her Diaries, Lady Asquith records that she wrote to Redmond on Saturday 1st August and told him he had the opportunity to make a great speech offering his Volunteers. Redmond got up to speak in Parliament after Bonar Law on 3rd August (war was not yet declared) and said: "*I say that the coast of Ireland will be defended from foreign invasion by her armed sons, and for the purpose armed Nationalist Catholics in the South will be only too glad to join arms with the Protestant Ulstermen in the North.*"

On 4th August 1914 war was declared against Germany. In her Diary entry for that day the Prime Minister's wife Margot Asquith wrote:

"all happened in such a short time. On 30th July everyone was talking of Ireland. The cry of 'Civil War!' 'Civil War!' to which The Times and the Tories treated us every day has been stilled in five days and now we read in tears a silenced Press, with the sound of real war waving like wireless telegraphy round our heads."

Was it all engineered in 1914 to suit several agendas? How suddenly the House of Commons appeared to be united in its purpose of War?

Could a War suit agendas today in 2018? I cannot be the only one who imagines that it all stacks up!

Michael Stack ©

Redmond Centenary Conference Waterford

from page 32

There were a number of academic speakers. Also the ubiquitous John Bruton. Waterford labour historian Emmet O'Connor assessed the social contribution of Redmondism, and concluded that, so long as the British government was paying the bills, Redmond's party made some worthwhile efforts. But, with Home Rule in prospect, the party was reluctant to transfer wealth from their better-off supporters. He described housing, infrastructure and industrial achievements by Redmond in Waterford.

Redmond's biographer Dermot Meleady defended Redmond's heritage and reputation. He seems to prevaricate between various points of view. To him, Redmond was a dedicated and honest Irish leader who achieved the goal of his country, only to have that goal snatched away.

Was his achievement wrecked by the 1916 Rising? That seems to be what Redmond himself believed. Or was it Unionist intransigence? Or British Government treachery? Each of these positions is damaging to various cherished political beliefs. Meleady now seems to hold that Redmond himself was to blame, in that Home Rule was on offer from the British on terms which were not unreasonable; but Redmond rejected the terms. The implication being that Redmond brought about his own downfall!

This conclusion seems to confirm that

the Redmondite tide of fairly recent years has receded, along with the Great War fanaticism which drove that tide for a while. To believe in Redmond, you have to believe that the Great War slaughter he espoused was in a good and honourable cause; that Redmond's blood sacrifice was virtuous, "gallant", even "plucky". For most Irish people that is not tenable.

Meleady's Waterford talk was therefore convoluted and tedious. Some people began to walk out, and the organisers had to intervene.

So what was so great about Waterford's Large Room conference?

Pat McCarthy was born in Ballybricken, attended Edmond Ignatius Rice's Christian Brothers' school in nearby Mount Sion, and went on to make a career in the pharmaceuticals industry. His interest in history is manifested in various writings, including a book on the War of Independence in County Waterford.

The Redmond Conference was the occasion of the launch of his new book "*The Redmond's and Waterford: a Political Dynasty, 1891 - 1952*". McCarthy does not take sides in the debate about the historic national legacy of Redmondism. But, unlike Redmond's biographers such as Dermot Meleady, McCarthy provides an unvarnished account of the origin of Redmond's political leadership in the thuggish Ballybricken Pig Buyer clique in Waterford, and their crucial role in his subsequent career.

Though it has not permeated into official history and Redmond dogma, this is well known to locals, of whatever hue, who are interested in their past. It is a bit of a mystery why it was not known to Waterford posh boy Roy Foster, who had to resort to asking around who the Pig Buyers were.

It will be no surprise to readers of this magazine which, over the past year, has provided the salient facts about Redmond's unsavoury Pig Buyer associations. It is no longer possible to skate around Redmondite political violence, as Meleady & Co. do, with evasive formulas like "*Scuffles broke out*".

Hopefully the *Irish Political Review* will soon provide a fuller account of Pat McCarthy's new book.

Reported by **Eamonn de Paor**

IRISH FOREIGN AFFAIRS, SPRING 2018

Editorial

- * "**Foreignness" and material aid in warfare: on Irish foreign policy** in transition to Europe – a reply to Martin Mansergh

Palestine and Israel Edition

- * A forgotten Corkman on the Zionist project. Brendan Clifford
- * *The Times* and The Balfour Declaration – both Zionist and anti-semitic. Manus O'Riordan
- * On banning the import of Israeli settlement goods. David Morrison
- * Israel must be forced to end the occupation, or there will be no Palestinian state. David Morrison

Document:

- * In Year Zero, a contribution to the history of the German Press. (II) Hans Habe (1966)

Irish Foreign Affairs—is produced quarterly at €5, £4. Subscriptions: 4 issues. Electronic €5 (£4). Postal Euro-zone and World Surface: €16; Sterling-zone: £14

towards supplying the wants of the Irish people and agriculture towards providing food for those engaged in industry. Food and houses, clothing and education, these would be provided for all the people by the labour and service of all the people before luxuries or superfluities were allowed to any. The private profit of the private proprietor would not then determine what class of goods should be produced, whether cattle should be raised or corn grown, the needs of the people would decide.

Probably, as in Russia, the first act found to be necessary would be following the example of the capitalistic governments at the outbreak of war, to declare a moratorium ("I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word!") suspending temporarily the repayment of debts and making illegal all interest! By this act alone, the income of the workers would be increased about 25 percent.

The land of the country would be made free of access to those who were willing to cultivate it to the best communal advantage. The Dublin housing problem would be immediately tackled, and might be made less pressing by a distribution of the congested population from the tenements over the partially occupied mansions of the suburbs!

These are a few of the things that would happen if the Bolsheviks came to Ireland. It is right that our friends who join with us in acclaiming the Bolshevik revolution should understand its implications. It means that as society is based upon labour, Labour shall rule. And that means a complete overturning from the present state wherein, though society is based upon labour, capital and property rule" (From: *Come Here To Me-Dublin Life & Culture*, 2017)

- The above meeting was held in the Mansion House, Dublin on February 4, 1918—to congratulate the Russian People on the triumph they have won for Democratic Principles. The speakers were Mr. Wm. O'Brien, ITGWU; Mr. L. Ginnell, MP; Madame Markievicz; Mr. Thomas Foran, ITGWU; Madame; Mr. Cathal O'Shannon; Mr. J.J. Hughes; Mr. P. Coates; Mrs. Connery and Russian Bolsheviks.

See: "Writings of Thomas Johnson—An article entitled '*If the Bolsheviks came to Ireland*' in *Irish Opinion*, 23.2.1918" (Fr. J. Anthony Gaughan, *Thomas Johnson*, Kingdom Books, 1980):

John Redmond died on 6th March 1918. A number of events were held to commemorate the centenary. They were sponsored and/or grant-aided by the Government. Former Taoiseach John Bruton and Redmond biographer Dermot Meleady turned up at most of them.

But the most vocal of the Redmond/Remembrance/West British jihadists was conspicuous by his absence. This is Kevin Myers, who exploded prematurely around the time of his appearance at the Skibbereen West Brit (sorry, West Cork) history event last year. Incendiary Eoghan Harris could have added a little excitement to the recent Redmond events, but he seems to be out of the loop as well. Without this duo, the Redmond commemorations were somewhat flat and boring.

Except for one event, to be described below.

According to newspaper reports the main event in Dublin was addressed by Dail Ceann Comhairle Sean O Fearghail TD, who made a backhanded apology for the violent origins of his party (Fianna Fail), unlike Redmond's kind of democratic non-violent politics. All the while denying that he was apologising at all.

John Bruton gave his usual spiel, that Redmond in effect gained legislative independence without killing anybody; so the Republican independence movement was a waste of time and lives, and set a bad example for Irish politics. Unionist Professor Lord Paul Bew gave the keynote address.

There was a bit of a row in the papers about President Michael D. Higgins not attending this event. Higgins fielded this criticism effortlessly. Come to think of it, many weighty public figures were conspicuously absent from the Redmond centenary.

Another Redmond commemoration event was staged in the Officers' Mess in Custume Army Barracks in Athlone. This was one of the *History Ireland* magazine's Hedge School series. Again, this looked like it was more academic than popular.

Waterford was the home of John

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RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

For an objective appraisal of the revolution see "The Russian Revolution, 100th Anniversary—December, 2017; January, February and March 2018 in *Irish Political Review*."

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Redmond's ancestors, and he is buried in the falling down family vault in a neglected old graveyard in the centre of Wexford town. From reports, the Wexford commemoration had a whiff of tourism promotion about it. But I wonder whether the local authorities will waste much money in the expectation that large numbers of visitors will be beating a track to pay homage to the "*father of Irish democracy*"! More likely they will cannily continue to build on their 1798 marketing.

If Dublin, Athlone and Wexford were a bit bland, the Waterford commemoration of Redmond was electrifying. But not in a way which was good for the Redmond's reputation; quite the opposite.

The Waterford event was held in the Large Room of Waterford City Hall, where John Redmond annually addressed the citizens of Waterford whom he represented in the House of Commons from 1891 until his death in March 1918. The commemoration was organised by local officials, with seventy or eighty local people in attendance.

The star of the show was Oxford Professor Roy Foster, a Waterford boy born and bred in the final years of the city's Redmond era, before Bridget Redmond TD died in 1952. You might have expected Foster to deliver personal stories, illuminating anecdotes, or street lore about the Redmond dynasty. At the very least you might have expected some fresh or challenging historical angle from an acclaimed historian with a personal connection.

Not a bit of it. Foster re-hashed some well-worn Parnellism, and launched into a weary recital of names and themes of equally dreary fellow-academics that hardly anyone present had ever heard of. He was not sufficiently motivated to lighten the dreariness with his trademark sneers. You know—when he simulates spontaneity, pauses for a second, and lowers his voice a bit to signal to his knowing audience that he is about to deliver a carefully crafted *bon mot*.

He pulled this ploy once in Waterford's Large Room. But the under-educated culchies present did not know what was expected of them, and failed to pay him the expected tribute of a knowing ripple of obsequious laughter at the expense of their forebears.

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BOLSHEVIKS continued

America, all the allied countries were bent upon annexation. France seems to have been the greediest, demanding even some definitely German territory and "liberating" some German territory from the sway of Prussian militarism. England also would get some of the spoil, even to the last inch of Persia. All the other "liberators" were to compensate themselves liberally also. It was nothing, but imperialist aggression, naked and unashamed. We trust it has been killed, though we know that European democracy must still remain very much on the alert.

We know now, too, for certain why the Allies of the Entente ignored the Pope Benedict XV Peace Note. It will be remembered that Allied statesmen were very evasive upon the point; some said that President Wilson stated their aims; while others said it was the intention to reply when the members of the Alliance had discussed the question. Now, we know they were deliberately lying. They knew they could not reply without converting another treaty into a mere "scrap of paper". If such mendacity be the price of what is called diplomacy, we had better have none of it. Secret diplomacy has been the curse of the nineteenth century. It has drenched Europe in blood in the twentieth century. It is well that the workers do not understand it, they had much better stick to truth and justice as their guides rather than trust themselves to something of which the very essence is deceit and falsehood. Yet it is true that some persons whose hatred of the thing called diplomacy we were wont to think at least as strong as our own, seem to disapprove of the action of the Russian Maximalists.

The only way, as it seems to us, to end secret diplomacy is simply to end it by making it public. It is like ending the slaughter, someone must begin, and that one will very probably be the most abused of Europe for a time. It is said that the publication of these treaties can do no good, but it has done good already. We are quite willing to believe that the Bolshevik leaders have not behaved like "gentlemen" and for that we certainly rejoice. Kerensky tried to behave like a "gentleman" of the diplomatic school, but he found the voracious appetite of the prospective recipients of the annexed lands too much for him, so he is now in hiding or perhaps he is dead. Who knows?

It is easy, perhaps, to be a "gentleman" if one is dealing with "gentlemen", it is certainly not easy to act as such when one's colleagues are after spoil rather than etiquette. The Russians decided upon public diplomacy. It may have been thought they did not mean all they said. But in some quarters at all events their words were taken literally, hence the newspaper eulogy of the revolving Korniloff. Korniloff was to save Russia for the Imperialists, but Korniloff, too, failed. Russian literature is almost as incomprehensibly chaotic as the Russian revolution, yet through it shines the great fact that the Russian is honest. Readers, of say, Tchekov, might have wagered that the treaties would be published and they would have wagered upon a certainty. Let us hope that even though the Bolsheviks be not "gentlemen", they have rid the world of the incubus of secret diplomacy. For the future it must be public, it must be controlled by the democracies of the world, anti must be based upon international justice.

(*Voice of Labour*—Newspaper organ of the Labour Party and trade union movement, which appeared from October, 1922 until 1927, edited by Cathal O'Shannon. It was succeeded by *The Irishman* (1927-1930) and *The Watchword of Labour* (1930-1932). (*A Dictionary of Irish History 1800-1980*, Hickey & Doherty, 1987, Dublin).

Well, last month's *Labour Comment* published "Open Letter to the English Labour Party" published in *The Voice of Labour* (Vol. 1, No. 22-April 27, 1918). The above article, a leader on the Bolsheviks, is from the publication *Irish Opinion, The Irish Labour Journal*, December 15, 1917. It would appear that this journal was absorbed into *The Voice of Labour* little more than a couple of weeks later.)

If The Bolsheviks Came To Ireland

February 1918

The great gathering of Dublin citizens at the Mansion House* to acclaim the social revolution in Russia was a sign to all parties in Ireland that the people in demanding independence are not going to be satisfied with a mere political change, no matter how drastic. What they need, and are quickly coming to recognise, is a change of social and economic relations.

It is not only British authority that this is a warning: it is a call to the conservative forces of all political parties to rally to the defence of the existing social order. All those people whose prosperity is dependent upon the institutions of rent, interest or profit or who can be persuaded that the national well being can only be built upon a basis of capitalism—"the most foreign thing in Ireland"—will be told that their own and their country's future is endangered if any countenance is given to the doctrine that Labour is king.

Labour also must take warning. We acclaim the Russian revolution, and our hearts respond to the call of the Russian people to join with the workers throughout war stricken Europe in dethroning Imperialism and Capitalism in our respective countries. But, as we asked at the meeting in the Mansion House, are we prepared to take action if opportunity offers? Is Labour organised sufficiently? Are our trade unions and our trades councils, our co-operative societies and our Labour parties properly supported and in close enough relations to become the centres of economic life in a new society? Are our working class leaders or spokesmen devoting time and effort in reading and study to fit themselves for the duties that may be forced upon them?

The framework of the new Russia consisted of 50,000 co-operative groups in town and country, organised within the past six or seven years. The archive men and women who made the revolution had devoted years to the work of propaganda, to study mental discipline and self-sacrificing service of the people. While Ireland has produced but one Connolly, Russia has produced hundreds; men and women of great intellectual power, devoting their lives entirely to the work of organisation, education and agitation, and receiving in return no reward but persecution, imprisonment, poverty and the love of the people.

The Soviets—the councils of workmen, of peasants and of soldiers—who are now in power in Russia have their Irish equivalents in the trades councils, the agricultural societies, and—dare we say it?—the local groups of the Irish Republican army. An Irish counterpart of the Russian revolution would mean that these three sections co-operating would take control of the industrial, agricultural and social activities of the nation. Power would no longer be in the hands of the wealthy nor authority be wielded by the nominees of an Imperial Majesty. Industry would be diverted

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LABOUR

Comment

ISSN 0790-1712

VOLUME 36 No. 4

CORK

ISSN 0790-1712

Irish Labour and the Bolsheviks

(Irish Opinion, The organ of Industrial and Political Democracy, Vol. 1, No. 3. December 15, 1917, Weekly: Price 1d.)

The respectable ones of Europe and America have turned their thumbs down and have shrieked "Away with them". This might have been expected, it might have been provided for in advance. Bourgeois Europe and America is outraged, wounded in its tenderest parts, perhaps permanently injured. And so it howls because the Bolsheviks have exposed their secrets. How is life to be lived, they say, if everything one does is to be known to and by the ignorant, illiterate mob? We cannot doubt that the secrets so exposed to the vulgar gaze were valuable secrets to the capitalists, commercialists and industrialists of Europe and America. They had been held as family secrets by the "noble families" because, according to Lord Robert Cecil, a workingman is incapable of understanding the intricacies of foreign politics. But now workingmen have arisen who are not only capable of such understanding but are honest as well. Of course it was not so much the capacity of the workman that Lord Robert Cecil doubted, it was his transparent honesty, his sincerity, his earnestness he distrusted.

It is true that the Labour Parties of Europe have no tradition in the art of diplomacy, no skill in the tactful lying and mazy intrigue which gives itself the name of Foreign Affairs. He does not think in terms of military strategy and consequently does not worry very much about "safe" frontiers and carefully rounded-off Empires. These are not by any means the lines of the workers' thoughts. He may be a mere materialist, to these high-brow diplomats, but it is a fact that he thinks more of his own land and his own home than he does about the necessity of fortifying the Suez Canal or coaling stations in the China Seas. These things do not interest him generally, and even when he understands their significance he opposes them strenuously.

In every country of Europe to-day, belligerent or neutral, Labour opposes imperialist aggression. Labour opposes imperialism because it is the antithesis of freedom. It has been said that nothing is nearly so important to a subject race as the fact of its subjection. Labour in every country is a subject race and in some countries like our own, it is a subject race within a subject nation. Being so, Labour can and does understand that subjection is a hateful burden; a burden that cannot and should not be borne cheerfully or willingly. In consequence, Labour is in favour of freedom everywhere, in favour of the freest development of human genius in all its aspects and under its many national guises. Labour, therefore, cannot contemplate with equanimity any encroachment upon that very meagre stock of liberty which the world possessed at the outbreak of the war, rather, that stock must be increased.

Labour in Russia was and is honest. In consequence it has given to the world a formula which was worth a Czar's throne to have given. "No Annexations, no

indemnities, and the right of every nation to determine its own destiny." Beside that formula the greatest military victories are as nothing. That formula must be ultimately triumphant; not now, perhaps, but in the days to come that formula will, in our opinion, be the outstanding feature of Europe's years of agony. The Entente Powers were aware, according to Dr. E.J. Dillon, of the imminence of a revolution in Russia. The revolution was to have been a post-war *coup d'etat* by the Cadet Party led by Milioukoff. But bread proved stronger than promises and the revolution came earlier than was anticipated. There was yet another accident. Revolutionary Russia having triumphed, having given its formula to the world, decided to be honest and as might have been expected stand by its own formula rather than by the Czar's treaties.

Kerensky tried the diplomatic method of moving his nominal allies. He asked definitely for a revision of war aims and was, not very politely, turned down. We were interested in these "war aims" negotiations because we thought of the small nations that were to be liberated from the menace of the Hun. The saviours of small nations preferred diplomatic procrastination to the honesty displayed by the Russian Soviet and so the Maximalist displaced Kerensky. Kerensky tried to serve two masters; he served neither. Now we know why Kerensky failed, the skeleton cupboard has been opened, and no matter what is said to the contrary, we are of the opinion that the skeletons displayed are useful. It has been said that we guessed all that the Secret Treaties contained, but even if we did it is much better to know. Thanks to the Bolsheviks we know now.

We know that, with the exception of

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2 Newington Green Mansions, London N16 9BT
or *Labour Comment*, TEL: 021-4676029
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