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## Some Political Blind Alleys

### Second Referendum

Bertie Ahern and Tony Blair, writing as former Taoiseach and former Prime Minister, have written a joint article in the *Irish Times* (April 15th) against the British EU Referendum: *There Must Be A Second Vote On Brexit*. It is hard to see what effect it could possibly have on British opinion. The *Irish Times* does not even appear on newsstands in Britain anymore.

They wrote as the men who, "with the hand of history" on their shoulders, acted with "personality and resolution when surrounded by uncertainty" and put together "a new powersharing agreement", "releasing from prison people who had committed horrendous crimes" in order to do so.

We find we cannot recall which horrendous criminals were released by Ahern.

And the 1998 Agreement was not for power-sharing but for power-dividing.

It worked because it recognised that there were two electorates in the Six Counties, not one, and arranged that the representatives of each should take it in turn, the order determined by votes cast, to choose Ministries to run, with no Cabinet supervision over them.

We can assume that Blair has chosen to forget the detail. Ahern probably never knew.

They say that they felt the hand of history "pushing us to the start of a process, not signalling the end of one", and that—

"the people of Ireland, North and South, have been signing that agreement every day since. Because it is the everyday actions and interactions of people, businesses, civil society, politicians and governments that enable a lasting peace."

They must at least be given the credit for not saying that the Good Friday Agreement

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## Constitutional Realities!

Writing about the Brexit debate in the UK, John Bruton tells us that—

"The parliamentary system of government is, in many respects, a British invention, a British contribution to democratic governance. It is in the interests of the entire world that the systemic problems of the parliamentary system revealed by the Brexit saga are resolved, and quickly."

And this invention came about, he says, because—

"The underlying organising principle of the UK constitutional system has been that parliament, not the monarch, and not people by referendum, is sovereign. This principle may not be contained in a written constitution, but it is a long-standing one. It was established in the 17th century by the outcome of the Civil War of 1646-69, in which parliament defeated the monarch, Charles I, and his ministers. It was reaffirmed by the revolution of 1688, whereby parliament deposed the legitimate monarch, James II. Parliament, not the king, became the source of legitimacy... The government of the UK

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### Brexit Summary for March

## Brexit: the extreme danger from well-meaning interventions

Dan O'Brien, the chief economist at Ireland's EU think tank, the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA), thought he was doing a service to the Irish discourse on Brexit by proposing that Ireland should compromise on the backstop. His case was that Irish defence of the backstop has pushed Brexit towards a No

Deal crash out which will result in the outcome—a Hard Border—that it was designed to prevent.

In thus pushing against the political consensus he has, you might think, created space for lateral thinking about the challenges of Brexit. Indeed the case he makes could equally be made from the viewpoint

that, giving way on the backstop, may be a way of facilitating the British exit. But, from whatever viewpoint it is argued, the idea that Ireland or the EU should take responsibility for breaking the deadlock in London should be rejected; the deadlock has been generated in British politics; it is important that it be left for the British political system to sort out.

Throughout the negotiations, a repeated refrain from the EU side has been that the UK needs to decide on the form of Brexit that it wants. Given that there have been

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guaranteed an all-Ireland economy and that Brexit is therefore in legal conflict with it. Blair must have been advised that the GFA did no such thing and this is the nearest he can get to going along with the idea that it did.

It was the joint entry of Britain and Ireland into the Common Market that took down the commercial border between them. And the introduction of free trade had nothing to do with bringing the War to a close. The War began when there was a commercial border and continued for 26 years after it was taken down.

Dublin had little or nothing to do with ending the War. Well, Charles Haughey had something to do with it, but the Haughey Government while in power was repudiated by the Dublin Establishment. And Ahern, who was made by Haughey, joined the elitist mob against him.

The "peace process" was set in motion by the Adams group in the IRA, the isolated figure of John Hume in the SDLP, and the isolated figure of Haughey in Dublin. And Blair, in the moment of his omni-

potence, put the cap on it, browbeating Trimble into submission.

Dublin, after Reynolds, has been a drag on it.

The event needs to be recognised for what it was: a War caused by a particularly perverse form of undemocratic government. But the word *war* is not mentioned in their article. What is mentioned is "*horrendous crimes*". And yet the Agreement of which they boast set up the horrendous criminals in Government offices!

That encourages the legalistic feuding that continues unabated in the North. Official recognition of the fact of War alters the perspective in which incidents are experienced. But it is Dublin that is most resistant to such recognition.

### Living In A Continuous Present?

'History' should be cherry-picking— not recording what was the case.

That is the view of Fr. Seamus Murphy

SJ, who is Professor of Philosophy at Loyola University, Chicago:

"Leaving the dead to bury their dead, the living need to choose what in the past is serviceable for the current challenge of building a new Irish political community" (*Nationalist Ireland Almost Universally Condemned The Soloheadbeg Killings As Murder*, Irish Times, 15.1.19).

Yet the robbery of dynamite at Soloheadbeg—

"started a chain of events that brought not just one, but three, civil conflicts. These were fought primarily between Irish people: Protestants and unionists vs. Catholics and nationalists in Belfast, the Bandon valley and elsewhere; Sinn Fein and the IRA vs a nationalist 'establishment' of the Irish Parliamentary Party and the RIC ; and, eventually, the Civil War over the Treaty..."

All of that followed quickly from an armed robbery at Soloheadbeg that was almost universally condemned as murder when it happened!!

It set the fashion in murder, did it? People were shocked by it for an instant, but it gave them a taste for murder, which they indulged freely over the next few years!

And the Imperial Parliament was not involved. (Or did Professor Murphy just forget to mention it?)

What is now generally understood to have been a war between an elected Irish Government and an unelected British Government of Ireland was really a series of faction fights—"civil conflicts"—between Irishmen.

Is that what Professor Murphy is saying? Or is he saying that that is how it should be presented as commemorative history, in order to encourage people to forget about it so that they can begin living in a present that has no past?

He seems to advocate living in an exclusive present, guided only by beautiful ideals—in other words, *Existentialism*.

But a blank present is not easily established. Human understanding, as cultivated in this region of the world at least, insists on causation in time, which is History. It insists on having some notion of how it came about. Is Professor Murphy suggesting that it should be fed with fantasy history?

But isn't that what Communist Russia was accused of attempting to do, and roundly condemned for attempting it?

Stringent Protestantism did produce a kind of history-free existence in this world by means of another world which determ-

ined, by means of continuous interference, every single thing that happened in this world. Everything was predestined by the Creator at the moment of creation, and the Creator was continuously active in causing all those things to happen which he had predestined to happen.

They did not happen through secular causation within this world but through Divine management of this world from another world.

But Roman Catholicism insisted from the start that free-will operated in this world and that the Creator in the other world only passed judgment later on how individuals had acted in their freedom... History, therefore, was real in the Catholic view of things. And the European culture of almost two thousand years was the product of the intertwining of a particular strain of Christianity with the utterly secular and historical Roman Empire.

It is true that Irish Christianity only became structurally Roman Catholic in the 19th century, but long, long before that it had its own history. Escape into an empty present, where life will be guided only by fancy, will not be easy to consolidate, though that seems to be what the situation is just now. If Ireland ceases to be historical on its own it will be reabsorbed into British history.

### **Irexit: a cunning plan for Irish Unity!**

The *National Platform EU Research And Information Centre*, Director, Anthony Coughlan, has issued a *Statement On What Was Supposed To Be The UK's 'Brexit Independence Day'* (March 29). It says:

"If the leadership of Sinn Fein had stuck by the EU-critical principles which the party upheld in Ireland's EU-related referendums... and backed Brexit in the UK referendum, there probably have been a majority in the North for Brexit. There would also have been a whole new dynamic between Sinn Fein and the DUP for they would have been on the same progressive side.

"If a Northern majority had consequently voted for Brexit, Sinn Fein and the DUP together could then have turned to the Dublin Government and political parties and called on them to follow the UK out of the EU, thus preventing an EU external border being thrown across Ireland and putting the Southern Establishment politically on the spot.

"That might have encouraged some Northern Unionists to think of the possibly progressive role they might play in a future All-Ireland State, side by side with Republicans...

"Having missed that opportunity, it is

## **Cathal Brugha And Britain's *Divide And Rule***

Thank you for publishing, in your March issue, my introductory remarks, at the First Dáil centenary commemoration on January 21, preceding a re-enactment of the reading of the Declaration of Independence by my grandfather, Cathal Brugha, who had presided at that inaugural session.

Further to Manus O'Riordan's "Treaty War" article in your April issue, I would also point out:

Cathal Brugha was concerned about Britain's tactic of divide and rule.

They had failed to defeat the Irish people. So get them to defeat themselves.

They would have liked a civil war between Catholic and Protestant, similar to what they were to foment between Hindu and Muslim in India, and between Jew and Muslim in Palestine.

His concern was always for the people of Ireland, more than for any particular political institutions. When he promised to keep the Army disciplined after the Dáil voted to adopt the Treaty, he chose to accept that the Republic was gone. The alternative would have meant dividing the people.

He spent the last few months of his life arguing that republicans should not take up arms to defend the Republic, including trying to get them to leave the Four Courts right up to before it was attacked by Free State forces, with heavy guns supplied by Britain.

He and others then tried to create a diversion in O'Connell Street, to help relieve pressure on the Four Courts. In joining this he was not defending the Republic. He was trying to defend republicans, whom he had led as Minister for Defence throughout the War of Independence. His sacrificing his life appears to have been a last desperate attempt to bring both sides to their senses, that they should not be fighting each other.

**Cathal MacSwiney Brugha**

**PS**

For those who might be interested in citations, and quotations: Cathal Brugha wrote:

**"An sean-chleas: déan deighilt, agus beidh smacht agat!" \***

in a 1909 lecture on Eoghan Rua Ó Neill, quoted in both the two biographies of Cathal Brugha, in Irish, by Ó Dochartaigh p.25, and Sceilig p.29.

**\* The old trick: bring about a split**

truly a sad situation that the current Sinn Fein leadership now finds itself aligned with the most reactionary anti-democratic forces in these islands and internationally that seek to scupper Brexit in the interests of EU supernationalism..."

The Press Release is accompanied by an article of C. Desmond Greaves of the British Communist Party, published in his *Irish Democrat* of March 1977: *Thoughts On Socialism, Nationalism And Partition Today*.

Coughlan was a member of the Connolly Association, a front-organisation of the British Communist Party conducted by Greaves, but was not a member of the Communist Party. He was later a member of the Irish Sovereignty Movement founded by Professor Raymond Crotty. Professor Raymond Crotty had an article in the *London Times*, appealing to the British Establishment to take Ireland in hand once

again, as it was entirely unable to do its thinking for itself. (See February 2012 *Irish Political Review* for a reprint of that article and commentary on it. Editor)

Crotty's Sovereignty Movement was directed against the EU as the great threat to Irish sovereignty.

The reason why the Irish Establishment became seriously incoherent, and its political life became erratic, and it began to jettison its history, was that it would recognise neither that the Ulster Protestants were a different people from the nationalist Irish nor that Northern Ireland was a system of undemocratic government, different in kind from the political system of the state which contained it.

It denied that the Ulster Protestants were a distinct people. It held that they were part of the Irish national body but failed entirely to draw them into the

political life of the Irish national body. In fact it never made any serious attempt to engage with the Ulster Protestant community, except by the most superficial debating points whose only effect was aggravation.

If it had asserted national territorial rights over the Ulster Protestants, acknowledging that they were a different people, that would have been intelligible. But, in defiance of all the evidence, it insisted that they were the same people

(Greaves once described the difference between the Irish and the English as resembling the difference between cats and dogs. That comparison would be much more credibly made between the Ulster Protestant Irish and the other Irish.)

The reason why the Irish Establishment would not recognise that, leaving Partition aside, the Northern Ireland system was a system of undemocratic government within the democratic British state, was fear that, if it was made an issue of, the region would be brought within the British democracy. Northern Ireland was devolved government combined with exclusion from the party-political life of the state.

Devolved government was not asked for by anyone in the Six Counties. When first proposed, it was rejected by the Unionist Party. The Unionists were persuaded by Whitehall to accept it.

Half a century later, when devolved Governments were set up in Scotland and Wales, in order to ward off independence movements, the parties of the state, the Tory and Labour Parties, continued to operate in Scotland and Wales. But the Six Counties were excluded from British party politics from the start.

There was no Ulster independence movement to be warded off. British politics would certainly have attracted people from both communities in substantial numbers. There would have been less ground for complaint about sectarian politics. But sectarian tensions kept the Border issue alive. That can have been the only reason why, when the introduction of Tory and Labour party-politics to the North was raised as a live issue, Dublin Governments used all their influence to prevent it.

The purpose of Dublin politics was to keep tensions over the Border alive, rather than do anything practical towards ending Partition. A "*British withdrawal*", which its formal position demanded, was not something it desired but something it feared. It would neither repeal the sovereignty claim nor do anything towards realising it. Its ideal was to keep the issue

simmering while self-righteously condemning those who tried to do something towards resolving it. British sovereignty in the North was illegitimate, but it must not be challenged in the way illegitimate regimes in other parts of the world were challenged. It was sacrosanct though illegitimate.

This duplicity was inaugurated by Jack Lynch, advised by Saint T.K. Whitaker, in the Summer of 1970. It is plainly evident in Whitaker's correspondence with Lynch at the time, which was put in the public domain about twenty years ago.

## Haughey And Pádraig Ó hUiginn

The other major civil servant of that era died recently—Pádraig Ó hUiginn. He was given a mean-spirited obituary in the *Irish Times*. He had been Haughey's civil servant, active in the making of the new Ireland—the Ireland of the Financial Services Centre and the Social Partnership—against the hostility of the political and media Establishment, including the Elders of Fianna Fail. And when he retired from the civil service he went into collaboration with Denis O'Brien, the national capitalist. These associations with Haughey and O'Brien were two mortal sins that must never be forgiven. The Lynch/Whitaker regime was the ideal Irish regime for Britain—which, after all, had been asked to resume the governing of Ireland, at second hand, by Professor Raymond Crotty (see *Irish Political Review*, Feb. 2012).

Haughey is still characterised as a gun-runner for the Provos. Our most distinguished historian, Professor Foster, continues to tell that tale, simply ignoring the Trial verdict and the evidence presented at it. And he brought corruption to Irish public life! Fintan O'Toole says there is no doubt that he was 'on the take'—though there is a question about "*whether he gave anything in return*"! A bribe which is of no profit to the briber is still a bribe. And a gift of money can only be a bribe, because O'Toole cannot imagine anybody giving him a free gift in appreciation of his extraordinary services to the state.

Haughey assembled an authoritarian force within the administration of a limping democracy and forced the economy out of the pre-Keynesian doldrums into the finance capitalist era of credit. And he recognised the crucial point that the Ulster Protestant community is not an alienated part of the nation which could be won back by either blandishments or threats but is something in itself, and that the

Northern Ireland structure is "*not a viable political entity*". That is why he sponsored no internal initiatives in the North—schemes which had never done anything but aggravate the Unionists—but treated the Provo War as a problem for the British State, to be resolved by a British accommodation with the IRA, which he took to be representative of the Nationalist community.

In 1920 Whitehall had intimidated the Ulster Unionists into operating the Northern Ireland system. In 1998 it browbeat the Unionist leader into submitting to a kind of two-nations federal re-arrangement of the devolved government which cancelled the majority status in politics of the Unionist majority. This was a *de facto* acknowledgement that what existed in the North was not democracy.

The IRA then gave permission to the Dublin Establishment to repeal the sovereignty claim.

The purpose—or the function—of the Good Friday Agreement was not 'reconciliation' but accommodation of hostile political bodies which could have no common politics because their difference was not policy but nationality.

What has been going on since the GFA, as before it, is a process of communal attrition, but on a playing field that has been levelled. Anthony Coughlan's scheme for getting the representative bodies of the two communities to act together on some issue would not have the effect he supposes—and which he supposes only because he sees their difference as a mere policy difference.

Sinn Féin and the DUP *have* acted closely together—a thing which the SDLP and the UPP failed to do—without there being an hint of 'reconciliation' occurring.

If Coughlan's primary concern is Partition, then he should begin by searching out the cause of it—which is the establishment of an Irish state separate from Britain.

It was obvious from the time that O'Connell launched the Repeal movement in the 1830s that there was a coherent community in Ulster that was utterly opposed to separation from Britain. Ulster Presbyterians who had collaborated with him on the repeal of the Test Act (called Catholic Emancipation, but it was not only that: it had a Dissenter element) parted company with him on the Repeal movement.

Partition did not occur in the 1830s because there was no prospect of the Repeal movement succeeding. It occurred 90 years later, when Home Rule was finally

implemented. It occurred when the British Government ceased to govern Ireland.

William O'Brien saw this coming. He saw John Redmond's policies as driving the situation towards Partition. In order to avert Partition, he proposed that something less than legislative Home Rule should be sought in the first instance, so that there should be some form of all-Ireland administration, however slight, that was not an institution of the British Government. He won 9 seats from Redmond's party on that issue in the 1910 Elections, but that fact has been deleted from published history.

Coughlan's cunning scheme for ending Partition by following Britain out of the EU is in effect a scheme to make Ireland a subordinate region of Britain. It is very unlikely that it would induce the Ulster Unionists to agree to the ending of Partition. But, if it was followed through by Ireland rejoining the British Union as it left the European Union, then, of course, Partition would end along with the Irish state.

But that is all in the sphere of an idealism detached from the reality of accomplished fact, as distinct from an idealism that might be a guiding influence within accomplished fact.

Desmond Greaves, as a senior member of the British Communist Party, saw the European Union from the viewpoint of Soviet interest. Coughlan is his literary executor. But the Soviet Union has long gone, and it is a shame to see Coughlan still being guided by its whip hand.

## Constitutional Realities!

continued

should, in accordance with those traditions, act as a servant of parliament, not the other way around" (*'Why it is utterly undemocratic to deny second UK referendum'*, Irish Independent, 23 March 2019).

This is history for the nursery. The "attempt to make Parliament the source of legitimacy" caused the civil war and the rule of Mr. Cromwell who, *inter alia*, had to abolish it because that system just did not work, and he re-established monarchical rule under another name—what would now be called a dictatorship.

This political experiment created such a horror among those who experienced it that they and their successors ensured that such a thing would not happen again. The

monarchy itself was restored, but the new ruling class arranged for an invasion by William of Orange to replace the legitimate King (as John Bruton acknowledges) and establish royal rule with Parliament as the instrument and certainly not the master.

In due course, the Prime Minister replaced the monarch as arbiter.

And it was kept like that until Wednesday, 27th March 2019, when Parliament took control of parliamentary business and promptly showed its inability to govern. It could not decide on any of its members' 16 policy proposals on Brexit—whittled down to 8 by the Speaker. Later, it succeeded by one vote in passing a Bill ordering the Prime Minister to delay the Brexit process, but it did not dare to propose a Bill to reverse the referendum result—which is what it really wanted. Thereby its indecision was continued.

It is worth reflecting on what John calls this "*invention*" has been instrumental in creating and remains quite happy with—and we will stay close to home.

The Penal Laws in all their glory were enacted immediately after the new dispensation and lasted over the following century. The Irish copy-cat invention of the Mother of Parliaments, the "*Irish*" Parliament, wanted to go a stage further and passed an Act in 1727 to have all Catholic priests castrated in the belief that this was the only way to stop Catholicism propagating itself. Like all such "*Irish*" Acts it had to be confirmed by Westminster, which it would no doubt have done except that Walpole quashed it—confirming him in his contempt for Parliamentary shenanigans and thereby also illustrating where real power lay.

We need not remind ourselves that, further afield, slavery, colonialism, exterminations and other marvels were never hindered by Parliament. In fact Parliament had no say whatever in the most important State activity of all—going to war—which was a constant occurrence. For example, Parliament—and even the Cabinet—were kept completely in the dark about the preparations for war on Germany in 1914 and then MPs were hustled into supporting that war by a single speech of the Foreign Secretary.

The first time that Parliament was ever actually asked to agree to go to war, by Blair, to help invade Iraq, it did so.

And, of course, that most democratic Parliament of 1918—with its extended franchise—went along with the war

against the Irish democracy and accepted an end to that four-year war which included a set-up in Northern Ireland that led to another, longer, 25-year, war, before constitutional reform ameliorated governing arrangements to the level of being tolerable to the minority.

John Bruton's solution for Brexit is for the British Government to become what he believes was achieved over 300 years ago, i.e., to be the servant of Parliament. But his 'solution' is a cause of the problem. What he believes, which is the accepted notion by millions, is contradicted by an elementary knowledge of the actual course of British history.

The secret of Britain's political successes (and failures) was not its parliamentary system but the existence and capabilities of the ruling class that emerged from its civil war and the "*Glorious Revolution*". Everything else was an agency/instrument of that force—navy, army, banking system, Parliament, etc.

That class put the content, the life, into all these agencies or instruments. To put it in Burkean terms it was a case of '*men not measures*' or, as Canning argued against "*the idle supposition that it is the harness and not the horses that draw the chariot along*". The British ruling class is the horse of modern British history, and parliament is not much more than an ornament to impress the gullible. To follow Canning's analogy, it is like the plumes and tassels that adorn a horse's winkers.

When that ruling class loses its way, its agencies lose their way and that is what is happening in the UK and its Parliament over Brexit.

Jack Lane

## Empire Realities!

British colonial oppression still continued after Indian independence. There was an agency in Belfast recruiting *supervisors* for the tea pickers in India. One, in the shipyard, where I worked, was trying to recruit them from there in 1948—and being paid 10 shillings a head if successful. He was about to leave for India, a young thug, who spoke of beating the pickers—all women—on the back with a knotted rope if they worked too slowly. "That's all you had to do", he said.

It seems whites were getting out of India as fast as they could at independence and their jobs needed filling.

Wilson John Haire

## LEST WE FORGET (5)

**The following are the Acts of Aggression committed in Ireland by the Military and Police of the Usurping English Government, as reported in the Censored Daily Press, during the week ending July 26th, 1919.**

DATE	Arrests	Sentences	Months	Armed Assaults	Suppressions & Proclamations	Courtsmartial	Raids	Total exclusive of imprisonment terms
<b>July</b>								
<b>21</b>	3	9	3	30	-	-	1	43
<b>22</b>	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	4
<b>23</b>	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	4
<b>24</b>	1	4	3	1	6	2	20	34
<b>25</b>	2	1	6	-	-	1	1	10
<b>26</b>	-	-	-	-	-	1	31	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>127</b>

### MONDAY, 21st JULY, 1919.

**Sentences:-** For collecting for Dail Eireann without a permit from the "authorities". William Jackson, Michael Jackson, and Michael Cahill, were at Foynes, Limerick, sentenced to one month imprisonment in default of bail. They were removed to Limerick prison under a strong military and police escort. The Misses N. Fitzgibbon; M.E. Harris, M. Owens; A.M. McDonald; E. Coleman; and J. O'Brien, Youghal, Co. Cork, were fined at the Petty Sessions for selling flags without a permit. The accused did not appear at the Court; Miss Harris stated she had a permit for Mr. de Valera, and Miss Fitzgibbon said she had one from the Irish Republic. The flags were inscribed "Help Central Europe – Starving."

**Raid:-** Police searched the house of Mr. M. Foley, Edenderry, King's Co. and took away a syllabus of military strategy.

**Armed Assault:-** A meeting was held in Beresford Place, Dublin, on Saturday night, and was attended by about 300 people. An ex-soldier addressed the crowd, which was good-humoured and orderly. When the meeting was dispersing a large body of police, armed with revolvers and batons, appeared on the scene. The assembly which by this time was considerably thinned, immediately broke up. Seeing this, the police broke rank and drew their batons, and advanced on the double on the remnant of the crowd. After the charge, in which the police used their baton freely and indiscriminately, half a dozen people were seen at one time lying on the roadway. While a crowd who had been singing Irish songs outside the old G. P. O., in Dublin on Saturday night, were dispersing, police appeared on the scene

and proceeded to clear the road. Two other charges were made on isolated groups of people immediately after. While proceeding down Fleet Street, Dublin, about Midnight on Saturday, three young lads were charged by a number of police, and one of them was so severely injured that he had to be taken in an ambulance to Jervis Street Hospital. On Saturday night ("Peace Night") baton charges by police also took place in Grafton Street, Henry Street, Dame Street, O'Connell Street, and College Street, Dublin. Sixteen persons were treated in Jervis Street Hospital during the night, mostly for scalp wounds.

In Cork on Saturday night the police made several baton charges, principally in Patrick Street, and the adjoining thoroughfares. In Parliament Street, a crowd stoned police, who retaliated by firing a volley at the people. No casualties are reported.

Serious disturbances took place in Limerick, owing to disputes between British soldiers and civilians. Armed police made baton charges on the crowds. Several civilians were treated for scalp wounds. About a hundred British military were ordered out to reinforce the police but the crowds had already dispersed.

### TUESDAY, July 22nd, 1919.

**Armed Assaults:-** While burning some Union Jacks on "Peace" Day, in Lismore, Waterford, a crowd were charged by police with batons. Several were injured in the charge.

**Raid:-** A force of detectives arrived in a military wagon driven by a soldier and searched the house of Mr. James McCullagh, Clonturk Avenue, Drumcondra, Dublin, yesterday morning. Nothing was found.

Proclamations:- An Irish Festival in connection with the pilgrimage to a Holy Well was announced to be held at Clonbeg, Aherlow, Tipperary, on Sunday. The "authorities" announced that the gathering would not be allowed. Soldiers with armoured cars and machine guns arrived during the day to enforce the proclamation. An Irish Language Festival announced to be held at Murroe, Limerick, on Sunday, was proclaimed.

### **WEDNESDAY, July 23rd, 1919.**

Court martial:- Mr. Hugh Kennedy, Bansha, Co. Tipperary, was tried by court martial at Cork on a charge of possessing seditious literature, namely an old copy of the official organ of the Irish Volunteers. He was found "not guilty" and discharged. Patrick Horgan, Cashel, Co. Tipperary, was released from Cork Jail in such a weak condition that he had to be removed to the South Infirmary immediately for treatment.

Armed Assault:- In Athy, Co. Kildare, on Monday evening, 40 demobilised British soldiers rushed up Duke Street and forcibly entered a shop owned by a Sinn Feiner. After destroying everything they could lay hands on, they completely wrecked the cycle stores in front of the shop, smashing the cycles and windows. They then tore down and burned a banner with an Irish motto in Leinster Street. Volunteers had to guard the houses and premises of other Sinn Feiners in the town.

Proclamation:- A meeting to be held in the Mansion House, Dublin last night under the auspices of Cumannacht na h-Eireann, at which Mr. John McLean, M.A., Glasgow, was to speak, was proclaimed. About 7 o'clock, 50 armed police under a Superintendent and a couple of Inspectors marched into Dawson Street and took possession of all the approaches to the Mansion House, preventing anyone from entering. Those in charge of the arrangements were informed that no meeting would be allowed. Groups of people, who intended to participate in the proceedings were "moved on" by police. The meeting was subsequently held elsewhere.

Raid:- The residence of Mr. J. A. Burke, Member of the Irish Parliament for Mid. Tipperary, Rochford House, Tipperary, was raided by a large force of British Military and Police. This is the third raid within the past six months. On not finding Mr. Burke, the military and police left again.

### **THURSDAY, July 24th, 1919.**

Court martial:- Mr. Matthew Butler, Turtullen, Thurles, Co. Tipperary, was tried by court martial at Cork on a charge of possessing seditious literature. The literature in question included "Ruthless Warfare" and "Belfast Prison Atrocities". The evidence stated that the literature was found in the house in which Butler was living, but there was nothing to connect the accused with them. The decision of the Court has not transpired.

Arrest:- Mr. Cornelius O'Mahony, Tralee, Editor of the "Kerry News" was arrested yesterday at his residence, Moyderwell, and charged under D.O.R.A., with refusing to admit the police to a lecture at Tralee Theatre on June 25th.

Trial Sentence:- O'Mahony refused to recognise the Court and was ordered to enter into recognisances for his future good behaviour, or in default 3 months in Cork Jail. He refused to enter into recognisances, and was removed to Cork Jail.

Sentences:- Messrs. M. Jackson, W. Jackson, and M. Cahill, Foynes, Limerick, charged for collecting for Dail Eireann without a permit, and refusing to give bail, have been imprisoned in Limerick Jail.

Raids:- Large forces of British military and police left Cappa Pier, Kilrush, Co. Clare, by boat and landed on Scattery Island. They made thorough searches in each house (in all about 20) for arms. They discovered some old rusty fowling-pieces, and four of these they took away with them. They also searched the ruin of the Tower, before returning to Kilrush.

Suppressions:- A closing order under D.O.R.A., signed by Swift, K.C., "Chief City Magistrate" was served on the caretaker of 44 Parnell Square, Dublin. The building was used by the O'Rahilly and Thomas Ashe, Sinn Fein Cumainn, and contained the offices of Cumann na mBan. The order was made on the affidavit of a police Inspector that the place was being used for "seditious purposes" and was served on the care taker at his place of business.

Armed Assaults:- A shop assistant, returning to Claremorris, Co. Mayo, was attacked by seven soldiers and thrown off his bicycle. His hands were twisted behind his back, and his assailants who addressed him as "a dirty Irish dog" were marching him towards the water-fall at Brook hill when another soldier came to his rescue. At the approach of a picket from the town the soldiers fled to their camp. It is stated that some of them have since been placed under arrest. The injured man was subsequently helped home, and has not yet been able to resume work.

### **FRIDAY, July 25th, 1919.**

Arrest:- Mr. Liam Tannem, Dublin, one of the 20 prisoners who escaped from Mountjoy Jail on March 29th, 1919, was re-arrested yesterday by detectives in the Public Health Offices, Municipal Buildings, where he was employed. He was taken to the Lower Castle Yard and later to Mountjoy.

Court martial:- James Byrne, 28 Lr. Stephen Street, Dublin, was tried by Court Martial in Dublin, charged with unlawfully possessing 5 revolvers, a German automatic pistol, a machine gun belt, with 250 cartridges, 220 rifle cartridges, 2 hand grenades, and a tin of gunpowder. Accused refused to recognise the Court. The sentence has not transpired.

Arrest:- Mr. Francis Whitney, Drumlish, Longford, was arrested by armed military and police at his residence yesterday. A thorough search was made of his house, and it is reported that some ammunition was found. He was removed to Dublin. Whitney is only a short time home from Belfast Jail where he served 3 months for drilling.

Deportation:- Mr. Hugh Thornton, Kilbogan Hill, Bandon, Co. Cork, was served with an order requiring him to leave Munster immediately. Thornton has been in Bandon since 1916 and was District Manager of the New Ireland Assurance Co. The order for his banishment was signed by Lt. General Shaw.

Sentence:- Mr. Hugh H. McGlennon, Crossgar, Co. Down, was sentenced to six months with hard labour by a Crimes Court, on a charge of unlawful assembly and assaulting a constable. According to the evidence, during a Sinn Fein procession, McGlennon struck a constable with a hurley. The constable was awarded £300 compensation. Accused refused to recognise the Court.

### **SATURDAY, July 26th, 1919.**

Raids:- Armed police raided the Young Men's Hall, Cloughjordan, Tipp., on Wed. night, and turned out those who were passing their time there. The hall is a social Club, with no connection

with any political party. The Village of Kilmaine, Co. Mayo, was raided early on Thursday morning by "British military and police" on motor lorries and bicycles. The raiders made exhaustive searches for arms and ammunition in gardens, out-offices and hay-fields, while the inhabitants slept. At about 8 a.m. they made a general house to house search, in which everything indoors was ransacked, causing great inconvenience and annoyance to the residents. Nothing was found during the search, and the raiders left the district about 11 a.m.

Court martial:- Austin Geraghty, Boghill, Lisdoonvarna, Clare, was tried by court martial at Cork on July 17th, on a charge of illegal drilling and sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour.

Sentence:- For possessing a shot-gun and 15 rounds of ammunition without a permit, John Hall, Fairfield, Wexford, was fined at

Wexford Petty Assizes. Owing to the disturbance caused by discharged and demobilised soldiers in Athy, Co. Kildare, the Urban District Council have found it necessary to take action to protect the lives and property of the people in the town. The following resolution was passed at their last meeting:-

"In view of recent wanton and malicious disturbance of property, and the organised attempt to terrorise the people of the town by a section of demobilised soldier and the inadequate protection afforded by the civil authorities; we call upon the well-disposed citizens of Athy to enrol themselves with the town clerk to preserve the peace, property and civil liberties."

The Chairman of the Council, Mr. P. P. Doyle, stated he had written a letter to the District Inspector of Police, pointing out that a number of police stood idly looking on when the mob was destroying private property.

DATE	Arrests	Sentences	Armed Assaults	Militarism	Suppressions & Proclamations	Court martial	Raids	Total (exclusive of terms of imprisonment)
<b>July</b>								
<b>28</b>	5	-	1	-	-	4	1	11
<b>29</b>	1	-	1	1	3	-	-	6
<b>30</b>	-	-	1	3	1	2	-	7
<b>31</b>	2	-	-	-	-	1	6	9
<b>Aug. 2</b>	-	5 (6 months)	-	-	-	8	-	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>46</b>

**MONDAY, JULY 28th, 1919.**

Raids:- The house of Mr. O'Dwyer, Ballydavid, Co. Tipperary, was raided and searched by a large body of military and police.

Arrests:- Mr. Jerh. O'Dwyer, Ballydavid, Co. Tipperary, was arrested by military and police at his home at night. He was carried off to the Military barracks. The charge brought against him is not disclosed.

Four young men whose names were not given were arrested and tried at Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, for "indecent behaviour". The police declared the "indecent behaviour" consisted in singing the national songs. Only by a slight majority of the magistrates was this scandalous charge dismissed and the four men liberated.

Armed Assaults:- Armed police attacked and dispersed a crowd who were returning from a public welcome given to a political prisoner whose health being broken by the treatment given him in Cork Jail had been released.

**TUESDAY, JULY 29th, 1919.**

Arrests:- Mr. O'Dwyer, a prominent citizen of Thurles, was held up on the public highway at the point of the revolver by military and police and his resistance being overcome was searched.

Suppressions:- An Irish Language Festival and sports arranged to be held at Dolly's Brae, Co. Down, was proclaimed by the

English military authorities. Large forces of military and police took possession of the roads leading to the venue and held up all traffic. The festival was held secretly in the adjacent hills. An Irish Language Festival at Craugh, Co. Limerick, was similarly proclaimed. Police and military being drafted in great numbers to suppress any endeavours to hold it. Flying columns of English forces scoured the surrounding country to prevent the festival being held elsewhere. A third Language Festival was suppressed at Ballyneety, East Limerick. In this latter place the military with full war-equipment took possession of the field in which the festival was to have been held.

Treatment of Prisoners:- Mr. William O'Dogherty, who was sentenced by enemy court martial to 9 months' imprisonment for possession of a revolver, was released from Galway Gaol in broken health.

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 30th, 1919.**

Armed Assaults:- A large body of English military attacked a picnic party at Sarsfield Rock, Co. Limerick, dispersing them by a bayonet charge. There were many women and children in the party.

Treatment of Prisoners:- Mr. John Gallagher of Enniscorthy who was sentenced to five years penal servitude by enemy court martial for possession of "seditious literature" was released in broken health from Maryboro' Convict prison. His condition

necessitated his immediate removal to Hospital.

**Militarism:-** It was stated at a meeting of soldiers held in the barracks at Thurles, Co. Tipperary, that the militarism the Irishmen who had fought for the liberation of Belgium, found in Ireland on their return home was more terrible than that they had seen in Belgium during the German occupation. In Thurles, the police have erected sand-baggage strongholds. Fully armed troops continually patrol the Streets of the town.

**Court martial:-** Mr. Eamonn O'Kelly, Dublin was tried by court martial for being in possession of a revolver and ammunition. Mr. L. J. McNally of Claremount, King's County, was tried by court martial in Dublin. The charge was the possession of firearms. Sentence has not yet been promulgated.

#### THURSDAY, JULY 31st, 1919.

**Raids:-** Three houses were searched in Rathfarnham, Co. Dublin, by R.I.C. armed with rifles and batons. Nothing incriminating was found. Armed British Military, accompanied by armoured cars, searched the premises of Mr. Michael Gray, Main Street, Maryboro', Queen's Co. It is stated that some miniature rifle ammunition was found. The same party of military searched the house of Mr. Walsh, Kylikiproe, Maryboro'. An old service rifle was found and commandeered.

**Arrests:-** Following a search by military and police on his home at Lalor's Mills, Maryboro', Queen's County Mr. L. Brady, R.W.C. was arrested in bed on Tuesday morning and brought to Mountjoy Gaol. Mr. M. B. M'Auliffe, Newmarket, Co. Cork, was arrested by armed police. No charge has been formulated as yet.

**Court martial:-** James Byrne, 28 Lr. Stephen Street, Dublin, was tried by District court martial at Ship Street, Dublin on a charge of possessing firearms, ammunition, and explosives without a permit, and was sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour.

#### SATURDAY, AUGUST 2nd, 1919.

**Court martial:-** Sergeant John Clarke and Sapper W. F. Comans, two Australian soldiers, were tried by court martial yesterday at Ship Street Barracks, charged with marching at the head of a Sinn Fein procession the day after the signing of Peace; and with wearing Sinn Fein colours. Both the accused were acquitted. Mr. W. McNally, Molly, Longford, was charged at a court martial in Ship Street with possessing a seditious document and with assaulting a R. I. C. constable. The hearing was adjourned. McNally has been in custody, untried, since June 2nd.

Matthew Butler, Turtulla, Thurles, Co. Tipperary, was tried by district court martial at Cork on a charge of possessing two seditious leaflets namely, "Ruthless Warfare" and an account of the treatment of Sinn Fein prisoners in Belfast Jail. He was found guilty and sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment with hard labour.

**Sentence:-** Maurice Culhane, Listowel, Co. Kerry; Patrick McMahan, do.; John Morrissey, do.; and Laurence O'Keeffe, do., were summoned to Limerick Petty Sessions to answer charges of damage done to their cells in the county prison on February 5th and 14th, while prisoners. The disturbance at the time arose out of an agitation for political status. None of the accused appeared before the court. Each was fined 10/- and ordered to pay compensation for damage done.

This is an extract from a **full reprint of newspaper of Dáil Éireann** giving war reports.

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## In its "On this day" centenary series, the London "Times" reproduced its editorial of 15th April 1919, inciting more "active intervention" in militarily "policing" Ireland

### Strong Measures!

"The Lord Chancellor, in moving in the House of Lords the second reading of the Criminal Injuries (Ireland) Bill, said with considerable force that those in distant lands who criticized the British Government regarding Ireland ought to be very sure that they appreciated the real nature of the Irish problem. The Bill illustrates the gravity of the present situation. It provides that if a policeman in Ireland is assassinated or wounded in the execution of his duty, the district in which the crime is committed shall compensate him in the case of wounds, or provide a pension for his widow and children in the event of his death.

The Privy Council last Saturday "proclaimed" the counties of Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Roscommon, and Tipperary, under an

Act which enables the authorities to send additional forces of police into disturbed areas. Limerick and Westport are already notified as military areas in consequence of murders of a peculiarly brutal and cowardly type. The police in all the "proclaimed" districts, and in many other parts of Ireland, take their lives in their hands in the performance of their daily duty. The Royal Irish Constabulary never had a severer strain upon their loyalty than at this juncture in the long tragedy of Irish history. They are entitled to the fullest support of the Government, and are entitled to know that should they fall at the hands of a cowardly assassin those they leave behind will be provided for. A proclamation posted in thousands in Tipperary declared that any policeman found in certain areas would be "deemed to have forfeited his life". The threat extends to all persons who "in any way" help the Government.

These deplorable developments are mentioned here because the problem of Ireland can no longer be left as a matter of debate. The condition of Ireland is affecting our relations with the Dominions, and the misunderstanding it creates clouds our friendship with the United States. The second consideration is that both great political parties in this country are pledged to the hilt to observe their solemn undertakings to Ulster. The real responsibility rests, and must continue to rest, with the British Government, which cannot much longer postpone active intervention."

[Contributed by Manus O'Riordan]

## Clair Wills and the Story She Tells (Part 11)

"I do not agree that the dog in a manger has the final right to the manger, even though he may have lain there for a very long time. I do not admit that right. I do not admit for instance, that a great wrong has been done to the Red Indians of America, or the black people of Australia. I do not admit that a wrong has been done to these people by the fact that a stronger race, a higher grade race, a more worldly-wise race, to put it that way, has come in and taken their place."

Winston Churchill. 1937

"In Palestine we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the wishes of the present inhabitants of the country .... Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long tradition, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land."

Lord Arthur James Balfour. 1919

In this last issue that arrived by post of the *'London Review of Books'*, Vol.41, No.7, 4th April 2019, there is a review by Clair Wills of *'The Collected Letters of Flann O'Brien'*, Edited by Maebh Long, Dalkey Archive, 2018. What really caught my attention was the little biography of each contributor. What they had listed for Clair Wills that she is:

"King Edward VII Professor of English Literature at Cambridge University."

We know that she is also the Leonard L. Milberg Professor of Irish Letters at Princeton University, having joined the faculty there in 1915. I can only assume that when she took her sabbatical for the year 2018, she took up her Professorship at Cambridge and then went back to America, but that is speculation. But certainly now Wills is a very formidable academic, having two such institutions availing of her expertise—thus adding considerable heft to her name.

And her review of O'Brien is clearly mined from her research for her 2007 book, *'That Neutral Island: A Cultural History of Ireland During the Second World War'*, published by Faber & Faber. Her review is fair and balanced, which is rather novel these days when authors review one another without ever revealing their close ties and any objectivity goes out the window. She accepts that, in the main, the letters were written in the last five years of O'Brien's life (a writer who also went by his real name Brian O'Nolan along with his pen names Flann O'Brien and Myles na gCopaleen) and mostly

consists of trying to wheedle jobs or money out of his contacts, especially Timothy O'Keefe, his publisher at MacGibbon and Kee.

But—

"the longest and most revealing correspondence is with Niall Montgomery, a close friend from university and later a collaborator on his newspaper column, with whom O'Nolan liked to share in-jokes, but on whom O'Nolan could turn like a terrier as in this quoted 1964 letter accusing him of plagiarism:

"You are known to far more than me as the peddler of the second hand, the inadequate, the misunderstood. Heretofore this has been disguised by a massive "gentleman" charlatanry and why this has now been cast aside is a total mystery to me."

And that more or less revelatory snippet just shows how he treated everyone. Poor Montgomery, an architect "*distinguished by inane imitation of the work of others*", as O'Nolan snidely remarked, tried to help the writer out by assisting him with appeals "*to bank managers, mortgage companies and even typewriter repair firms*".

O'Nolan entered the civil service in 1935 and had progressed to "*the rank of Principal Officer but retired in 1953*" though, as Wills points out, he had been sacked for his "*frequent and protracted absences*" due to his alcoholism. Because of the latter, he was in poor health and was in and out of hospitals "*either drying out or being treated for a series of intractable complaints, including, at the end, throat cancer*".

But he was successful at his day job and in 1937,

"he was promoted to Private Secretary to the Minister for Local Government

and by 1948 (when he married) he was acting Principal Officer of the Planning Section of the Department. By 1941, when he turned thirty, O'Nolan had written three novels and published two: 'At Swim-Two-Birds' as Flann O'Brien in 1939 and in 1941 his Irish language masterpiece, 'An Béal Bocht' (as Myles na gCopaleen). In 1940 he began his regular column for 'The Irish Times', 'An Cruiskeen Lawn'. He also had a play staged in 1943, at the Abbey Theatre, a satire on local government 'Faustus Kelly' and a translation of the Capek brother's 'Insect Play' at the Gaiety.

'Swim-Two-Birds' "gained him astonishingly high-class praise, from Beckett, Joyce and Borges among others. It was always going to be hard to follow that but 'The Third Policeman' wasn't even given that chance".

Longmans, his British publisher rejected the novel as being too fantastical and O'Nolan was crushed and put it away in a drawer and pretended to forget about it. So from 1939's success with 'Swim-Two-Birds' till 'The Hard Life' in 1961, he had little standing as a writer outside of Ireland. Wills admits he couldn't even "*pitch an article to 'The Guardian' or 'The Sunday Telegraph' without a long explanation of who he was and what he had written*".

His biographer and friend Anthony Cronin wrote of this prematurely-aged alcoholic that "*by his late forties O'Nolan was generally so pickled by three in the afternoon that he retired to bed—he was never not in the position of having to carve out a place for himself as a writer. The failure to find an American publisher for 'At Swim-Two-Birds' was another blow*". And he hated being compared to Joyce as he thought of himself "*as a popular novelist*" who could write a novel as "*entertainment, not literature*". He had sent a copy of his first novel to the popular novelist Ethel Mannin and when she unsurprisingly criticised its "*wilful obscurity*", O'Nolan was furious.

Wills finds O'Nolan's scorn for Joyce, as evidenced in these letters, somewhat strange. After all, he had sent a copy of 'At Swim-Two-Birds' to Joyce in Paris who had already read and enjoyed the book. He even put in a word with the French papers for O'Nolan. But the "*more critics insisted that the works of Flann O'Brien were Joycean, or post Joycean, the more he*" (O'Nolan) "*fumed*". Eventually he began to hate the novel describing it as: "*this dreadful book of mine*" and "*schoolboy juvenilia*".

As Wills acknowledged, it—

"went to the heart of his ambition to be a writer of the people, rather than an

'artist' propped up by an 'esoteric coterie' at the Abbey Theatre, by WAAMA (Writers, Artists, Actors, Musicians Association) or worst of all the American academy".

"Artists" "were a term of abuse in O'Nolan's lexicon".

By 1963 he began to plunder *'The Third Policeman'* for his new book *'The Dalkey Archive'*, in which both Saint Augustine and James Joyce appear. In a letter to Montgomery he accepted that he was trying to make Joyce appear as *"even a more obnoxious prig than he is"* and criticised him for cultivating a pretentious and privileged readership. O'Nolan wrote of Joyce:

"His main interest in life was acting the bollocks as grd. seigneur (grand seigneur)."

One can see clearly that O'Nolan was quite jealous of the patronage and success of Joyce which is understandable enough, given his own financial situation. But then surely even he could acknowledge that he followed where Joyce led! The modernist style of both writers was fully accepted but I think that whereas praise was heaped upon the one, the other found the going much harder. And it certainly had to do with that mammoth, never to be outdone, book *'Ulysses'*, which had—as its introduction to the English speaking world—the burning of all its copies at Folkestone Docks in the UK. Censorship of that ilk meant that a lot of people took note, and those in the Bloomsbury set were especially keen, even if Virginia Woolf thought *"the book vulgar in the extreme"*.

It is hard not to feel some pity for O'Nolan—at a distance admittedly—as he tried out for a series of jobs in varying places, from the radio broadcasting studio in Cork to applying for a junior lectureship in Trinity College, Dublin with a c.v. full of *"embellishments"*, as Wills notes. But, in fairness, the civil service was incredibly patient with him, to have kept him on for such a long time—not that he ever thanked his political masters for their decency. He even took a run for the Senate in March 1957 as an Independent—free as he declared publicly—from:

"the fug of cant, hypocrisy and recrimination that blighted Irish political life... while the Dáil was crowded with the immediate relatives of dead or surviving politicians, many of them quite unfitted for public life."

That sort of public engagement went down very badly, as one can imagine, and

O'Nolan *"received a crushingly low number of votes"*.

But, by May of that year, he was trying to get references, not seeming to understand that he was more or less quite toxic and had been for some time. When Irish television began broadcasting on New Year's Eve 1961, O'Nolan saw a new opening for his talents. In 1963, he started writing sketches for Jimmy O'Dea, but the work wasn't particularly well-paid. However, he kept pitching ideas which went nowhere. Wills states:

"His letters in his last years are full of 'big money' certainties: a BBC serial of 'The Dalkey Archive' was just around the corner and the novel he was working on when he died—'Slattery's Sago Saga' a spoof on de Valera and the Kennedys—was bound to break open the Irish-American market and rake in film options."

Of course it wasn't to be and, as Wills continues:

"...more earnest cultural commentators such as the much despised" (by O'Nolan) "Sean O'Faolain, Conor Cruise O'Brien, and Gay Byrne on 'The Late Late Show' were coming to the fore."

Wills rightly—in my opinion—sees the letters, especially the job application ones, as being—

"absent of personality because they are not personal. But they speak all too eloquently of the way O'Nolan thought about himself. *He had no stable perspective on who he was or what he amounted to*". (Italics –JH).

**Julianne Herlihy ©**

## Brexit

continued

unrealistic expectations on the British side, by no means confined to the extreme Brexiteers, that position has been absolutely right. If a compromise on the backstop was granted, what guarantee would there be that further demands for compromise would not arise from the UK? What guarantee would there be that such a move would not be interpreted as confirmation that UK intransigence had been right all along?

This article covers the Euroscepticism of Remainers, Westminster's slow meltdown, a Conclusions section which attempts to identify the causes behind the meltdown, and a final section in which Donald Tusk's well meaning appeal for a long extension

to Article 50 is rejected in favour of the EU remaining on the course it set at the recent European Council Summit.

### EUROSCEPTIC REMAINERS

On Monday, 25th March, the papers were full of pictures of a large anti-Brexit demonstration that jammed central London on the preceding Saturday. From the forest of EU flags visible in many of the photographs, it would be easy to form an impression that a groundswell of pro-EU sentiment was sweeping through public opinion in the UK. That impression, which seems to have been swallowed by Donald Tusk, would be entirely false.

While there are undoubtedly many individuals in Britain well disposed towards the European project, the main message in the literature of the anti-Brexit activist organisations is identical to that of the Remain side in the Referendum: *leaving the EU will harm the economy*. There has been no sea-change in British attitudes to Brussels. Whether aligned with *Leave* or *Remain*, mainstream opinion in England and Wales continues to be firmly supportive of the Eurosceptical view of the EU.

This is evident among the anti-Brexit intellectuals as much as among the activists. A recent opinion column from Simon Kupor in the *Financial Times* is well summed up in its title: *"The EU's enemy within: Eurosceptic Remainers"*. Kupor's opening paragraph reads:

"For continental Eurosceptics, Brexit was an experiment. Only the British were incautious enough to want to be first out of the door, but many countries were thinking about going second. Brexit's Monty Pythonesque implosion has put that issue to bed. What you might call "Leave Euroscepticism"—the Boris Johnson version—has discredited itself. What survives is *"Remain Euroscepticism"*, the version embodied by Hungary's prime minister Viktor Orban: stay in the EU, suck on its teat and, meanwhile, rot the union from the inside. In May's European elections, Remain-Eurosceptic parties could get 30 per cent of the vote. Long term, they are more dangerous than the hapless Leave Eurosceptics" (FT, March 21).

Later in the article Kupor refers to the *"old British dream"*, which he describes as the EU becoming *"just an expanding single market"*. He contends that the dream is finally coming true because hostile countries are each fighting their corner in the European Council. He produces scant evidence for a claim that the European federalist project is *"defunct"*, but his article exemplifies the contempt for the EU felt by many influential British Remainers.

Towards the end he cites the view of Timothy Garton Ash, an Oxford Professor of European Studies, a staunch opponent of Brexit and a contributor to both the *Guardian* and the *Financial Times*. He quotes the Professor to the effect that maintaining the EU at its current state of development for 50 years would be a "*magnificent achievement*" but that "*gradual disintegration*" is more likely. It is difficult to understand, given the overt stratagems of such Remainers, why the EU doesn't prize the honest opposition of the Brexiteers.

#### WESTMINSTER'S SLOW MELTDOWN

February's summary of Westminster developments concluded at the point where a second meaningful vote on February 27th was under discussion. This was to take place following concessions or changes to the backstop which the EU was expected to agree. In the event, the vote was deferred, with Theresa May pledging to hold it on March 13th or 14th. In the days and weeks following February 27th, the focus of attention switched from Westminster to Brussels where negotiations of a sort were reported to be ongoing.

Despite occasional puffs of optimism, the chances of a breakthrough were generally talked down, especially by EU officials. On March 6th Mrs May dispatched Attorney General Geoffrey Cox and Brexit Secretary Stephen Barclay to Brussels to secure changes to the backstop; that came to nothing. Cox's legal advice regarding the backstop was known to have been influential in the defeat of the first meaningful vote on January 15th. As time passed, word filtered through the media that EU officials were not overly impressed with Cox.

Finally, on Monday March 11th, news came through that Theresa May had made a "*dash to Strasbourg*" and that a set of new proposals and documents had been agreed. During the late evening, as David Liddington kept the Commons informed of developments, Jean Claude Juncker and Theresa May informed an *impromptu* press conference in Strasbourg about three '*instruments*' that contained new assurances regarding the backstop. These were: a joint legal interpretation of the impermanence of the backstop, the provision for a unilateral UK declaration on the backstop and amendments to the Political Declaration on the Future Relationship re-committing both sides to immediate talks on a trade deal which were to include '*alternative arrangements*' which could replace the backstop. It seemed that Mrs May had achieved some success in

implementing the Brady Amendment.

On the morning of Tuesday, March 12th, speculation mounted at Westminster as to what the text of legal advice from Geoffrey Cox would contain. A group of legal experts in the Brexiteer faction, referred to as the *Star Chamber*, were also reported to be scouring the new documents. On the previous Sunday an interview with Cox had been published in which he stated:

"My professional reputation is far more important to me than my reputation as a politician. If the risk of being trapped in the backstop had not been removed, then I would make it as clear and plain and in exactly the same way as I did on November 13."

When his legal opinion was released at 11 am, its final sentence read: "*the legal risk remains unchanged*". These words sealed the fate of the second meaningful vote, which was defeated by 391 to 242 that evening (the margin was 149 votes—the previous defeat had been by 230 votes). EU officials were reported to be stunned that Mrs May had embarked on the Strasbourg initiative without first ensuring that the Attorney General supported it.

The second meaningful vote was defeated on the Tuesday of that week. Two further days of important Commons votes followed: on Wednesday the main item was preventing a No Deal disorderly Brexit; on Thursday the main business was applying for an extension to Article 50. With a weakened Prime Minister and a divided Cabinet, it is fair to say that the conduct of Government business during those two days became disorderly and at times chaotic.

On the Wednesday, the Government plan was to rule out *No Deal* for the month of March only. The Whips' office convinced Caroline Spellman to withdraw her Amendment which ruled it out at any time. However, since the Amendment was in the name of a number of MPs including Labour MPs Jack Dromey and Yvette Cooper, and since all of its sponsors needed to agree to the withdrawal, the Amendment remained on the order paper and was passed.

This caused the Prime Minister to reverse a decision to allow a free vote on the main Motion and apply a Three-line Whip. Four anti-Brexit Government Ministers along with 14 other MPs on the Government payroll managed to find themselves locked out of the Chamber for the vote. A further complication was that the PM's chief of staff, Gavin Barnwell,

put out the word that Ministers could abstain. The Government lost the vote and by all accounts a major Cabinet row ensued.

Also on Wednesday an Amendment proposing a managed exit with a transition but without the Withdrawal Agreement, known as the Malthouse compromise, was defeated by 374 votes to 164. The Amendment drew support from across the House but was closely associated with Jacob Rees Mogg. The Barnier Task Force had previously signalled that a transition would not happen unless the Withdrawal Agreement was passed.

On the Thursday a Government Motion proposing an extension of Article 50 until June 30th was passed, but 188 Tory MPs plus the DUP used the free vote to oppose it. Having urged his fellow MPs to support the Motion, Brexit Secretary Stephen Barclay voted against it.

An Amendment which would have allowed backbench MPs to take control of the Commons was defeated by just two votes.

The week beginning Monday, 18th March turned out to be just as unpredictable and chaotic as the preceding week. It began with rumours that a third meaningful vote, now referred to as MV3, would take place in the coming days possibly followed, if it was defeated, by MV4 closer to the planned exit date. Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond then stated in an interview that a further attempt at getting the Withdrawal Agreement passed would only be attempted if the Government was confident of winning.

Then came a wholly unexpected development. Speaker John Bercow ruled that, in line with an arcane Parliamentary convention dating back to 1604, the Government could not bring the Withdrawal Agreement before the House again unless it was substantially altered. Meanwhile the Government needed to prepare its proposals to the EU for the Summit scheduled for 21st-22nd March.

The speculation in the days before the Summit ranged over the duration and terms of an extension to Article 50. In a speech, delivered on the day before the Summit (March 20), Mrs May berated MPs for causing Brexit to be delayed, a move that provoked increased calls for her resignation from the body of MPs that she was still proposing to win over to her Deal.

At the Summit she answered questions from other EU leaders—"what grounds

*have you for being optimistic?"* one Prime Minister is reported to have asked—before leaving the meeting to allow the next steps to be worked out by the European Council. After a prolonged discussion the EU-27 decided that, if the Withdrawal Agreement was ratified by the House of Commons (devising a procedure for getting around Bercow's ruling was stated to be relatively manageable), Brexit would take place on May 22nd, or on April 12th if it was not passed and if no further proposals were made.

After that Summit, the main talking point in British politics was about when and how the May Premiership will come to an end. Control of the order of Brexit business passed from the Government to the general body of MPs. Time was allocated to efforts to ascertain what Parliament wants in relation to Brexit, by means of a series of "*indicative*" votes. This process began on Wednesday March 27 and concluded on Monday April 1.

Andrea Leadsom, the Leader of the House of Commons, declared that the indicative voting is all very well but deciding on the Agreement that has been negotiated over two years with the European Council should take priority.

A statement from Donald Tusk was also run on the news cycles. Addressing the European Parliament, he expressed a preference for a long extension to Article 50, so that what he calls the pro-EU sentiment of 6 million UK citizens who signed a petition calling for Brexit to be called off, should be recognised. He was appealing to the Strasbourg Parliament and to the wider EU audience to put up with the inconvenience of having UK participation in this year's Elections to the European Parliament.

Meanwhile, back at Westminster, Jacob Rees Mogg announced in a newspaper article that he was now open to voting to accept the Withdrawal Agreement: this voting intention being conditional on the DUP supporting the Agreement, an unlikely outcome to say the least. Boris Johnson was also reported to be considering a change of heart on the Withdrawal Agreement.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Attempting to make sense of this record of tumult is a process that will clearly take many years. In the meantime I offer the following set of opinions for the purpose of assisting debate. While I have devoted much space to describing Westminster events, to a large extent the UK's political crisis has become a sideshow; the import-

ant factor now is the direction of thinking in the European Commission and among the leaders of the EU-27.

It was notable that, while the House of Commons wrestled with the length of the Article 50 extension that should be applied for, that matter was eventually decided by the European Council. Likewise, while the Commons may have ruled out a No Deal at any time, the matter will ultimately be decided by the European Council, although responsibility has been left with the House of Commons.

The Brexit negotiations have caused a breakdown in the functioning of the UK Government and its Cabinet system. In the circumstances, it is important to identify the causes behind the breakdown in as specific a manner as possible. First and foremost in the list of causes is the determination of the Remain side to thwart the will of the majority as expressed in the Referendum.

This began with Gina Miller's court case in early 2017, which made it necessary for any UK-EU Deal on Brexit to be ratified by Parliament. The opponents of Brexit saw in this an opportunity to subvert Theresa May's objective of implementing what the electorate had chosen. If the matter had been left to the democratically elected Government to resolve, the terms of the British exit would have been resolved last November.

The campaign to stymie Brexit has been led in Parliament by experienced Conservative liberals like Dominic Grieve and Oliver Letwin, but also by Blairite liberals like Yvette Cooper. From the sidelines Tony Blair has himself exerted a mischievous influence. Anti-Brexit members of the Cabinet, like Amber Rudd and Philip Hammond, may also have cooperated behind the scenes with the anti-Brexit lobby on the backbenches.

The Speaker, John Bercow, deserves to be in a category all of his own. Arguably, the Office of Speaker should be politically neutral, while having a slight bias in favour of the Executive Government for the reason that the Executive carries the heaviest burden of responsibility for the political system. Mr. Bercow has interpreted the role of his Office in a contrary manner; holding the Government to account is what he sees as a part of its function, a role that has conveniently allowed him to use the Office to further his personal opposition to Brexit.

In an important study of the causes of the Irish Crash, "*The Decline of the Celtic*

*Tiger*" by Donovan and Murphy, a special section is reserved for the culpability of media opinion-formers. That is only fair, as political pundits and editorial writers play a key role in modern politics. In that context the anti-Brexit press in Britain and Ireland—the *Guardian*, the *Financial Times*, the *Independent*, and the *Irish Times*—has been complicit in what became a dubious campaign to undermine Brexit.

Government incompetence has been another important cause of the Westminster meltdown. Much has been said and continues to be said about the unfitness of Theresa May, in a time of crisis, to be Prime Minister. Unfortunately, much of it is true. One need only cite her recent attempt to blame Parliament for the paralysis over Brexit, at a time when she still needed a Parliamentary majority to back her Deal, as evidence that she was well out of her depth. Theresa May's "*uncollegiate*" approach to politics has been disastrous.

Pro-Brexit Ministers have also contributed to the shambles—David Davis's statement during an interview in late 2017 that the backstop would not have legal force springs to mind. But the *man-of-the-match prize* for political misjudgement must surely go to Geoffrey Cox. Even if it is allowed that he meant his standing as Attorney General when he referred to his "*legal reputation*", and even accepting that legal advice to the Government should always be delivered under the cover of Cabinet confidentiality, his statement before the second meaningful vote, was breathtaking in its political irresponsibility.

For what it's worth my theory as to why political standards have declined so drastically is that, as part of the long reign of Thatcherite ideology, across the West as well as in Britain, the idea took hold that the role of the State in social affairs needed to be reduced. If the State is to be downgraded, it follows that the status of statecraft should also be downgraded. From the perspective of this liberal worldview in which the economic actors are the key decision-makers, why take politics seriously?

But apolitical ideology and political incompetence only partially explain why the Brexit negotiations have gone so badly wrong for the UK. The underlying problem is the traditional British attitude to Europe, a historical legacy that has never been subjected to the rigorous questioning that geopolitical realities have required since at least the Suez crisis in the 1950s. On

many different occasions during the negotiations British representatives from all shades of opinion showed themselves to be unable to hear what the EU side was saying.

While the British can be accused of engaging in a dialogue of the deaf, the incomprehension between the two sides was in part at least, mutual. The apparent incapacity of the British Government to attach weight to arguments coming from the EU is rooted in the same ground as the UK's long term antipathy to the European Project. But Brussels is open to the charge of being insufficiently aware of the depth and provenance of that antipathy.

#### DONALD TUSK'S ANGLOPHILE INTERVENTION

Brexit is at a critical juncture. The Withdrawal Agreement has been rejected on two occasions in the Commons; the European Council has agreed that the UK can begin transitioning out of the Union on May 22 if, in the coming days, the EU-UK Deal is passed at Westminster; and if not a disorderly Brexit will occur on April 12. [See April Brexit Summary below for an update on this. ed.] In line with his personal Anglophile predisposition, Donald Tusk has appealed for a long extension to Article 50 so that, as he sees it, Brexit can be cancelled.

The problem with the Tusk position is that it prolongs the uncertainty and instability of Brexit while ignoring the danger that UK participation poses for the EU Elections. UK participation in the Elections is likely to encourage anti-EU forces across Europe. It will also mean that the Brexit mess gets carried over into the business of the new Commission and the new Parliament. And none of these disadvantages take account of the long-term damage that allowing a hostile UK to remain in the Union would cause.

It may not come to pass if Tusk has his way, but the sensible alternative is for the EU to simply hold its present course. The UK Parliament has the option of passing the Withdrawal Agreement that took over two years to negotiate and in which the EU compromised its opposition to allowing a non-Member to have access to the Customs Union and close alignment with the Single Market. If the Commons fails to pass the Deal, exit will happen on April 12th. By the EU thus holding course, the choice between the two options is left for the House of Commons to decide. That would be fair dealing on the part of the EU.

March has been a month when painful

home truths for political tendencies subscribing to an Anglo-centric worldview have come into the open. That has been movement in the right direction. The challenge now for the EU, and for Ireland as a member of the EU, is to hold guard against well-meaning interventions from people who would prevent an outcome that is the product of long term historical developments—Brexit—from coming to pass.

Dave Alvey

## April Brexit Summary

On the date that was to be 'Brexit day', 29th March 2019, when the 21-month transition to the British exit was to have commenced, the British House of Commons voted for a third time on the Withdrawal Agreement. The result, by 344 votes to 286, was another defeat. Boris Johnson, Jacob Rees Mogg and Dominic Raab all voted with the Government—but the shift was not enough to win the vote. Too many of the Brexiteers and all of the 10 DUP MPs voted against. Following the defeat, Donald Tusk called an Emergency Summit of the Council for Wednesday April 10th.

Emphasising the gravity of the situation, Prime Minister May stated that the legal default then obtaining was that the UK would exit on April 12th, without a transition and without a Deal.

Some days later, May sent a letter to the European Council requesting a further extension. She also initiated talks with Jeremy Corbyn to ascertain if a bipartisan approach between Conservatives and Labour could allow the Withdrawal Agreement to be passed in the Commons.

These talks have been described both as making little progress and as making more progress than has been acknowledged. The Labour Party position is being reported as supportive of the Withdrawal Agreement, so long as some form of Customs Union membership is part of the future relationship, and so long as a confirmatory referendum takes place in which the choice presented to the UK electorate would be a Customs Union relationship with the EU or Remain. Such a position would have the support of a majority of the Party membership and of many Labour voters, but it would be opposed by Labour voters who favour Leave and possibly by the Corbyn leadership. Joining a Customs Union with the EU would be bitterly opposed by a majority

of Conservative voters and by much of the Conservative Party.

The debate in the European Council over a further extension began in advance of the Summit. Donald Tusk, Angela Merkel and Leo Varadkar were reported as favouring a long extension—dates from December 2019, March 2020 and December 2020 were mentioned—while Macron, together with the leaders of Belgium and Spain, were reported to be open to a *No Deal Brexit* and, if a further extension was to be granted, to favour a short one.

In the event a compromise was agreed, and a flexible extension was given until 31st October, with a review of developments to take place in June without another Emergency Summit. The compromise date makes sense from the perspective of the EU, in that Jean Claude Juncker must resign his position as President of the Commission at midnight on October 31st; Brexit will thus be decided before the new office holder takes up the post.

On the eve of the Easter break, Theresa May encouraged MPs to use the time to reflect on ways of overcoming the Brexit deadlock. Parliament will reconvene on April 23rd, at which time another attempt to pass the Withdrawal Agreement may be tried. If that fails, there may be more *'indicative voting'*, to find an option that Parliament does support.

Meanwhile preparations are underway for UK participation in the Elections for the European Parliament, and Nigel Farage has launched a new party, the *Brexit Party*. The likelihood is that parties like Brexit and UKIP will make gains at the expense of the Conservatives.

An exchange between Donald Tusk and Guy Verhofstadt in the European Parliament on April 16th shows where the Brexit debate inside the EU is at. Verhofstadt warned Tusk that the six month extension was *"putting Europe at risk"*. He said the deadline was *"too near for substantial reform, too far away to prompt any action... I fear it will lead to continued uncertainty and indecision"* (IT, 16 April).

While Tusk has made no secret of his wish to see the UK perform a total U-turn regarding Brexit and is openly scathing of the Brexiteers, Verhofstadt is fearful that the Brexit mess will be imported into the EU through the European Elections.

Dave Alvey

**This is one of de Gaulle's statements on why he objected to the UK joining the then Common Market. A fuller statement of his position is included in the forthcoming Summer edition of *Irish Foreign Affairs***

## **'Plus ca change.....'**

**Press conference held by  
General de Gaulle at the Elysées  
(27 November 1967)**

Ever since there have been men, and ever since there have been States, any great international project has been imbued with seductive myths. That is quite natural, because at the origin of the action there is always inspiration, and that was true for the unity of Europe. Ah, how fine and how good it would be should Europe be able to become a fraternal and organised entity in which each people would find its prosperity and its security. This also holds true for the world. How marvellous it would be to see disappear all the differences of race, language, ideology and wealth, all the rivalries, all the frontiers that have always divided the world.

But, however sweet dreams may be, the realities are there and, on the basis of whether or not one takes them into account, policy can be a rather fruitful art or a vain utopia. It is thus that the idea of joining the British Isles to the economic Community formed by the six continental States arouses wishes everywhere that are quite justified ideally, but it is a matter of knowing if that could be done today without rending, without breaking, what exists.

Now, it happens that Great Britain, with truly extraordinary insistence and haste—certain reasons for which the recent monetary events perhaps cast some light on—had proposed the opening, without delay, of negotiations in view of her entry into the Common Market.

At the same time, Britain stated that she accepted without restriction all the provisions that rule the Community of the Six, which seemed somewhat to contradict the request for negotiations, for why would one negotiate on clauses that one would have entirely accepted in advance? Actually, we are viewing here the fifth act of a play during which Britain's very diverse behaviours with regard to the Common Market have succeeded one another without seeming to be alike.

The first act had been London's refusal to participate in drafting the Rome Treaty,

which it was thought, across the Channel, would never come to anything.

The second act brought out Britain's deep-seated hostility toward European construction, once that construction started to take shape. And I still hear the summons which in Paris, as early as June 1958, my friend Macmillan—then Prime Minister—addressed to me, who compared the Common Market to the continental blockade and who threatened to declare it at least a tariff war.

The third act was the negotiations conducted in Brussels by Mr. Maudling for a year and a half, negotiations designed to make the Community bow to Britain's conditions and halted when France made her partners note that the issue was not that, but precisely the opposite.

The fourth act, at the start of Mr. Wilson's Government, was marked by London's lack of interest in the Common Market, the maintenance around Great Britain of the six other European States forming the free-trade area, and a great effort exerted to strengthen the Commonwealth's internal ties.

And now the fifth act is being played, for which Great Britain, this time, has declared her candidacy, and, in order for it to be adopted, has set out on the path of all the promises and all the pressures imaginable.

To tell the truth, this attitude is rather easy to explain. The British people doubtless discern more and more clearly that in the great movement that is sweeping the world, in the face of the enormous power of the United States, the growing power of the Soviet Union, the reborn power of the continental States, the new power of China, and taking into account the increasingly centrifugal orientations that are dawning in the Commonwealth, the structure and customs of its activity,

and even its national personality, are henceforth at stake.

And, moreover, the great economic, financial, monetary and social difficulties with which Britain is at grips make her aware of it day after day. Hence, to her very depths, a tendency to seek a framework, be it European, that would help her to save, to safeguard her own substance, that would permit her still to play a leading rôle and that would lighten a part of her burden. And this could, in principle, only be beneficial to her, and could over the short term only be satisfactory to 3/4 Europe. But, on condition that the British people, like those with whom it wishes to join, wishes and knows how to compel itself to make the fundamental changes that would be necessary in order for it to be established in its own equilibrium; for it is a modification, a radical transformation of Great Britain that is necessary in order for her to be able to join the continental States. This is obvious from the political viewpoint.

But today, to speak only of the economic domain, the report that was addressed on 29th September by the Commission in Brussels to the Six Governments, shows with the greatest clarity that the present Common Market is incompatible with the economy, as it now stands, of Britain, whose chronic balance-of-payments deficit is proof of permanent disequilibrium, and which involves—as to production, to food supply sources, to credit practices, to working conditions—factors which that country could not change without modifying its own nature.

A Common Market is also incompatible with the way in which the British obtain their food, as much by the products of their agriculture, subsidised to the highest level, as by the goods purchased cheaply everywhere in the world, particularly in the Commonwealth, which makes it impossible for London ever really to accept the levies laid down by the financial

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regulation, which would be crushing to it.

A Common Market also incompatible with the restrictions Britain imposes on the exporting of capital, which, to the contrary, circulates freely among the Six.

A Common Market incompatible, lastly, with the state of the pound sterling as it has once again been brought to light by the devaluation, as well as by the loans that preceded and accompany it; the state of the pound sterling, also, that, combined with the character of an international currency which is that of the pound, and the enormous external liabilities weighing on it, would not permit Britain to belong, at this time, to the solid and solidary [sic] and guaranteed society in which are joined the franc, the mark, the lira, the Belgian franc and the florin.

In these conditions, what could be the outcome of what is called Britain's entry into the Common Market? And if one wanted, despite everything, to impose it, it would obviously be the breaking up of a Community that has been built and that functions according to rules that do not tolerate such a monumental exception. Nor would it tolerate the introduction among its main members of a State who, precisely owing to its currency, its economy and its policy, does not at present belong to Europe as we have started to build it. To have Britain enter and, consequently, to be committed now to negotiations to that end, that would be for the Six—everybody knows what this turns on—that would be for the Six to give their consent in advance to all the expedients, delays and façades that would be aimed at masking the destruction of an edifice that has been built at the cost of so much hardship and in the midst of so much hope.

It is true that, while recognising the impossibility of having Britain enter today into the Common Market as it exists, one can wish all the same to sacrifice the latter to an agreement with the former. For theoretically, the economic system currently practised by the Six is not necessarily the only one that Europe could practise. One can imagine, for example, a free-trade area extending all over the West of our continent. One can also imagine a type of multilateral treaty like that which will emerge from the Kennedy round and regulating, among 10, 12 or 15 European States, their reciprocal tariffs and their respective quotas. But, in one case as in the other, it would first be necessary to abolish the Community and to disperse its institutions. And I say that France will certainly not ask that. However, if one or another of her partners, as is after all their

right, were to propose this, she would examine it with the other signatories of the Rome Treaty.

But what France cannot do is to enter now, with the British and their associates, into negotiations that would lead to destroying the European construction to which she belongs. And then, that would in no way be the path that could lead to allowing Europe to construct itself by itself and for itself, in such a way as not to be under the dependence of an economic, monetary and political system that is foreign to it.

For Europe to be able to counterbalance the immense power of the United States, it is necessary not at all to weaken, but to the contrary to strengthen the Community's ties and rules. Certainly, those who, like me, have proved by their acts the exceptional esteem, attachment and respect that they hold for Britain, firmly desire to see her one day decide on and accomplish the immense effort that would transform her. Indeed, in order to facilitate things for her,

France is quite ready to enter into some arrangement that, under the name of association, or under another name, would foster, starting right away, trade between the continental States on the one hand and the British, Scandinavians and Irish on the other.

Indeed, it is not in Paris that one fails to recognise the psychological evolution that seems to be taking shape among our friends across the Channel, or that one does not fully appreciate the merit of certain steps that they had already taken, and others that they plan to take, toward re-establishing their balance within and their independence without. But for the British Isles really to be able to moor fast to the continent, a very vast and very far-reaching mutation is still involved.

Everything depends, therefore, not at all on negotiations—which would be for the Six a march toward abandon sounding the knell of their Community—but rather on the determination and action of the great British people, which would make it one of the pillars of the European Europe.

## Worthwhile Insanity Evidence Lacking At Worth Library Casement Lecture

The Worth Library houses the book collection of the eminent 18th century Dublin physician, Edward Worth (1678-1733). Worth was the son of a Dean of Dublin's Christchurch Cathedral.

The library is something of a time capsule. It is one large room lined with old varnished timber and glass bookcases, and it remains essentially unchanged since it was constructed in 1733 to house the valuable and extensive collection which Worth had bequeathed to Dr. Steevens Hospital, as it then was. A large imposing oil painting high on the back wall has the bewigged benefactor looking down with dignified satisfaction on the visitor.

Much of the collection concerns medicine. However, the sciences and other areas, such as travel literature, are also included. Since the 1980s Dr. Steevens Hospital has ceased to function as an actual hospital and the building has provided administrative offices for the health service. The Worth Library is now subject to a Board of Trustees, some of whom are appointed by the Health Service Executive, others by the National Library, and still others by Trinity College.

In the year 2003 Prof. W.J. McCormack was appointed Worth Librarian. He retired in 2010. Before this McCormack had for

a number of years been Professor of Literary History at Goldsmith's College, London. He came to the notice of a wide media public in 2002 as the organiser of what was described as a "*forensic examination*" of the controversial Roger Casement diaries. This undertaking was bound up with two television documentaries; one produced and shown initially by the BBC; the other an independent production for RTE. That year also saw the publication of his book, *Roger Casement in Death or Haunting the Free State*, which claimed to address the plausibility behind the thesis of W.J. Maloney's helpfully titled book, *The Forged Casement Diaries* (1936). McCormack's treatment of the matter placed much reliance on the tests carried out by Dr. Audrey Giles, formerly of Scotland Yard, which he organised in 2001 with the assistance of an academic standing committee.

### CONFIRMED BEYOND ALL REASONABLE DOUBT

The back cover of the book goes so far as to claim the tests "*have confirmed beyond all reasonable doubt that they were indeed written by Casement, and not forged by British intelligence, either in part or wholly*". However, it the long running Casement diaries controversy had

indeed been brought to an end, or, at least, materially influenced by means of scientifically -validated discoveries, it would have provoked a response in the forensic science journal literature. Professional practitioners would have been curious to read what sort of testing had been done and why, what results had been produced and the reasons why certain technical decisions had been made. This curiosity would have been answered by means of published explanations as to how the outstanding uncertainty had been brought to an end and by which scientific methodologies and the reasons some approaches were favoured over others. However, the professional journal literature, in the seventeen years since, has displayed no interest.

It is significant also that, despite public criticism, Dr. Giles has never gone public to defend the forensic plausibility of her 2001/2002 undertaking. The number of other forensic science practitioners, with relevant knowledge and experience, who have been prepared to publicly defend it as a valid forensic examination and report, that is one worthy for presentation before a court of law, is a very modest one: that number is zero.

Prof McCormack arrived in good time with dark trilby hat, full white beard, red magenta shirt and open casual jacket; a comfortable balance between senior *gravitas* and showmanship. The title of the lecture was: *'Ambrose Charpentier (1861-1945), Roger Casement's GP Doctor'*. It was billed as the Worth Library's *Grizelda Steevens Memorial Lecture*.

#### CASEMENT DEVOTEES

A small number of listeners had taken up position scattered amidst the seating. Among them were some of the inevitable Casement devotees, call them what you will; *Casementists, Casementistas, Casementalers, Casementoids*, whatever.

There were brief words of welcome from Librarian Elizabethanne Boran followed by an introduction from Dr Catherine Cox of the *Centre for the History of Medicine*, University College, Dublin. She explained that the talk arose from Prof McCormack's work on Roger Casement.

Beginning his talk McCormack referred to the historical figure, Jonathan Swift, who for many years after his death "*was regarded as mad, for the last few years of his life*". However, ninety years later, Sir William Wilde, the physician and father of Oscar, had proven he had been the victim of Menier's Disease. This had shown how the passage of time could release "*altered verdicts and indeed, diagnoses*".

(Menier's Disease is a disease of the inner-ear. It causes hearing loss, vertigo and tinnitus. It can also lead to anxiety, and depression.)

#### CHALLENGINGLY LONG LIST OF DOCTORS

Casement is usually listed in a supposed genealogy of Protestant Irish patriots, beginning with Sir William Molonyeux (*The Case of Ireland Stated*, 1698), down to Robert Barton (a signatory of the Anglo-Irish Treaty) who, McCormack said, supported the Treaty, then opposed it and then retired to County Wicklow.

Casement's life reveals "*a challengingly long list of doctors who were traceably involved in providing information or commentary or consultation or treatment of his various ailments and changing corresponding conditions*". The list comes to just a little more than (unlucky) thirteen. Among them were James Crichton Browne; Sir Lauder Brunton, Fellow of the Royal Society; W. Ironside Bruce; Ambrose Charpentier; Sir Maurice Craig; Francis Croft; Herbert Dickey; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle; Letitia Fairfield; Justin Henry; Herbert Mackey; W.J. Maloney; George Sigerson; Robert Percy Smith; and Sir John Thompson Walker.

The speaker omitted to separate out and name those doctors in the list not charged with treating Casement as a patient but, who rather, commentated upon aspects of his story.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Herbert Dickey were acquainted with Casement and commented upon his life. Letitia Fairfield wrote about the Diaries controversy from the position of a believer in authenticity. She is also credited with organising a small semi-official examination of the 1911 Diary using Ultra-Violet light apparatus some time in the late 1960s or early 1970s, an examination which discovered nothing untoward. W.J. Maloney and Herbert Mackey both wrote books contesting authenticity.

McCormack went on to explain how Ambrose Charpentier had been active on behalf of Casement from 1902 onwards until near the end of Casement's life. Charpentier was born in Cheshire to English-born parents in 1861. The ancestral family had evidently fled revolutionary France. The father, William Henry Charpentier, had been a publisher of such material as railway timetables and local guides. The family lived in Southsea, adjacent to Portsmouth, in the south of England.

#### MEAD MEDAL FOR PRACTICAL MEDICINE

Ambrose took his medical degree at the

University of Durham, graduating MB in 1883 and MD in 1889. He married Mary Russell Fallows in 1885. They had one child, Agatha, born in 1887. She married a Dr. Stanley Bott, who proved to be an unfortunate man with his own health difficulties, and she became a widow relatively young in life.

Ambrose studied at St. Thomas's Hospital, London, where he was presented with the Mead Medal for proficiency in Practical Medicine. Casement had a painful link with St Thomas's Hospital. He was operated on there for piles in 1893. It is unclear how they became physician and patient.

#### RATHMINES HOUSE TO KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN

Ambrose became a GP in Uxbridge, then a then a small town near London. There is a mild Irish connection in that he lived at, and practised from, an address known as Rathmines House on Main Street, Uxbridge. The site is now taken up by a branch of Kentucky Fried Chicken.

As Casement had written a cheque to his friend Richard Morton in 1914, to pay a doctor's bill and Morton lived within ten miles of Uxbridge, it has been suggested that Morton was responsible for introducing Casement to Charpentier.

#### THE LANCET

Occasionally articles penned by Charpentier appeared in *The Lancet*, the medical journal. These indicate a diligent practical physician rather than an original researcher. Cheque-book stubs, belonging to Casement, indicate a cheque to Charpentier for one guinea (£1.05) written in 1907.

Charpentier was asked in 1913 by the Foreign Office how long he had served as a GP to Casement. He answered he had been his private medical adviser, at intervals, since 1902. In his submission to the Foreign Office, Charpentier stated that 1911 was the only year, as far as he knew, when Casement was not seriously ill. In contrast he was ill for almost all the duration of 1912.

#### ALICE STOPFORD GREENE INTERVENES

Alice Stopford Greene intervened late in 1912 to take the matter of Casement's health in hand. A number of medical specialists became involved, many of them Scots, Scottish medicine enjoying a special prestige in that era. They examined Casement over a two or three day period during December 1912. At the head of the group was Sir Lauder Brunton, Fellow of the Royal Society, and Mrs. Greene's brother-in-law. Also there was John William Thompson Walker, urologist, and W

Ironside Bruce, a radiologist. Charpentier was the only doctor involved in this process who had been acquainted with Casement over an extended period of time.

After the December 1912 examination, Casement resigned on medical grounds from the Foreign Office and took himself away to the benign climate of the Canary Islands.

In 1913 Casement was in contact with a Dr. Cross in Los Palmas, in the Canary Islands. They corresponded mainly about prescriptions and treatments.

Later he went to Ireland and then in July 1914 he arrived in New York. This appears to be the date of the last contact between Charpentier and Casement.

#### CASEMENT WAS "INSANE"

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was among those who organised a clemency petition after Casement was sentenced to death. The petition had three paragraphs. Doyle had said "*quite bluntly in 1914*", while writing to a newspaper, "*that Casement was insane*". In the petition, "*he rather softened his position*", probably to encourage more people to give their support.

There were two incidents outside the remit of the talk which he wished to draw attention to. The first involved a powerful figure in the pharmaceutical business with whom Casement became in contact about 1890. The second concerned the Charpentier family as late as the 1940s.

#### A HORRIFIC INCIDENT IN THE CONGO

While Casement was on home leave from commercial activity in April 1890, he learned of a brutal and disturbing incident that had occurred in the Congo region. He learned of it in greater detail after he had returned to equatorial Africa. A drunken Belgian administrator, with the assistance of some Zanzibar soldiers, over a period of many hours flogged two native boys to death. In August of the same year, having heard from a witness—a cook—Casement wrote to Henry Wellcome, American-born founder of the Wellcome/Burroughs manufacturing company, a huge manufacturer of patented medicines.

The two had been in correspondence since the previous year or even earlier. The letter, expressing Casement's moral outrage at the way such acts could be committed without the perpetrators being held to account, ran to six or eight pages handwritten pages. He wished for Wellcome "*to make a noise in the British papers*" in the way a very wealthy businessman could.

#### CHARPENTIER IN OCCUPIED JERSEY

At some unknown time Ambrose

Charpentier retired from his Uxbridge practice and moved with his family to the Channel Island of Jersey. He had published an article in *The Lancet* in 1933, when he would have been about 72. Retirement could not then have been far off.

"*German military aggression, which had so attracted Charpentier's most famous patient*" (to quote Prof. McCormack) complicated the stay of the family on Jersey from June 1940. Jersey was occupied by the Germans from then until 1945. At this stage his daughter Agatha, a widow, worked as a nurse at the general hospital on the island. She was sentenced to one month's imprisonment in 1943 for verbally abusing an Irish nurse, a Maureen Keane from County Galway, for having been involved with a German military doctor. The couple were later to marry after the required permission from the German authorities came through.

The wife of Ambrose died in Jersey in 1942, in her mid-90s. The following year he remarried. He himself died in 1945 before the German occupying forces withdrew.

"*Perhaps Casement smiled down on all of them*" concluded Prof McCormack.

A number of questions followed.

The first concerned Charpentier's medical training.

#### MEDICAL STUDIES

Charpentier's performance in the early years of his medical studies was average. When he came to do post-graduate studies at St. Thomas's Hospital, London, he received the Mead Medal for Practical Medicine, and he won it with distinction. His father had been a small town printer. It does not sound like a background where the young would have been pushed towards academic achievement.

Charpentier had been in practice at first with a man named Thompson. Later he was listed in directories as in practice on his own. It is possible he bought out a share of the practice from Thompson.

#### A RANGE OF AILMENTS

Another attendee expressed his support for the notion that Casement probably first learned of Charpentier through his friend Richard Morton, whose home was within ten miles of Uxbridge and whose house was the closest thing to a home he had in the London area. Referring to his state of health, he recalled how Casement had been complaining he felt like an old man for a few years before his execution at the age of fifty-two. He had spent a lot of time in bed in those years. He had

malaria and fairly bad arthritis and a range of other ailments. He asked if the speaker had learned anything new about what Casement was suffering from.

The speaker said that the December 1912 investigation shone some light on the matter. W, Ironside Bruce, the radiologist, referred to a build-up of fatty tissue about the spine which would have caused pain. He recommended medications as well as "*radiant heat*". Lauder Brunton, for his part, believed Casement had a dangerously tender appendix and so should not travel back to the tropics as he needed to be near to a surgeon should the matter become critical.

Answering another attendee, and continuing on regarding Casement's general state of health, the speaker referred again to Arthur Conan Doyle's 1914 letter to a newspaper, which stated that, given what Casement had written regarding Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, Casement "*was insane*". Horace Plunkett and John Quinn shared this view.

Another questioner asked about the view James Crichton Browne, pioneering neurologist and psychiatrist, had of Casement. McCormack said that Brunton had approached Crichton Browne "*to do something for Casement*". This was mentioned in Crichton Browne's autobiography. He answered that he could not join the campaign for clemency as he was an officer of the Government, being the official "*Visitor in Lunacy*". He also stated that he had no sympathy for Casement and did not want to get involved.

Having collected all the diagnoses and medications prescribed according to the archived sources, McCormack is circulating them among "*a small working party*" of medical people. "*When we get their view of what the implications are*" it will be easier to discern if the conditions treated encompassed mental as well as physical ones.

From the floor the individual, who had brought up the issue of what Casement was suffering from, expressed the view that supporting various strands of radical Irish nationalism and "*taking the German side*" in World War One were all deemed to be mad. He was inclined to think the judgement of Conan Doyle was a political rather than a medical one.

#### SCIENTIFIC TESTS NOT CARRIED OUT

Another audience member referred to Professor McCormack's book, *Roger Casement in Death*, which appeared the same year as the *Giles Report* on the Diaries. The book, he said, had awakened

in him an interest in matters related to Casement. He noted that the book appeared to have been written just before the peer review evaluation from James Horan emerged. Horan had said there were tests which could have been carried out on the paper and ink which were not carried out by Dr. Giles. He concluded with a question:

"Do you think those tests should be carried out to conclusively determine whether the black diaries are genuine or not?"

Dr. McCormack said that Horan had become involved "as the nominee of Martin Mansergh". Mansergh, he helpfully explained, was "the spin-doctor... to the Taoiseach of the time, Bertie Ahern". Mansergh had come up with some funding for the tests on the condition the reports would be sent to Horan for his opinion. Horan never sent a response back to him, although parts of a report appeared in various journals.

Secondly Horan admitted to him he had never seen the Diaries. Thirdly, there were people, believers in forgery, who were unhappy with various aspects of the Giles report who would see to it that extra tests were carried out. To his knowledge no additional tests were organised in the last seventeen years.

The questioner continued to press the point about further tests being needed. McCormack, after digressing in various directions, and further prodding from the questioner, unexpectedly changed tack.

Prof McCormack: "I suggest you institute your inquiries..."

Questioner: (Stunned silence) "Sorry. Excuse me?"

McCormack went on to assure the attendee he would have no objection to him instituting his own inquiries.

The chair asked if there were more questions. There were not.

#### LATER REFLECTIONS

On reflection, McCormack's reference to Casement's alleged sympathy for German military aggression was misplaced. Casement sincerely viewed the German position in the First World War as that of victim of British plotting and subterfuge rather than that of an aggressor.

The lack of detail provided on the variety of ailments Casement had to contend with was disappointing. Despite energetic enthusiasm for unmasking Casement as insane, convincing evidence was not produced.

The statement to the final questioner that James Horan, the former head of the

New York Police Department Crime Laboratory, document examiner and faculty member at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, had not viewed the Diaries was strange. Horan's role was always strictly consultative. It was not part of his remit to view the Diaries. He had delivered a paper at the 2000 international Casement conference held in the RDS, on how forensic science would approach an examination. He was perfectly placed, given his wide knowledge and experience, to comment on the Giles report after it emerged.

It is noteworthy that, despite the extravagantly uninhibited sexual activity outlined in the 1911 Diary, the archived examination by a number of eminent medical men in December 1912 found no corroborative evidence upon the patient's body for what was suggested to have transpired.

The visit to the Dr. Steevens Hospital building to hear the Worth Librarian emeritus hold forth, despite some misgivings, was, so to speak, well worth the effort.

Tim O'Sullivan

#### The Debate Continues with a response to John Martin's article in the April *Irish Political Review*

### Money Creation: The Story Of *Bank Money*

According to the fractional reserve/money multiplier (FR/MS) theory of banking, if £1,000 is deposited in a bank then the operation of the banking system can lead to the creation of an additional £9,000 in bank money (for simplicity I assume a 10% reserve ratio in this article). I am not convinced that the theory accurately describes the way bank money is expanded.

In the March issue of the *Irish Political Review* I described an alternative theory, the *credit creation theory of banking*. According to this theory, banks lend against any project that they think will be profitable. I considered a scenario in which customer CA comes to bank BA and requests a loan for £100 million. BA decides the investment looks good and advances the loan. Now suppose CA spends the £100 million, and it all goes into deposits in bank BB. Bank BA now has a problem because it needs to pay bank BB 100mm. I wrote: "Of course when BA makes its loan of £100 mm, BB may have also made a loan of £100 million to customer CB who pays it into BA." This was poorly phrased. I meant that customer CB was buying product/services from someone who banked with bank BA and so CB would pay the £100 million borrowed from BB into BA via a cheque or BACS transfer. So £200 million of bank money has been created and no net cash needs be transferred between BA and BB.

Specifically I am suggesting that, if banks create credit broadly in step, then there is virtually no limit—other than the existence of profitable projects—to the amount of credit that can be created.

Keynes in his 1930 *Treatise on Money*'

had this to say on bank money creation:

"If we suppose a closed banking system, which has no relations with the outside world, in a country where all payments are made by cheque and no cash is used, and if we assume further that the banks do not find it necessary in such circumstance to hold any cash reserves but settle inter-bank indebtedness by the transfer of other assets, it is evident that there is no limit to the amount of bank money which banks can safely create *provided that they move forward in step*. The words italicised are the clue to the behaviour of the system. Every movement forward by an individual bank weakens it, but every such movement by one of its neighbour banks strengthens it; so that if all move forward together, no one is weakened on balance. Thus the behaviour of each bank, though it cannot afford to move more than a step in advance of the others, will be governed by the average behaviour of the banks as a whole—to which average, however, it is able to contribute its quota small or large. Each bank chairman sitting in his parlour may regard himself as the passive instrument of outside forces over which he has no control; yet the 'outside forces' may be nothing but himself and his fellow-chairmen, and certainly not his depositors.

"A monetary system of this kind would possess an inherent instability; for any event which tended to influence the behaviour of the majority of the banks in the same direction whether backwards or forwards, would meet with no resistance and would be capable of setting up a violent movement of the whole system... " (J.M. Keynes, *The Pure Theory of Money*, 1930, pp 23).

Readers may find it somewhat startling that Keynes suggests that there is no limit to the amount of bank money that can be safely created, assuming that cash is not used to settle debts. But perhaps what is even stranger is that the use of cash to settle debts somehow results in a limitation on the amount of bank money that banks can create. Why is this?

Here's how Keynes explained that strange fact:

"If some payments are made by cash, the amount of cash so used will generally bear some proportion, more or less stable, to the amount of bank money. In this case the creation of more bank money by the banks as a whole will lead to a drain of cash out of the banks as a whole, which will set a limit to the extent that the banks can afford to create bank money unless they are in a position to obtain command of an increased quantity of cash" (Ibid. p24).

An illustration of what Keynes says here is that, if someone is given a loan of £1,000, then they may use £900 to settle debts using cheques and bank transfers but may want to use £100 in cash to cover other costs.

When lending £1,000 the bank has therefore to be sure that it has the cash to meet the borrower's cash demands. Therefore the bank will only lend £1,000 if it knows it has the necessary cash reserves. In this way the level of a bank's cash reserves limits the amount of its credit creation.

I suspect that Keynes' 1930s description of the principles of the operation of the banking system for the most part still stands. Indeed even more so. In today's society, where almost all wages are paid by bank transfers, and even very small purchases are made by tapping an electronic screen, the amount of bank money that can be '*safely created*' is now even larger when the banks all move in step. But,

nevertheless, there would still be some limit, according to Keynes, in the amount of bank money that could be created.

Does what Keynes wrote in 1930 still apply? Specifically does the use of cash still limit the amount of credit creation? Keynes, in fairness, considered this possibility when he speculated with some considerable prescience:

"... Finally, it may be that member banks themselves have some power, perhaps within limits, of increasing at will their deposits with the central bank... In this case, sympathetic movements on the part of the member banks will gather strength as they go and provide their own food in the shape of increased reserve resources, with the result that it will be difficult to restrain the inherent instability of the system" (Ibid, p26).

As best I can see, all economists agree that commercial banks create money. That is not in dispute. What is in dispute is whether banks are limited in that creation by the Keynesian constraint that they may need to convert created money (in the form of loan deposits) into cash.

In the UK banks are no longer legally required to meet a specific reserve ratio. UK economists seem to be more inclined to believe that banks are not now actually reserve-constrained. Banks decide what they will lend and then tell the Central Bank what reserves they will need in order to finance their lending. The UK Central Bank does not attempt to directly control the money supply. Rather it controls the price at which it will sell reserves to a bank. Most of the UK economists I have been reading seem to accept this description of things.

Is the situation the same in the US? In the US banks are required by law to meet a reserve ratio. However economists are divided in whether it is effective. According to Warren Mosler, an investment fund manager and Modern Monetary Theory economist,

"The truth is the opposite of the textbook model. In the real world, banks make loans independent of reserve positions, and then during the next accounting period, they borrow any needed reserves. The imperatives of the accounting system... require the Fed to lend to the banks whatever they need" (Warren Mosler, *Soft Currency Economics II*, p24).

In contrast Paul Krugman argued in 2012 that the Keynesian reserve constraint still applies:

"... Yes, a loan normally gets deposited in another bank—but the recipient of the loan can and sometimes does quickly withdraw the funds, not as a check, but in currency. And currency is in limited supply—with the limit set by Fed decisions. So there is in fact no automatic process by which an increase in bank loans produces a sufficient rise in deposits to back those loans, and a key limiting factor in the size of bank balance sheets is the amount of monetary base the Fed creates—even if banks hold no reserves."

<https://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/30/banking-mysticism-continued/>

In boom times the banks tend to move in step as they fight to win the right to create bank money to finance profitable investments. And so a huge amount of bank money is created and only very small daily settlements between banks are required. Before QE was introduced, a mere £20 billion of reserves were required to settle some £700 billion of daily transactions.

Can this theory of how banks operate be used to explain the recent bank crises?

The first bank collapse in the UK since the mid-19th century occurred in 2007, when Northern Rock had to be bailed out by the Government to the tune of some £28 billion. Northern Rock had borrowed money from short-term lenders to finance its credit creation for people taking up mortgages. Why did it not just create the required bank money to finance these mortgages?

Here's one explanation of the Northern Rock crash by a credit creationist:

"But Northern Rock went on a lending binge. Every new loan made created new money in the form of numbers in people's accounts. These numbers could be used to make purchases, with payments using central bank reserves via payments systems such as Visa, Mastercard, BACS, direct debit, Faster Payments or any electronic funds transfer. Because Northern Rock was expanding its lending faster than other banks, at the end of each day it ended up having a net outflow of central bank reserves. That is why it had to borrow money (in the form of central bank reserves) from other banks, and indirectly from pension funds and other large investors. The borrowing was a way of bringing in central bank reserves to settle the huge outflows that lending at

such a rate would have caused.

"Northern Rock eventually went bust when, for a variety of reasons, no-one would lend central bank reserves back to it, and it was unable to make its outward payments through the settlement system. In this situation, the Bank of England lent Northern Rock more central bank reserves, in its role as lender of last resort.

"Had Northern Rock instead expanded its lending—and created the type of money used by the public—at the same rate as other banks, it would have found that its daily inflows of central bank reserves roughly matched its outflows (since the payments from its customers to other banks would be cancelled out by payments from other banks to customers of Northern Rock). It is unlikely that it would have become so dependent then on interbank lending to be able to make its payments. The very reason why Northern Rock went bust was the sheer speed at which it was creating money through issuing loans, which created a massive outflow of deposits which had to be settled by securing the reserves from somewhere!"

<https://positivemoney.org/2012/07/if-banks-can-create-money-how-come-northern-rock-went-bust/>

I have never worked for a bank. My views on the role of banks are based on the various accounts I have read. These accounts differ in the role they give banks. I find the *credit creationist* explanation more believable than the *money multiplier* explanation. Although both theories lead to money being created, the credit creationist view sees banks identifying profitable opportunities and creating whatever money is required to realise the profitable opportunity.

John seems to support a *money multiplier* view of credit expansion in which each bank only ever lends a percentage of its assets (on the assumption that people are not using their deposits) but the operation of the whole banking system results in a large amount of credit being created. John states in the April *Irish Political Review*:

"Nor are the loans that a bank makes equal to a multiple of the banks borrowing or customer deposits as Martin (Dolphin) appears to believe. The accounts always balance. The assets of a bank (consisting mostly of loans) equal the liabilities (consisting of shareholders' funds plus various creditors)."

But in the credit creationist story the accounts also always balance. When a loan of £x is given, the accounts show the loan as an asset and the corresponding liability is £x in the borrower's deposit account. (I am not aware of any theory of banking in which accounts do not balance.)

Basically the money multiplier theory is a story that absolves bank managers of

any responsibility. Each individual bank manager who receives a deposit decides from experience that most of the deposit will not be used by the depositor. (John: "... *For credit to exist there must be a class of people who have surplus funds over and above what they need for day to day spending.*") He therefore lends out that surplus portion. He is not creating money. He is simply letting surplus funds be used by those who can put them to good use. He will be astounded to learn that, on the basis of that action by him and other bank managers, additional money has been created equal to 9 times the original deposit. He will protest that he is a mere financial intermediary who simply lets a borrower use money that one of his customers is not using. (John: "*A commercial bank cannot create money out of thin air. It is a mere financial intermediary. Ultimately, credit must be financed from outside the banking system.*") Is our good bank manager to be criticised because such sensible action on his part leads by some quite miraculous process, which he is too simple a man to understand, to the creation of 9 times whatever he loans? (All assuming a reserve ratio of 10%)

It's a good story which has only one saving fact: that it correctly predicts that a huge amount of new bank money will be created!

The money multiplier story of apparently accidental credit expansion is quite different from Keynes' explanation in which credit creation is purposeful but is (regrettably) limited by the fact that some small percentage of bank money created

might be turned into actual cash—similar to Krugman's story. A loan of £1,000 is not given based on the assumption that someone else is not using that £1,000. Rather it is given because the bank knows it has reserves of £100 which is the average amount of a £1,000 loan that might be required in cash form (and because it assumes that other banks are also actively lending). That was Keynes' view in 1930.

However, it would seem that today most UK economists and many US economists believe banks can buy whatever reserves they need, so even Keynes's limit on bank money creation would not apply though the price of the reserves may deter banks from lending.

In this respect it is interesting to quote Simon Wren Lewis, Professor of Economic Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford and erstwhile adviser to Labour's shadow chancellor John McDonnell:

"...no macroeconomist I have ever talked to about this actually thinks the money multiplier is relevant to monetary policy today. And I am sure that... good first year textbooks tell you that loans can create deposits as well as telling us about the money multiplier. But this does raise a rather embarrassing question for macroeconomists—why is the money multiplier still taught to many undergraduates? Why is it still in the textbooks?"

<https://mainlymacro.blogspot.com/2012/07/kill-money-multiplier.html>

Martin Dolphin

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR · LETTERS TO THE EDITOR · LETTERS TO THE ·

## A Jesuit Solves The Money Problem!

*Gaël Giraud, an interesting Jesuit economist*

Gaël Giraud SJ is the Chief Economist of the Agence Française de Développement (AFD). AFD is a non profit-making public bank that finances projects in countries in the South. Giraud is also director of research in economy at the national French research institute (CNRS) and Professor at the Ecole des Ponts.

His message is that the challenge for coming generations is to find a way to organise their societies so that they will have a low ecological footprint and a high level of human development at the same time. To achieve that goal, everyone will have to move: poor countries need to

increase their human development levels, and rich countries need to reduce their ecological footprint. It is impossible for us to continue on the same 'business as usual path'. In the face of this, Giraud quoted Pope Francis's words: "Halfway measures simply delay the inevitable disaster". Put simply, it is a matter of redefining our notion of progress. (See: "*Economic Inequality and Environmental Degradation and the Role of the Jesuit University*", a lecture to the World Assembly of Jesuits Higher Education institutions at the University of Deusto (Bilbao, Spain) in July 2018) at <http://>

[iaju.deusto.es/business-as-usual-is-not-an-option/](http://iaju.deusto.es/business-as-usual-is-not-an-option/), in English.)

He argues that Cuba was the one country in the world that had both a high "human development index" and a low ecological footprint, i.e. what all countries should be like. That was true before Cuba renewed relations with the United States. But he quickly adds that Cuba could not be taken as a model, because of democracy and human rights considerations.

#### CREATING MONEY

Giraud gave his views on banks in an interview (in French) with an alternative news channel online (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oFARgqG0NA>).

Banks, says Giraud, are financial institutions that create money. Most money is just lines of code on a computer screen. When you go to the bank for a loan to buy a house, at least 80% of the money lent to you didn't exist before you walked in.

It is created from nothing.

States gave banks the power to create money.

A bank can't create money at will; and can't create money to save itself; and, in order to create money, the bank must have a customer asking for credit.

Banks must have their own funds to cover eventualities. In the 19th century these own funds were 50% of money lent; at the beginning of the 20th until the 1980s it was 20%. It is now 3%, which is too low.

One reason it is that low is that the ratio is calculated depending on the riskiness of loans: the more risky the loan, the higher the banks own funds should be. But today banks calculate the riskiness of their loans themselves, and arrive at a low figure. This has the advantage that less money has to remain 'unused' and more money can be spent on more business and also bonuses and very high salaries.

The solution would be to calculate the ratio without taking riskiness into account. This must be done in order to save banks. The IMF itself says that banks are under-capitalised and that the ratio should go back to 20%.

After a moment of worry at the time of the 2008 financial crisis, financiers have been reassured that States will always come to the rescue, without attaching conditions or blame. So they have continued acting as before the crisis.

#### SHADOW BANKING

Banks need borrowers. With de-industrialisation banks lost industrial customers. To replace them, banks created speculative funds, private equity funds, manned by former colleagues, to which

they can lend money. These funds can then buy and sell remaining firms.

#### THE MAASTRICHT TREATY

This has stopped states from borrowing from their own central banks at low or no interest, and forced states to borrow from the financial market.

#### THE ENVIRONMENT

At a meeting with City financiers at the Royal Society in London, Giraud found they were all aware of the environmental degradation of the planet and the risks involved. They said Europe would do nothing.

Why? Because it would mean unravelling everything they had worked for over the past 40 years: essentially, weak regulation, reduction of state intervention in the economy, socialisation of losses and priva-

tisation of profits, dismantling of the welfare state. But the Chinese will do the job, because they have an authoritarian system.

To finish, Giraud said catastrophes like the one that is to come had happened in the past, on a smaller scale. These catastrophes were not talked about at the time and have been forgotten since. Mike Davis described in *Late Victorian Holocausts* how environmental factors and Imperial policy combined to kill 50 million people who died of hunger.

Cathy Winch

**It is hoped to carry a review of Giraud's book, *Illusion Financière*, by Cathy Winch in a forthcoming issue of *Irish Political Review*.**

## A Tale Of Two Seáns, an unpublished 'Irish Times' letter, and the 'fada' question.

The Irish language word 'sean', meaning 'old', is phonetically pronounced 'shan' in English, while the Irish language name 'Seán', equivalent to 'John', is pronounced 'Shawn'. RTÉ Radio 1 broadcaster Seán O'Rourke does not seem to mind that that the station, while maintaining the 'fada' (or accent mark) in its own name, drops it in his, in all mention of "*The Sean O'Rourke Show*". This would not ordinarily concern me, but a discussion on that show on February 20th did, with its repeated mispronunciations of Roscrea's Sean Ross (Shanross) Abbey—birthplace of my late wife Annette—as 'Shawn', offended me. It immediately prompted me to send in a short letter on the correct pronunciation to the '*Irish Times*'—which letter, however, was denied publication.

There is nothing I can do about that, except to now publish that letter here and draw attention to the '*Irish Times*' refusal to do so. On the only other occasion when I had written to that paper about Sean Ross Abbey, and when it became clear that it had no intention of publishing my letter, very precise factors were then present which enabled me to take effective action and ensure its publication. In November 2013, six months after Annette's passing, I participated in the debates concerning the portrayal, in the film '*Philomena*', of Sister Hildegarde—having been an eye (and ear!) witness to Annette's meetings with her at Sean Ross Abbey itself, in both 1985 and 1991.

On 25th November 2003, I felt compelled to write to the '*Irish Times*' concerning a report that morning which

had misquoted my contribution to a radio discussion. I pointed out:

"It is necessary to correct your report on Sean Ross Abbey (November 25th) which seriously, if inadvertently, misquotes me, no doubt due to mishearing 'essential' for 'sense' in what I had said on the '*Liveline*' programme on November 4th. I never stated, to quote your report, that I had found a 'sense of evil' about Sean Ross's Sr Hildegarde. 'Evil' is such a definitive term, implying a condition well-nigh irredeemable, that I would hold back from ever using it lightly, and I am certainly not psychic enough to sense it in people. Whenever I have come to conclusions about evil, they have been based on an accumulation of hard facts... When Martin Sixsmith's book ('The Lost Child of Philomena Lee') was published in 2009, we were horrified to learn that, two years after Annette's last encounter with her (in 1991), Hildegarde would be lying to both Philomena and her lost child (in 1993), in the full knowledge that each was looking for the other. What I stated on '*Liveline*' was that it was this specific act which was 'the essential element of the evil' that Annette now concluded was present in Hildegarde, and which had to be 'something totally vindictive and vicious'."

I had, indeed, been very polite to the paper. I don't now, and didn't then, attach any blame to the reporter for a misquotation that I regarded as inadvertently made—a genuine mistake. A refusal to publish a correction would, however, have been quite a different matter. Five days later, on Saturday, November 30, it was clear to me

that there was no intention to do so. This was not an issue of mispronunciation, but of serious misquotation, amounting to misrepresentation if not corrected. Those were the terms of the email I dispatched to the then Editor-in-chief, Kevin O'Sullivan. Two days later, on Monday morning, December 2, came his return email, reassuring me that my letter was finally in print that morning.

See [www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/philomena-evil-and-the-lost-years-1.1612140](http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/philomena-evil-and-the-lost-years-1.1612140) for the full letter, page 27 of [www.siptu.ie/media/media\\_17799\\_en.pdf](http://www.siptu.ie/media/media_17799_en.pdf) for my review of 'Philomena', and [www.rte.ie/radio1/liveline/programmes/2013/1104/484588-liveline-monday-4-november-2013/?clipid=1349328](http://www.rte.ie/radio1/liveline/programmes/2013/1104/484588-liveline-monday-4-november-2013/?clipid=1349328) for the radio broadcast in question.

This January, it irritated me that, in TV interviews, the Minister for Children, Katherine Zappone, was repeatedly mispronouncing Sean Ross Abbey, as 'Shawn'. I half excused her as an American, but I felt some advisor should have corrected the Minister. This February 20th, however, I had enough of 'Shawn'. The lead story in the *'Irish Daily Mail'* that morning, penned as an exclusive by reporter Alison O'Reilly, concerned excavations at Sean Ross Abbey, and she was invited to discuss her report on *"The Sean O'Rourke Show"*. In his introduction, O'Rourke pronounced the Abbey's name as if had the same name as his own, referring on several occasions to 'Seán / Shawn' Abbey. What took me aback, however, was that O'Reilly, who had visited the Abbey, and who should have known the correct pronunciation if she had asked residents of the Roscrea area—and who should therefore have been in a position to correct O'Rourke—followed suit by also speaking of 'Shawn' throughout her interview.

The next interviewee, who had actually been born in Shanross Abbey, was introduced by Seán O'Rourke as having been born in 'Shawn' Ross Abbey, and she herself now fell into line with O'Rourke and O'Reilly by speaking of 'Shawn' thereafter.

Now, I hold that everybody has the right to know the true name of his or her birth mother, although it was only by relentless intrigue that Annette finally discovered her own truth, going on thereafter to enjoy such a warm relationship with the family of her deceased mother. But so also does everybody have the right to the correct name of their place of birth. That was why I promptly emailed a corrective letter to the *'Irish Times'*—which was quite short, and avoided any *ad hominem* criticism of the media. So, O'Rourke and O'Reilly remained unnamed, not least because I had no wish to embarrass the interviewee who had actually been born in Sean Ross Abbey.

The following is the text of the letter—headed *"Sean Ross Abbey—Not Seán Ross"*—that was refused publication:

"There was no 'mother and baby' home named after somebody called Seán Ross, now the norm for media mispronunciation of that Abbey's name. I know that for a fact, as Sean Ross Abbey, Roscrea, was where my late wife Annette had been born on 3 May 1953, making her a contemporary baby of Michael Hess—"The Lost Child of Philomena Lee". Sean Ross means Old Ross and, indeed, on Annette's baptismal cert it had been spelled phonetically as Shanross Abbey, as also in a list of hospitals in receipt of Sweepstakes funding provided to the Dáil on 25 November 1954 by the then Minister for Health, T F O'Higgins. Moreover, in Annette's 1985 confrontation at that Abbey with the late Sister Hildegarde, Shanross was how that baby saleswoman pronounced it, as she herself had every reason to know the correct name of her business premises!"

But it gets worse. I had been here writing about the right to have one's Irish birthplace correctly written and pronounced. It now transpires that one does not even have the right to one's own personal name vindicated! On his radio show on April 9th, Sean O'Rourke, who couldn't care less about the dropping of the 'fada' from his name, argued the Data Protection Commission's case with one who does. On the previous day, April 8th, the *'Irish Times'* had reported:

"Irish people don't have an 'absolute right' to have their names spelt correctly, the State data watchdog has ruled. A television producer being treated for cancer, who complained to the Data Protection Commission after medics refused to include the fada on his name, has described the finding as a 'disgrace'. Ciarán Ó Cofaigh (51), alleges the Health Service Executive (HSE) was in breach of EU rules when University Hospital Galway, where he is getting radiotherapy, told him its computer software does not allow for fadas... 'They have sided with the HSE that I don't have the right to have fadas on my name', said Mr Ó Cofaigh. 'It is an insult. It is a disgrace that in my own country I can't be given my own name. You often hear of the right to defend your good name—I don't even have a right to a name.'... Rónán Ó Domhnaill, An Coimisinéir Teanga, said the use of a síneadh fada is an intrinsic part of the Irish-language alphabet. 'Irrespective of any possible data protection implications, this most basic of requirements should be put on a statutory footing by way of an amendment to the Official Languages Act'."

In the podcast of his interview with Ó Cofaigh—which his Show has captioned *"In the name of the FADA"*—O'Rourke went on to announce: *"Look, we're getting*

*a lot of texts in from people who don't really see your point. They're wondering why it's so important to you."* Ó Cofaigh replied:

"Ask yourself: How important is your name? How badly would you see it if every day of your life you're slapped in the face and told: 'We don't recognise your name; we're not going to recognise your name, ever.' It's the essence of what I am, how I refer to myself. Yes, it is vitally important to me. We have two official languages in this State, and in the Irish language my name can not be represented without a fada. It is inaccurate, and that is just a fact... I do not have a right to a name... My name is 'C' 'í' 'a' 'r' 'a fada' 'n'. Fada means long in Irish. The second 'a' is long—Ciarán. If there was no fada it would be Kieran. That is not my name. It's as simple as that."

Responding to this interview, Timmy Dooley, the Fianna Fáil Front Bench spokesman on Communications, Climate Action and Environment, tweeted: *"With all the problems that exist in the health service it's difficult to listen to this individual banging on about a fada!!"* An Eoghan MacCormaic tweeted back that, without the 'fada' in the Party's name, it would be *Fianna FAIL!* Quite.

And on this Fianna failure, Éamon Ó Cuív TD, the former Minister and Front Bench spokesman who is now out of favour with FF's Martin leadership—and, for whatever it's worth any longer, a grandson of the Party's founder Éamon de Valera—also went on to tweet: *"I am ashamed that a front bench member of my party, one of whose aims is to promote the use of the Irish language, would question the right of people to use the correct form of their name interacting with the state."*

Which just about sums up Martin's FF—the long, the short and the *fada* of it all.

**Manus O'Riordan**

## REXIT

Getting that feeling things are disintegrating around you?

The crew that you trusted to run the ship are now all captains in the queue.

charting a course for the isle of Apocalypse?

Or could this be running on the spot, lots of movement but getting nowhere, contributing to the rot?

Or the admiral as cabin-boy in full glare running errands to Brussels

on yet another dead mare

(being pecked by crows)

to where the mighty euro rustles along with that old fox in the hedgerow?

**Wilson John Haire.**

28.3.2019

## The Russian Revolution

Baron Wrangel, the counter-revolutionary General, remarked in his memoirs, *From Serfdom To Bolshevism*, that, in the course of revolution and counter-revolution, people got used to killing and being killed. That is always the case with a society which is thrown into violent motion. Those involved in it do not experience the violence as senseless. It is purposeful for all concerned, and therefore rational. It is only from the vantage-point of the disengaged onlooker that it appears senseless. And, from the vantage point of dispassionate observers, living for the moment in situations of ordered security, by far the greater part of human history must appear senseless, since it was all conducted in breach of the United Nations Convention on Human Rights.

Humanity constructed itself inhumanly.

In the singular culture of Slieve Luacra, in the part of it that was the Eastern Fraction of Kerry in Co. Cork, I was able to read Kant as a teenage labourer. He made an all-out effort to establish Universal Truth in Enlightenment mode, through Pure Reason, in what, I suppose, was a Voltairian spirit. But he was not satisfied with it, and under the counter-Enlightenment influence of Rousseau, he reverted to Practical Reason and described the actual human world, accepting that humanity could not be remade under the dictates of Pure Reason: "*Out of the crooked wood of humanity, nothing straight can be made*".

If the human race was straightened out in accordance with the universals of pure reason it would become a closed species, orderly but no longer human.

This is what was at issue in the Soviet revolution—and also in the major opposition to it: the Capitalist revolution engineered by England.

It was England's destiny, according to Cromwell's Secretary of State, "*to teach nations how to live*".

The means by which the Russian Soviet and English Capitalist Revolutions went about working themselves out in the world were different in kind.

When the Soviet Revolution gained control of Eastern Europe in 1945 by overthrowing the Fascist regimes that had saved Capitalism from it in the 1920s, it sought to reproduce itself in the lives of

nation-states "*from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic*".

The English Capitalist revolution did not seek to reproduce itself in the nations it was teaching how to live. What it taught them was to live in subordination to it.

When the Soviet system collapsed under capitalist democratic pressure, it left behind in Eastern Europe, after a mere forty-five years, a series of functional nation states with national cultures and economies. The only one which collapsed in internal disorder was the one which had broken free in 1948 and aligned itself with the West: Yugoslavia.

And, when Yugoslavia did not dismantle its own form of Socialism in 1991, the West—on the way to becoming the European Union—destroyed it by encouraging the resurgence of nationalist passions that had seemed to be defunct, and then moralising self-righteously about what it had brought about.

When England left India after a couple of centuries, it left behind it a Partitionist religious war.

During those centuries it had not taught India to live as England lived. Nothing was farther from the English mind than that. It had just plundered India, destroyed the economy it had before England took it, and made it into a source of raw materials.

Charles James O'Donnell of Donegal was educated for the Indian Civil Service (i.e., the English Civil Service in India) by the Christian Brothers. England had sold its Indian Empire project to the Home Rule Irish as a great civilising enterprise. The Christian Brothers bought it, and prepared O'Donnell for it. O'Donnell went to India, and was disgusted by what the English administration was doing to it. He saw Lord Curzon, before 1914, as laying the groundwork for what happened during and after the 2nd World War—this was half a century earlier. He resigned from the 'Indian Service' and went to England to warn the English people about what was being done in its name. He got himself elected to Parliament, informed the Mother of Parliaments, but he might as well have been talking to a brick wall.

Then the Great War happened. Home Rule was refused. Redmond recruited the

Irish into that War. Partition followed. And O'Donnell published the first Irish history of the Great War that was not just a rehashing of the British war propaganda. It remains in fact the only Irish history of the Great War ever published by a commercial publisher. In his will he left a bequest to UCD for the holding of an annual lecture in his name, but I do not know of any that was ever held.

The outstanding piece of *civilising* that England did in India, to accompany the plundering, was that it ruled that widows should no longer be allowed to throw themselves on the funeral pyre of their dead husbands. Macaulay boasted of it. What did the plunder matter in the light of that progressive measure? Widows needed to be indoctrinated out of disgraceful practices like that!

Indian thought had dwelt on the facts of human existence over millennia and had devised ways of living a complete life within the meaninglessness of infinity. England did not wish to be affronted by these Indian ways as it plundered and starved India.

Better twenty years of Europe  
Than a cycle of Cathay.

That was how Alfred Lord Tennyson put it. (And we knew all about Tennyson in Gneevs, where there had been five Hedge Schools before compulsory State education was brought in.)

The worthlessness of the world, apart from Europe (with England monitoring Europe) was the justification of all that England did in the world.

The Soviet Union was "*ruled by Terror*". That is the customary way of putting it.

It is not found necessary to explain how a vast country, composed of many different peoples, could be taken in hand by terrorists and made to do what Russia did in the course of the 25 years following the consolidation of the terror regime in 1920—one of those things being the saving of Europe from itself, and saving the world from Europe, after Europe became Fascist, with Fascism allegedly being a threat to Civilisation.

Fascism came from Communism: that was Churchill's formula when he came to write the History of Churchill's War—the war of elemental forces that was set off by Britain in June 1940, after Britain lost the regular war that it had launched in September 1939. But where did Communism come from?

Churchill knew very well where it came from. It came from European social science, out of the wreckage of Europe caused by the usurping by Britain, in August 1914, of a relatively minor European conflict, inflating it into a totalitarian war of world conquest, and from the Carthaginian peace imposed on Germany in 1919, but later called off lest it should make France too powerful.

The term "*totalitarian war*" was used by Lord Beveridge—of the future Beveridge Reform of social welfare—to describe the warfare of 1914–18. He used it in a War Pamphlet, published in the Summer of 1939 in preparation for the next Great War that Britain was about to launch. The pamphlet was called *Blockade And The Civilian Population*. It was a defence in principle of the Starvation Blockade which the world-dominating Royal Navy imposed on Germany during and after the 1914 War.

Another way of putting it, more widely used, was *war of peoples*. John Buchan, the official war historian, described 1914 as the first Middle Class war, taking it for granted that the British Middle Classes had the people in tow. Formal democracy was introduced in the course of the war and a functional Labour Party was established for the first time. It was Imperial in orientation and was eager for the destruction of Germany.

Then, when Germany was defeated, and the time came for making a functional peace settlement, it could not be done because of "*the babel of democracy*"—as Churchill put it: Goebbels came later.

Churchill wanted an Imperial peace—a civilising peace—of the traditional kind but, because of the popular passions that had been worked up in order to win the War, that was not possible. In order to hold his seat in Parliament he had to make an Election speech that he was ashamed of.

Lord Bew, "*our distinguished historian*", who is now a minor figure in the British Establishment, wrote quaintly of some Home Ruler, I think it was John Redmond's brother, dying "*gallantly*" in France. But gallantry was off the agenda of war. The age of chivalry was past. It went out with the Charge of the Light Brigade. War had become utilitarian. And Lord Beveridge only spoke the truth when he said that the distinction between civilian and soldier had been abolished.

(That had been done in British military practice with the establishment of Concentration Camps in the war of conquest against the Boer Republic.)

"*Dynastic War*" had given way to *People's War*. And that catastrophic change was hailed as progressive in Socialist literature in Britain.

War waged without restraint by all available means, and without distinction of civilian and soldier, was pioneered in modern European practice by Britain.

It might be argued that it was done in France in 1870, after its regular Army was defeated in the war it launched on Prussia, and negotiation of a settlement in the light of the outcome of battle was refused by France, and the Government was overthrown, and a *levee en masse* was called for. But wild popular resistance, following defeat in battle, is different in kind from war on the civilian population of the enemy state applied by the aggressor State from the start—as was done by Britain in August 1914.

(The notion that Germany made war on Britain still has currency in England.)

The reasoning behind this is entirely 'moral'—as if morality has any place in totalitarian war. The reasoning is that, by marching an Army through Belgium, which was not an independent state, Germany gave moral offence to Britain and obliged the latter to make war on it. This was the case, even though Germany had tried to get a clear answer from Britain about what it would do, if a German Army marched through Belgium, and was not told that Britain would make war on it if it did.

But, however that is regarded, it does not alter the fact that it was Britain that made war on Germany, and that Germany had no intention of making war on Britain.

Once the World War began—a week after the European War—only Britain, its creator, and the dominant World Power, could have ended it by negotiation. But Britain felt morally obliged to crush Germany by seizing its trade and its foreign possessions, and also to seize the Middle Eastern region of the Ottoman Empire.

Germany was on the military defensive after the first weeks. It was cut off from the world trade on which, through its capitalist development, it had come to depend. Nevertheless, against all expectations, it held out for four years. And when, under American military pressure and American promises, it agreed to an Armistice which was an admission of defeat, Britain intensified the Starvation Blockade and maintained it until a weak, deluded Social Democratic German Government made a false confession of German responsibility for the War on behalf of the German people and agreed to pay for it.

Britain made war on Germany in order to protect an imagined political or moral order of Europe from an imagined German breach of it, and it produced chaos. And scientific socialism arose out of that chaos. It was the element of European culture that survived the wreckage of the War, and actively flourished in it.

Russia broke down after two and half years of War. Britain had refused Constantinople to it in the 19th century but, shortly before 1914, it gave it Constantinople for the taking, in order to direct Russian might against Austria, and against Germany on which Austria had become dependent. But the effort to get to Constantinople made Russia collapse.

British Liberalism—which launched the World War and hoped the Russian *steamroller* would crush Germany for it—had been concerned that the real autocracy of Tsarism would take the place of the imaginary autocracy of Kaiserism and become dominant in Europe. It was in two minds about the collapse of Tsarism.

Lenin, a European social scientist with a talent for practical politics, mastered the anarchy of the February Revolution and constructed a State dedicated to the construction of a new civilisation, European in spirit, but profoundly un-English.

Churchill wanted Britain to ally itself with defeated Germany, instead of wrecking it, and make war on the new civilisation being developed in Russia. But "*the babel of democracy*" drowned him out.

Amongst the things that were disabled in Britain's Great War was the British ruling class. And so it became Churchill's fate to achieve his destiny as the ally of Communist Russia against Germany, instead of as the ally of Germany against the Communist Russian danger to civilisation.

In the 1920s he was a Fascist. In 1926, as a British Cabinet Minister, he made a pilgrimage to Rome to pay homage to Mussolini as the saviour of capitalist civilisation from Bolshevism. He said explicitly that, if he lived in Italy, he would be a member of the Fascist Party. In the early 1930s he held himself ready to be the English Mussolini, if the economic recession made it necessary. But it was his destiny to prevent Halifax from making peace with Germany after Britain lost the regular war that it launched in September 1939, and use the Naval supremacy which Britain still held to spread the war here, there and everywhere until it became the greatest ever war of annihilation, and brought Communist Russia, as the most

coherent and purposeful Power in it, to dominance in Eastern Europe—including the Poland for whose independence Britain had started the war.

"*European civilisation*" was saved in 1918 by capitalist America which, having achieved its "*manifest destiny*" on the American continent, and having gone west from the Continent through the Pacific, now felt that the time had come to extend itself eastwards across the Atlantic. It was ingrained in its culture that its sovereignty was destined to be universal.

"*European civilisation*" was saved in 1945 by Communist Russia. It was possible for Russia to save it because the lazy, dreamy Russian had Bolshevised. Oblomov had stopped sitting by the fire all day, dreaming. He had pulled himself together, rolled up his sleeves, and put himself to work. The means by which he did this was called the Great Terror by the capitalist/imperialist democracy of the West.

I had read *Oblomov* in my teens, along with a lot of other pre-1914 Russian literature, when I had read no Marxist literature except *Capital*. (And I was greatly surprised when I received *Capital* by post because, when ordering it, I had assumed it was about the influence of great cities on world affairs.) I was vaguely predisposed in favour of Russia because the Church had entered the Cold War against it. I discussed it, in Christy Sullivan's forge in Boherbue village, with a kindred spirit: a man called Casey, who made a point of denouncing the Church annually during Mass on the anniversary of the Civil War excommunications. And the 'peasants' amongst whom I lived often discussed the Stalinist collectivisation sympathetically.

I gave no thought to the question of how Oblomov had become a Bolshevik until the issue of the Great Terror came up in the group got together by Liam Daltun. And then I just couldn't see how Terror could have done it. It was not a matter of whether Terrorism did it, but of whether it was conceivable that Terror might have done it.

The population of Bolshevik Russia came from the peasantry. There was nowhere else for it to come from. And, if there had not been a will within the peasantry to construct a strong industrial economy and a powerful modern Army, it just could not have been done. All the Stalin group could have done was direct the process.

The notion of the State, as something

apart from society, compelling society by terror to do what it did, becomes absurd if any attempt is made to envisage it realistically.

The idea of State, party or society applied formalistically, according to the way Irish or British politics functions, misses the actuality of Russian affairs then—and misses the actuality of most of the world most of the time.

The apparatus of government was the Party. The Party was, of course, an elite. But it was an elite of millions. It did not exist over against the mass of society. Its concern was not to increase its membership but to limit it, so that it remained a coherent directing influence.

The State became, to a very considerable extent, identical with the populace. The populace was engaged in an enterprise that was without precedent. The populace policed itself for the most part, in accordance with general guidelines from the centre. The policing was rough and ready—which, given the scale of the enterprise and the time available for it, was inevitable.

What was done could not have been done without a widespread will to work, a will to be disciplined and a will to fight. That was the reality underlying the Western title of the Great Terror.

In the Great Terror the Russian Army was capriciously wrecked in its leadership by a whim of the Great Dictator. But the Germany Army that had brushed aside the military efforts of the British and French Empires failed to break that renewed Russian Army, which followed it back to Berlin.

"Democracy" was unable to defend itself from the Fascism that had saved it from Communism.

It had declared war on the central Fascist state for no intelligible reason, after collaborating with it for five years, and was swept aside by it.

The expectation was that the Germany Army would easily crush the demoralised and mismanaged Russian Army. If it had done so, European Civilisation would have consolidated itself as Fascist. And the British Empire would have taken its place in the world alongside the Third Reich. Hitler wanted it to be there. It was what he most admired in the world. And Britain had no wish to disappear as a World Power. Churchill would probably have returned to his Fascist roots of the post-Great War era and delivered a great celebratory speech on the final extinction of the Communist Evil.

The European Civilisation that produced Fascism in the wreckage of the Great War was settling down under it when it was overthrown by the Communist enemy from which Fascism had saved it. Communism saved Europe from itself, and Europe has been a puzzle to itself ever since.

The regime of Terror continued in Russia. An American diplomat filmed Moscow street scenes in colour at the height of the Cold War around 1950. That film was only released last year. It just didn't look right. Everything looked so *normal*. The people showed no signs of being traumatised by the Terror.

Well, the Terror began some years later. It was not a construct of direct experience but of belated *memory*. Khrushchev denounced the regime that had constructed the industrial economy and won the World War as terrorist. And Gorbachev tried to re-found the state on the foundation of the traumatised memory of the Great Terror.

Memory—a memory imported from Western propaganda and imposed from the top, contradicting the way the industrialisation and the War had actually been experienced by those involved in them.

The regime which was based ideologically on induced trauma failed. It made no sense, even to itself. The past, which had made Russia into a major Power in the world, became an aberration. The regime adapted itself increasingly to Western democratic capitalist criticism of it. It collapsed politically, and the economy broke up into a kind of parasitic capitalism.

Collective property was privatised into the hands of strategically placed party bosses, who became Oligarchs. It seemed for a while as if Russia had reverted to the condition of things from which Ivan the Terrible had freed it, but with the difference that the Oligarchs, unlike the Boyars, were selling themselves to an external Power—the US/EU.

The welfare state was abolished. The economy shrank. Employment opportunities diminished. Life expectancy lowered. The President became a drunken sot. But, according to the BBC, a literature based on the social life of the Oligarchs, developed which was much more sophisticated than the mass literature of the welfare state.

Things were looking bright from the Western point of view. Russia was shrinking. NATO was pressing on it militarily. The Oligarchs were selling their fiefdoms to Western capitalism.

But then a counter-development set in, based on the KGB, whose purpose was to restore the State and enforce law on the Oligarchic anarchy.

But the Oligarchs had all been Marxist-Leninists. One of them, who established a base for himself in London, explained in Marxist terms why Putin was bound to fail—the economy determines politics. And, in his understanding of it, the economy was money, and the Oligarchs had the money.

Then Khordakovsky—like Al Capone—was arrested for tax-evasion. Some recent American publications concede that tax-evasion was the rule amongst the Oligarchs. And what self-respecting anarchist would pay taxes to a State, except under extreme compulsion.

Putin gradually restored the State by use of laws which were presumed to be no longer operative. Mere money-capital did not have the power of resistance to the State that productive capital would have had. The restoration of the Russian State in support of Russian national economy was seen in the West as a reversion to *Stalinism*, but the West was unable to intervene in support of freedom because the core of the Russian State—the base around which it was being restored—had kept its defences functional: the only effective defence in the era of the United Nations being the power to exterminate the population of an enemy state.

The lesson of all of this is that traumatised memory of Terror is no basis for the operation of a state.

A senior British Liberal, Sir Charles Dilke, in a best-seller, wrote that the Anglo-Saxons were the greatest exterminating race the world had ever seen. Nobody disputed the statement with him. And nobody was bothered by it. *Progress* is inseparable from genocide.

Britain will not allow itself to be put in the dock about its undoubted genocides, nor will the United States, and both are entirely free of traumatic guilt feelings about them. Turkey will not tolerate inquisition about its alleged genocide, nor will Poland. Germany has inflicted traumatised memory of Terror and Genocide on itself and it taken the place of the Ottoman State as "*the sick man of Europe*". But this memory does not date from the war. It was constructed a generation after the war. The war generation did not act traumatically in the post-war period.

It is often said that the Irish were traumatised by the Famine and were made Anglophobic nationalists by it. They weren't. They took the Famine in their stride. I first heard about it from my grandmother, whose mother must have grown up in the immediate post-Famine generation. She was matter-of-fact about it. There was nothing unexpected, and therefore nothing shocking, in the English conduct. That was just how they were.

The Irish national development began a generation before the Famine, within the decade following the abolition of the Colonial Parliament by the Act of Union. The substantial political difference the Famine made to it was that O'Connell died during it and the genocide made the tenant-right more practicable.

Was it genocidal? Of course it was. The Famine in the Ukraine in the early 1930s, which was part of a widespread Russian Famine, is described by Ukrainian nationalism as a Genocide, and Europe agrees. In that case there can be no question but that the Irish Famine was a Genocide. It was not part of a general British Famine. It happened only amongst the Catholic Irish, in the conditions to which they had been reduced during the century and a half since the Williamite Conquest. And the government had the resources to keep the starving millions alive but chose not to do so. It was a Genocide. So what!

And the 'Civil War' did not traumatise. There was serious matter at issue for all those involved. It was not meaningless in actual experience, but the objective of the modern Commemoration Committee seems to be to reduce it to meaninglessness. And that is the ground of trauma.

The Fianna Fail Party, led intellectually by Martin Mansergh—or is it Eoghan Harris?—wants to deny its origins in the 'Civil War' resistance to the destruction of the Republic. This reduces a period of intense activity in national history to a meaningless blank.

The Treaty party operated a reign of Terror. The high-minded Professor MacNeill was a party to taking four eminent Republicans out of prison, where they had been for five months, and killing them without even a semblance of a trial. That was done as an act of error. Blythe admitted that the Treaty State was terrorist. The purpose was to terrify the populace into submission to the new system as a precondition of participating in it. And Professor Garvin, defending it in retrospect, almost says that authoritarian

action by a dominant force is the way to lay out the ground for democracy—but he lost his nerve and said instead that the authoritarian action was itself an exercise in democracy.

The State terrorism failed to terrify because those operating it had no ideal for giving purpose to their victory when they won.

The 'Civil War' was not caused by a conflict of ideals. The Treatyites were not fighting for the Crown. They were only fighting because the Crown compelled them to. They had given it an inch—and it manipulated them into a war which they won at the expense of becoming lost souls.

The defeated were in possession of the ideal. They revived quickly and gave purpose to the State.

But today the State is committed to abolishing its history. It made this commitment out of an absurd conviction that nationalist history, rather than the provocative system of undemocratic government cut off from the democracy of the British state, brought about the war between the Six County Catholic community and the British State.

It is now in a condition of pre-trauma, along with Germany, at the prospect of being separated from Britain by Brexit.

**Brendan Clifford**

## Some Thoughts On Fergal Keane OBE

On 2nd November 2015, I exposed *Some Thoughts On Fergal Keane OBE*, many of which I had revealed to readers of *The Irish Post* and *The Irish World* over previous years. Though my criticisms were severe they were never challenged, let alone refuted, and I'm convinced that they should stand the test of time.

Mr. Keane expressed a wish for a *Truth Commission* on the unpleasantness in the North of Ireland, and events connected to it further afield since 1968. His wish was expressed in *The Independent* of London. I doubt he would express it again in the British Media, not on General Nick Carter's Watch, nor that of the current British Government. He might risk an even more painful fate than being dropped by the BBC and the Irish Studies Department of Liverpool University. The British Dog of War is a Jealous Dog and welcomes Truth like a Flea in its Ear.

Mr. Keane complained that British Crown Forces killed during the 1919-1921 war didn't get proper funerals in Ireland. Well, one RIC man *Tobias O'Sullivan*, shot in Listowel, Co. Kerry, by the IRA in April 1921, got a huge funeral through the centre of Dublin to Glasnevin, which can be seen on YouTube, and there was no attempt by Ireland's democratic forces to disrupt it. It may, perhaps, console Mr. Keane, that most of the Crown Forces who fell in that War, got similarly conducted funerals, with no interference from Ireland's National Democratic Forces, and many of them were recorded for Pathe News.

Mr. Keane was perturbed that ten Volunteers of the Democratic Forces, hanged and buried in quicklime in 1920 and 1921 were exhumed and given State funerals 80 years later.

Mr. Keane's family comes from Listowel, and I find it hard to believe that anyone considered an authority on modern Irish history cannot be unaware of events in the Royal Irish Constabulary Barracks there on 15th June 1920, when it was visited by the Force's newly installed Commander, General Tudor, hand-picked by Winston Churchill—who later proudly introduced another of his favoured warriors, to Josef Stalin, as a "cut-throat"—and the newly-appointed Divisional Commander for Munster, Smyth, recently transferred from the British Military.

Smyth addressed the RIC Garrison, telling them that they would henceforth patrol the country at least five nights a week, that they would lie in ambush.

Civilians who didn't immediately obey the order to raise their hands were to be shot down. If they had their hands in their pockets, they were to be shot down. "*The more you shoot, the more I will like you, and I assure you that no policeman will get into trouble for shooting any man.*"

The garrison, all Irishmen, told Smyth that he was a murderer, and stripped themselves of their arms and resigned from the force. Tudor threatened them with Courtmartial but, despite the semi-military nature of the RIC, they were not liable for that procedure. Similar resignations followed in Killarney and Tralee.

I read the account of the Listowel incident in "*Kerry's Fighting Story*" over 65 years ago, though, unlike Keane and his clan, I have no Kerry relations.

Constable Jeremiah Mee's Witness Statement to the Bureau of Military History is available online. The Irish Bulletin of 12th July 1920 gives an account of the incident. Volume 2 of the reprints of the

*Irish Bulletin* covers the incident. on page 720.

On 29th July 1920 the Bulletin carried an Instruction from Sinn Fein HQ in Dublin to all Sinn Fein Clubs, headed—

"Now that the English-controlled police forces in Ireland are breaking up, the country should take cognisance of the position individual ex-members of these forces under the new regime."

It continued—

"Every man of Irish birth should get a chance of becoming a loyal citizen of the Irish Republic, and of earning an honest living in Ireland.

This is true even of those Irishmen who are so unfortunate to be engaged doing the work of the enemy in Ireland as members of the Royal Irish Constabulary. Many of these men joined without any

clear understanding of what they were doing. They were young; they had no knowledge of Irish history The national tradition may have been weak in their own families and in their native district. It should be made clear that those who now resign will not be regarded as enemies of Ireland but will be granted every opportunity to make up for the past..."

Perhaps, *Ninety-Nine Years* Later, those Irishmen and Irishwomen with little knowledge or understanding of their country's history, now "*engaged in doing the work of the enemy*", might be encouraged to become loyal citizens of Ireland, cease spreading enemy propaganda, and be given "*the opportunity to make up for the past*".

How about it Fergal?

**Donal Kennedy**

**This article appeared in the April *Irish Political Review*. However, a large section of the transcription of the GAA discussion was lost in the production process, so the piece is being carried again.**

## A GAA Debate In The Shadow Of Brexit

A debate in the GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association) flared up and spilled over onto the national airwaves in early March. The prospect of a Hard Border as a result of Brexit was its backdrop but as arguments have flown from both sides the discussion has prompted deeper questions pertaining to national identity and the isolated position of Northern nationalists.

The exchanges started when former Armagh Captain and current Armagh delegate to the Association's Ulster Council Jarlath Burns was interviewed by Justin McCarthy on *This Week* on RTE radio (3 March). Burns expressed a private opinion that, in the event of a Border Poll, his hope would be that the GAA nationally would not be neutral but would support a United Ireland. On the following day, in the course of a lively interview on Sean O'Rourke's RTE radio show, GAA pundit and Derry all-Ireland medallist Joe Brolly upped the ante by vigorously endorsing the stance taken by Burns.

The case against has so far come mainly from sports columnists and GAA specialists in the Southern newspapers. Of particular note was a piece by Declan Bogue in the *Irish Independent* (Bogue normally writes in the *Belfast Telegraph*), in which he invoked the pluralist stance taken by then GAA president Aogan O'Fearghail in 2016. Another sports journalist at the *Independent*, Ewan Mac Kenna, rowed in against the Northerners

with an article headed, "*Using the GAA to bring about a United Ireland would be self-defeating*" (*Irish Independent*, 10 March).

In a more cautious article *Irish Times* columnist Sean Moran argued that Burns was shoring up support in Ulster for his candidacy for the GAA Presidency in 2020 and that it would be difficult for the Association to take up an overtly political position for a range of reasons. This criticism drew a cautious reply from a reader. Aonghus Mac Domhnaill from Tipperary ended a letter by stating: "*It is not unreasonable, though we may not like it, for the Northern nationalist to expect the GAA to rally to their cause. This is what Joe Brolly and Jarlath Burns are asking for*" (IT, 8 March).

The subject of the debate merits more attention than it has so far received. As a result of Brexit, there has been a notable shift of emphasis in the opinions being expressed by members of the Northern nationalist community. The message they are conveying deserves to be heard.

### JARLATH BURNS ON A BORDER POLL

It is clear from what has been written about him that Jarlath Burns is a serious contender for high office in the GAA. Equally clear is that he is far from being a dogmatic nationalist, oblivious to the sensitivities of politics on the island as a

whole. As Principal of a large secondary school in Bessbrook, South Armagh, he has encouraged students to visit Orange Halls and to march for gay rights. He is also known as a supporter of Sinn Féin. In the past he has been publicly supportive of the GAA's outreach programme, to the point where he stated in an interview with Eamon Mallie some years ago that he would have no issue with dispensing with the flag and anthem at matches if it would attract unionists. On that issue he attracted a predictable share of criticism.

In the *This Week* interview on Sunday, 3rd March, Burns explained what a Hard Border would mean for the Ulster GAA. He said that, of 12 National League matches being played in Ulster on that weekend, 5 would involve cross Border travel and there were also matches in Croke Park in Dublin between clubs like Sleacht Néill and Clonduff Camogues. At this time in March every year there would be between 15,000 and 20,000 people moving across the Border for GAA activity alone.

In explaining what the GAA means to the nationalist community in the North, he said that it was an isolated community which is allowed to pursue its Irishness and its national identity in a non-violent manner through the GAA.

Asked about a Border Poll, he referred to the 36 referenda that had been held since the foundation of the State in all of which the GAA had remained steadfastly neutral. But a Border Poll would be different. Quoting from point 2.1 of the Association's Official Guide (constitution) he described the GAA as:

"a National Organisation which has as its basic aim the strengthening of the National Identity in a 32 County Ireland through the preservation and promotion of Gaelic Games and pastimes".

Burns' point was that rejecting neutrality in such a referendum would be "*logical as well as ideological*" for the Association.

#### JOE BROLLY SPELLS IT OUT

Like Jarlath Burns, Joe Brolly is not someone who can be easily pigeonholed. Coming from a republican family in Dungiven, County Derry, he refuses to identify as a republican. Interviewed by Miriam O'Callaghan some months ago, he was robust in disagreeing with her about the superiority of *Ireland's Call* as compared to the National Anthem. For Brolly *Ireland's Call* is a pious song devoid of culture but in the same interview he described how at a school debate he had applauded young people for not attaching

undue importance to flags and anthems. A regular panellist on the popular TV show "*The Sunday Game*", he believes sport should be discussed on TV in as lively a fashion as it is discussed in pubs; he brings the same attitude to debates about the politics of the GAA.

From the start of the interview with Sean O'Rourke on 4 March Brolly was at pains to support the stance taken by Jarlath Burns. The next few paragraphs are a rough summary of what he said:

I was cheered to hear the statement from Jarlath Burns, a budding GAA leader. Through the years of the Troubles it was the GAA that sustained us Northern Gaels. Right from the start of it in 1969 we focused on Gaelic games and it was no accident that the Ulster teams began to win all-Ireland titles in the 1990s, 21 years after that year.

The peace process here has been a spectacular success, rightly praised across the world. The Brexit stance of the DUP has caused a major change. The notion of a pluralist Northern Ireland has entirely evaporated. The DUP have shown themselves to be nut jobs—homophobic, creationist deniers of climate change and supporters of the death penalty, who oppose the use of "gay blood" in the blood transfusion service. They never miss an opportunity to rub our noses in their contempt.

O'Rourke: They are the largest party in the North and I'm sure they would disagree with everything you are saying.

Brolly: There has been no political representation in Northern Ireland for two years. All we get is scorn for the Irish language, despite the large numbers of children being educated through Irish. In Derry alone 400 children are now in all-Irish schools. But providing State funding to this movement is described by the leader of the DUP as "*feeding the crocodile*". Northern Ireland is politically dysfunctional and the minority community feel isolated. Of course the GAA was founded on politics. It was only in 2004 that the ban on members playing foreign games was lifted.

O'Rourke: But the GAA stayed out of politics during the Troubles.

Brolly: They did and they didn't. The GAA is described in its constitution as a National organisation. The organisation now needs to support its members in the North. The DUP has always regarded the GAA as "*the IRA at play*", a fantastical generalisation with no basis in truth. We need the GAA all the more since the Church has collapsed.

O'Rourke: What about the inclusion of members of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in the GAA?

Brolly: I have been an outspoken

defender of GAA members who have joined the PSNI. I defended Peadar Heffron, an Irish speaker who was frozen out by his club and who eventually lost a leg as a result of a bomb attack by dissident republicans. I recently attended a celebration of the PSNI branch of the GAA and it was a hell of a night. But there is a different point here. Who are we pleasing? The DUP makes UKIP look like charmers. Protestant working class areas are being desecrated by neglect because of the DUP.

[Sean O'Rourke then read out a text from a listener saying that any respect for Joe Brolly he ever had, had now evaporated. The point was ignored by Brolly]

Brolly: The GAA has a state of the art outreach programme for non-members and successfully opposes sectarianism.

O'Rourke: Should you not just leave politics to the politicians?

Brolly: There are times when it is necessary to take a stance. Spiritual support from the rest of the Association is what the Northern Gaels are asking for. Parties like Sinn Féin have their own agendas. Many in the Northern GAA take a different position. Northern nationalists are feeling isolated as a result of Brexit. It is all very well for people in the liberal pluralist South to proclaim such values but they don't have to contend with scorn on a daily basis from a political party that is homophobic and anti-science, a party that habitually makes a laughing stock of the Irish language. We are not prepared to be cut adrift.

From reading the above it may seem that Sean O'Rourke showed bias but, given the force of the case being made, O'Rourke's questioning was standard journalistic practice. Key points made by Brolly were: the concept of a pluralist Northern Ireland has evaporated as a result of Brexit; the GAA constitutes a basic defence against the isolation of the nationalist community; the Church has collapsed as a focal point for the community; many in the Ulster GAA take a different view to that of Sinn Féin while holding a commitment to a United Ireland; he is an active defender of the across-the-communal-divide GAA outreach programme and of welcoming members of the PSNI.

#### CRITICISM FROM BOGUE AND MACKENNA

Before examining the substance of the criticisms of Declan Bogue and Ewan MacKenna it should be noted that many of their points are representative of current strands of opinion in the South. Account should also be taken that as sports writers they are at something of a disadvantage in

commenting on political and historical matters.

Bogue begins his article by asserting that Jarlath Burns has dramatically scaled back his GAA involvement and is "*miles away from inhabiting the present inner sanctum*" of the Association. He then tackles Burns on the question of ethos which he describes as a "*tricky thing*". Referring to point 1.2 he states:

"Now 99% of those involved in the GAA would be largely unaware of such a mission statement."

Bogue clearly admires the leadership style of former GAA President Aogan O'Fearghail and approvingly cites O'Fearghail's belief in an "*agreed Ireland*". The present writer had occasion to dispute the ethos of the GAA with O'Fearghail in 2016. Having attended with family and extended family a fixture in Croke Park, followed by a commemorative pageant to mark the 1916 centenary, I was disappointed to see John Redmond's contribution highlighted on a giant screen. I complained to GAA headquarters and O'Fearghail replied defending the presentation on the grounds that, by including Redmond and Carson, the Association was acknowledging the unionist perspective. In the context of that exchange I would consider Joe Brolly's question—*who are we pleasing?*—to be well chosen.

Bogue concludes by asking: what is the GAA? He answers that there are thousands of different versions of what it is perceived to be. Accepting that there are 2,200 clubs in Ireland and 400 more in different parts of the world encompassing religions, beliefs, prejudices and sexual orientations, his final question is: "*How can any one man speak for all of that?*"

Ewan MacKenna approaches the debate from an openly partitionist angle and is less than sympathetic to the Northern viewpoint. He says:

"If those north of the border think those south of it have a view that it's a place of illogical hate and fringe lunacy dominating their society, they'd be right."

Lest there be any doubt on the role he sees Northern GAA members playing he states:

"Those in the north must realise there are large numbers in the Republic that don't see it the way they do, and therefore the tail cannot wag the dog."

In subsequent paragraphs acknowledging that Brexit has revived hopes of a United Ireland, MacKenna cuts his Northern antagonists some slack. The experience of Northern members, he says, "*was never*

*close to experienced by the rest*" and should not be dismissed. Then he gets to another punch line. He bluntly questions the relevance of the GAA's history in the light of its present existence as—

"a multi-million pound organisation that has had the airlines of gulf states, French beer companies, and German supermarkets pump money into it, that sell their big events to a British satellite TV company that lies behind a paywall, and that rents out their world-class arena for everything from country-and-western concerts, to American college football, to those very same 'foreign and fantastic games'?"

In the context of what Burns and Brolly are arguing, he sees references to history as an unjustifiable throwback to aspects of the GAA's legacy that are gone, never to return. As he puts it:

"To use the past for present means is cheaply opportunistic. It's true that for major tracts of its existence and growth, the GAA has been quite naked about being intertwined with Irish nationalism and that made sense. To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose, under heaven. But now it's largely a sporting business, with proceeds helping it fund the positives like togetherness and activity in community life. It now must stay that way."

#### THE WIDER POLITICAL CONTEXT

The issues raised in this debate are clearly important and weighty, for observers of the evolving Irish discourse on Brexit as much as for members of the GAA. I will comment on the issues under two headings: Changing views of Irish history; and National sentiment and tolerance.

#### Changing views of Irish history

It is not surprising that the legacies of history are no longer taken seriously in Irish popular discourse. For over forty years clear signals have issued from the highest level of State indicating that the nationalist historical narrative needs to be abandoned. Elaborate alternative narratives often focussed on social history have been concocted, historical truth has been declared to be impossible to establish and, as a school subject, history has been made optional on the second level curriculum.

While all of this has borne fruit in certain quarters of the academic and media worlds, a counter movement has also appeared. In the public mind that alternative movement has become associated with President Michael D Higgins.

In a speech given shortly before the main centenary commemorations in Easter 2016 the President commented on the revisionist practice of questioning every-

thing in the nationalist tradition. His main point was that such questioning had not been matched by a similar questioning of the triumphalism of the British Imperial tradition. The speech was publicly criticised by DUP Leader Arlene Foster. To avoid political controversy the President cancelled his participation in a planned commemorative event in Belfast. Higgins's very public dissenting from the official narrative in matters historical did him no harm in the Presidential Election in November 2018 which he won with the largest majority in Irish electoral history.

As described in a recent book by Kevin O'Rourke, the 2016 centenary did not go to plan for the Government. Referring to the 75th commemoration of the 1916 Rising in 1991, O'Rourke describes how very few people turned up because of fears that the event might be seen as an endorsement of the Republican War. But the 2016 centenary was different.

"Peace changed all that. To be sure the government announced rather solemnly that the centenary of the Rising would be commemorated rather than celebrated, but many Irish people decided that they would go ahead and celebrate it anyway. Hundreds of thousands of spectators crowded Dublin city centre to watch the largest military parade in the country's history, and many others watched on TV." (*A Short History of Brexit*, p. 150)

O'Rourke concludes by pointing out that neither the American nor French revolutions were non-violent and that the 1916 Rising was an event that eventually led to the establishment of an independent Irish Republic. In other words it is something to be proud of. These points are relevant to the GAA debate because they indicate how even before Brexit Irish public opinion was starting to swing away from the anti-nationalist agenda promoted so assiduously in previous decades.

But Brexit has been a game changer in terms of the Irish relationship with history. The anti-nationalist case was often presented as a growing up process in which the nation was shedding childish notions of its own '*exceptionalism*', but in practice it was a movement towards a closer relationship with Britain, towards making Ireland a region of the UK in all but name. The thinkers leading anti-nationalism were unashamedly Anglophile to a man and woman. We were being asked to break the connection with our actual history in favour of a contrived British-Irish identity.

As the Brexit negotiations have progressed, and previously hidden depths of the English commitment to its Imperial

tradition have come to the surface, the mat has been pulled from under the Irish Anglo-ophile position. In small ways we are being reminded in the daily unfolding of the Brexit story why Ireland separated from Britain in the first place.

Critics of Irish nationalism, inside the GAA and elsewhere, argue that the unionist viewpoint needs to be accommodated and that one way of doing that is to re-discover aspects of Irish history where Irish and British interests were united: for that purpose John Redmond's mobilisation of Irish nationalists behind the British war effort in 1914 is highlighted. But what effect does such spinning have on unionist opinion? Will it undermine unionist opposition to a United Ireland? In modern life a community is what it says it is. The Ulster unionist community describes itself as having a British culture, and so it does. No amount of clever reconfiguring of the facts of history will alter that reality.

Another purpose behind the attempted revival of Redmondism is to make out that 1916 was an aberration and that the underlying wish of the Irish people was to remain within the British orbit. The problem there is that too much distortion of the historical record is required. The alternative tactic (still Government policy) of downgrading the study of history and de-politicising the story of the State's foundation creates problems in other areas. If history is rendered incoherent, incoherence can infect the national mind in all sorts of unintended ways. Ultimately, commemorating 1916 by including positive references to Redmond's leadership is akin to celebrating the Resistance to Nazi rule by lauding Hitler; it discredits the very idea of belief in a political cause.

It would be unfortunate if the GAA were to jettison its historical legacy at exactly the time when informed opinion in Ireland is rapidly moving towards a new appreciation of the importance of historical continuity and of *ethos*, in the philosophical sense that Aristotle used the word—a sense of security, of understanding where we have come from.

#### NATIONAL SENTIMENT AND TOLERANCE

A common misconception is that nationalism and tolerance occupy opposite ends of the ideological spectrum. Historically that is not true in Ireland.

Looking at the development of the national movement in the nineteenth and early twentieth century it can be seen that it was marked by important divisions at different times. One such was a fierce and

## Israel's election and Palestine

Israel has gone to the polls. For millions of Palestinians the election and its outcome mean just one thing. The only certainty is that the illegal occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and the blockade of Gaza, will continue. No party seems to have a programme for peace and all are committed to maintaining and expanding the occupation. So, today, millions of Palestinians who live under Israeli occupation and blockade are mere observers to an election the result of which will govern their lives for years to come.

In January this year TDs backed the Control of Economic Activity (Occupied Territories) Bill which bans the sale in Ireland of goods produced by Israel in the occupied territories. If passed into law it would set an example to the international community and show that in Ireland at least the rights of the Palestinian people will not be whitewashed from political discourse. — **Eamonn Meehan**, Board Member, *Sadaka*, the Ireland-Palestine Alliance

*Irish Times*, 11.4.19

## Foundation Of Israel

Jackie Goodall, in her defence of Israel's hosting of the Eurovision Song Contest (Letters, March 28th), gets at least some of her historical facts wrong. The village of Al Shaykh Muwannis was not evacuated by its population (resident in Palestine at least for two centuries, as Ms Goodall acknowledges) because of encouragement by its leaders, or because "six Arab armies attacked the newly established Jewish state in order to destroy it". The villagers fled their homes, as historians as various as Omar Bartov, Benny Morris, and Walid Khalidi have shown, because the village was blockaded by Zionist forces, cut off from vital supply connections to Jaffa. Village notables sought to negotiate with the forces around the community, but without success. An appeal for support to King Abdullah produced only vague promises. The evacuation of the village then occurred because a group of village leaders was kidnapped by the right-wing Jewish Irgun Zvi Leumi militia.

All of this occurred in March 1948, fully two months before any Arab army approached, and at the moment of the decisive Zionist offensive, which produced other atrocities such as that at Deir Yassin. According to Benny Morris, a report drawn up in June 1948 for the IDF Intelligence Service argued that the operations at Deir Yassin and Shaykh Muwannis had had a "special effect" and were an "accelerating factor" in prompting Palestinian flight in general. **Conor McCarthy**

*Irish Times*, 29.3.19

prolonged dispute in the years between the passing of the Act of Union in 1800 and Catholic Emancipation in 1829 regarding the manner by which Catholic bishops should be appointed. On one side were liberal Catholics like the Rev Charles O'Connor and the poet and song writer, Thomas Moore, and on the other were polemicists like James Bernard Clinch and Dr Dromgoole who wanted the Irish bishops to be appointed directly by Rome. Without siding with either camp it can be said that the liberals in that instance had a more national orientation.

This identification between liberalism and nationalism was even more pronounced in the dispute between Daniel O'Connell and the Young Ireland movement in the 1840s. For Thomas Davis and Charles Gavan Duffy the important principle was that a national movement needed to be developed having as its overriding characteristic a bridging of the divide between Catholics and Protestants. For O'Connell

the main aim was to defend Catholic interests in the most pragmatic and effective way possible.

A similar division is to be found in the electoral conflicts between the supporters of William O'Brien and Redmond's Home Rule party in the two General Elections of 1910. In the first instance the O'Brienites stood as independents and in the second as a political party, the *All-for-Ireland League* (AFIL); in both contests they defeated the Home Rule Party in eight of the nine Parliamentary seats in Cork city and county. The AFIL was liberal in the sense that it opposed a tendency towards *Catholic ascendancy* in the Home Rule Party and advocated *Conciliation and Consent* in dealings between nationalists and diverse Protestant interests (including Northern unionists) regarding Land Purchase and various schemes for administration devolution. Through its daily news-

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### THE NORMAN INVASION IN 1169 — (NOT!)

Trinity College, Dublin, has announced an invitation to the 3rd Trinity Mediaeval Ireland Symposium to take place on 2-4th May 2019. The title of the Symposium is 'Invasion 1169' and they note that this "major National Conference marks the 850th Anniversary of the Anglo-Norman Invasion of Ireland".

Professor Séan Duffy and Dr. Peter Crooks are the stated organisers.

Excuse me, Sirs, but as you must surely know, when you put propagandistic prejudice aside, there was **no** invasion of Ireland in 1169. Indeed, there was no Anglo-Norman Invasion of Ireland at any time if we are to be strictly correct, as you academics should know, being historians.

For example, there was a Norman Invasion of England when, on 28th September 1066; William le Batarde of Normandy, latter called William the Conqueror, landed at Pevensey on the English south coast. He had sailed the previous evening 27th September from St. Valery-sur-Somme in, it is said, 400 ships carrying, some say, up to 30,000 soldiers but modern estimates put it at around 10,000 to 15,000 men and 2,000 to 3,000 horses —a large army by any standards. William led his army as far as Hastings where the road towards London was blocked by King Harold and his army.

The very fierce and bloody battle of Hastings ended with Harold's death and William—victorious. William was crowned King of England on Christmas Day, 1066. The story of the 'Great Battle' is told in the Bayeux Tapestry which was embroidered later in a Winchester nunnery and presented to William and as such is, of course, Norman propaganda. There was what can properly be called an invasion at Pevensey followed by 'The Great Battle of Hastings' but it took at least another ten years for what is called 'The Norman Conquest' to be realised to any substantial extent.

The Anglo-Norman rule in England was brief—it lasted perhaps 150 years—

but it established the Norman style of government. Norman laws, record keeping, use of religion to control and suppress the people, improvement of roads etc, and regular taxation.

There was no Norman Invasion of Ireland at any time. Nothing happened in Ireland in any way similar to an invasion.

What happened in 1169 was that, after much persuading by Dermot Mac Murrough and his adviser Maurice Regan, two Norman knights, Robert Fitzstephen and Maurice de Prendergast formed a band of Flemish Archers and 60 Cavalrymen and many kinsmen of their own, who sailed on three ships out of Milford Haven in Wales. Dermot directed them to land at Bannow Haven. Dermot's reason for a Bannow landing was to make the ships sail outwards so as to avoid the Saltee Islands and Carnsore Point and then turn northwards into Bannow Haven. This route, it was hoped, would avoid recognition by Dermot's enemies until the party had landed.

Dermot promised Wexford to Fitzstephen and so they attacked it. Wexford, along with Waterford, Cork and Limerick, were Norse towns, not Gaelic towns. Furthermore, the Normans, Fitzstephen and de Prendergast, were of Norse descent—being only a few generations removed from the Vikings who under Rollo has set up Normandy in France. So it is very likely the two Normans had cousins in Wexford. In any event, the Norse of Wexford capitulated and gave up the town to Dermot and to Robert Fitzstephen.

Next Dermot proceeded against Ossory. Two years earlier, Dermot's son Enna, who had been held as a hostage by Ossory was viciously blinded by the latter and his living and bloody body had been dumped at the edge of Dermot's territory. So now Dermot took his revenge and Ossory was defeated in a bloody battle. Then, some months later, the High King Rory O'Connor decided to intervene and he gathered an army including Tiernan O'Rourke, Dermot O'Maoil Seachlainn of Meath, and the Norsemen of Dublin.

Dermot MacMurrough was not attacking them. He was at home at Ferns. They proceeded to march and Dermot got to hear of it so he prepared to defend himself. The attacking High King's army would have to pass through a widespread scrubby wood called *Dubhtír*—black land, due to the darkness in the dense wood. And so Dermot and Fitzstephen fortified the wood by felling trees and digging trenches.

When the High King came with his army to the wood he realised what he was faced with and, instead of fighting, he negotiated his way out of it. The High King offered enormous bribes to Robert Fitzstephen to get him to abandon Dermot MacMurrough but he would not do so. In Robert's company was a Norman, Harvey de Montemarisco, who was Strongbow's uncle, and he was representing Strongbow although "*he had neither arms nor money*". Strongbow had organised the support for Dermot who had in turn promised his daughter Aoife in marriage to Strongbow, and had promised Strongbow would succeed him as King of Leinster. All of which was good reason why Robert would not cross Dermot.

Next, the High King negotiated with Dermot. They agreed terms:

- (a) that Dermot would acknowledge Rory O'Connor as High King of Ireland
- (b) that Dermot MacMurrough be restored as King of Leinster
- (c) that Dermot would give hostages, among whom was his last remaining son Conor MacMurrough, to whom Rory O'Connor would give his daughter in marriage.

There was a secret agreement between the two Kings that Dermot would bring no more Normans into Ireland and that those he had employed would be sent back to Wales as soon as Dermot had re-organised his kingdom again.

Some time later, Dermot was joined by two shiploads of mercenaries under the command of Maurice Fitzgerald. There were 10 knights, 30 mounted cavalry and 100 archers. There was work to be done, consolidating Dermot's kingdom of Leinster and fighting off his enemies.

And that was it for 1169!

Hardly an invasion. The few Norman knights were paid to come and were at Ferns by invitation. In 1170 Dermot decided he had a chance of becoming High King, if he could get rid of Rory O'Connor and so Dermot sent a message to Strongbow asking for more reinforcements. And then, meantime, Dermot captured Dublin and made the Norse there subject to him once more.

Strongbow continued recruiting in Wales. He sent Raymond 'Le Gros' Fitzgerald with 10 knights and 70 archers and on 23rd August 1170 Strongbow himself arrived at Passage East near

## Zero Hours *continued*

working hours.

Under the Act, employers will no longer be able to use these zero-hour contracts except in very limited circumstances, such as to provide cover in emergency situations or to cover short-term absences.

### 3. Workers are entitled to a minimum payment if their employer fails to provide them with work.

Workers have the right to compensation from their employer if they turn up for work but are sent home without work.

The minimum payment they are entitled to is three hours' pay at the minimum wage rate, or three hours at the JLC (Joint Labour Committee) rate if they work in a sector where an Employment Regulation Order is in force, such as security or contract cleaning.

### 4. Workers are entitled to be guaranteed hours of work that reflect their normal working week.

Under the Act, if a worker habitually works more hours each week than is provided in their contract, they have the right to request to be placed in a band of weekly hours that better reflects their normal working hours over a 12-month period.

Any worker denied their new rights under this legislation, or victimised for asking for them, should contact a Trade Union who will assist them to vindicate their rights.

*(Irish Independent, 4.3.19)*

Union contact details can be found on the Irish Congress of Trade Unions website: [www.ictu.ie](http://www.ictu.ie)

## Count John McCormack, James Connell, And "The Red Flag"

James Connell, writer of the socialist anthem '*The Red Flag*' and a number of political works was born at Killskyre, Co. Meath.

Connell wrote '*The Red Flag*' during the Dock Strike in 1889. Subsequently set to the old German air '*Tannenbaum*'.

"In 1924, Labour Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald held a competition to find a substitute. However, judges John McCormack and Sir Hugh Robertson, declared that none of 300 entries could match '*The Red...*'" (Aiden H. Crealey, *An Irish Almanac*, Mercier Press, Cork, 1993)

James Connell died in the same year on the 8th February 1924 and is buried in his place of birth.

## Michael Stack

*continued*

Waterford with 200 Norman knights and 1,000 others. Strongbow attacked and took Waterford from the Norse. Dermot joined him there and his daughter Aoife married Strongbow.

Henry 11 of England, Duke of Normandy, was upset by all this toing and froing. Things were getting out of hand and two years later, in 1172, he landed to see for himself what the lie of the land was. He proceeded to Dublin without any significant opposition. He handed out charters and lands right and left without any regard for who owned them or who occupied them.

Experts have calculated that at no time were there more than 200 Normans in Ireland. Henry II and his successors described themselves as '*Lords of Ireland*', but in fact they never held much of Ireland except Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Limerick and Galway—which were Norse cities and many of whose inhabitants were related to Normans.

The Normans integrated with the Gaelic Irish and after 150 years or so they were fully into the Gaelic way of life.

It was not an invasion and certainly, in Ireland, not a conquest!

Michael Stack ©

## GAA Debate

*continued*

paper, the *Cork Free Press*, it identified strongly with the Thomas Davis strand of national politics.

A striking difference between the AFIL and its Redmondite opponents was that its representatives had greater confidence in the national cause. Leaders like Redmond and John Dillon vehemently opposed Land Purchase and administrative devolution on the grounds that achieving such reforms would weaken the demand for national independence. But the AFIL contended that allowing the tenants to become land owning farmers, and co-operating successfully in a conciliatory manner with the diverse elements of all-Ireland society would build confidence in the national ideal. Subsequent history showed this to have been a correct judgement. The counties where the AFIL had influence—Cork, Kerry, Tipperary, Limerick and Waterford—were all areas where the ethos of Irish nationality has deep roots, areas which are to this day strongholds of the GAA.

The opinion expressed here is biased in the sense that it is based on the writings of Brendan Clifford (of whom I am a long term associate) in books like *The Veto Controversy* (Athol Books 1985), the *Cork Free Press in the Context of the Parnell*

*Split* (Aubane Historical Society, 1997) and *Spotlights on Irish History* (Aubane Historical Society, 1997). My thesis is that in Ireland a tendency to greater tolerance and generosity of spirit goes hand in hand with a secure sense of national identity. I am confident that it would withstand rigorous scholarly assessment.

But to return to the matter in hand, I don't find it surprising that the individuals currently defending the national ethos of the GAA have both, in different circumstances, risked their reputations in defence of social tolerance. Despite the confusion of recent decades when everything traditional has been subjected to relentless questioning and criticism, I believe that Irish society continues to have a core. What is at issue in the debate started by Burns and Brolly is whether the GAA knows itself well enough to remain part of that core.

Dave Alvey

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## New legislation Tackles Scourge Of Zero-Hour Contracts

**Patricia King**

*General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.*

The regulation of working hours is one of the Trade Union movement's earliest and most far-reaching achievements.

Borne out of the long hours toiled by workers, including children, in the factories and mills of industrial Britain, our struggle from Robert Owen's 1817 short-time movement slowly became the accepted norm and then the law from 1997, to the benefit of generations of working people.

### SMARTPHONE TECHNOLOGY

In recent years, however, the working day has come under threat on two fronts from an always-on work culture. Smartphone technology is blurring the boundaries between work and home life by making workers easily accessible outside of their workday and exposing them to longer working hours. Without clear guidance from their employer on the right to switch off in their free time, workers feel pressured to answer work-related calls, emails and other electronic messages.

When the occasional intrusion from our digital devices during non-work hours becomes constant, it is an issue for concern. An overtired worker is a danger to themselves and others.

In the absence of a legal 'right to disconnect', as in French employment law, it is essential that employers engage with workers through their Trade Unions in order to secure pragmatic collective agreements at a company level which achieve a balance between the rights of workers to adequate rest time and the need for flexibility to ensure the continued success of the business.

### ZERO-HOUR AND LOW-HOUR CONTRACTS

Another phenomenon chipping away at the working day is the creeping precariousness of work. Zero-Hour and LowHour contracts give employers complete discretion over working hours.

Workers must make themselves available for work at their boss's request. They are effectively on call constantly. Unscrupulous employers use the threat of reduced hours to keep their staff servile and to punish them for being unavailable, even at short notice.

Unpredictable working hours and insecure income make it next to impossible for workers to organise childcare, to plan ahead and to budget their household expenses.

We know of workers who, despite working a full working week, have been denied bank loans based on the low-hours guaranteed in their contracts.

Uncertainty in working hours creates stress and insecurity in the family life of workers and has no place in a modern, wealthy economy.

### NEW LEGISLATION

Legislation signed by President Michael D Higgins on Christmas Day 2018 is an important milestone on the road to addressing this power-imbalance.

From 5th March 2019, this new law bans Zero-Hour contracts in almost all circumstances and gives workers in casual and precarious jobs greater certainty around the length of their working week.

The *Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018* is one of the most significant pieces of employment law in 20 years and is the result of a five-year campaign by the Trade Union movement to get legal protection around working hours for vulnerable workers.

There are four new rights:

**1. Workers are entitled to a written statement of their terms of employment within the first five days.**

The Act legally requires employers to provide workers with a written statement of their main conditions of employment within the first five days of starting work.

The statement must include details of daily and weekly working hours, rate of pay and how pay is calculated.

**2. Zero-Hour contracts are banned in almost all circumstances.**

It had become practice for some employers to employ workers without guaranteeing them a set number of

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