

# IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

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## A Look Across The Water!

The great problem in Liberal Democracy is how to prevent the majority from ruling. That problem is clearly stated by Lord Patten, the last Viceroy of Hong Kong, in an article on the Free Trade capitalist, Peter Sutherland, in the current issue of the Irish Jesuit magazine, *Studies*. If the majority rules, the outcome will not be liberal. And Democracy which is not liberal is a very, very bad thing as it deprives the progressive minority of its directing function in public life.

(It is axiomatic that Progress is the prerogative of minorities—of quite small minorities.)

In routine matters the problem has been dealt with adequately by means of the hierarchical structure of party-politics in Britain, combined with the political apathy of a third or more of the electorate. The British party system—a system of two parties with practical arrangements made to inhibit the emergence of parties beyond the two—is an elite structure derived from the aristocratic structures that were in place for a century and a half before the first Reform Act.

The appletart was upset four years ago, when the bipartisan elite called a referendum on the issue of membership of the European Union in order to crush with the voice of the people a movement for leaving the EU that had arisen. It was taken for granted that, with the three political parties in Parliament united, with control of the propaganda apparatus of the state, all telling the populace to vote Remain, the result would be *Remain*.

But a referendum is not the election of a Party to govern. Party concerns were not at stake. The people were told that they were being given a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to determine the course of the state.

*continued on page 2*

## EU Council meeting: *another small step . . .*

In the middle of the recent 5-day EU Council meeting, it was reported that Luxembourg's Foreign Minister, Jean Asselborn, expressed his despair at the proceedings:

"...“I believe that if this spirit had prevailed in 1989, for example, I am not convinced that the reunification of Germany would have gone so quickly and so smoothly, whether we could have reunited Europe, whether we had a euro today, or whether we had the Schengen area.

“All this required farsightedness, a willingness to take risks and also conviction at the time, and not a narrow-mindedness, as seems to be the case today.” Asselborn said the EU was currently giving the impression of being “divided into four parts, the north, the south, the east, the west, and no one knows exactly what is holding the whole thing together in the middle.” He warned that such a state of affairs was “not up to the task that the European Union is facing today”...”

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## Lessons From The Break With Sterling

Ireland is “geographically and politically torn between Britain and the EU” according to Naomi O’Leary, Europe correspondent of the *Irish Times*. She makes that statement in an article headed, “*Ireland’s travel policy curbed by Britain*” (IT, 9 July 2020), which describes how Ireland cannot adopt the EU’s travel policy regarding Covid19 because of the Britain-

Ireland *Common Travel Area*.

Whatever about travel policy—the case for Ireland withdrawing from the Common Travel Area by joining the EU’s Schengen Area must remain a subject for a future article—it is certainly the case that our geographic proximity to Britain and the difficult position of Northern Ireland,

place obstacles in the way of a close Irish relationship with Europe. How current ties with Britain, like the Common Travel Area, will be reconciled with post-Brexit realities still, in July 2020, remains to be seen.

However, a useful aid to thought on the subject is to examine the history of Anglo/Irish relations in the context of the EU, with regard to specific events in economic history: one such event was the Irish Government’s breaking of the link with Sterling in 1979.

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

State Monopoly versus Socialism

James Connolly

(back page)

A very small minority within the ruling elite advocated Brexit. It urged the populace to use this one and only opportunity of exercising power to come out and vote for a resumption of British sovereignty instead of letting Britain drift into subordination to a Europe which it had been saving from itself for three centuries.

All of Britain's many Great Wars were wars for the freedom of Europe from European forces that were destroying that freedom—Weren't they?

Would anybody dare to say that they were not?

And, after all those altruistic wars that Britain had had to fight in Europe to keep it from perdition, was it now to lose itself in the European morass brought about by the Treaty of Rome—yes Rome!

It was a very fair question, given the ideology regarding Europe with which the elite had been saturating the populace for centuries. And the populace gave the appropriate answer, in the biggest ever

voting event in Britain's history.

The elite was astonished. It was disgruntled. It was disorientated. How did the populace escape from it after being so obedient for so long?

It set up a Parliamentary Committee to investigate. The Committee has now issued its Report. The Report explained that the Russians did it! (See Cathy Winch's article on page 15.)

The two most powerful propaganda forces in the world today are the propaganda forces of the two dominant democracies, the UK and the USA. They brought about the collapse of the Soviet system, and then, in combination with a NATO which changed its purpose from Defence to Expansion, they brought Russia to the verge of extinction.

Russia did not have anything that could reasonably be called a State for about fifteen years after the collapse of 1990. It had an anarchy of billionaires, called Oligarchs, whose billions came from the seizure of the assets of the Socialist State.

They went into alliance with Western capitalists. That plutocratic anarchy was hailed as democracy by the West at the time.

And now we are told by the Westminster Parliamentary Committee, and by the Irish Times (July 25) that Russia, having achieved a degree of effective national government under Putin's leadership, is an imminent danger to the democracy of Britain and the USA—and that the British Tory Government, headed by a Brexiteer, is complicit with Putin because it directed the British security services away from investigating the subversive danger of political opinion inspired by the Kremlin.

The Committee's Report was launched at a Press Conference addressed by two MPs: Kevan Jones, Labour, and Stuart Hosie, Scottish Nationalist. They said they could present no hard evidence, because the Government had not allowed it to be discovered, but that they were certain that a Russian campaign of "disinformation" was undermining British Democracy.

And what they were demanding sounded like an Inquisition into the holders of un-British Opinions on the lines of McCarthyism in America in the early fifties.

The agents of Putin's subversive action against British democracy were the Oligarchs. Some of them had come to Britain bringing their billions with them and investing it in the British economy. They appeared to have become ordinary capitalists but they were not. They were Putin's agents of influence with a mission to subvert British democracy.

The leader of this conspiratorialist campaign against covert Putinist influence is the new leader of the Labour Party, who has begun a purge of Corbynism in the Labour Party. It seems that Corbyn, like the Prime Minister, is a Russian agent. Putin is buying British politicians wholesale.

Starmer has called for the TV Channel Russia Today to be closed down. Presumably he wants to silence dissenting voices, such as those of Alex Salmond and George Galloway, who both have their own programmes on the Channel.

There are Russian Oligarchs in Britain because Putin began to make the Russian State effective in the economy. He had to begin by negotiating his way through the Oligarchs who were dominant. Some of them saw the way the wind was blowing and agreed to get out of his way if they could take their ill-gotten gains with them. Others believed that in the end Money determines Politics and that therefore Putin would fail. They were obdurate. Some of them were charged with tax-evasion—of

which there is no doubt they were guilty — and were imprisoned.

Of the more astute oligarchs, who went to Britain with their money while the going was good, the main one in a position to influence opinion is the owner of the London Evening Standard, which gives staunch support to Keir Starmer.

It now seems certain that Britain is out of the EU, presumably without a deal. A Brexit which left Britain half in the EU was a real possibility. Prime Minister May agreed it with the EU but could not get it through Parliament because the Ulster Unionists and the Labour Party opposed it—including Keir Starmer. Labour Remainers would agree to no half measures. They wanted a re-run of the Referendum, and Starmer was particularly influential in ensuring that Labour went into the Election with something other in mind than making the best of Brexit as an accomplished fact.

\*

It is now certain that Ireland will be alone in the EU. It will be there absent the UK. When it joined the EU following Britain, it used EU membership as a means of evading the Northern Ireland issue. In a sense, it escaped from itself into the EU, and in some respects its presence in the EU was Anglicising rather than Europeanising. It now faces the prospect of being in the EU without British guidance, and with the only newspaper that counts at home being the paper whose heart is in the home that it came from. That was not the case when it joined.

### **Corrections to *Irish Political Review*, July 2020:**

Page 1, paragraph 2: “the time of the British Embassy burning in 1971”

This should be 1972.

Page 3, paragraph 5: “Lord Patten set up what he called “*democracy*” in Hong Kong when handing it back to China in 1964.” This should be 1997.

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## **Printing Money?**

I read John Martin’s article on MMT [Modern Monetary Theory, relating to Government printing money] with interest. A couple of matters puzzle me which perhaps the author can clarify.

1. He says that printing money takes purchasing power out of the economy. All other things being equal, yes. But isn’t the aim of printing money to increase purchasing power by, say, buying bonds in exchange for cash? Does not this put money into the economy, which can then be used to produce more goods, thus offsetting any inflationary effect? My understanding was that this is how Keynes’ multiplier effect works.

2. “The strongest, most successful manufacturing economies are relentless in their pursuit of austerity policies”. I was surprised to learn that China runs a relentless austerity policy. Is China’s austerity the cause of its manufacturing success? Germany’s austerity is much milder than the UK’s and they haven’t run down health, local government, social care etc in the same way as the UK did. Is Germany’s austerity the cause of its manufacturing success? I would have thought that other factors, such as relentless investment in education, health, transport and Vocational Education Training also had something to do with it.

**Chris Winch**

### **Editorial**

## **Storey Funeral:**

### ***Chipping Away At Sinn Fein!***

The big issue in Northern Ireland as we go to print is the funeral of Bobby Storey, who is accused of (or is credited with) responsibility for the great Northern Bank robbery, and the stroll into Castlereagh high security barracks in the middle of the day and the lifting of high security dossiers.

He was given a state funeral.

Northern Ireland is regularly described as a State by authoritative historians, though it isn’t. But if we consent to the line laid down by authority, then we must say that it is not merely one State but is two States—a fact that is emphasised by the events surrounding Bobby Storey’s funeral.

Storey was a teenager when the War began. He became a power behind the scenes, even while spending years in prison. He supported Adams’ view of the situation, helped the war to continue until circumstances were right for a settlement, and then ensured that the settlement was orderly on the Republican side.

The Covid rules were possibly broken in his funeral arrangements. They were also possibly not broken. It was a matter of ‘the optics’—a widely-used term with regard to other matters in recent times: a matter of vantage point. (However, an official statement seems to indicate that the rules for the Cremation were broadly adhered to.)

It was not the only funeral at which crowds gathered without observing social distancing, North or South. The police did not interfere with those other funerals, any more than they did with this one. But the BBC decided to make a great issue of Storey’s funeral and stimulate “*sectarian division*” on it.

The police closed certain roads, so that the funeral cortege could pass through without interference. So it was one law for one and another law for another. Attempts to explain that other funerals were unlikely to cause public disorder in certain areas were cut short.

The DUP leaders in the Cabinet, having become habituated to the dual power ar-



rangements in internal Six County affairs, and wanting to maintain the dual power devolution brought about by the War, did not initially make an issue of the exceptional treatment given to Bobby Storey. It didn't want to bring down the Government.

*Why not?*, the BBC demanded. Morning after morning the BBC directed its agitation towards the DUP rank and file with the purpose of putting pressure on the leaders.

The main Radio Ulster programme, the *Stephen Nolan Show*, which goes on for an hour and a half every morning, has been boycotted by both the DUP and Sinn Féin for many years as a mischief-maker—a stirrer up of sectarianism.

The disconnect between BBC opinion and public opinion in the Six Counties was something we noticed forty years ago. It was absolute with relation to the Nationalist population. It is now substantial with relation to the Unionist population.

British 'mainland' BBC radio gives a considerable degree of expression to public opinion, while trying to nudge it along with a degree of bias. In the Six Counties it stands outside public opinion and attempts to master it. The result is that it feeds on itself and has a tendency towards hysteria.

In Northern Ireland there are, and always have been, two public opinions, in conflict with each other. The difference between them bears no resemblance to the difference between mainland political parties (which are always stealing each other's clothes). Whitehall decided in 1920 to impose a Home Rule arrangement on the Six Counties, which neither Unionists nor Nationalists had asked for, and at the same time to exclude them from the Tory/Socialist/Liberal party politics of the state. Under that arrangement, the antagonism between the two communities on the issue of Irish Home Rule was institutionalised in a spurious local party system that lay beyond what is generally understood by politics.

Politics is the business of governing a state. Northern Ireland was excluded from that business. It was institutionally abnormalised, and the normalities brought about by state politics do not prevail. It is by its nature exceptional. Out of that exceptionalism a war came about—and the funeral of Bobby Storey.

Stephen Nolan, who also has a programme on 'mainland' BBC, knows this perfectly well. But he uses Radio 5 normalities as a standard with which to stir

up the 'sectarianism' which Westminster/Whitehall decreed should be the mode of political existence in the Six Counties.

He never addresses the cause of the things he complains about. He doesn't want to. But, if he did want to, he would not be allowed to. He is a State agitator.

Back in the 1980s, in the case of an interview with Martin McGuinness and Gregory Campbell, it was made clear that the BBC in its Six County division is an instrument of State policy.

The Dublin Government has behaved very discreetly on the issue. It doesn't want the Six Counties back in the agenda as a live issue. It wants to preserve the fig-leaf of a Northern Ireland 'state'. It wants unity, of course. *But not yet, O Lord!* What it wants is to retain an all-Ireland market, without incurring political responsibility for the Six Counties.

Maria Cahill, however, has spoken out boldly in the *Sunday Independent*. She resigned from the Provos because Gerry Adams, ably supported by Bobby Storey, brought the war to an end without ending Partition. That is why she is now making a career in the anti-Republican Dublin Establishment. It is not a unique story.

## PS

The Radio Ulster agitation about Bobby Storey's funeral went into a second week.

A few weeks ago Emily Maitlis, a present of *Newsnight*, asserted as a matter of fact that Dominic Cummings, the top adviser to the Government, had broken the lockdown rules adopted by the Government. It was a politically contentious statement of opinion as fact. It was not a fact as far as the BBC was concerned because the Government did not agree with it. Facts are opinions on which there is political consensus. It is not within the remit of the BBC to form independent views and present them as facts.

Maitlis was reprimanded by her superiors for breaking the rules, and she has improved considerably as a consequence.

Stephen Nolan, in his Radio Ulster capacity, has done exactly what Maitlis did. He has done it repeatedly. He did it particularly blatantly on July 7th and 8th. He asserts it as an indisputable fact that Michelle O'Neill, as leader of Sinn Féin, broke the social distancing rules. This cannot be a fact for Radio Ulster because Michelle O'Neill, a member of the devolved Government and leader of one of its major parties, says she did not break the rules.

This matter was gone into thoroughly in the mid-eighties when *Newsnight*, in breach of Government rules, broadcast an interview with Martin McGuinness and Gregory Campbell. The *Newsnight* presenter then was Vincent Hanna, who came from a Belfast Nationalist background. He asserted that the BBC was an independent Guild of Broadcasters, and flirted with the idea of securing its independence from Government interference by means of a strike.

The Government, basing itself on the Charter on which the BBC was set up, sacked the Director General and replaced the members of the Board. It was reasserted that the function of the BBC in politics was to be "*impartial*", and it must not be "*independent*". Impartiality meant in effect that it must report the different party opinions expressed in Parliament, but must not express independent judgement on them.

There is no doubt at all that Stephen Nolan has repeatedly broken that rule. As he said on July 9th, he will carry on breaking it, regardless of pressures brought to bear on him.

Only one pressure counts—that of the Government. But which Government?

When television Party-political broadcasts at election time were introduced in 1951, the Northern Ireland Prime Minister did not want them to be broadcast on BBC, Northern Ireland, as none of the Parties making them contested elections in Northern Ireland. He was told by Whitehall that he had no authority in the matter. The BBC was a State institution, and those broadcasts must go out in all regions of the state.

To have allowed Northern Ireland to be excluded from the Party broadcasts of the democracy of the State would have given too much of the game away.

So the Government which should be keeping Radio Ulster in order is the Secretary of State.

We assume that there is a Secretary of State, but it would need special research to find out who it is!

What Radio Ulster has been doing with its freedom from the constraints of the BBC Charter is to stir up the resentment of a layer of incoherent Loyalist feeling, with a view to compelling the DUP to break its working arrangement with Sinn Féin.

There are two major parties in the devolved Government. The DUP has been driven to agree with three of the others to pass a vote in the Assembly condemning Sinn Féin over the arrangements for the

Storey Funeral. That vote can have no effect. It cannot bring down the Government. It is unlikely that it would have passed if it could.

This is the kind of thing that made the Good Friday Agreement workable, as we pointed out when supporting it in 1998. It is demonstrably a political arrangement for a region which is not a State itself, nor a normal region of a state. It is an arrangement to facilitate the attritional conflict of two communities which aspire towards membership of different states and are excluded politically from both.

In the Nolan Show on July 10th, Ian Paisley junior, who has fielded allegations of corruption, went on at considerable length about how Republicanism was Fascist and the Storey Funeral a demonstration of Fascist power . . .

The Catholic community has developed in the only way it could in exclusion from the democracy of the state in which it was required to live, after it was abandoned by the state which for half a century had declared sovereignty over it and encouraged it to be disaffected. The Storey Funeral was a demonstration of its success.

What was particularly galling for the Protestant communal sentiment, that had been dominant for so long, was the cremation of the body at the Crematorium at the heart of East Belfast, and the arrangements made by Belfast City Council and the police for it to be done without disorder.

The funeral service and the cortege were in West Belfast, as if there was to be a burial in Milltown. But the body was then taken to Roselawn in East Belfast for what was, as far as we can recall, the first Republican cremation of a high profile figure. The security implications of this foray into enemy territory were considerable. Even though there was not a mass attendance at Roselawn, some very high profile republicans 'trespassed' on Unionist 'territory' on this occasion. The event therefore could be seen as a challenge to territorial sensitivities.

Radio Ulster agitation, which does not acknowledge that Northern Ireland is an inherently abnormal structure, or that what went on for 28 years was War which the State failed to win, has led to a demand that the City Council, in dealing with facts as it found them, and which it understood very well, should be investigated for behaving improperly in the arrangements made in respect of the Roselawn event. (The SDLP and the Alliance Party sided with Unionism

in this vote.) Two senior Executives, who are far from being republican, declared that they could resign if an independent Inquiry went ahead. Nevertheless, the City Council voted for an Inquiry.

The Government of the State knows that it failed to crush the IRA in a War. It decided to live with its failure and move on, making an agreement. And it was the first to break the rules with relation to the enemy with which it made terms. Bobby Storey died after a lung transplant operation in an English hospital during a period when operations were suspended so that the Covid emergency could be dealt with. But this is something that Radio Ulster dare not comment on.

### **Statement From Belfast City Council Officials**

The following Statement issued by the Council, and carried by the *Irish News* on 11th July, contradicts wild claims made on the Stephen Nolan Show over several days:

#### **Internal report: 'There were no paramilitary trappings'**

Bobby Storey's cremation at Roselawn Cemetery was attended by 28 mourners, and council wardens rather than republicans manned the gates.

An internal report by Belfast City Council also found there were "no paramilitary trappings, guard of honour or flag" at the ceremony.

The veteran republican was cremated at Roselawn on June 30.

There has been concern raised about attendance and why some staff had been sent home early.

The council already apologised and offered compensation to eight other families who were not allowed to attend services on the same day.

According to the report, council chief executive Suzanne Wylie received two phone calls from Sinn Féin about the numbers who could attend.

A decision by Nigel Grimshaw, the council's director of city and neighbourhood services, to allow up to 30 mourners, was taken "in the context of managing potential issues if numbers arrived and demands for access were made".

Mr Grimshaw confirmed that he would send up to five stewards to Roselawn to assist with identifying family members and mourners.

The report said: "There have been no reports of intimidation or harassment of

staff. To the contrary I am advised by council officers that the occasion was respectful. There were no paramilitary trappings, guard of honour or flag. Council officers described the occasion as a 'low key dignified send off'.

"The gates of Roselawn were controlled by council wardens at all times. There is nothing in the CCTV footage that provides any evidence that Roselawn was under control of persons other than council officials."

The report stated that 28 mourners were present at the service.

"This is taken from a head count carried out by a member of staff which tallies with the estimate made by a warden that the number of mourners was in the high twenties. One individual, identified by staff as a 'local' was observed riding his bicycle close by. There is no evidence of others present or people having entered, other than the individual referred to, by alternate means.

"The family used their allocated 30 minutes (families are allocated 15 minutes for the outdoor service but operationally we allow 30 minutes for the whole process for each family). This suggests that the service was conducted promptly and that mourners did not remain on the site following the committal.

"Three slots were held after the cremation of Mr Storey. In order to accommodate the sensitive nature of cremation services and burials that day, and in tandem with protecting the privacy of families, this sort of arrangement is not unusual as a precaution to ensure mourners arrive and leave without the individual parties being on-site at the same time. The cancellation of other cremations did not occur. Roselawn was at that time operating under capacity. Four cremations out of a total possible number of 16 took place on 1 July."

It added that some staff were sent home early saying this was an operational decision.

"The decision was motivated by concerns that more people than permitted may attempt to gain access at the site and to avoid staff being photographed or feeling uncomfortable and to prevent any potential issues arising in the car park area where some temporary staff accommodation was situated. 15 staff remained on site. The director of city and neighbourhood services was consulted on the decision to send staff home insofar as it related to maintenance and grave digging staff. There were no more burials planned that afternoon."

**See article by Pat Walsh  
on page 11**

While continuing our series on events of 1920 with the help of the daily newspaper of the First Dáil, the *Irish Bulletin*, we are reducing the amount printed to just one day per week as reproducing the full monthly collections of the weekly summaries is taking up too much space at the expense of other items in *The Irish Political Review*. Instead, we will be making available each month more of the weekly summaries of events for that month online, as well as all the previous instalments which have appeared in this magazine, on our dedicated Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/FrankGallagher1919/?modal=admin\\_todo\\_tour](https://www.facebook.com/FrankGallagher1919/?modal=admin_todo_tour)

It should be noted that these weekly summaries are not by any means the full content of the *Irish Bulletin* which also contains *daily* accounts of all significant developments in the war and not just these specific events.

## **LEST WE FORGET (30)**

The following are the Acts of Aggression Committed in Ireland by the armed Military and Police of the Usurping English Government - as reported in the Daily Press, for the Week ending Saturday, July 31<sup>st</sup>., 1920.

### **S u m m a r y**

Date – July:	26th	27th	28th	29th	30th	31st	Total
Raids: -	85	23	28	25	201	14	376
Arrests: -	45	14	1	4	-	34	98
Sentences: -	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
Court martial:-	4	-	4	-	-	-	8
Proclamations & Suppressions:-	1	4	1	-	1	1	8
Armed Assaults:-	31	13	6	9	-	9	68
Deportations: -	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Murders: -	1	-	-	-	-	2	3
<u>Daily Totals: -</u>	168	54	41	38	206	60	567

The sentences passed for the political offences during the above six days totalled five years and one month.

### **MONDAY, July 26<sup>th</sup>.**

#### **Raids: -**

Fourteen houses in Limerick City were raided by British police on the 24<sup>th</sup> inst. During the early hours of the 25<sup>th</sup> inst. another search was made, during which over thirty houses were forcibly entered and searched by the same forces.

On the same date a party of British police forcibly entered and searched upwards of forty houses in the district around Berehaven, Co. Cork.

British military and police raided Queenstown Town Hall, Co. Cork.

#### **Arrests: -**

Two men, whose names did not transpire, were arrested “on suspicion” by a party of British police during indiscriminate raids in Limerick City on the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup> inst.

Fifteen persons were arrested on the streets of Dublin on a charge of being “abroad” between the hours of 12 midnight and 3 a.m. without the permission of the British military authorities.

Twenty-eight persons were arrested on the streets of Cork on a charge of being “abroad” between the hours of 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. without the permission of the British authorities.

#### **Court martial: -**

The following members of the Youghal (Co. Cork) Republican police were tried by Court martial at Dublin on a charge of attempting to arrest two men who were behaving riotously by smashing windows in the street of Youghal: - Messrs. John Aher, John Whelan, Laurence

Coleman and D. Hassett. The trial was adjourned until the 30<sup>th</sup> inst.

Since the withdrawal of the British police forces from their legitimate duties these Republican Police patrols have been wholly responsible for the maintenance of public order and safety, and citizens of all political opinions have expressed their approval of the efficient manner in which these duties have been performed by the Republican police.

#### **Proclamations & Suppressions: -**

By an order issued by the British authorities on the 24<sup>th</sup> inst. all persons travelling to Ireland will have to submit all luggage and personal effects to examination by the Customs Authorities at Holyhead.

#### **Armed Assaults: -**

A motor car full of young men on their way to an open-air musical festival was turned back near Adrigool, Co. Cork, by a body of armed British police who barred the way with bayonets.

Outbreaks (*outrages??*) by members of the British police forces on the civilian population are daily becoming more numerous. The press of today's date reports four such acts of terrorism in which police have run amok in two towns in County Limerick – Kilmallock and Newcastle-West – in Galway City and in Boulduff, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

#### **INCENDIARISM: -**

On the night of the 23<sup>rd</sup> inst. these police drove into Kilmallock in a lorry. As soon as they alighted they proceeded systematically to wreck the towns by firing volley after volley along the streets, smashing windows and setting alight to buildings. In Lyon's Hotel they

attempted to shoot two waitresses and wounded a man named Duggan. Proceeding to Mr. Herlihy's licensed premises, they attempted to shoot the owner. On his escaping through a backway they set the house on fire, injuring the women occupants. In the house of a Mr. O'Rourke, an occupant broke his leg in escaping from the hands of the police. A man named O'Callaghan was dragged into a back yard where the police beat him with their rifle butts until he was unconscious.

The house of Mr. Wm. O'Carroll was sprayed with paraffin and burned to the ground, as was also the licensed premises of Mr. O'Keefe. Mr. John Cahill's drapery establishment was practically burned. Amongst the wounded are the following: - Messrs. Wm. Donegan, (bullet wounds); Wm. Hayes and J. O'Callaghan, (beaten with rifles); Thomas O'Connor, (injured in escaping from burned building); and J. Duggan (bullet wounds).

The damage done to property is estimated at £6,000.

#### **INCENDIARISM: -**

Between 70 and 80 British policemen arrived in motor lorries at midnight on the 24<sup>th</sup> inst. and attacked and partially wrecked the town of Newcastle-West, Co. Limerick. The Carnegie Library, a newly erected building, was completely gutted by fire. The roof of the Co-operative Creamery was blown off and the machinery destroyed. Plate glass windows were smashed and attempts were made to fire several other houses. All the private houses attacked were those of prominent Republicans. Several persons had narrow escapes from rifle shots fired through their windows.

#### **INCENDIARISM: -**

At 2.00 a.m. on the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> inst. British policemen attempted to blow up the premises of Mr. P.J. O'Connor, Mainguard Street, Galway City, by means of an explosive bomb which they threw into the shop. The explosion wrecked the shop fittings and a large plate glass window.

When Mr. T. Crowne, Drumkeerin, Co. Leitrim, was passing the British police barrack he was wounded by a bottle which a policeman threw at him through the barrack window. Two armed policemen then rushed out at him and pursued him to his house, the front door of which they smashed in with their rifles. Mr. Crowne managed to elude them by escaping through a back exit.

On the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> inst. four lorries of uniformed British police drove out from Thurles firing promiscuously as they approached the village of Bouladuff, Co. Tipperary. They halted at the licensed premises of Messrs. Dwyer and rushed into the bar. They assaulted and overpowered the attendant, and consumed all the drink they desired. They then carried quantities of what was left into their lorries, and set about destroying the remainder. They swept the shelves clear of bottles by means of their rifle butts, and smashed up the shop fittings. Having wrecked the bar they fired several volleys through the ceiling into the upper rooms and then drove away leaving Dwyer's house wrecked.

On the night of the 24<sup>th</sup> inst. British military patrolling the streets of Cork fired indiscriminately at

pedestrians. A man named Michael Callaghan was wounded.

#### **Deportations: -**

Mr. B. McAllister, Swords, Co. Dublin, whose trial and sentence by a military courtmartial in Dublin was mentioned in these lists on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, was deported on the same date to Liverpool gaol under heavy escort.

#### **Murder: -**

Mr. Wm. McGrath, an ex-soldier, of 12 Coach Street, Cork, died on July 24<sup>th</sup> from wounds received during promiscuous firing by British troops and police on unarmed civilians in Cork City.

### **TUESDAY, JULY 27<sup>th</sup>.**

#### **Raids: -**

British military and police raided the residence of Mr. P. Hegarty, Crossmolina, Co Mayo, on the 24<sup>th</sup> inst. Mr. Hegarty is a newly-elected Republican Member of Mayo County Council.

The Castlebar Sinn Fein Hall, Co. Mayo, was forcibly entered and searched by British military and police.

A large force of British troops forcibly entered and searched over twenty houses in Killeagh, Co. Cork, in search of Mr. M. Higgins, a Republican member of the local District Council.

At 3 a.m. on the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup> inst. British police raided the residence of Mr. M. Loughman, Kilkenny, in search of Mr. Loughman who was recently released on hunger-strike from an English prison, where he had been interned for four months without charge or trial.

#### **Arrests: -**

Mr. P. Hegarty, Republican Member of the Mayo County Council, was arrested with his three brothers at their home in Crossmolina, Co. Mayo, on the 24<sup>th</sup> inst. They were conveyed to Castlebar gaol under a strong escort of British military and police. No charge was made against them.

Mr. W.J. Merchant was arrested in Castlebar Sinn Fein Hall by a party of British police. No charge was brought against him.

Nine persons were arrested on the streets of Cork on the night of the 25<sup>th</sup> inst. on a charge of being "abroad" between the hours of 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. without the permission of the British military authorities.

#### **Proclamations & Suppressions: -**

British troops commandeered the offices of Youghal Urban Council, Co. Cork, thus preventing the officials from carrying on the work of the Council.

The districts of Ballyvourney and Macroom, Co. Cork, have been proclaimed special military areas by the British military authorities. No person is permitted to be "abroad" between the hours of 9 p.m. and 3 a.m. and no fairs, markets or meetings are permitted to be held within a three-mile radius of these villages. The order was enforced two hours after it was promulgated on the 26<sup>th</sup> inst. and before any warning had been given to the people.



## ‘O Lady Full of Guile’

“O lady full of guile,  
take away your hand.  
Though you sicken for my love,  
I am not an active man.

Consider my grey hairs.  
Consider my slack body.  
Consider my tired blood.  
What is it you want?

Don’t think I am perverse.  
You need not tilt your head.  
Let’s love without the deed  
for ever, spirit slender.....”

Brian Mac Giolla Phádraig (c.1580-c.1652).

Mac Giolla Phádraig, a scholar and poet of noble descent, was ordained priest in his native diocese of Ossory in the year 1610. About the year 1651 he was appointed Vicar General and Apostolic Vicar of the diocese. Cromwellian forces put him to death soon afterwards.

Only a handful of his poems survive.

‘An Duanaire: 1600-1900. Poems of the Dispossessed’, Séan O Tuama, Verse Translations Thomas Kinsella. The Dolmen Press, Portlaoise, Ireland. 1981.

“But the subject of Bowen’s Court is, in essence, the loss of the ‘idea’, the failure of a big, impersonal, dignified concept of living, what Yeats calls ‘traditional sanctity and loveliness’. For this reason the book is intimately related to Elizabeth Bowen’s fictional works, all of which are concerned with a world in which rootedness, acquisitions, permanence - the Burkean ‘goods’ – are at risk, and in which a decorous idea of behaviour had degenerated, through Romantic and Gothic influences on feeling, literature and architecture, into ‘the dire period of Personal Life’ and the neurotic insubstantiality of modernism.”

Hermione Lee, York, 1983. Introduction.

‘Bowen’s Court and Seven Winters’, Vintage, London. 1999.

## Elizabeth Bowen.

### A Review of Patricia Laurence’s biography.

#### Part 6

I ended my previous article in the July edition of the *Irish Political Review* about David Hicks and his expressed outrage over the demolishing of Bowen’s Court by the new owner who had purchased it in 1959. Now Hicks is rebranding himself as an “architectural historian” —though he qualified as an ‘architectural technician’ only in the Tech in Sligo—and these things really do matter in university circles —but, when those with posh accents speak, the university classes take heed nevertheless.

The ‘Big House’ is a sign-post of our cultural values and if we lose them—it should be a loss to us all, is more or less what Hicks has to say. Hicks encodes his lament for Bowen’s Court with a definite ‘guilty’ verdict for the Ireland that let this happen. The owners, like the Bowens who as Elizabeth Bowen herself willingly testified were such “litigants” that “her family history is dominated from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries by a recurrent, destructive lawsuit over property”, adding that, when she inherited the ‘big house’, it was heavily burdened by debts and “entailed” as is the legal definition.

Bowen herself was a lavish spender and, when the great families of England came to stay with her, she made sure that they were well looked after. The best food and drink were on her table, as is evidenced by the letters and diaries of those who came and went—even if the house itself didn’t merit great favour. I remember once reading of a gentleman from Oxford—a don, whose name escapes me for the moment—who wrote in his diary that he used his Mackintosh to keep somewhat dry while sleeping in his damp bed!

But it is not the owners of Big Houses who are responsible for their loss—it is us ordinary Irish! We who, by the way, have given enormous resources to keeping some noteworthy Big Houses from falling into ruin. Before Sir Jocelyn Gore-Booth of Lissadel sold his estate, the Irish Government had re-roofed and re-wired the Big House! And then he sold it at a great profit to the Cassidy family, a husband and wife who were barristers and therefore had enough liquidity to purchase the whole estate. Sir Jocelyn—a former London banker—then auctioned the contents for another couple of million and off he went back to the UK considerably richer.

There was no outcry about re-clawing back some of the money the State invested in this Big House. And really it should have done so, but the Hicks of this world and ‘The Irish Times’ set would set up such a *canáning* that, in the end, we’d have to call it a lost cause!

But, as I was working on my researches, in one old file, I came across an article by Mary Leland in ‘The Irish Times’ on 7th August 1996: ‘An Irishwoman’s Diary’. Leland (of Cork city) does fawning on the Anglo-Irish and Protestant like no other and I will spare my readers some of her worst efforts. The above-named column is sometimes lent out to writers, other than the usual stable of ‘Irish Times’ writers, to give the idea that that the paper is catholic in its orientation: well, Leland is as safe a bet as one can get!

Leland is recalling an evening spent in Anne’s Grove, where the Annesley family, Patrick and Jane, are giving a fundraising “supper and a conducted tour of the garden as a way of raising funds to repair the church roof”. The latter is of course the Church at Farrahay, and is called St. Colman’s Church, which the Bowens built and where they worshipped. Leland gushes:

“Everyone wants to go. Even those who have already seen Anne’s Grove perhaps especially those who have already seen



Anne's Grove are clamouring for the £20 tickets. There is no charge, of course, for the service or for the lecture" (on the following day – Sunday).

Before I continue with Leland's article, I just wish to state that my husband and I once went to see the gardens at Anne's Grove and were left distinctly unimpressed. Not only because we had paid handsomely for the privilege, but we had to pick our way with care as there was plenty of shrubbery – some of it coiling on the walkways which were basically stone steps of uneven type. Now if anyone likes rhododendrons, this is your place. They were everywhere and I remember at home my own mother calling them "vexations", owing to their spreading, seemingly like wildfire. I notice that Leland while referring often to the "magnificent gardens", has to acknowledge in the end the sum total of this Eden:

"the wealth of spectacular rhododendrons and azaleas, stunning in springtime and of interest throughout the year."

Thankfully our own ones deadened in winter and gave my mother some peace.

Going back to Leland's article, she gushes on about the speaker of that year's lecture – who was none other than Victoria Glendinning, the first and official biographer of Elizabeth Bowen (Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd. London. 1977). But what interests Leland is that Glendinning is also the biographer of Vita Sackville West (whose affair with notables included – Virginia Woolf, Violet Trefusis and others), and what grabs Leland's attention the most is the great garden at Sissinghurst Castle, Knole – which was largely created by Vita, whose husband Harold Nicolson saw Elizabeth Bowen when she went for her interview at the Ministry of Information, which subsequently saw her work as a spy in Eire. Obviously Leland does not mention that fact in her piece.

But Leland is determined to pay homage to Vita, as she calls her, for her "creations of the great gardens at Sissinghurst", and to Glendinning who herself had gardening interests. Leland writes the following:

"Proprietors" (the Annesleys) "of Anne's Grove and keepers of several shades most noticeably, after Elizabeth, that of Spenser who waited and suffered at Kilcolman and wrote in the meantime about the Mulla, or Awbeg river, which rackets its way through the Annesley gardens."

Would that awful drivel about Spenser, Assistant to Lord Grey, and Commander of subduing Munster for Elizabeth 1st, be

tolerated in today's climate of alertness to the awful deeds of the past? Even mention of the *Smerwick Massacre* at Dún na Óir, near Dingle, Co. Kerry – where 600 men, women and children, after their surrender, were killed in the most brutal way by troops of Captain Walter Raleigh, whose underling was none other than Edmund Spenser.

But Mary Leland ends by hoping that Jane Annesley,

"if she has a ticket to spare, perhaps she'll send it to Cork Co. Council, which has put on record (in its recent draft development plan) to investigate the development of an archive centre based on the literary heritage of North Cork, Spenser, Elizabeth Bowen, Hubert Butler (at a stretch), William Trevor and others."

Oh yes, she did put in Canon Sheehan but then she most certainly felt the eyes of the Aubane Historical Society were on her and she wanted to cover all bets. Hubert Butler was a Kilkenny man, so again – as she said herself – why the "stretch"? In today's literary world Canon Sheehan's very name is unsayable. Yet when Donncha O Dulaing in the early sixties went to meet his English Professor at UCC, a B.G. McCarthy, she proposed he did his Masters on "a writer from North Cork": and named Elizabeth Bowen – when he was expecting Canon Sheehan! In his memoir he remembered:

"I was struck dumb. I had never even heard of her" ( 'Walking and Talking with Donncha', Blackwater Press, Dublin. 1988).

And I too can say with utter truth, that finding people who have read Elizabeth Bowen, is very rare indeed. And this is in today's world! Those who do recognise her name allude to questions about her "supposed spying", or some ruckus, by a group who brought out something about her from North Cork. On the whole, those who are university-educated are the ones who will fight tooth and nail against her spying – believing it to be a smear. Any mention of *Aubane* immediately raises hackles – really it is the dog whistle every time.

On 20th May 2020, Eibhear Walshe had an article about his own book featured in *The Irish Times* with the heading 'Elizabeth Bowen's Blitz love affair reimagined'. The photo is the usual of Bowen in front of her home with a horse and cart, but this time after a long campaign by this writer in the *Irish Political Review*, the paper has dispensed with the wrong date of "1962". Eibhear of course is now Head

of Creative Writing in University College, Cork (he didn't get the expected Head of Department – which went instead to the many-booked Professor Clair Connolly.) But Eibhear has a new book out and it is a novel called: 'The Last Day at Bowen's Court' (Somerville Press. 2020).

He opens the piece thus:

"How do you keep on writing when your everyday life has suddenly turned into a nightmare, a place where death seems to shadow every step, and you and your loved ones are in constant danger? This was the challenge faced by the *Irish writer*, Elizabeth Bowen, living and working in London during the second World War and experiencing the worst moments of the Blitz" (Italics mine – JH).

"Well, in my view, Bowen rose to the challenge magnificently. Her response was to discover a heightened sense of her own imagination, finding, in her own words, that

"I lived both as a civilian and a writer, with every pore open".

Breathlessly Eibhear goes on:

"How did she do it? I've always loved Bowen's writings on her experience of living through the Blitz and now, unexpectedly, her words have an added meaning, an enabling sense of possibility for any of us trying to write in these uncharted and often terrifying times."

Could anyone tell Eibhear that living in Covid-19 times does not equate with living in the era of World War Two? But on he goes:

"Bowen said of her time in London during the second World War that "We all lived in a state of lucid abnormality". This has a resonance today as I remember her words, a resonance that I never expected when I began to write my own novel about Elizabeth Bowen, called *The Last Day at Bowen's Court*.

"In my novel I re-imagine her time in wartime London, the writing of *The Heat of the Day* and her love affair with the Canadian diplomat, Charles Ritchie. I had been writing about Bowen as a literary critic for 20 years or so, filled with admiration for the inventiveness and the poetic elegance of her prose.

"I began to write and to publish fiction myself in the last 10 years, and, about three years ago, it struck me – why not try fictionalise Bowen's life myself. I can't answer for other people but I find writing fiction much, more easier than writing biography or literary criticism. A novel is never the truth" (???! - JH)

"It doesn't have to be. It's a novel, under no obligation at all except that of attempting to stay as true to the act of imagining as possible. Although historical fiction derives from the lives of real people, it can go further than a biography

or a literary essay in providing answers about the private world of these people. These are, of course, false answers but then this is fiction."

I have left in Eibhear's own writing errors and punctuations and they continue on throughout his article. What mystifies me is the huge write-up that *'The Irish Times'* has given Eibhear? There is a big picture of the cover of the book with a benediction from author John Banville emblazoned across the front, calling it "*subtle and compelling*".

What set Eibhear off "*was a book called Love's Civil War, where Elizabeth Bowen's letters and Charles Ritchie's diaries were collected and edited by Victoria Glendinning and Judith Robertson.*"

Their love affair, it seems, was too seductive a story and Eibhear began his work.

"To prepare, I went to Austin, Texas, where Bowen's papers and letters are, to immerse myself in her world". (Her letters to Charles Ritchie are not in Texas but in Canada, and other letters are all over the UK and also in the US— JH.) "From there, I followed her footsteps to Farahy in north Cork, to Clarence Terrace in London, to Hythe, to Rome and to Paris, where she and Charles met during the Peace Conference of 1948, finding a few days alone together away from their busy lives."

"*Slowly I built my novel, as I found a voice for each of the four people*", Elizabeth, her husband Alan Cameron, Charles Ritchie and his wife Sylvia Ritchie.

"We have Bowen's novels and stories and Ritchie's letters and diaries but nothing survives from the point of view of Alan Cameron and Sylvia Ritchie so I decided to write the novel from all four perspectives, giving each a distinct point of view in successive chapters. I felt their story also deserved telling, or at least my version of it."

(Please note that we do not have any letters from or to Charles Ritchie, who took Elizabeth's letters from her on her death to his home in Canada. We do have his published diaries which being a high ranking diplomat are heavily edited - JH.)

"So now the novel is in print and I hold it in my hand. Little did I imagine when I began the novel that it would be published in a remade world with dark and disturbing parallels to Bowen's own time? Now, rereading it today, it feels as if these frightening times somehow add another layer to my novel for me. It is giving it another level of meaning, one I had never guessed would exist....."

Eibhear Walshe seems to have been

reading too much Bowen, but then his novel awaits our reading—if we can ever get to it?

But how much money did he spend on all that travel when everything was at hand here in Cork? Everyone suspects that UCC in these pandemic days is facing huge losses in revenue, but also they heavily invested in the property market which— however one looks at it— is going to take a huge hit. After all, President O'Shea of UCC has resigned suddenly and the place is in turmoil.

He is the second University President to go in the last month, with the University of Limerick's President resigning too. Meanwhile Eibhear seems to have lived the life of Riley, but stark realities await us all.

Julianne Herlihy ©.

To be continued

## EU Council Meeting

continued

This seemed obvious to many, but it was only one aspect of what was happening and a Foreign Minister should be able to see further than the drama in any international negotiations. I don't know what Mr. Assleborn is saying today, now that a settlement has been reached. He should read an item in the *Irish Examiner* that would tell him what actually happened:

"The 'Deal!' that EU Council president Charles Michel announced in a one-word tweet early yesterday morning is historic. There will be much talk of the money involved to rescue Europe from the deepest recession since the 1930s.

More important than the money, however, is the modality.

For the first time, the European Commission will borrow money. Deficits for this intra-national organisation are now the new normal. That debt will be mutualised among the member states.

The amount of money, €360bn in loans plus €390bn in grants, is significant in the greater scheme of things, even among 27 states.

What is of historical importance is that the EU has taken on another aspect of statehood. It is not of itself decisive, but it is an appreciable move-on in a more federal direction.

All of its ultimate consequences are unknowable, but I clearly sense it is a major change in how the EU will work in future..." (Gerard Howlin, *Irish Examiner*, 22.7.20).

It was a successful meeting and for other reasons as well. This was the first full

Council without the UK and the Ministers must have felt like pupils when the teacher has left the classroom!

But they stayed together, worked out a curriculum and graduated.

It was also, in effect, a five day Cabinet meeting of the EU but with a difference. It was almost a public cabinet meeting. While the meeting was not held in public, all arguments, abuse, accusations, compromises, objections, table thumping etc.—as happens at all cabinet meetings—were duly reported. No normal cabinet would survive such scrutiny for a day.

The fact that it worked at all is the real story and Howlin puts his finger on the key to that, the '*modality*' involved, the way the thing was done. Another way to put it is that a European *demos* was actually proven to exist. There was something more than the sum of its parts at work—when the UK is subtracted.

The EU may inadvertently have thereby discovered the key to its long-term success—a new way of governance—one that may seem anarchic on the surface but with a solid foundation that, at the same time, is not fully definable i.e., a real *demos*—and one which inevitably includes a large amount of constructive ambiguity to function.

This success also included the reaffirmation of the Franco-German axis at a new level and Merkel will have a satisfied retirement; Mr. Rutte and his colleagues were seen off as mean-spirited and short-sighted voting hogs to their national electorates; the Eastern European States fought off the self-righteous liberals and their insulting mantras about the alleged lack of the 'rule of law' in their countries.

The deal now goes for approval to the shower of demagogues in the European Parliament, responsible to nobody, and who played no part whatever in creating the Deal, and never could. But, for misguided reasons, the MEPs have been given approval power over such things without any corresponding responsibility for creation of consensus or implementation of decisions.

Plenty grandstanding of course: and its only role will be to pick holes in the settlement, the scope for which there is in plenty—if one cannot see the wood for the trees!

Jack Lane

## Bobby Storey: *First Among Equals*

The funeral of Volunteer Bobby Storey has created something of a palaver. Palavers, of course, are not unusual in the weird political construct of 'Northern Ireland'. They are the very stuff of the communal grind and they gain extra purchase when they occur within one of the two communal blocs rather than between the two. Condemnations of a Republican show of force at a funeral are nothing new from Unionism. The interesting thing is the reaction within the Catholic community.

The view that has been expressed within the media by some ordinary, decent, right-thinking Catholics, and given extensive publicity, is that *some people are more equal than others*. For months relatives have had to put up with harsh restrictions in burying their loved ones, due to the Covid restrictions, and been instructed by the Executive, including the Sinn Féin leader of the North, to desist from normal practice associated with grieving.

Seeing Sinn Féin flouting the directives given to the masses and doing its own thing with its own has angered a section of the community and this anger has been extensively aired in the media and latched on to by those who wish to do Sinn Féin ill, for various reasons.

The anger is understandable at a personal level. But surely, at the political level it is a case of *first among equals*, rather than some being more equal than others. The sending off of Bobby Storey had every appearance of a State Funeral, a special event that had a status above the temporary circumstances which now regulate ordinary behaviour for individuals. If HM the Queen or another important Royal were to die, would the restrictions imposed on the masses be applied? I very much doubt it. And there is little doubt that Bobby Storey was very special indeed in relation to the achievement of the current position of the Catholic community and the resurgence which brought it to a position of equality within 'Northern Ireland'.

Bobby Storey was the most vigorous of spirits within that resurgence—ordinary in so many ways but special all the same. He was the embodiment of the struggle in most of its forms. From when he joined the IRA, during the high point of the Republican offensive, between Internment and the fall of Stormont, he was in the thick of the action—fighting gun battles

with Crown forces, attempting to spring comrades from gaol in helicopters, serving nearly 20 years in gaol himself, organising the Great Escape of 1983, directing large and flamboyant operations like the taking over of Belfast docks by volunteers, when fleets of lorries were brought from South Armagh to offload the captured goods to be taken south, and directing Intelligence operations in the crucial period after 1998.

Could anyone within the depressed and beaten community of the early 1960s imagine such things? Their occurrence helped demoralise the Unionist political class and counter its ascendancy over the Catholic community, and they forced the real Power in the Land to exact structural change that equalised relations between the two communities.

I have seen Bobby Storey compared to a number of figures by the political adversaries of Gerry Adams. Ed Moloney of *'Boston Project'* infamously called him "*Gerry Adams' Beria*" and "*Luca Brasi with brains*"—after the character from *The Godfather*. All very predictable from Moloney. Former comrade, Anthony McIntyre, compared him to Richard Mulcahy "*an IRB and subsequent IRA leader who became a key player in the violent enforcement of the Treaty against those who maintained fidelity to a republican project*".

McIntyre described Storey as—

"an immensely courageous and determined IRA volunteer who invariably led from the front... A man of immense practical intelligence coupled with a tactical verve and... remarkably bereft of all political and strategic acumen... It is not that Bobby Storey abandoned everything he ever believed in. Politically, there was extraordinarily little he did believe in other than the IRA... His politics were those of armed resistance to the British state. When that ceased he was left with no politics... he became an enforcer for the Adams political career project."

McIntyre rejected comparisons with Michael Collins, which had been made by some, founded on Storey's role as Head of IRA Intelligence. Actually comparisons with Collins are very instructive. Certainly Storey was more of a fighter/soldier than Collins and spent much more time in British gaols. An argument could be made that he was an even more effective Director

of Intelligence than Collins within the situation he operated in. But his great attribute was actually that he left the politics to others and then implemented agreed decisions to great effect. If Collins had left the politics to De Valera in 1921, and not engaged in statesmanship himself, on a unilateral basis, would the movement have been split by the British in the way it was? And, if Collins had left the fighting to his men in the countryside, and not indulged in reckless bravado in West Cork, he would have preserved himself as the indispensable element for his *stepping stones* to freedom.

Bobby Storey had an immense task entrusted to him when he was released from prison in 1998 after the Good Friday Peace settlement. It was to organise the Republican Army's retreat from the battlefield in the transition from war to politics. Retreating from the battlefield, whilst maintaining your forces in good order and discipline, is one of the most difficult of military manoeuvres. Britain, which is the most martial state in history, is well aware of how armies have been destroyed, whilst being formerly undefeated, in such a manoeuvre. Micheline Kerney Walsh described it well in her masterpiece, *'Destruction by Peace: Hugh O'Neill after Kinsale'*, and Cardinal O'Fiaich, who wrote the *Preface*, surely communicated its lessons to Charles Haughey and Fr. Reid and Gerry Adams, who were at that time developing a new peace with the British State. Germany in 1918 was also a good case in point, for a more recent British achievement.

There were two problems in successfully performing such a manoeuvre. Firstly, the British State and its various and myriad agencies naturally wished to destroy the force that it had failed to defeat in war and which now confronted it politically. Secondly, there was always the problem of the Republican forces fragmenting and being torn apart by Republican diehards who wished to maintain the traditional position and found it impossible to accept the prospect of a political transition to the final objective, for which the War had been fought. This element was bolstered by the fact that Republicans had maintained a hostile disposition to many of the things Sinn Féin began to embrace to secure the secondary objective of the war—the equalising agenda—in the transition to the final objective. And there was a long experience of "sell-outs" through participation in the systems that were pointed to in order to preserve the core of the movement from the virus of the political process.



If the British State had got the better of the Republican movement in this process the resurgence would have been rolled back and the community position of equality squandered. And there were certainly some within the ranks, and outside, who would have been happy at this and to have said: "I told youse so!"

There was therefore a shadow war, which had to be organised by Bobby Storey against the British in the IRA's fighting retreat. Storey established a meticulous Intelligence-gathering operation with assets in many important places, and he ran sleepers in significant positions within key institutions. This shadow war comprised obscure events like the Castlereagh break-in, the Northern Bank Robbery, the Stormontgate Spy Ring etc. It was never quite clear who was involved in these mysterious events but they were probably combinations of British/Republican activities: British Intelligence attacks on the Republican position which were warded off by very competent responses, directed

largely by Bobby Storey. What was proved was that the IRA remained a fighting force, not to be taken lightly by its former foe, as it metamorphosed "from a caterpillar to a butterfly, and flew away", in Bobby Storey's imaginative phrase.

It would have given Bobby Storey great pleasure to have seen the Republican movement take control of an area of East Belfast, in alien and hostile territory, to complete his passing. It was an operation that he would have organised himself if he had remained at the helm, and he surely would have smiled at what was accomplished in his absence.

Pat Walsh

*The Catholic Predicament In 'Northern Ireland', Catastrophe And Resurgence 1914-1968* by Pat Walsh:

Volume One : **Catastrophe:** 334pp. €24, £20

Volume Two : **Resurgence:** 1969-2016: 586pp. €30, £25

postfree in Ireland and UK

## Break With Sterling

continued

This article will dip into the question of bias in Irish economic analysis, summarise the Irish role in the negotiations for the European Monetary System and assess the effects of the 1979 break with Sterling with a view to post-Brexit considerations.

### THE QUESTION OF SOURCES

The first problem one encounters in investigating topics in Irish economic history is the difficulty of finding reliable or authoritative sources. Traditionally Irish economists have suffered from what can only be described as an insular West British bias. Happily, an economic historian, Kevin O'Rourke, has demonstrated that accounting for the economic development of the Irish State since independence without such a bias is both possible and enlightening.

In his book, *A Short History of Brexit* (2019), O'Rourke argues that Irish economic growth in the 75 years from 1926 to 2001 fits the pattern of an independent state on the European periphery catching up on its richer neighbours, and is broadly comparable to that of Spain, Portugal, Greece and Finland; what was different in Ireland was the timing of that growth. He attributes the under-performance of the Irish economy in the two decades between 1950 and 1970, a time when most Western European econo-

mies were developing well, to two factors: delayed liberalisation and "Ireland's excessive dependence on the poorly performing British economy" (p. 135).

By liberalisation O'Rourke means the execution of an export-orientated economic policy, based on the elimination of trade tariffs. Ireland was behind core European economies—like France, Germany and the Netherlands—in introducing such a policy. But it was broadly in step with the economies of the periphery, most of which began forging links with the EEC in the early sixties. And, in setting up the *Industrial Development Authority* in 1949 for the purpose of attracting direct investment by multi-national companies, Ireland was ahead of the pack. So, by O'Rourke's reckoning, dependence on Britain was a major inhibitor of economic growth in Ireland.

O'Rourke demonstrates that Irish Gross National Product (GNP) per capita (the most reliable indicator of the living standards of ordinary people) grew as a result of increasing foreign direct investment, and of the Common Agricultural Policy, right from the moment of entry into the EEC in 1973—notwithstanding the Oil Crisis of that time. And, as the economy grew, the proportion of trade with the UK declined.

Referring to the accelerated growth achieved in Ireland during the 1990s, compared to sluggish rates in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, he says:

"It seems clear, not only that the European Union was fundamental in transforming the Irish economy, but also that Irish independence was essential in exploiting the opportunities that the European Union afforded" (p. 146).

Further developing the point, he refers to—

"...a well established political science literature that shows how other small European countries, in Scandinavia and elsewhere, have been able to respond nimbly and flexibly to changing international market conditions in ways that larger countries have found more difficult" (p. 149).

In the Irish university system, it is not uncommon to encounter the viewpoint that the Irish economy was a basket case before the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement of 1965, and that political independence effectively held back economic development. O'Rourke has deftly pulled the mat from under that construction. Whereas the material I have quoted is from O'Rourke's 2019 book, his ideas were developed over many years in economic journals; yet the book has an interesting provenance. First published in French in 2018, its purpose was to explain Ireland to a Continental audience, given the central position that the Irish Border occupied in the Brexit negotiations. Brexit, it seems, is already supplying a bountiful harvest to Ireland in the sphere of ideas.

A lesson from *A Short History of Brexit*, therefore, is that discernment is needed in the use of sources when examining Irish economic history. Sources that I have used in reviewing the 1979 break with Sterling are: *Breaking the Sterling Link: Ireland's Decision to Enter the EMS* by Patrick Honohan and Gavin Murphy, Institute of International Integration Studies (Trinity College Dublin) Discussion Paper 317, 2010; an essay in the 11th edition of *The Economy of Ireland* (editors John O'Hagan and Carol Newman), entitled *Historical Background*, by Jonathan Houghton (Gill and Macmillan, 2011); relevant chapters in *The Macro-Economy of Ireland* by Anthony Leddin and Brendan Walsh (EMU edition, Gill and Macmillan, 1998, 4th edition); relevant chapters in *Economics for Business* by Dermot McAleese (FT Prentice Hall, 2004); and, for a British perspective, *The Great Deception* by Christopher Booker and Richard North (Continuum, 2005); and, for the perspective of a grass roots member of Fianna Fail, *80 Years of Fianna Fail* by Donal O'Shea, Manco Publications, 2006.

The paper from Honohan and Murphy is useful, not only because the authors had



access to the Department of Finance files on the subject, but also because an attempt is made to cover the political context. It contains a strong West British bias.

Haughton's essay is a good summary. The treatment by Leddin and Walsh is reasonably objective but pays insufficient attention to the political background; it has the merit of being written just prior to the birth of the Euro, so EMU (Economic and Monetary Union) is taken very seriously. The chapters in the McAleese textbook summarise the relevant theories succinctly, but the author's disappointment that Milton Friedman's belief in floating exchange rates became a recipe for instability is palpable. Booker and North is invaluable for explaining James Callaghan's loyalty to the traditional British foreign policy distrust of all things European. But, as one of the mainstays of British Euroscepticism, it should come with a health warning. The O'Shea booklet is very useful for the background politics that is never mentioned in economic analysis.

#### THE EMS NEGOTIATIONS

Despite the problem of bias, the basic facts of Ireland's abandonment of the link with Sterling are not disputed. The main action of the story took place in 1978. The relationship with Sterling became bound up with negotiations over the formation of the European Monetary System (EMS), the half-way house to a common currency, conducted over three summits of the European Council: Copenhagen (7 and 8 April); Bremen (6 and 7 July); and Brussels (5 and 6 December). On 15th December 1978, after the UK had signalled that it would not be joining, the Irish Government announced that it would participate in the narrow band of the Exchange Rate Mechanism as part of the EMS which duly came into existence on 13th March 1979.

The traditional parity between the British and Irish currencies could have survived their different responses to the EMS, if Sterling had stabilised at its recent value but, to the surprise of forecasters, its exchange rate value strengthened. It was this unexpected development on foreign exchange markets in the first quarter of 1979 (probably caused by positive expectations about North Sea oil) that forced the connection between the Pound and the Punt to sunder on March 30th, three weeks after the birth of the EMS.

During the 1970s the link to Sterling was a source of weakness for the Irish economy. Devaluations in the British currency were frequent and each devaluation

made foreign imports more expensive, giving rise to a high rate of price inflation (15%). UK inflation was duly imported into Ireland via the currency link.

In addition, Irish trade had become significantly less dependent on the UK market by the late seventies. The value of Irish exports to Britain had declined from 75% of exports in 1960 to 47% in 1978, while the proportionate value of imports from Britain remained relatively constant. But trade with Europe increased, with exports rising from 5% to 30%, while imports went from a negligible amount to 21% over the same time period.

According to Honohan and Murphy Irish finance officials and Government leaders were aware that the Sterling link was problematic and both the main political parties were formally committed to ending it. But practical measures to address the problem were constantly long-fingered. In the event, the issue was forced on Jack Lynch and his Minister for Finance, George Colley, by a development at the highest level of the EEC when, at the April 1978 summit of the European Council in Copenhagen, the German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, with the backing of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing of France, introduced his idea for a common European currency zone that was later called the European Monetary System.

Honohan and Murphy are most likely correct when they say that Ireland "stumbled" into the EMS, but their overall view bears the hallmark of a concocted narrative with a West British bias. Here is their summary:

"Our reading of the official papers suggests that there was little formal economic analysis of the policy choices. At best, highly simplified political and economic checklists were employed. Perhaps this explains why Ireland stumbled from a coherent and robust exchange rate regime into a rather dysfunctional one which lacked a nominal anchor and was associated with recurrent crises and exceptionally high nominal and real interest rates. Not surprisingly, twenty years later, comparatively little hue and cry was raised against a return to a fixed peg in the form of euro-zone membership" (p.2).

The give-aways here are the descriptions of Sterling as a "*coherent and robust exchange rate system*" and of the adoption of the Euro as a "*return*". Apparently, Ireland *stumbled* into the EMS and out of its traditional relationship with Sterling in 1979, and twenty years later moved irrevocably further out of the British orbit by joining the Single Currency. But the

latter move was in no sense a return and in every sense a deliberate alignment with Europe based on the national interest. Our membership of the EMS was mismanaged and had adverse consequences, but it was nonetheless an important stepping stone on the path to independence from what had been an exploitative economic relationship with Britain.

It's interesting that Honohan and Murphy are sympathetic to George Colley. Describing in approving terms Central Bank advice to the Government to avoid taking a position on various currency options, given the uncertainties about the UK's preference, they continue: "*better, in the Central Bank's view, to let the UK choose their preferred system and then row in behind them*" (p. 12). They then describe how Minister Colley "*uncharacteristically*" chose to show the Government's hand at an ECOFIN meeting on 19th June 1978.

Actually, Colley was sometimes overly cautious and sometimes reckless. Without warning, in his Budget of February 1979, he introduced a Farm Levy of 2%, which provoked huge anger from farmers. Under pressure later that year he abandoned the levy altogether, a capitulation that helped stir up a massive protest movement of PAYE workers. Donal O'Shea refers to the "*farm levy fiasco*" (*80 Years of Fianna Fail*, p. 94) as one of the factors causing a drop in the Fianna Fail vote in the Local and European Elections of 1979. Colley was also the Minister who oversaw the fiscal expansion of those years, a policy universally acknowledged to have engendered the chronic Public Debt problems of the 1980s.

The Honohan and Murphy Paper contains a few references to political figures but is otherwise deficient in explaining the political background. The Lynch Government was weak, and still haunted by the fallout from the Arms Crisis of 1970. A firm hand at the Irish tiller was conspicuously absent throughout the year long process that ended with the Sterling link being broken. O'Shea describes how members of the Cabinet, "*especially Haughey*" (p.92), resented the way that important economic decisions, most especially the question of joining the EMS, were being made by a "*gang of four*" (Lynch, Colley, Martin O'Donohue and Des O'Malley). O'Shea also mentions that, when Jim Gibbons voted against Haughey's *Family Planning Bill*, the expectation on the back benches was that Gibbons would lose the Whip (be expelled from Fianna Fail). That Gibbons survived as Minister "*was further proof*

that Lynch did not have full control of his Cabinet" (O'Shea, p.94). It was predictable and entirely consistent with the faltering quality of his leadership that Lynch failed to survive 1979 as Fianna Fail leader.

An incident in the EMS negotiations shows how, even with an Irish Government led by a Fianna Fail faction that had parted company with that party's republican tradition, the prospect of moving closer to Europe and away from Britain through a practical measure was irresistible.

The issue came to a head when the Irish Government got left out of the preparatory briefings in advance of the Bremen Summit. The British representative, Ken Couzens, was aware that the German and French representatives were briefing the Italians, Dutch, Belgians and Danes. On the Continent it was assumed that Couzens would inform the Irish of the current state of play, but he never did so. Honohan and Murphy state that the incident "*highlighted to the Irish authorities how closely Ireland was perceived to be linked with England by fellow EEC members*" (p. 14). In the course of the Bremen Summit Lynch aired his grievance at the treatment Ireland had received. The conclusion drawn by Honohan and Murphy is telling:

"It is as if the affront of being seen as a client of the UK even if only in monetary affairs galvanised a nationalist reaction that severely weakened the cautious instinct to hold onto the security blanket that was the sterling link" (p. 15).

And concluding the paper they state:

"In the end, therefore, the final decision to break the post colonial sterling link can be seen as a symbolic and political act as much as being based on short-term economic or technical financial considerations" (p. 27).

That the Lynch Government would allow a critical economic policy matter to be decided by shallow nationalist sentiment testifies to its lack of competence. This became apparent in the immediate aftermath of the country's entry into the EMS as described below.

Before leaving the EMS negotiations, it is worth noting a Parliamentary Question raised by John Bruton from the pro-British wing of Fine Gael. Regarding the negotiations, Bruton asked how a break with Sterling would affect the Republic's relationship with Northern Ireland. Using the Border as a stick to hold back Ireland's simultaneous integration with the EU and movement away from ties to the UK is likely to be a recurring tactic in the post-Brexit debates.

#### EFFECTS OF THE BREAK WITH STERLING

The immediate effects of Ireland's entry into the EMS and its Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) were adverse: inflation fell faster in the UK than it did in Ireland and various factors—the level of Government borrowing, an increasing public debt burden with costly interest payments, a high interest rate, wage settlements of over 20%—caused the Irish Pound to become overvalued in the ERM. Much of this was down to political mismanagement. Wages and public expenditure needed to be tightly controlled to get the benefits of the new currency alignment. Leddin and Walsh state the point diplomatically: "*Our entry into the ERM had little impact on wage bargaining behaviour or on the conduct of fiscal policy*" (Leddin and Walsh, p.503). And they quote a statement from a famous German economist working in the University of Chicago, Rudiger Dornbush, to summarise the dire economic situation in Ireland at the time:

"A policy that uses a fixed exchange rate to disinflate and at the same time requires fiscal consolidation can easily run into difficulties. The fixed exchange rate policy stands in the way of a gain in competitiveness and in fact becomes a policy of overvaluation. The overvalued currency then needs to be defended by high real interest rates. The combination of budget cutting, high real interest rates and an overly strong currency creates unemployment on each score. There is no offsetting crowding-in mechanism unless money wages are strongly flexible downwards or productivity growth is high. Neither was the case in Ireland and hence the country is locked into a high unemployment and high debt trap" (p. 505).

The economic crisis was compounded by three years of political instability (from December 1979 to December 1982 there were four changes of Taoiseach and three changes of Government). When a stable Government eventually emerged, the international recession of the early eighties prevented a recovery in Ireland. That Fine Gael-Labour administration under Garret Fitzgerald was unable to get either the public finances or the scale of wage settlements under control. It wasn't until 1986 that improvements in the international environment began to impact on Ireland and 1987 that a Government was elected, under Charles Haughey, with the wherewithal to undo the mistakes of previous years.

It would be wrong to ascribe the economic turnaround of the late eighties exclusively to the Haughey's political competence—a devaluation of the Irish

pound in 1986 gave a competitive edge to Irish exports as international markets started to boom, and the high rate of unemployment had a moderating effect on wage demands—but through forging a new Social Partnership, delivering a major reduction in public expenditure, and kick-starting employment-generating projects like the Irish Financial Services Centre, Haughey delivered reforms that attracted a flow of investment into the country. In any case, it was only from 1986 onwards that Ireland began to enjoy the benefits of EMS membership, an indication of which was the convergence of the Irish inflation rate to that of Germany.

So the effects of the decoupling of the Irish and British currencies were initially adverse but eventually positive. The above quotation from Honohan and Murphy to the effect that Ireland moved from a stable currency regime to "*a rather dysfunctional one*" is entirely misleading. It is true that the EMS fell apart in late 1992, following a sustained assault by speculators on most of its currencies; the ultimate cause of disparities within the EMS was the high costs associated with German re-unification. However, the benefits to Ireland of joining the EMS had effect for at least six years, and that period (1986-92) was an important time in Irish economic history.

Largely because of our experience in the EMS, Ireland easily met the criteria for graduating to the Euro. Leddin and Walsh even consider that, notwithstanding the difficulties encountered before 1986, "*the rise in our real exchange rate after 1979 was much more modest than it would have been had the sterling link been maintained*" (p. 505). A final point worth noting on the economics of currency relationships between Ireland, the EU and the UK is that, as long as Irish companies trade with the UK, which will probably be always, the exchange rate between the two countries will be a factor needing to be taken account of in Irish policy making.

The history of Ireland's experience of joining the European Monetary System in 1979 certainly has relevance for the debates that will open up when the Brexit negotiations conclude at the end of this year. Stand-out lessons for me are the need to be wary of West British bias in Irish economic commentary, the importance of political competence for economic policy and an insight into how obstacles in the way of our relationship with Europe arising from our associations with Britain can be overcome.

Dave Alvey

## An Economic Deep Freeze

For a number of decades now manufacturing companies have adhered to the Japanese doctrine of reducing stock by ordering “*just in time*”. There are a number of benefits to this from a business view. Firstly the investment in working capital is reduced. Secondly, the risk of being left holding obsolescent stock is not as great. Thirdly, it encourages manufacturing efficiency.

In order for the system to work there must be no disruption in the production or distribution processes. Obstacles to the smooth functioning of the system must be eliminated.

The analogy that is often used is of a canoeist floating on a deep river. He moves slowly and is barely aware of any boulders below the surface. But as the water level drops the current increases and he must

confront the various obstacles which were formerly hidden.

However, with the advent of Brexit and now Covid 19 “*just in time*” is not practical. There has been a scramble to secure supplies as lead times are extended to breaking point.

While demand and therefore rents have reduced for retail units and office space (as more people work from home), the demand for warehousing space is soaring as distributors and manufacturers stock up fearing disruption in supplies.

The mentality has even extended to the final stage in the supply chain: the consumer. In the white goods category there has been a dramatic increase in sales of fridge freezers!

John Martin

## Micheál Martin Betrays Supporters Of The Occupied Territories Bill

On 30th January 2018, Independent Senator Frances Black tabled the Control of Economic Activity (Occupied Territories) Bill 2018 in the Seanad. This sought to make it illegal to import goods or services into Ireland from illegal settlements in occupied territories, in particular, from the illegal Jewish-only settlements established by Israel in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), which it has occupied since June 1967 (HYPERLINK "<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2018-01-30/7/>").

The Bill was opposed by the Fine Gael Government but was backed by every opposition party – Fianna Fáil, Sinn Féin, Labour, Social Democrats and Greens – and a number of independents. It had a good chance of passing through both the Seanad and the Dáil and becoming law, since the Government didn't have a majority in either House at the time.

### FIANNA FÁIL TAKE THE LEAD

On 5th December 2018, the Bill was passed by the Seanad by 29 votes to 16 and consideration of the Bill then moved on to the Dáil. Fianna Fáil took over responsibility for securing its passage through the Dáil and, in the second reading debate on 23rd January 2019, Fianna Fáil foreign affairs spokesman, Niall Collins, led the debate. Seven other

Fianna Fáil TDs — Jim O'Callaghan, Darragh O'Brien, James Browne, Billy Kelleher, Fiona O'Loughlin, Eugene Murphy and Éamon Ó Cuív — spoke in support of the Bill. And Fianna Fáil TDs voted for the Bill the next day when it HYPERLINK "<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2019-01-24/26/>" passed its second stage by 78 votes to 45. (HYPERLINK "<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2018-12-05/27/>")

Little did they know that they were wasting their time. Eighteen months later on 21 July 2020, their leader Micheál Martin, now Taoiseach of a Fianna Fáil/Fine Gael/Green coalition government, declared that the objective of the Bill – to ban the import of goods and services from the Jewish-only settlements in the Israeli occupied West Bank – “*is not legally possible*”, by which he meant that doing so would be contrary to EU law. In other words, all the efforts made to pass the Bill, including by his own party, were a pointless waste of time – because he now says it “*is not legally possible*” for Ireland to ban the import of settlement goods. That was the main reason that Fine Gael gave for opposing the Bill. HYPERLINK "<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2020-07-21/7/>"

### MICHEÁL MARTIN WITHDRAWS

With that, Micheál Martin unilaterally withdrew Fianna Fáil from the project to ban Settlement Goods from Ireland that was initi-

ated over three years ago by *Sadaka—The Ireland Palestine Alliance*, and was supported by the *Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign*, the *ICTU*, *Trócaire*, *Christian Aid Ireland* and *Amnesty International*. Since their votes were essential for the Bill to pass, Fianna Fáil were part of the discussion about the Bill from the outset and, after initial hesitation, they supported the Bill's passage through the Seanad at every stage and then assumed responsibility for the Bill's passage through the Dáil.

It wasn't Fianna Fáil's fault that it didn't become law in the months after it passed its second stage on 24th January 2019. As that vote demonstrated, there was a considerable majority for the Bill in the Dáil, but it didn't pass through its later stages there and become law because the Fine Gael Government found a procedural trick to obstruct its passage (of which more later).

As Foreign Minister Simon Coveney told the *Kan* public broadcaster on a visit to Israel in December 2019, “*we have effectively blocked the legislation from moving through parliament as it normally would*” (HYPERLINK "<https://www.timesofisrael.com/visiting-israel-irish-fm-says-hes-open-for-new-thinking-on-peace-process/>" Times of Israel, 3 December 2019).

### OCCUPIED TERRITORIES BILL LEFT OUT

The Bill lapsed with the dissolution of the Dáil and Seanad on 14th January 2020, prior to the General Election on 8th February 2020. However, all was not lost because the major parties, apart from Fine Gael, made a commitment in their Election Manifestos to introduce a ban on Settlement Goods from Israeli-occupied territories. The possibility that the Bill would be revived in the next parliament looked good.

In the Fianna Fáil Manifesto, Micheál Martin promised that Fianna Fáil would “*Progress the Occupied Territories bill*”. He neglected to tell the Irish electorate that it “*is not legally possible*” for Ireland to ban Settlement goods, as he told the Dáil later after he became Taoiseach. HYPERLINK "<https://www.inmo.ie/tempDocs/Fianna%20Fa%20GE%202020.pdf>"

The Sinn Féin Manifesto promised to “*ban goods from Israel's illegal colonial settlements in Palestine from entering the Irish market by implementing the Occupied Territories Bill*”. HYPERLINK "[https://www.inmo.ie/tempDocs/Sinn%20Fein%20GE%202020%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.inmo.ie/tempDocs/Sinn%20Fein%20GE%202020%20(1).pdf)"

And the Greens Manifesto promised “*a ban on settlement goods*”. HYPERLINK "<https://www.inmo.ie/tempDocs/Green%20Party%20GE%202020.pdf>"

However, in the negotiations with Fine Gael about forming a coalition government, Fianna Fáil and the Greens gave in to Fine Gael and reneged on these promises to the electorate — and as a consequence there is no mention of the *Occupied Territories Bill* or an equivalent in the coalition's Programme for Government.

Fianna Fáil and the Greens gave in to Fine Gael, even though between them they have more seats than Fine Gael in the newly elected Dáil (FF:37, G:12, FG:35) — and even though parties with a manifesto commitment to a ban



on Settlement Goods had substantially more seats overall in the newly elected Dáil. Sinn Féin had been especially successful, increasing their number of seats from 23 to 37.

Micheál Martin gave into Fine Gael on this issue despite being in a position of strength and as a result the Occupied Territories Bill was left out of the Programme for Government — which means that the possibility of the present coalition allowing the Bill or an equivalent to pass is remote.

But Micheál Martin has gone much further than that: he has treated with contempt all those who have worked diligently for years with his party to put on the statute book a modest piece of legislation to counter Israel's unceasing colonisation of Palestinian land.

As Kevin Liston wrote in a letter to the Irish Times on 25th July 2020:

"... it would have been better if Fianna Fáil had not raised the hopes of the Palestinian people when the Bill was being debated in both Houses of the Oireachtas, if the Taoiseach believed then, as he would now appear to believe, according to the report in The Irish Times of July 22nd, that the Bill would be in breach of EU law.

"Regrettably, the Palestinian have been dealt a cruel disservice at a time when they have never been in greater need of international solidarity." [HYPERLINK "https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/fianna-fail-and-the-occupied-territories-bill-1.4313031"](https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/fianna-fail-and-the-occupied-territories-bill-1.4313031)

#### FINE GAEL OPPOSITION

The Fine Gael Government opposed the Bill, even though it has frequently condemned Israel's colonisation programme on the grounds that it is illegal under international law. For example, when the Bill was first debated in the Seanad on 30 January 2018, Foreign Minister Simon Coveney said:

"The introduction and settlement of communities from an occupying power to alter the demography of the area is unambiguously illegal under international law. The process of establishing settlements also inevitably involves violations of the rights of the occupied population through seizure of their land, demolitions, discriminatory treatment, including unequal implementation of planning laws, and other restrictions, including on movement. The Government has consistently and repeatedly condemned the construction and expansion of settlements." [HYPERLINK "https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2018-01-30/7/"](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2018-01-30/7/)

If passed, the Bill would have given expression to Ireland's opposition to these Jewish-only settlements by banning imports from them, and would have set an example for other states to follow suit. In view of Israel's extensive record of committing war crimes, the "punishment" prescribed in the Bill cannot be said to be harsh.

So, why does the Government oppose a bill that merely seeks to sever Ireland's trade relations with these entities which, according to the Minister, are "unambiguously illegal under international law"? The primary reason given by him in the Seanad at the outset on was that

passing the Bill would have a negative impact on Ireland's role in the Middle East "peace process", which has been a priority for him as Foreign Minister. For instance, on 11th July 2018, he said:

"I believe Ireland can play a positive role in the Middle East peace process in working towards an agreed solution to the conflict, with people in the two states involved, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and prosperity. ...

"I have spent hours trying to build relationships with people who will be involved in decision making that can bring about peace - Palestinians, Americans, Israelis and others in Jordan, Egypt, Cyprus and many other neighbouring countries." [HYPERLINK "https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2018-07-11/18/"](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2018-07-11/18/)

But he feared that all his good work would be undermined if the Bill were passed:

"I fear the consequence of Ireland taking a significantly different position from everybody else in the European Union and the world would be to suddenly undermine my capacity to be seen as someone to whom both sides can at least talk, even though I clearly advocate strongly for Palestinians all the time. This is a real fear."

What he means here — but seems to be reluctant to state explicitly — is that, if Ireland dared to adopt a policy that goes beyond verbal criticism of its war crimes, Israel would almost certainly refuse to talk to him as Ireland's Foreign Minister — and his efforts with respect to the "peace process" would be set at naught.

Given the time and effort he has expended on the Middle East "peace process" as Ireland's Foreign Minister, he must believe that there is some chance of success: he must believe that a two-state solution can be achieved by another round of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

This is a fantasy: though Simon Coveney doesn't seem to be aware of it, there is an insurmountable obstacle to a successful outcome to the "peace process". It is the fact that the Israel's political leadership is opposed in principle to a Palestinian state being established in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza.

#### A ROAD TO NOWHERE

The "peace process", by which Simon Coveney sets such store, is a road to nowhere, which has no chance whatsoever of bringing about a two-state solution. Nevertheless, he insists that Ireland should play a role in some undefined way with this process that is doomed to failure, if it is ever revived.

It is far from obvious that it is appropriate for Ireland to be associated at any time or in any circumstances with an inevitably fruitless process. But, it is absurd for him to suggest that Ireland must relinquish the objective of banning the import of goods from Israel's illegal settlements, in order to play a role in a process that is doomed to failure. But that is a message which Simon Coveney conveyed to members of the Oireachtas: vote against the *Occupied Territories Bill* because Israel disapproves of

it and, if the Bill is passed, Israel will deny Ireland any role in the "peace process".

The alternative is to pass the Bill, ban settlement goods from Ireland and set an example for other states to follow. True, this course of action might mean that Ireland is excluded by Israel from a role in the inevitably fruitless "peace process". But would that be a diplomatic disaster?

#### BILL CONTRARY TO EU LAW?

The other argument that Simon Coveney has deployed against the Bill is that it would be contrary to EU law for Ireland to enact legislation to ban the import of goods from settlements in occupied territories, because that is a matter within the competence of the EU. At the end of the day that can only be determined definitively by the relevant legal authority, which is the European Court of Justice.

Over time, this argument came to dominate the Fine Gael Government's opposition to the Bill — because it provided it with a means to block the passage of the Bill through the Dáil after it passed its second stage in 24th January 2019. How so? The following from the Oireachtas website provides the answer:

"The Dáil may not pass legislation that involves tax or expenditure of public moneys without a prior recommendation by the Government. If a PMB [Private Members' Bill] involves public expenditure, it cannot progress to Committee Stage unless the Government issues a money message supporting the expenditure. If a PMB imposes a tax, it cannot progress to Committee Stage unless a member of the Government brings forward a financial resolution on a motion and the Dáil approves it." [HYPERLINK "https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/visit-and-learn/how-parliament-works/how-laws-are-made/"](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/visit-and-learn/how-parliament-works/how-laws-are-made/)

The Government insisted that the Bill (which is a Private Member's Bill) would involve the expenditure of public moneys and therefore could not progress to the Committee Stage without a prior recommendation by the Government.

But how was the Bill going to involve the expenditure of public moneys? Simon Coveney told the Dáil on 23rd January 2020:

"Should Ireland be found to have breached EU law, as we would expect, the State would be exposed to potentially very significant fines as well as legal costs. Fines recommended by the Commission in such cases can include lump sums of more than €1.5 million plus daily fines. Cumulative annual costs of these fines can range from hundreds of thousands of euros per year at the lower end of the scale, up to tens of millions of euros per year at the highest end." [HYPERLINK "https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2019-01-23/25/"](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2019-01-23/25/)

These sums seem to be way over the top. But on this basis, the Fine Gael Government refused to give the Bill a prior recommendation so that it could proceed to the Committee Stage.

**David Morrison**  
26 July 2020



# 'Russian interference' In British Affairs!

A British Commons Report, prepared by the *Intelligence and Security Committee*, has just been published by the Tory Chairman of the Committee, who was elected with the support of Labour MPs: he nominated himself, the Tories on the Committee voted against him, and he was subsequently expelled from the Tory Party! The previous Chairman had delayed publication for 10 months.

In fact the Report gives no evidence of Russian interference, apart from a few redacted comments.

No problem: Labour and the Scots Nats declared that British Intelligence Agencies did not find any evidence because they did not look for it!

Labour MPs have done their utmost to give this report as much publicity as possible. On Wednesday 22nd July, in the last questions to the Prime Minister of the parliamentary session, Starmer, leader of the Opposition, attacked Johnson over the Report, using each of his six allotted questions to amplify his attack. In the ensuing debate, Labour MPs continued the offensive.

James Brokenshire, Minister of State for Security at the Home Office, replied for the Government.

These are excerpts taken from *Hansard*. Labour MP Nick Thomas-Symonds declared:

"until recently, the Government had badly underestimated the Russian threat and the response it required.

Not my words, but the damning indictment of deep systemic failings in the Government's approach to security that the Russia report sets out. It is not so much that the Government studied what was happening and missed the signs. The truth is that they took a conscious decision not to look at all, as in the case of the 2016 referendum. If there is any doubt about the failure of Ministers to look, let me tell the House what the report says:

"The written evidence provided to us appeared to suggest that HMG had not seen or sought evidence of successful interference in UK democratic processes".

Who provided the written evidence? If we check the footnote, it was the Government themselves. No wonder the Government were so desperate to delay the publication of the report. Sitting on it for months and blocking its publication before a general election was a dereliction of duty.

We have no issue with the Russian people. It is the Russian state that is involved in a litany of hostile activity, cyber-warfare, interference in democratic processes, illicit finance and acts of violence on UK soil. The report finds a failure of security departments to engage with this issue to the extent that the UK now faces a threat from Russia within its own borders. Does the Minister accept that that is in a situation when the UK is, as the report says, a top target for the Russian regime? Does he also accept, on defending the UK's democratic processes and discourse, that no single organisation was offering leadership in government? Instead, it was, in the words of the report, "a hot potato" passed from one to another, with no body taking overall responsibility.

I thank our security services for the work they do, but they need help, and the report makes it clear that they have not received the strategic support, the legislative tools or the resources necessary to defend our interests. The report concludes that

"recent changes in resourcing to counter Russian Hostile State Activity are not (or not only) due to a continuing escalation of the threat—but appear to be an indicator of playing catch-up..."

When will the Government stop playing catch up? Anyone who saw the Prime Minister's failure to engage on this at Prime Minister's questions will be extremely worried. When will the Government treat this matter with the seriousness it deserves, act on the findings of the report and put the security of our country first?" (<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2020-07-22/debates/8FB95D9A-A489-4F3C-8840-017A7A00949A/IntelligenceAndSecurityCommitteeRussiaReport>)

Other Members then took up the baton to attack Russia and to practically accuse Boris Johnson's Government of treason.

The motivations of the Labour leadership for this shameful work are manifold. One is to try yet again to delegitimise the result of the Brexit Referendum (*the Russians distorted the democratic process, so the result doesn't count*). Stella Creasy (Labour member for Walthamstow) :

"The Minister has told us today that he is confident that there is no need for an investigation into any potential Russian interference in the EU referendum, because if there had been, it would have been detected by existing processes. Given that this report sets out that there

was Russian interference in other referendums and that the Russians continue to be involved in British politics, why does he think that the Russians chose to sit that one out?"

Another motivation is to flatter the electorate; the British are on the whole very war-minded, in all strata of society. Didn't they win World War II without anyone's help? Fifty per cent of British people interviewed in 2018 are convinced they did (<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/international/articles-reports/2018/05/08/half-britons-think-britain-did-more-us-and-russia->).

A war-like stance always goes down well.

Another motive is to show that they've broken completely with Corbyn, who's a pacifist.

And then, it will please the United States. Shadow Foreign Secretary Lisa Nandy is as anti-Russian as she is anti-Chinese. She applauded the decision to remove all traces of Huawei from the British telephone system (which will take years and cost astronomical sums of money). This decision was finally taken by the Johnson Government under very strong American pressure, but Labour applauds.

What can we conclude? Let's conclude with a curiosity. Northern Ireland has its particular system of political parties. A member of the DUP (Democratic Unionist Party, Protestant) had this to say in the debate, and his remarks are not much more bizarre than those of Labour. Jim Shannon (Strangford) (DUP):

"...The Minister will be familiar with the four horsemen of the apocalypse; I believe that Russia is one of those horsemen and a real danger to the free world. Will the Minister further outline what lessons we have learned from the report that will help us to counteract the very real presence of Russian interference, especially in social media?"

When talking about the English political system, beware of simplifications: "*Labour good, conservative bad*", doesn't work in this case. Especially when Johnson is less of a warmonger than others and might well be doing something for economic recovery in the north of England.

Some in the bellicose, ultra-liberal camp would like to get rid of him. Starmer will give them a helping hand . . .

Cathy Winch

## FF/FG Founding Fathers— *Forsaken, 'Forgotten', Forbidden ?*

Alongside its political agenda, the governmental marriage between Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael also has its sentimental features—false, foolish and farcical.

This June 28th, the new FF Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, announced that he was requesting Leo Varadkar, the outgoing FG Taoiseach and now Tánaiste, to place the portrait of Michael Collins back in the Taoiseach's office, alongside which Martin would now place a portrait of Éamon de Valera. Perhaps we should be grateful for small mercies. This April 26th, Martin received a glowing profile from *Sunday Independent* political correspondent Philip Ryan, and Martin did not demur one iota after Ryan had falsely accused de Valera of having "murdered" Collins in August 1922.

See [www.pressreader.com/ireland/sunday-independent-ireland/20200510/282595970088062](http://www.pressreader.com/ireland/sunday-independent-ireland/20200510/282595970088062) for my Sindo letter on May 10th, reprinted in the June *Irish Political Review*. Dev had indeed been forsaken by Martin, who stood idly by when his Party's founder was accused of "murder". But Dev, apparently, is not now also to be forgotten, as he will be joined in Martin's picture gallery by Collins, his "murder victim", as well as by Martin's own great hero, the "won't stand by" FF Taoiseach, Jack Lynch.

Apart from that not insignificant detail, however, like is not being compared with like with such a lineup. Whereas de Valera had been the founding President of Martin's Fianna Fáil Party in 1926, it was not Collins who had founded Varadkar's Fine Gael Party. Indeed, Collins never founded any Party at all. Having split from Sinn Féin (where de Valera continued on as its then President), and having launched the Treaty War in June 1922, Collins did not permit Dáil Éireann to meet, and for the remaining two months of his life, he proceeded to rule militarily through a triumvirate composed of Dick Mulcahy, Eoin O'Duffy, and Collins himself as Commander-in-Chief.

It was only following the formal establishment of the Free State in December 1922, that the President of its Executive Council, W.T. Cosgrave, got around to become founding President of the Cumann na nGaedheal Party in April 1923. And it was Blueshirt Fascist leader Eoin O'Duffy who would become the founding President

of Fine Gael, holding that office from September 1933 until June 1934.

Fine Gael's own website—[www.finegael.ie/the-party/history-of-fine-gael/](http://www.finegael.ie/the-party/history-of-fine-gael/)—has, however, erased all mention of O'Duffy from its own 'history', not to mention the then Fascism of its more preferred luminaries, such as John A Costello, who would be Taoiseach from 1948 to 1951, and again from 1954 to 1957, and who in 1934 had threatened Dáil Éireann:

"The Minister carefully refrained from drawing attention to the fact that the Blackshirts were victorious in Italy and that the Hitler Shirts were victorious in Germany, as, assuredly, in spite of this Bill and in spite of the Public Safety Act, the Blueshirts will be victorious in the Irish Free State."

And so, marching side by side with their shared Michael Collins iconography, the rotating FF FG Taoisigh, Martin and Varadkar, have also jointly 'forgotten' the founding first President of Fine Gael in 1933-34, and who it was who had led the opposition to that Government headed by the first President of Fianna Fáil. The Ireland of those days, of course, knew O'Duffy only too well. And so also did the English-speaking world at large, thanks in no small measure to Milton Bronner, London-based European manager for the US Newspaper Enterprise Association during the two decades interval between World Wars One and Two. A syndicated feature article filed by Bronner on 16th March 1934, and published throughout the USA, was entitled "*O'Duffy Laughs at Buffets of Fate, Fights On For Erin*". It was illustrated with portraits of O'Duffy and Dev, placed side by side, but with the Fine Gael Leader placed higher. Bronner's support for the Fine Gael personality cult surrounding its Leader proceeded accordingly:

"Next to that of Eamonn de Valera, there is no better known name in the Irish Free State today than that of Eoin O'Duffy, militant opposition leader, whom President De Valera had arrested. Once upon a time friends fighting on the same side against England, they are now sworn enemies, with O'Duffy planning night and day to supplant the government De Valera leads with one of his own devising... When in the fall of 1931 the Cosgrave government published its public safety act, it became O'Duffy's lot to arrest many of the Irish

Republican army for offenses against its decrees. When De Valera came into power he released those prisoners and fired O'Duffy. The latter proudly refused to accept another position offered him and a possible pension. Instead he joined the Army Comrades' Association which he changed into the National Guard and when De Valera outlawed this organization, changed its name again, but went on defiantly wearing the banned blue shirt until arrested recently. This arrest marked another fantastic chapter in his career. Leader of rebels against England, he led police against rebels against the Irish Free State... A year ago or so, De Valera denounced the public safety act and O'Duffy was enforcing it. Then De Valera, making use of this same safety act, arrested the man who used to enforce it against others. Just turned 40, vigorous, brave and aggressive, O'Duffy looks hopefully forward to conquering power. He especially thinks so, because he is a bachelor. As he put it: 'You must either be single or damned.' It is this man of whom his partisans sing:

"Forward lads for Ireland. We can raise her and we will.

We did it once for Collins, and our arms are active still;

When some we know were 'careful' of the English Black and Tan,

Our leaders did the fighting and O'Duffy was the man!"

See <http://irelandscw.com/docs-ODMoR.htm> for my own assessment of O'Duffy.

On June 4, 2019 David McCullough and Edel McAllister presented a six minutes Prime Time feature—"*Fianna Fáil v Fine Gael: What's the Difference?*"—which remains accessible online from RTE sites (see <https://youtu.be/d-XFDhqb1Y>). It was a well presented feature, but while having some historical components, it nonetheless skipped over Fine Gael's Blueshirt origins.

With the formation of the new Government on January 27th, however, David McCullough did indeed rise well to the occasion by scripting and narrating an excellent three minutes item—headed "*Historic Coalition*"—for the 6.01 pm RTE News. This made excellent use of historical documentary footage, skilfully edited.

FF's second leader, Seán Lemass, was the first party leader to get a sound bite, with the caption '*Seán Lemass, Fianna Fáil Taoiseach, 1963*'. The third sound bite came with the caption '*John A Costello, Fine Gael Taoiseach, 1949*'. But the second sound bite came with the caption '*Eoin O'Duffy, Fine Gael Leader, 1934*', as O'Duffy, in Blueshirt uniform, was seen and heard bellowing forth, and be-



ing introduced as follows in McCullagh's commentary:

"The pro-Treaty Cumann na nGaedheal distrusted Fianna Fáil so much that after it lost power in 1932 it merged with the quasi-Fascist Blueshirts to form Fine Gael."

That's called telling it like it was. But this McCullagh news item did not even last the evening of June 27th itself. Three hours after being broadcast on the 6.01 pm news, it was pulled from the 9.00 pm news, and was replaced by just a one minute contribution from McCullagh—entitled "*Sworn enemies must now work together*"—but which did not have time to include the Blueshirt phase.

See <https://bit.ly/3InrQNW> to view that short 9 pm news item on RTÉ News website, but there it is at least accompanied by an informative text penned by McCullagh, which includes the following narrative:

"De Valera, after Civil War defeat and imprisonment, founded Fianna Fáil, which attracted many anti-Treatyites. He took power in 1932, introducing social reforms and protection for Irish industry, breaking further away from British control, and remaining neutral in the Second World War, the ultimate expression of sovereignty. But while the origins of both parties, and the split between them, lay in the Civil War, it is slightly misleading to call them 'the Civil War parties', because both were formed in a conscious attempt to transcend the limitations of that split."

"De Valera left anti-Treaty Sinn Féin and formed Fianna Fáil in 1926 precisely because he wanted to appeal to those who were neutral in the Civil War, or even supported the Treaty. After all, while Sinn Féin had done surprisingly well in the 1923 general election, it had still lost. And de Valera liked to win. So he explicitly stated that Fianna Fáil would be a broad church which would try to recreate the united movement of 1918-21."

"Fine Gael was also an attempt at broadening support. While Cumann na nGaedheal had undoubted successes during its ten years in power, it had also become deeply unpopular. After Fianna Fáil took power in 1932, and then won an overall majority in a snap election in 1933, Cosgrave and his colleagues realised the need to rebrand. They also genuinely if wrongly worried that de Valera would ban opposition."

"It decided on a three-way merger to create a new party. Joining Cumann na nGaedheal in Fine Gael was the Centre Party, which represented former supporters of the constitutional Home Rule Party, who had largely remained neutral in the Civil War. The third part of Fine Gael was more controversial—the quasi-fascist Blueshirts, whose uniforms and Nazi-style salutes echoed contemporary

trends in Europe."

"The Blueshirt leader, Eoin O'Duffy, actually became the first leader of Fine Gael, an arrangement which didn't last long due to his utter unsuitability for political office, and Cosgrave returned to the leadership. But while the two parties had attempted to transcend the Civil War split, the issue which caused the conflict, the State's constitutional status, remained—at least until 1937, when de Valera's Constitution made Ireland a Republic in all but name. The question was finally put to rest when a Fine Gael-led government declared a Republic and formally left the

British Commonwealth in 1949."

McCullagh's text had clearly been designed to accompany the longer three minute footage, now scrapped and banished from the RTÉ website. Why was it deemed necessary to exclude any visual illustration of Fine Gael's 1933 origins? O'Duffy was not being 'forgotten' here, but forbidden. Between 6 and 9 pm on the evening of June 27th, someone in RTÉ was to arrive at a 'Fawlty Towers' determination: "*Don't mention the Blueshirts!*"

Manus O'Riordan

## O'Duffy Laughs At Buffets of Fate, Fights On For Erin

London, March 14—Next to that of Eamonn de Valera, there is no better known name in the Irish Free State today than that of Eoin O'Duffy, militant opposition leader, whom President De Valera had arrested.

Once upon a time friends fighting on the same side against England, they now are sworn enemies, with O'Duffy planning night and day to supplant the government De Valera leads with one of his own devising. All leaders of modern Ireland have had strange careers, full of romance, fighting, and adventure, but none is packed with more incidents than that of O'Duffy.

Trained as an engineer, he started his young life tranquilly enough as assistant surveyor of County Monaghan.

With the sharpening of Irish opposition to further rule by England, he joined the Irish Volunteers, which later became the Irish Republican army.

He revealed considerable gifts both as administrator and organizer, paying especial attention at that time to the athletic side of the movement.

When the Irish rebellion of Easter, 1916, collapsed, the Irish Republican army was divided into local area brigades, so that it could maintain a guerilla warfare against the soldiers and police of Britain.

O'Duffy at once demanded a part in the fighting and the danger. Gen. Dick Mulcahey named him commander of the Monaghan Brigade. He became noted as cool, intrepid, and ruthless.

A lover of the Irish language, he trained his men to speak it and understood it, because it mystified British agents. He captured numberless police and army barracks and wrecked them.

Michael Collins sent O'Duffy to organize the movement in Ulster, where the young leader promptly was seized and put into jail in Belfast. He started a hunger strike.

Released from jail, he spent a hectic time—organizing a county, in

jail, out of jail, once more organizing another county.

When, in January, 1922, the peace treaty was signed between the Irish and the English, and the Irish Free



Eoin O'Duffy

State was set up, O'Duffy took a large part in forming the government army. Then for 10 years he was commissioner of the Civic Guards, which took the place of the old Royal Irish constabulary.

Later he was police commissioner of Dublin and was a familiar figure at the drawings for the Irish sweepstakes. When in the fall of 1931 the Cosgrave government published its public safety act, it became O'Duffy's lot to arrest many of the Irish Republican army for offenses against its decrees.

When De Valera came into power, he released those prisoners and, hearkening to their demands, fired O'Duffy. The latter proudly refused to accept another position offered

him and also a possible pension.

Instead, he joined the Army Comrades' Association, which he changed into the National Guard and when De Valera outlawed this organization, changed its name again, but went on defiantly wearing the banned blue shirt until arrested recently.

This arrest marked another fantastic chapter in his career. Leader of rebels against England, he led his police against rebels against the Irish Free State.

A hunger-striking prisoner in Belfast jail, he put other Irishmen in jail. A burner of British barracks, he built Irish barracks.

A year or so ago, De Valera de-



Eamonn De Valera

nounced the public safety act and O'Duffy was enforcing it. Then De Valera, making use of this same safety act, arrested the man who used to enforce it against others.

Just turned 46, vigorous, brave, and aggressive, O'Duffy looks hopelessly forward to conquering power. He especially thinks so, because he is a bachelor. As he put it: "You must either be single or damned."

It is this man of whom his partisans sing in the "Blue Kerry Song": "Forward, lads, for Ireland. We can raise her and we will!" "We did it once with Collins and our arms are active still; "When some we know were 'careful' of the English Black and Tan, "Our leaders did the fighting and O'Duffy was the man!"

## HIGH TARIFF REQUIRES THE SHORTER WEEK

By BRUCE CATTON

The hoary old bogoblin of national politics, the tariff, seems to be insisting on getting its head into the recovery picture.

If you listen closely, you can hear it scratching at the door to the

week and the tariff isn't at first apparent, a little reflection will make it so.

Back of the whole question of shorter hours, higher wages and unemployment relief stands the ques-

# The Metamorphism Of Tom Barry,

## Master Of Guerrilla Warfare

This is the age of personal revelation. People in the public eye are coming out to reveal their shortcomings like secret alcoholism, their sexual preferences, any time spent in psychiatric hospitals, their fears, their destructiveness and anything in their past life that makes them feel guilty and ashamed like racism and homophobia. If we have lived long enough we have been all of those things that are taboo now.

We had a media that came from the 19th Century and an education that also drifted in from that period. We also had parents that came from the edge of the 19th Century and saw in the 20th Century. Some people have remained in the past, some have gradually thrown off their prejudices through public information in a new age, and some have had their prejudices wrenched off them through revolutionary politics.

Thus we come to Tom Barry, guerrilla fighter, IRA leader during the Irish War of Independence, 21st January, 1919 – 11th July, 1921.

Many people termed in that over abused description, *legends*, are being examined to their very DNA. Tom Barry is no exception. The *Irish Times* recently went into his life before he became an iconic figure. This has angered some people who see this as someone who, failing to get a job in the civil service, after war-service in the British Army, decides to take up the gun against the British occupation of Ireland.

Even if this were true the catalyst is still a good one. He has risked his life for them and he is asking to be paid. He isn't English and so not a patriot, who'll do the job for nothing, but a mercenary sent on dangerous missions and he's asking them to at least give him a decent job, a job in-the-dry, as Irish building workers in England used to say.

His father was a sergeant in the RIC. A sergeant back then, like the later RUC, commanded a police barracks and had a wide territory under his control. The young Barry would have lived in the married quarters in the barracks during a more peaceful period (or lockdown of the people period) and being in close touch with the RIC constables and their opinions, and maybe his father's opinion Certainly

his father becoming sergeant would have come from his attention to duty beyond what is normal. His father, Thomas Barry, eventually resigned and opened a business in his hometown of Rosscarberry, Co. Cork. This would be years before the War of Independence and so unlikely to be on a point of principle.

We don't know much about Tom's parents and next to nothing about his mother. His father's business might have provided the money for his education. Yet, he still failed the examination for the civil service. Who knows what he was like as a young teenager. Disaffected youth in Northern Ireland were once forced into the British Army, by their fathers, in order: *'To make a man of you'*. I'm sure this was often done in the South as well.

The young Barry was educated for a period at Mungret College, County Limerick. His record there says: *"Went home (ran away) without knowledge of superiors – no vocation"*. What would his father have thought of that back then, on being given this opportunity?

Tom Barry was born on the first of July, 1897. In 1915, he enlisted in the Royal Field Artillery in Cork and became a soldier in the British Army. In a memoir he says of this period:

"In June, in my seventeenth year, I had decided to see what the Great War was like. I cannot plead that I went on the advice of John Redmond or any other politician, that if we fought for the British we would secure Home Rule, nor can I say I understood what Home Rule meant. I was not influenced by the lurid appeal to fight to save Belgium or small nations. I knew nothing about nations nothing about nations large or small. I went to war for no other reason than to see what war was like, to get a gun, to see new countries and to feel a grown man. Above all I went because I knew no Irish history and had no national consciousness."

Sounds like the typical semi-illiterate youth with no interest in his own country and possibly with his head filled with nonsense about the master race. For sure the British Army was for him with the persuasive, or by-the-ear backing, of his long-suffering poor old dad.

Barry, having enlisted in the Royal Field Artillery on the 30th of June, 1915, was

sent to the military depot at Athlone for basic training. After six months he was posted to Mesopotamian (modern-day Iraq) then part of the Ottoman Empire. On 1st March, 1916, he was promoted to Corporal. All the places he fought in we have heard of in the recent assault on Iraq, names like Kut and Fallujah. Fighting was fierce and his regiment suffered heavy casualties from the Turkish fight-back.

There is the claim that on hearing of the Easter Rising on Monday, the 24th of April, 1916, supposedly when passing the wireless tent and interpreting what was being said through Morse Code, he was changed forever, demoting himself back to gunner. But he remained in the British Army. From January 1917 until March 1918, he saw further action in battles that saw even more casualties on the British side.

In May his division was moved to Egypt for the campaign against Palestine. In February, 1919 he was shipped back to Ireland.

He was officially discharged from the British Army on the 7th of April, 1919. His record describes him as a sober, good, hardworking man. So no rebellion there, as a ruse, that could have seen him slung out of the army in order to follow his new principles.

On his return to Bandon, In Co. Cork he began to study Law and Business Affairs, while at the same time maintaining a friendship with a local ex-servicemen's organisation. It is recorded he seemed proud of his wartime British Army service and hoisted a Union Jack at Bandon on the first anniversary of the war's end in November, 1919. He later made contact with the Republican Movement, but after the Union Jack incident he was mistrusted by them, especially by Tom Hale the Brigade Commander.

It was as late as July 1920 when he decided on action. The capture and torture of republicans Tom Hales and Pat Harte appalled him so much that he joined the 3rd (West) Cork Brigade of the IRA. What helped was that Tom Hales, who had suspected him of being a spy, was incarcerated, and the new brigade commander was now Charlie Hurley.

Tom Barry's new guerrilla tactics and his training of raw recruits proved him to be invaluable to the fight for freedom. So no need for the three-monkeys philosophy any more.

**Wilson John Haire**



## Michael Heney And The North

The chief political columnist in the *Sunday Independent*, in a digressive review of Michael Heney's *The Arms Crisis Of 1970*, writes (Eoghan Harris, 13th July) that "*Heney seems to have small interest in the wider politics of crucial episodes*". That is true. Heney says hardly a word about Northern Ireland, which was the source of all the trouble and was also the main casualty of Jack Lynch's catastrophic handling of it. The only reference to it seems to be a paragraph on page 237, which—referring to the situation after Lynch had launched the Arms Crisis—says:

"Northern Ireland was something of an x-factor facing Lynch's newly constituted cabinet in July 1969. For several years there had been the stirrings there of a fresh civil rights campaign, a development set to challenge the traditional Fianna Fail approach to partition. A civil rights campaign that succeeded in reforming the partitionist Stormont regime from within, rather than simply seeking its abolition, could have the effect of strengthening partition, not weakening it. This was hardly something Fianna Fail, a party dedicated to ending partition, would welcome, and its leaders were accordingly uncertain on how to embrace the civil rights movement. Nor was Lynch, a politician from the south of the country without any republican pedigree, ideally placed to take a strong lead on this, or even to identify with the developing unrest among Northern nationalists. With the North bubbling ominously, how much of the initiative would Lynch yield to Neil Blaney? The answer, it appears now, was quite a lot..."

What existed North of the Border is very inadequately described as a "*partitionist regime*". And the crisis that overtook Northern Ireland had little to do with Partition and everything to do with the subordinate system of government established by Whitehall in 1921 as the means of enacting Partition.

The leading slogans of the agitation were *One Man, One Vote* and *British Rights For British Citizens*. The ground of radical agitation had been shifted away from Partition to internal political reform. Fresh purpose generated fresh energy.

Unfortunately the fresh purpose was formulated as an abstraction and it lacked a realisable material object.

The demand for *One Man, One Vote* was soon implemented, but gave no satisfaction. It had always been the case in Six Country elections and Westminster elections, and it

had a bearing on a minute fraction of Local Government elections.

The demand for *British Rights For British Citizens* was in substance a demand for British political normality, and it was not available outside British political life. Britain, before its entry to the EU, knew nothing of abstract *Bills of Rights* with Courts to which the citizen could apply to enforce them. And it did not even have Citizens, only Subjects.

And, of course, it had no definite Constitution. Whatever Parliament did was Constitutional, and what Parliament did was determined by the conflicts of two political parties at Westminster, and normality was the product of that. The two relevant political parties excluded the Six County region of the state from their sphere of operation. Demanding British Rights in those circumstances was like crying for the Moon.

Northern Ireland, excluded from British politics but supplied with all the other services of State, including the Welfare State, by Westminster/Whitehall, had no internal political life. The devolved system had never been asked for by anybody, and there was no basis in it for a separate system of politics. And so, when the August pogrom led to the over-ruling of the Stormont franchise, and the Derry gerrymander was ended, *One Man, One Vote* was implemented, the B Specials were disbanded, and a Police Commissioner was brought in from England to put manners on the RUC, the Civil Rights agitation ran out of perspective and a feeling of purposelessness threatened to set in. But the Catholic community, after an exciting year of enthusiastic agitation and expectation, was not ready to be deflated.

The only real thing there had ever been in what passed for political life in Northern Ireland was Partition. The "*Constitutional issue*" had nothing whatever to do with the governing of the state. There were no policy differences involved in it. The only issue was whether to leave the British state or stay in it. The Unionist Party organised the majority community for the purpose of remaining within the British state, on the terms set by the Government of the state. The Nationalist Party organised the minority community for the purpose of leaving the state.

There was never any transfer of votes between the one and the other. The Catholics voted to leave the state, knowing that

this would involve the loss of the Welfare State, because there was nothing else to vote for. But that routine could not be reverted to after the year of exciting demonstrations for something else, culminating in the shock effect of the pogrom launched by the local forces of the state.

That was the situation in which a new IRA emerged, and people who had been declaring that Partition was an irrelevance were drawn to it, and War was declared, and life became purposeful again.

No Dublin Government ever looked beyond Partition at what Northern Ireland was. Partition was all it saw. And, if Catholics were complaining in the North, it was assumed that Partition was the cause, not the extraordinary arrangements of hostile communal government to which they had been subjected. The fact that, though they were held within the British state, they were excluded from the democracy of the state, was never remarked upon. Nor does Heney remark on it. And we know of no evidence that any Southern politician or journalist ever noticed it.

Whitaker, who is credited with giving Lynch realistic advice in 1969, never gave it a thought. He knew that material conditions would be worsened for the Nationalist community if it was transferred to the Irish state, and advised Lynch about it, but did not suggest that Lynch should therefore advise them to seek a settlement within British normality.

In August 1969 Lynch, who had won a General Election a couple of months earlier and was his own man as Taoiseach, made an inflammatory speech which injected an anti-Partition element into the crisis that was ripening in the North. (This was during the 'Siege of Derry', when the Bogside had sealed itself off and was under pressure from a hostile encirclement.)

About two months later he made a speech declaring that peace in Northern Ireland could only be secured by the ending of Partition. And he set in motion the preparation of military arrangements to enable incursions into the North.

All of this was described in detail by Angela Clifford in the Arms Conspiracy Trials and other books. Heney acknowledged her pioneering investigation of the Arms Crisis, and remarks:

"Even Angela Clifford, whose view of events was radically different from many other commentators in the field, conceded that 'the arms crisis was crucial in shaping Irish political life in succeeding decades' (p10).

Others mentioned in the same paragraph are

Professor Dermot Keogh of Cork University and Stephen Collins of the *Irish Times*. One reason why Angela Clifford's view is different is that it is seen from a radically different vantage point—Northern Ireland—where the consequences of the Arms Trial prosecutions were greatest. The prosecution of John Kelly, who acted as liaison between the Dublin Government and the Defence Committees in the North, had dire consequences. It ruptured Government relations with the Defence Committees in about the most shocking and disruptive way that was possible.

Heney writes about these Committees:

"[Captain] Kelly insisted that he was not dealing with the IRA; his entire focus was on the defence of Northern Nationalists, not on attacking partition... On the other hand, British journalist and historian Peter Taylor took the view that 'it was axiomatic that the Defence Committees were dominated by the IRA, while John Kelly... observed that they were, by and large, the same'..."

Heney himself says—

"Although the Defence Committees relied on the IRA muscle for their security, and to that limited extent could be termed a front organisation, they drew on a bigger, more representative pool of citizens..." (p45-6).

Is it possible to be the Front Organisation of an organisation that does not exist?

Republican sentiment was widely dispersed amongst the Catholic population. The very peculiar British state structure in the Six Counties saw to that. But there was no IRA. The Army was being purged from the Irish Republican Army. The IRA had disabled itself and was absorbed in metamorphosis, and the purged elements had not yet got themselves together. The insurrection began without the approval of the Army Council any more than the approval of the Minister of Defence.

The first action in Derry, which unhinged everything else, was organised by a few British ex-Servicemen who were not even Nationalists—just Catholics. Their effective plan for barricading out of the police from the Bogside, put into practice by cooperation with local remnants of the IRA—set off a domino-effect because the state structure was inherently unstable.

When a state system breaks down, things go into flux. A process of rapid change goes on, whose outcome remains to be determined. Ad hoc defence groups sprang up here and there, as happens when a State goes berserk, and various ideals sprouted. Most of them were brought together in an association with the moderate aim of being prepared to meet force with force in the next pogrom.

John Kelly, who had been in the IRA that used to be, and was to be in the new IRA that resulted from the crisis, acted as liaison between the associated Defence Groups and the Dublin Government. It was common ground between them all, including the most Constitutionalist of Constitutional nationalists in the North, that further attacks on Catholic areas by Unionists were on the cards and should be prepared against.

People associated with this publication had been taking some interest in the history of the Ulster Protestants as a body, and in the bizarre British structure of state in the Six Counties. They were sceptical of the belief that further attacks were a virtual certainty. But the general view was that Ulster Unionism was such that the impulse to attack Catholics was ingrained on it.

But the fact was that, as a result of the August events, some Catholic areas in the North were in a state of actual insurrection as a result of defending themselves against assaults by the state, and the entire Catholic community was in what might be called a state of spiritual, or at least sentimental insurrection, while the Protestant community, influenced by Lynch's inflammatory speech in mid-August, echoed by the marching orders given by the Chief of Staff of the (Official) IRA to his imaginary Belfast Brigade, felt itself to be under assault.

The situation needed deft handling. Six County Catholics looked to Dublin to handle it. Wasn't it Dublin's business? Did Lynch not make that speech and did the Constitution not assert sovereignty over them? And wasn't the Free State military training their young men in defensive tactics?

And then, out of the blue, came the shocking slap in the face—the arrest and prosecution of John Kelly on criminal charges, the brushing aside of the Not Guilty verdict, and the disowning by Dublin of all that it had been doing in conjunction with the Defence groups for eleven months.

Heney does no more than hint that these actions by Lynch might have had adverse consequences in the North, but even that was too much for former Taoiseach John Bruton. Reviewing the book for the *Irish Catholic* (June 18), he says that Lynch had two policies, an open one of seeking reform through diplomatic action and a covert one of collaborating with Defence Groups in the North, and—

"Michael Heney controversially argues that this second track approach... might, by reassuring them that they were not alone, have forestalled the re-emergence of the Provisional IRA.

"I do not believe this at all: it is dangerous historical nonsense.

"The Republican ideology, dating back to the Fenians in the 1860s, is based on the false idea that Unionists can be coerced into a united Ireland..."

"This ideology was so widespread among 'Republicans', that the Provisional IRA Republicans would have gone down the cul-de-sac of violence, no matter what the Irish State did..."

All of this ignores the basic fact that the Constitution of the Irish state exerted a delegitimising influence on the British regime in the Six Counties by asserting Irish state sovereignty over them.

A first precondition of effective diplomatic action would have been a repeal of Article 2 of the Constitution. A second precondition would have been a recognition that the British regime was profoundly undemocratic, even on British terms, and regardless of the justice or injustice of Partition per se.

The precursor of this journal put that case to Dublin in 1969-70, and in 1971 a Northern picket was put on the Department of External Affairs to focus attention on the sovereignty claim. Jack Lynch didn't want to engage with that, but neither did Liam Cosgrave, or the leader of the Labour Party, Brendan Corish, or the Official IRA (Eoghan Harris) which later became the main ideological force of the State in combat with the Provos.

Reference to the Fenians is entirely anachronistic. Ireland was a unity under British administration in the 1860s. Partition entered nobody's mind until a quarter of a century later. And, for a quarter of a century after that, it occurred to nobody that Whitehall might enact Partition by putting the Protestant community in the Six Counties to govern the Catholic community outside the democratic system of the state.

The Irish State never dealt with what actually existed in the North after 1921.

When Dublin washed its hands of the North in the Summer of 1970, except for retaining the mischievous sovereignty claim, Northern nationalists were shocked into turning to a new Republican body which had been little more than a vestige until then, but which met the political requirements of the situation as set up by the London and Dublin Governments.

When John Bruton unexpectedly became Taoiseach in 1994, and was Constitutionally obliged to treat the North as part of his business, he seemed to realise suddenly that he knew nothing about it. He asked Martin Mansergh, who had been adviser to Fianna Fail Taoiseachs, to come and advise him. We saw that as being very much to his credit. Mansergh, who had political ambitions of his own, refused, but it is doubtful whether that was a great loss to Bruton.



Bruton is a gross Anglophile. He remained so, despite the disillusioning experience of British conduct in the EU. And he remains so, despite Brexit. His mind simply cannot entertain the possibility that Britain deliberately set up an undemocratic system of sub-government in its Six County region, where politics outside the party system of the state could only have been Protestant versus Catholic, and that the War was made possible by the futility of that conflict when Dublin, the legitimate sovereign authority in its own eyes and in the eyes of the Northern Nationalists, disowned all responsibility to give practical guidance.

The first act of insurrection, which in its ramifications led to war, was a defence of the Bogside against the annual routine invasion connected with the Apprentice Boy commemoration of the Siege of Derry by King James. The Civil Rights agitation of preceding months, conducted by the People's Democracy and other groups, had led to heightened tension across Northern Ireland, and Apprentice Boys had determined to mount an extra strong march through Derry that year. The Irish Government had sent its Foreign Minister, Dr. Patrick Hillery, on an urgent mission to London to warn Harold Wilson's Government that, unless the Parade was curbed or cancelled, there would be serious trouble. The pleas fell on deaf ears: Dr. Hillery was told that the Stormont Government was the authority and that no interference by Westminster was possible.

So the Royal Ulster Constabulary were barricaded out of the Bogside and, over a number of days, it failed to force the barricade.

The construction of the barricade was planned by Len Green a Salford man who served in the Royal Navy, and married and settled down in Derry. He was appalled by the routine harassment of Catholics in what he had supposed to be part of the British state. There were many Catholic ex-Servicemen in Derry who took a similar view. They did not see what they did to prevent an outrage on the Bogside as having any wider implications. But, what they made possible in Derry became world news as it continued day after day, and it subverted the ramshackle Northern Ireland structure, assisted by Lynch's inflammatory speech.

Len Green did not at all approve of what followed from his action. He dealt with an outrage happening under his nose, as he would have done if it had been in Salford, within a securely established state. But it wasn't in Salford. So shall we moralise and say that ignorance is no excuse and that in hindsight the right thing for him to have done was to let the RUC run riot in the Bogside as usual?

We hope to publish memoirs of Len Green and others involved in the defence of the Bogside next month.

## Letter To Editor

Brendan Clifford makes a small mistake regarding myself in his reply to my letter on the late Roy Johnston (*Irish Political Review*, June 2020). He writes that he understands that I was never a member of a political party. I was in fact a founding member of the Pádraig Ó Conaire student branch of the Irish Labour Party along with Barry Desmond, the late Michael O'Leary and others, when I attended UCC in 1956-58. This experience of being a party man put me off joining any other party subsequently.

Brendan Clifford was always unsympathetic to what the Connolly Association and Greaves were trying to do. Greaves did not believe that the people on the Falls Road and the Shankill Road belonged to different ethnic or civic nationalities despite their differences in religion and politics.

He believed that the rational basis for the unionism of many Northern Unionists was that their political situation made them top dog over Catholics/Nationalists. Getting rid of "top doggerly" would put Unionists in a position where some of the them at least should discover over time the political implications of the common Irishness that they share with their Nationalist and Catholic fellow countrymen.

One of those implications would be to identify with an Irish State rather than a British one. That would have to be a genuinely independent State of course, which made its own laws, had its own currency and was not just a region or quasi-province of a federalized European Union, as the Irish State is effectively at present.

At the same time, establishing equality and normal civil liberties in Northern Ireland was a democratic advance worth campaigning for in its own right. Hence the call of the Civil Rights Movement for British rights for British citizens.

These views make it valid, in my opinion, to regard Desmond Greaves and the Connolly Association as the intellectual progenitors of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, and in particular NICRA, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association.

The Good Friday Agreement of 1998, with its acceptance of the principles of equality of treatment and parity of esteem between the two Northern communities, is effectively "Civil Rights Redivivus", with the addition of power-sharing à la Sunningdale. Of course between 1969 and 1998 came the 1970 Republican split and the quarter-century-long "Troubles". These have left a legacy of division and bitterness between the two Northern communities that did not exist in 1969.

This year is the centenary of the Government of Ireland Act which instituted Partition. The coming years, maybe decades, will show whether equality of treatment and parity of esteem between the two Northern communities, combined with an a friendly attitude by Irish Nationalism, and influenced doubtless by various external events as yet unknown and unknowable, have the potential to bring about the united Irish State which the Connolly Association, Desmond Greaves and many others have aspired to.

It is pointless to assert dogmatically that they will or they will not. Time will tell. But it seems valid to say that the Greavesian historical experiment has been re-started by the Good Friday Agreement following a long interruption between 1970 and 1998.

The British and Irish Communist Organisation with which Brendan Clifford was associated in the 1960s was always hostile to the Connolly Association. It had a wholly different view of Northern Ireland politics and so it is unsurprising that Brendan was not made welcome at the Connolly Association events he mentions.

At the time he writes about, the Association was an active campaigning organisation seeking to influence British Government policy to bring about civil rights reforms in Northern Ireland. It had significant influence in British Labour circles and if that influence had been greater, Harold Wilson's Government might have insisted on reforming Stormont much earlier than it did and the Northern explosion of 1969 might not have happened. It was the political sins of omission of successive British Governments that were the prime cause of the 1970-1994 "Troubles".

Desmond Greaves held strongly that fruitful political action can only take place inside the State one happens to live in and in relation to that State's Government. For Irish people living in Britain and their non-Irish friends the focus should therefore be on the British Government. Criticising the Irish Government in Britain was thus a pointless self-indulgence that could not affect events in the Republic, while it would distract people from what could be done in the State they actually lived in. That is why in Connolly Association circles, as Brendan Clifford writes: "*Criticism of the Irish state was ruled out of order within the hearing of the English.*"

As Desmond Greaves's literary executor I disagree fundamentally with Brendan Clifford's view that Greaves's biography, "*The Life and Times of James Connolly*", "*misrepresents Connolly in many ways*". He writes:

"The clearest misrepresentation was on the Great War. Connolly did not see it as an inter-Imperialist War for a re-division of the world but as a war by the Empires to destroy the recently established German nation-state, which was in the forefront of socialist development."

But World War 1 was surely BOTH of those things. Connolly was well aware that Germany was an imperial and colonial power. At the same time his practical task in hand in 1915 was to prepare the readers of his *Workers Republic* to take part in a rebellion alongside "our gallant allies in Europe", as the 1916 Proclamation which Connolly put his name to called the Central Powers, Germany and Austria-Hungary.

As for Germany being "in the forefront of socialist development", it was the conservative Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, not the German socialists, who established the German welfare state when he instituted social insurance in 1889, "to reconcile the working classes with the State" as he put it, two decades before Lloyd George as Chancellor of the Exchequer did the same in the UK in 1911.

Any biography is a selection of relevant facts. A detailed consideration of the origins of World War 1 – on which a library has been written, and I broadly share Brendan's view as to those origins – was not central to Desmond Greaves's narrative. For him the key relevant point was that Connolly acted in accordance with the resolutions of the Second International to "turn the imperialist war into a civil war" by setting out to launch a rebellion in Ireland against his own Government, with the Citizen Army alone if necessary, and with the Irish Volunteers when that became possible.

Brendan Clifford writes that the Connolly Association was not set up by the CPGB and he presumably knows that the Association is still in existence thirty years following that body's dissolution. It is quite wrong therefore to call it a communist front. Desmond Greaves was always zealous for the independence of the Association. He himself had quite an independent attitude to the CPGB of which he was a lifelong member, for he was in no way financially or organisationally reliant on it.

The first volumes of Desmond Greaves's *Journal* are now being put up on the internet at [www.desmondgreavesarchive.com](http://www.desmondgreavesarchive.com). I aim to have all 38 volumes of this two-million-word record up there by this time next year. Brendan Clifford and his Athol Books colleagues have made significant contributions to modern Irish history-writing. It would advance historical truth if this new material encourages Brendan and those who share his views to set aside old animuses and to revise their views of the Connolly Association and Desmond Greaves.

## A Response

*"As for Germany being 'in the forefront of socialist development', it was a conservative Chancellor... Bismarck, not socialists, who established the German welfare state... to reconcile the working class with the State..."*

Therefore . . . ?

The issue is not whether Connolly was right in the views on Germany which he expressed in 1914-16. It is beside the point whether the working class position was more advanced in Bismarck's German state than it was in the state created by Liberalism in England. The point is whether I put his views accurately – by reprinting his own words – and whether readers of Connolly Association publications could have gathered from them that that was his view of the position of the working class in Germany, as compared with that of the working class in Britain.

Anthony Coughlan does not address that point at all, and does not appear even to see the distinction.

The easy way to refute what I said about how the Connolly Association uses Connolly is to either show that the view of Germany which I attributed to Connolly was not his view, or to show where in Connolly Association literature it was said that that was his view.

*"The clearest misrepresentation was on the Great War" etc*

Lenin characterised it as a war between Empires for the re-division of the world. Connolly characterised it, as Casement did, a *War Upon The German Nation*. Coughlan now says it was "surely BOTH of these things".

I cannot imagine what process of Byzantine reasoning could depict the Great War as being both, but the point is that Connolly characterised it as a war to destroy the German state because the advanced position of the working class in it had made it too strong a commercial rival for Britain to cope with.

Coughlan need only cite where in CA publications or in Greaves' *Communist Party* publications Connolly's characterisation of the War as a British war of destruction on Germany, and therefore as a war of national defence by Germany, was described, in order to refute what I said about them.

The idea that Connolly's view of the War was basically out of joint with Lenin's was first put to me by members of the Communist Party in Northern Ireland. This was not a matter that could be dealt with within the CP. I followed it up and found that

Connolly's views were incompatible with Lenin's. In trying to figure it out, I searched for German territorial ambitions that might have given it a reason for wanting war with France, Russia and Britain, but could find none; while the expansionist aims of the Russian, French and British Empires were all there in plain sight: the sharing out of the Ottoman Empire (which Germany was helping to preserve itself), and the French irredentist claim on Alsace-Lorraine.

If Coughlan had produced evidence of German expansionist territorial ambitions as a factor leading to war in July 1914, that would not be proof that I had misrepresented Connolly's position, though it might suggest that Connolly's characterisation of the War was wrong. He did not do so. And again he appears to be unable to see the distinction between the two things.

"Connolly acted in accordance with the resolutions of the Second International..."

Those Resolutions suggested that war between capitalist states should be prevented by class wars against Capitalism within each state. Connolly in August 1914 praised Karl Liebknecht for attempting to do this in Germany. Liebknecht's attempt was an utter failure. The 2nd International proved to be a flop. The War took root without serious resistance from British and French Social Democracy. Europe settled down to war within European capitalism. Connolly took up a position within that War, not against it. He joined a movement for Irish nationalist rebellion against Britain in which bourgeois forces were dominant, while Liebknecht kept on trying to disrupt the German defensive war effort by means of class war. Connolly never mentioned him again, though he made frequent reference to Liebknecht's enemies in German Social Democracy who supported the German war effort on similar grounds to Connolly.

And Liebknecht used his position in the German Parliament to expose the collaboration of the German Government with the Irish nationalists who were planning rebellion.

I do not recall where any of this was described in CA publications.

"Greaves held strongly to the opinion that fruitful political action can only take place inside the State one happens to live in and in relation to that State's Government..."

That was in fact the BICO position, not the Connolly Association position.

The state that people in the Six Counties happened to live in was the British state. They were excluded from the democratic institutions through which the British state functioned—



the Labour, Tory and Liberal political parties. And, beyond that, they were subjected to a form of sub-Government and sub-politics which could only work as the Protestant community governing the Catholic community in a detached arrangement while Whitehall laid on all the major services of state and conducted them with what was called "*the Imperial civil service*". Policy differences relating to the governing of the state were, therefore, never at issue in elections in the Six Counties, whether local or national — national in the United Nations sense, meaning state.

The B&ICO described this arrangement as undemocratic and proposed that it should be remedied by extending the democracy of the state to the Six Counties. The Communist Parties, and therefore the CA, opposed this proposal on the ground that the Six Counties ought not to be part of the British state, and that therefore no reasonable account should be taken of the fact that it actually was part of the British state.

I have never met anybody who, after giving Britain's perverse governing arrangements for the Six Counties a few minutes' serious thought, was of the opinion that, if the region had had the governing arrangement, after Partition, that was normal in the rest of the state, there would still have been a war.

It is not because the Six County exclusion from the state democracy, and its subjection to local communal government characterised by religion, is felt to be irrelevant to political reality, that it has been completely ignored by the CA and others. It is because of a fear that British political institutions, if made available, would have drawn substantial support from the Catholic community. The abnormal governing arrangement imposed by Whitehall, detaching the Six Counties from the democratic political structures of the state, and preserving a simple communal sectarian antagonism within them, was therefore almost universally supported within nationalist Ireland. This was made clear when Jim Callaghan, Home Secretary, suddenly became aware of how abnormal the Six County governing arrangement was and suggested that it might be brought within the democratic arrangements of the state.

"Greaves did not believe that the people on the Falls Rd. and he Shankill Rd. belonged to different ethnic or civil nationalities despite their differences in religion and politics" etc.

I have been observing the use of this word "*ethnic*" for half a century without being able to find a meaning for it.

For those who use it, the meaning seems to lie somewhere between race and nation.

The Irish nation, as I was given to understand when I was a child, was drawn from about half a dozen different racial or

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## Unpublished Letter to *Irish Times*

### The Casement Forgery

Back in 2016 I was invited to speak to the Dun Laoghaire & Rathdown County Council about their plans to commission a statue of Roger Casement as the focal point of the Baths Renovation project. In that presentation, I warned of the complications that arose back in 1966 in the commissioning and then decommissioning of Oisín Kelly's formidable life-size bronze statue that now resides in Ballyheigue, County Kerry. History teaches us that whenever efforts are made to bring Casement back into the national fold there are complications.

Gerald Flynn (IT 26 June) acknowledges the contradiction at the heart of Casement's remembering. Any statue to Casement recognises his achievement investigating atrocities in the Congo and Amazon and his role in the Irish revolution, but the exploitative language contained within the sexed-up diaries undermines his authority. That is exactly what they are intended to do.

The 'Black Diaries', as they are popularly and problematically styled, were constructed to promote a distorted and sanitised view of the imperial past by denying the moral high ground to a determined whistle-blower. As artefacts they are similar to the monuments to King Leopold II or Cecil Rhodes: both statues and documents occupy public space and understanding in a manner which distracts and obfuscates. The reporting yesterday of the Belgium monarch King Philippe's regrets, expressed in a letter to Congo's president Félix Tshisekedi, demonstrates that it is never too late to right the wrongs of the past.

Recognising the sexed-up diaries as forgeries should not exclude the important role that the conversation about Casement's sexuality has played in the movement for LGBTIQ+ rights.

In their Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct, the American Historical Association, arguably the leading professional body in the world states: 'Forgery and fraud violate the most basic foundations on which historians construct their interpretations of the past'.

Where Casement is concerned, history, like beauty, lies in the eye of the beholder.

**Angus Mitchell**

July 2020

tribal sources. It was a blend. If there were such things as race originals in the world, the Irish nation was not one of them.

Desmond Greaves, an Englishman who undertook to tend to Irish affairs for the British Communist Party, in a widely distributed article in the seventies, compared the Irish and the English to cats and dogs. That was a pretty fundamentalist distinction.

When the issue of nationality erupted in 1969 the B&ICO was closely involved in it on the ground in Belfast, on the nationalist side. I could only understand the conflict there as a conflict of nationalities. In every discernible respect, the two communities were utterly different from one another — except for language, of course, but that only seemed to sharpen the difference.

In September 1969 I described the conflict as being between two nations, and referred to articles by Renan and Stalin to indicate what I meant by a nation. They — an anti-Communist and a Communist — were in substantial agreement with each other, and with Slieve Luacra.

And it was far removed from the world of cats and dogs.

By then Greaves was the propagandist of a Party which had repudiated Stalin without embracing Renan and had directed itself on the way to oblivion.

In his comparison, the Ulster Unionists were cats who had got to imagine they were dogs — "top dogs" — but which would rediscover themselves as cats once their doggy privileges were taken away.

Greaves took no notice of the consistent development of Protestant Ulster during the couple of centuries after the Plantation/Migration of the early 17th century, disconnected from both the native Irish and the colonial Anglican stratum of the Ascendancy, which began its public life in the 1649 dispute between the Belfast Presbytery and Cromwell's Secretary of State, John Milton.

The dogmatic denial, by Greaves and the part of the Republican movement he influenced, of the distinct national develop-

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Does  
It  
Up

Stack  
?

## Covid-19

Fortunately, so far, the COVID-19 epidemic has not materialised as seriously as was forecasted. I say “so far” because it has not gone away and some medics say it could come back more severely next Winter. Apparently it likes temperatures of between 5 degrees to 11 degrees Centigrade which is our normal Winter/Spring temperature. Temperatures of 5–11 degrees Centigrade is also a usual range for office and home temperatures where central heating and air-conditioning is used; and, of course, re-circulation of air as in air-conditioning systems means also that everyone in that system sooner or later breathes in the air which has been exhaled by everyone else in that system. This is very conducive to spreading the flu or whatever other virus that is going around.

Air conditioning in the future should be banned except in submarines and spacecraft. Aeroplanes and ships and trains must have their ventilation systems re-designed so that air is used once only. That there is breathable air at 33,000 feet is proved by the few adventurous mountaineers who have climbed Mount Everest without using oxygen. (My apologies to those who live near Mount Everest—I cannot just now remember their name for the mountain before, and since, Mr. Everest lent his British name to it.)

Now that we know scientifically that COVID-19 is spread in droplets of moisture there is no excuse for continuing to use re-circulating air-conditioning. It just does not stack up. Systems must be immediately designed and implemented so as to use air once only, in any enclosed space. How much damage needs to happen to our health and to our economy before planes, trains, buses and ships are re-designed so as to minimise bio-hazards such as COVID-19.

## Pandemics

It hasn't gone away you know. And it will never go away. But we must learn to control it. As recently as 16th July 2020 it was reported that a young man died in Mongolia of Bubonic Plague. About

twenty more Mongolians are in hospital with it. It seems they got the plague from a marmoset they ate. It has been well known for a long time that these animals are hosts to the flea which carries the plague and they live in deserts, such as the Gobi Desert, the Nevada Desert and others. Do not eat the wild life, is the motto for desert living. Every year there are nine or ten cases of Bubonic Plague in California. But fortunately it is under control.

We will, in time learn to control the COVID-19 virus. In the meantime, keep safe by good hygiene and reasonable social distancing. In my opinion, a total lockdown was not necessary and is counter-productive. Instead there should be limited selective lockdowns where there is a source of infection: to impose a total lockdown on society will cause, and has caused, widespread stress. Human beings are in need of interaction with each other. The near-total lockdown in Ireland for four months from 12th March to 13th July 2020 has only resulted in feverish societal and even anti-social activity where society is rocked by COVID-19 parties and crowds flocking to beaches—behaviour suited to the further spread of the virus. Limited lockdowns would have been healthier.

## Cui Bono from COVID-19?

It is very clear that the IT and Computer industry has benefited from the propagandistic public-relations campaign attached to the very genuine virus. Benefited to the extent of trillions of dollars and counting. By coincidence (?) *The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation* held a conference in Wuhan in China in October 2019. It was reported at the time to be attended by US Army Generals etc. It was from Wuhan that the rumours of an epidemic emanated or were said to emanate. The propaganda began to escalate until, by 12th March 2020 in Ireland, it was ready to roll.

Schools were closed, Universities were closed, and patients waiting in trolleys were miraculously healed and sent home. Whole wards of hospital-patients were cleared into Nursing Homes and Care Homes so as to make way for the expected *tsunami* of epidemic COVID-19 cases, which never happened. There was no epidemic. Another agenda was served by the commandeering by the Health Service Executive (HSE) of several Private Hospitals at a cost of 115 million Euros a month, and Private Medical Consultants (some) were signed up on HSE short-term contracts. All done in a week or two and Hey Presto! We now had a one-tier public

hospital system! For three months.

All shops, big and small, were visited by public servants in the few days after 12th March. That these visitors were public servants seems to be universally accepted, but which Department they were attached to is in doubt. They worked quickly and effectively in getting the businesses to close down “*in accordance with regulations*”. The Dáil was not passing laws because the Taoiseach was not elected until June, but people were frightened by the impending “*epidemic*”. Then “*they*” decided food shops would remain open for, initially, some hours in the morning and miraculously every shop selling food, big and small, were fitted out with Perspex partitions around the cash registers and with Perspex sheets hanging from the ceilings on brass or chrome chains attached to brass cup-hooks in the ceilings.

These fitments mushroomed almost overnight. Miles and miles of chain, thousands of cup-hooks and acres of Perspex. And with them came the COVID-19 signs. Hundreds of thousands of them telling people to “*Socially Distance*”: signs in the distinctive COVID-19 black print on a yellow background. All identical and all just after 12th March 2020. It was masterful propaganda. And it was alarming too for the citizenry.

At a time when no Government had been formed—it seemed the whole country was taken over by somebody who master-minded all of this activity by frightening everybody into compliance as if we were in a totalitarian state.

Teachers who were qualified and employed to teach children in schools suddenly were co-opted into a war effort on COVID-19 and were expected to teach by computers, and students were to become involved in distance-learning and, whether they could afford it or not, parents were forced to provide their children, each of their children, with computers and broadband connectivity. The latest ploy is the delay in the Leaving Certificate results.

They normally come out in mid-August and it has now been announced that these results will be delayed until mid-September. Has the Central Applications Office (CEO) computer contracted the COVID-19 virus? Or is this another part of the propaganda to severely disrupt the Universities? This is a master stroke on top of the *imbroglio* involving the Leaving Certificate itself, where students were not allowed to sit the exam due to alleged social distancing problems. Those problems could have been easily solved by use of

the numerous empty community halls and hotel ballrooms around the country.

Inspectors of Taxes were expected to work from home via computerised equipment and warned not to use Zoom because it was too hackable! All systems are of course hackable, but privacy of individuals is a secondary consideration when technological advance is the Revenue Commissioner's policy.

In the meantime, Coroners were told to include COVID-19 on Death Certificates and, to boost the statistics, deaths listed on the online-site '*RIP.ie*' were included in official figures. Care Homes were instructed, apparently, that if one patient was diagnosed with COVID-19, then testing should stop and anyone who died should then be declared to have died with COVID-19.

There is a big difference between dying "*with COVID-19*" and dying "*from COVID-19*", apart from the fact that the patient may not have had any COVID-19 at all, but died from some other cause. In any event, the death statistics for the past three or four months are unreliable and almost useless. It all does not stack up, but an awful mountain of IT equipment has been sold and, most important to the tech industry, attitudes to the computerisation of society have been drastically changed.

Will we have electricity for it all? And what about the environment?

The techies need a second wave to nail down the progress in technological advances, and they are likely to get it. And I am sure—on their propaganda performance to date—they will make good use of it! On a TV channel of News output, it may have been CNN or Euro News (my wand fell from my lap so I didn't get the logo), this man popped up and stated this:

(Obviously I am paraphrasing here) "Now we really are living in the technological age—nobody can quibble with that—and it has shown how quickly society can adapt."

The man was delighted and very confident and of course he was right! Living in the city of Cork—one can have no idea how slow they are to move. Everything is done at such a slow pace that sending in some complaint to City Council takes forever to get done. But, honestly, they were beyond impressive with their quickness to implement any COVID-19 directions. Signs are all over the city, lines have been drawn

showing the spacing we all should adopt when out. They have moved to pedestrianise certain city streets and all the signage appeared literally overnight.

There are people who have yet to visit the city—well they have a surprise in store. The car is deemed to have gone—it is all bike lanes everywhere. But where to

park one's car? *That is your problem* and, believe me, they mean that. And then all the traders in the city are haemorrhaging customers, and our economy is going down the swan, but who cares when computers and electric cars have to be forced on the population and COVID-19 is the excuse. It all stacks up only too well.

**Michael Stack ©**

## Connolly

all be Socialist functionaries, as they are State officials — but the ownership by the State of all the land and materials for labour, combined with the co-operative control by the workers of such land and materials, would be Socialism.

Schemes of state and municipal ownership, if unaccompanied by this co-operative principle, are but schemes for the perfecting of the mechanism of capitalist government-schemes to make the capitalist regime respectable and efficient for the purposes of the capitalist; in the second place they represent the class-conscious instinct of the business man who feels that capitalist should not prey upon capitalist, while all may unite to prey upon the workers.

The chief immediate sufferers from private ownership of railways, canals, and telephones are the middle class shop-keeping element, and their resentment at

## continued

the tariffs imposed is but the capitalist political expression of the old adage that "dog should not eat dog".

It will thus be seen that an immense gulf separates the 'nationalising' proposals of the middle class from the 'socialising' demands of the revolutionary working class. The first proposes to endow a Class State—repository of the political power of the Capitalist Class—with certain powers and functions to be administered in the common interest of the possessing class; the second proposes to subvert the Class State and replace it with the Socialist State, representing organised society — the Socialist Republic.

To the cry of the middle class reformers, "make this or that the property of the government," we reply, "yes, in proportion as the workers are ready to make the government their property" (Workers' Republic, 10 June, 1899).

## Reply to Anthony Coughlan

### continued

ment of Protestant Ulster society over the centuries—a denial shared by all parties in the Dail—struck me in the early 70s as a sign of brittleness in the make-up of nationalist Ireland. The existential uncertainty which it attributed to Ulster Unionist society seemed to me to be true of itself and not at all true of Unionist society, and I said so when replying to a pamphlet called *The Hidden Ulster*. It was in a debate, arranged by the late Jim Kemmy in Limerick, on "the two nations"—with Eoghan Harris representing the Official IRA—that I encountered this denialism in its rawest form, and got myself comprehensively denounced as a stooge of the Orange Order. Harris's subsequent breakdown and transformation into a fierce Anglophile Unionist was only an extreme form of something that happened very widely in the population of the Free State, especially its academics and journalists.

Nationalist existential certainty survived

in the North because of the communalist structure of the state. In the South it survived only in the part of the Republican movement under Rory O'Brady's direction which rejected Greaves's influence.

Ulster Protestant society remains much as it was half a century ago, though weakened by industrial change, the continuing growth of the Catholic community as a proportion, and the great reform brought about by the War.

Finally: the only CA event I ever tried to attend was a publicly-advertised showing of a film, with an admission price. I wasn't let in.

PS: A second letter was received from Anthony Coughlan after the comment on the one published above had been written. It is a greatly expanded version of the above. It contains nothing in refutation of what I have written about the misrepresentation of Connolly's position on Germany and the World War by Greaves' Connolly Association.

**Brendan Clifford**



**LABOUR**

# Comment

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## James Connolly: State Monopoly versus Socialism

(Workers' Republic, 10 June, 1899)

One of the most significant signs of our times is the readiness with which our struggling middle class turns to schemes of State or Municipal ownership and control, for relief from the economic pressure under which it is struggling. Thus we find in England demands for the nationalisation of the telephone system, for the extension of municipal enterprise in the use of electricity, for the extension of the parcel system in the Post Office, for the nationalisation of railways and canals.

In Ireland we have our middle class reformers demanding state help for agriculture, state purchase of lands, arterial draining, state construction of docks, piers and harbours, state aid for the fishing industry, state control of the relations between agricultural tenant and landlord, and also nationalisation of railways and canals.

There is a certain section of Socialists, chiefly in England, who never tire of hailing all such demands for state activity as a sign of the growth of the Socialist spirit among the middle class, and therefore worthy of all the support the working-class democracy can give. In some degree such a view seems justifiable.

The fact that large sections of the capitalist class join in demanding the intervention of the State in industry is a sure sign that they, at least, have lost the overweening belief in the all-sufficiency of private enterprise which characterised their class a generation ago; and that they have been forced to recognise the fact that there are a multitude of things in which the 'brain', 'self-reliance', and 'personal responsibility' of the capitalist are entirely

unnecessary. To argue that, since in such enterprises the private property-holder is dispensed with, therefore he can be dispensed with in all other forms of industrial activity, is logical enough and we really fail to see in what manner the advocates of capitalist society can continue to clamour for such state ownership as that alluded to — ownership in which the private capitalist is seen to be superfluous, and yet continue to argue that in all other forms of industry the private capitalist is indispensable.

For it must be remembered that every function of a useful character performed by the State or Municipality to-day was at one time performed by private individuals for profit, and in conformity with the then generally accepted belief that it could not be satisfactorily performed except by private individuals.

But all this notwithstanding, we would, without undue desire to carp or cavil, point out that to call such demands 'Socialistic' is in the highest degree misleading.

Socialism properly implies above all things the co-operative control by the workers of the machinery of production; without this co-operative control the public ownership by the State is not Socialism — it is only State capitalism.

The demands of the middle-class reformers, from the Railway Reform League down, are simply plans to facilitate the business transactions of the capitalist class. State Telephones — to cheapen messages in the interest of the middle class who are the principal users of the telephone system; State Railways — to cheapen carriage of goods in the interest of the middle-class trader; State-construction of piers, docks, etc. — in the interest of the middle-class merchant; in fact every scheme now advanced in which the help of the State is invoked is a scheme to lighten the burden of the capitalist — trader, manufacturer, or farmer.

Were they all in working order tomorrow the change would not necessarily benefit the working class; we would still have in our state industries, as in the Post Office to-day, the same unfair classification of salaries, and the same despotic rule of an irresponsible head. Those who worked most and hardest would still get the least remuneration, and the rank and file would still be deprived of all voice in the ordering of their industry, just the same as in all private enterprises.

Therefore, we repeat, state ownership and control is not necessarily Socialism — if it were, then the Army, the Navy, the Police, the Judges, the Gaolers, the Informers, and the Hangmen, all would

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