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## Anti-Government Democracy!

The Dail met after the General Election to appoint a Taoiseach. It failed. The leaders of the three main parties all failed to gain a majority. The leader of Sinn Fein came closest to it, but the leaders of the two other major parties then declared as a matter of fundamental principle that they would not take part in the forming of a Coalition which included Sinn Fein. They have so far been unable to form a Coalition without Sinn Fein. And so the matter stands. There is no Government.

The Government that was in place before the Election remains in place. Not all the Ministers in that Government succeeded in holding their seats, but three months after losing their seats they are still Ministers. (See the *Michael Stack* column inside.)

The Greens are the fourth party but they are not strong enough to enable a Government to be formed, even if they agree to enter a Coalition with Fine Gael and Fianna Fail. They are in any case finding it difficult to contemplate entering a Coalition because of differences amongst themselves. It is not obvious what a Green policy is. Is it vegetarian or vegan? Does it just mean not eating cows, or does it mean not exploiting them by drinking their milk.

Complications also arise from the fact that the Greens are an all-Ireland party like Sinn Fein, but not so well established in each of the two states separately as Sinn Fein is.

If the Greens eventually find a way to join Fine Gael and Fianna Fail in Coalition, and enough Independents can be found to vote for it, who will be Taoiseach? Fianna Fail is the largest party. It has one seat more than Sinn Fein, but that is the uncontested seat of the Ceann Comhairle. But it is a party in serious decline in the opinion polls because of the inability of its leader, Micheál Martin, to make any impression on events since the Election.

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## The EU — *abandoned by its parents?*

Anthony Coughlan was naturally delighted with an opinion piece in the *Irish Times* on 29th of April that castigated the Euro and opposed further European integration. It must have been music to his ears. The title of the piece said it all: 'With idealism lost, has the euro become Europe's purgatory?' Coughlan also rightly emphasised that the source of this piece was very significant, a researcher, Eoin Drea at the Wilfred Martens Centre. The significance being that this is the think tank of the European Peoples Party, which represents Christian Democracy in Europe—and it was Christian Democracy that created the European project.

If the article represents its views, then the European project is indeed in trouble. It is an orphan, rejected by its parents.

If the project depended on idealism, it certainly would be in trouble. Idealism butters no parsnips in international politics.

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## Benito Mussolini, Knight Commander Of The Bath, And His Friends.

The *Saturday Review* section of *The Times* (23 May) published a review (by one Saul David) of "*Mussolini's War, Fascist Italy 1935-43*" by John Gooch.

Before Musso attacked France in 1940 he had been a Knight of the Bath for about 18 years, and before his accession to power had been financed from British Government funds, on the recommendation Sir

Samuel Hoare of the Secret Service. His war from 1935 had been against Abyssinia. According to the reviewer -

"With the League of Nations distracted by German rearmament, he authorised an invasion of half a million men.

It was quite an achievement, with the navy shipping 635,000 tons of supplies, 10,000 thousand vehicles and 40,000 pack

animals. Five army corps, Gooch tells us, 'were kept supplied in mountainous regions lacking resources more than 400 km from the coast and 4,000 km from the Italian patria.' "

Geography students will realise that the equipment and supplies didn't travel past Gibraltar and around the Cape of Good Hope. And cynics will guess that they went through the Suez Canal and paid tolls into British Government coffers. And the cynics will be right.

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Labour In Government

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Fine Gael did badly in the Election but its position has been improving just by virtue of continuing to be the Government in the virus crisis since it lost the Election. The measures it has taken have enhanced its position with the electorate. It has a vested interest in the Parliamentary impasse continuing until resolution by means of another Election becomes imperative.

Sinn Fein stands to gain either from an Election or from being the Opposition to a Government of all the other parties directed against it.

\*

England's parting gift to Ireland was the system of Proportional Representation brought in in 1920. Its purpose was to make the formation of effective government more difficult. It is a thing which England has recommended to others while refusing to have it for itself. Its inherent logic encourages the proliferation of parties by differentiating shades of opinion into separate parties, all of which have representation in Parliament, so that

becomes rare for any one party to have a governing majority.

This disabling tendency was over-ridden for a few generations by the Treaty dispute. Widespread feeling for and against the Treaty ensured that there was a two-party system in defiance of PR. After De Valera had brought the anti-Treaty position to electoral dominance he tried to remedy that final disability.

Fine Gael somehow persuaded itself that, in attempting to abolish PR, he was laying the foundation for permanent Fianna Fail government when the opposite was clearly the case.

Fine Gael never won an election under PR, and its first return to Government after 1932 was in the 1948 Coalition with an unrepentant former Chief of Staff of the IRA.

In more recent times there has been further fragmentation, with the two party system giving way to a three party system and a tail of minuscule parties and Independent TDs.

\*

The Corona Virus Crisis has, if anything, underscored divisions between the two political administrations in Ireland. The Irish Government does not appear to have kept the Stormont Executive fully informed about the measures it planned to take or to have consulted over the issues raised by cross-border travel.

And within Northern Ireland, deep divisions about how it was to be handled emerged between the Nationalist and the Unionist Parties. Sinn Fein and the SDLP wanted to follow the more rigorous approach to public protection adopted by the Dublin Government, while the Unionist Family wished to keep in step with Britain.

Unfortunately for Unionism, however, the three political administrations in the UK pursued different policies, with Scotland and Wales adopting a more rigorous approach to lockdown—albeit all are largely funded by Westminster.

And the more liberal English approach to lockdown did not sit well in Northern Ireland, bordering as it does on a society taking lockdown more seriously.

Things were not helped by the constitutional position under the Good Friday Agreement that each Minister has ultimate control of policy in his own Department, within the confines of a Budget, whose size is determined by Whitehall but its implementation is agreed by the Executive as a whole.

After some initial public spats, however, the Northern Ireland Executive settled down into an agreed approach to lockdown policy which was more restrictive than that prevailing in Britain, but less strict than that pertaining in the South.

In the context of the Virus, for the first time ever, travel restrictions between Northern Ireland and the rest of the island were enforced by the Irish police who have not only been turning back Southern Irish people wishing to travel, but also sent back Northerners wishing to cross the Border.

\*

During the crisis the UK BBC started reporting on developments in what it called the four nations of Britain. That four nations formulation became standard in Britain, and was taken up on BBC Radio Ulster—which perhaps hoped that the Word might bring forth the Deed!

Of course there is nothing that would please Britain, and Ulster Unionism, more than for Northern Ireland to become a 'nation' within the United Kingdom, along the lines of Scotland and Wales. However, that has been tried before (notably by

Labour's Merlyn Rees in the mid-1970s) and failed to run!

\*

After reaching out to civil society in Northern Ireland in his first few months as Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar regressed to 26 County horizons. In a radio interview he said of Fine Gael: "We don't have a lot of overseas members. We do have some overseas members though. We have members in Belfast for example", he told Pat Kenny's Radio Show (See Leo Varadkar Accused Of 'Insulting Nationalists, Irish News 9.5.20).

This of course caused outrage amongst NI nationalists, and of course the acting Taoiseach quickly retracted his faux pas. And he pointed out that there was a FG Branch in Queen's University.

However, this Freudian slip did reflect a certain reality, which led Chris Donnelly, a political commentator and former Sinn Féin candidate, to point out that the "Dublin has been social distancing from the north long before coronavirus" (Irish News, 11.5.20). Donnelly went on to review Irish policies with regard to the North. It seems that the draft Fianna Fail/Fine Gael Programme for Government provides for a unit to be established in the Taoiseach's Office to "examine political, social, economic and cultural considerations". Donnelly thinks that—

" In reality, that will mean Micheal Martin and Leo Varadkar (or his successor in the rotating taoiseach role) sending a few acolytes north every now and then for box-ticking chats. In case you think that's being cynical, let's look at Micheal's form.

In 2014 he told us that Fianna Fáil would contest elections in Northern Ireland in 2019. "We're impatient with the lack of progress North/South. The first phase of our engagement with the North is very much on a policy basis." Alas, not only has there been no Fianna Fáil candidates on the ballot papers up here, but that impatience with North/South progress has yet to result in any meaningful strategy never mind policies emerging from the party to confront major issues on an island-wide basis.

It is hard to view such pronouncements as anything other than a cynical attempt to find something to counter Sinn Féin's all-island credentials..."

It is good to see that Donnelly understands the importance of the two main Southern parties standing candidates in Northern Ireland. Surely that should happen long before any Irish Government "unit" tries to interact with Northern Ireland society?

Down the decades since independence there have been numerous TDs who have

## Eugenics!

An academic paper by the late historian, Norman Stone, revealed that the *Chair of Eugenics* at University College, London, was re-named *Chair of Sociology* in 1922. This was only 10 years after Eugenics had been promoted by the Great and the Good of Imperial Britain.

The First International Eugenics Congress was convened at Europe's largest hotel, the Hotel Cecil in London, on 24th July 1912. This Inaugural Banquet was presided over by Arthur Balfour, former Prime Minister and creator of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Its work took place over 6 days at the Great Hall, Imperial College, University of London.

This great Congress was not a fringe event of right wingers. It was supported by the most prominent Establishment figures in politics, law, religion, science, medicine, academia and education. Members of the General Committee included High Clergy, Professors, Doctors and senior military figures in Britain.

The Eugenics Congress had delegates from the Board of Education, many local Councils, the Royal College of Medicine, the Royal College of Surgeons, Universities such as Oxford, Edinburgh, Glasgow, St. Andrews, London and Bristol, Cheltenham Ladies College. Also attending were feminist organisations like The Women's Freedom League and the Jewish Free School of London.

Major Leonard Darwin, the son of Charles Darwin, was appointed President of the 1912 Congress and the Vice Presidents included: Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty; Reginald McKenna, Liberal Home Secretary; the Lord Chief Justice; the Presidents of Royal College of Physicians, the Royal Society, and Harvard University; the Lord Mayor of London; the Bishop of Oxford; Andrew Graham Bell, and the President of the German Society for Racial Hygiene.

What went wrong for Eugenics, in the space of only a decade, one might ask, to reduce it to Sociology?

Pat Walsh

Articles by Pat Walsh on this issue can be found at:

<https://drpatwalsh.com/2017/05/26/the-eugenics-congress-london-1912/>

advocated that elected Northern Ireland politicians should be permitted to sit in the Dail. If Fianna Fail and Fine Gael were to succeed in getting candidates elected in Northern Ireland, why should they not be allowed to sit in the Dail—possibly as observers with speaking rights in the first instance?

The nearest Varadkar has come to that was to allow Mark Durkan to stand on the Fine Gael ticket for a Dublin seat in the last European Election: Durkan was not elected.

Donnelly went on to point out that Micheál Martin has retreated from earlier moves by Fianna Fail to stand candidates in the North:

" In 2014 he told us that Fianna Fáil would contest elections in Northern Ireland in 2019. "We're impatient with the lack of progress North/South. The first phase of our engagement with the North is very much on a policy basis." Alas, not only has there been no Fianna Fáil candidates on

the ballot papers up here, but that impatience with North/South progress has yet to result in any meaningful strategy never mind policies emerging from the party to confront major issues on an island-wide basis.."

Donnelly might have added that Eamon O'Cuiv was severely disciplined by Martin, after he endorsed a Fianna Fail candidate in a Derry election.

\*

Leo Varadkar's most notable intervention about Northern Ireland, however, has been in a spat he had with MaryLou McDonald. This was hardly reported in the Irish papers, but Radio Ulster was so delighted with his put-down of the Sinn Féin leader that it carried a sound-bite from the Dail Debate twice in its morning show!

Having been criticised by MaryLou over possible cutbacks to Covid-19 payments to come, after the immediate crisis is over, Varadkar lashed out:

"The temporary wage subsidy scheme and the pandemic unemployment payment of €350 per week have protected those who have lost their jobs in a way that was appropriate and was right to do. I think we all acknowledge that it cannot last forever...

The temporary wage subsidy scheme and the pandemic unemployment payment of €350 per week have protected those who have lost their jobs... I think we all acknowledge that it cannot last forever... However, it will need to continue at least until people have the opportunity to return to their jobs. For the vast majority, that will not be possible before mid-June, so, yes, it will need to be extended beyond mid-June...

I am sorry, though, that Deputy McDonald chose to become so party political in her contributions because what she said was so two-faced and so fundamentally dishonest. My party, Fine Gael, never cut the minimum wage. Working with the Labour Party and then with Independents, we increased it by 25% to one of the highest in the world. What is the minimum wage in Northern Ireland, where Sinn Féin is in power? In this jurisdiction, a Government led by my party introduced a pandemic unemployment payment of €350 a week so the people who lost their jobs had some financial security. What happened in Northern Ireland, where Sinn Féin is in office? It is £100 a week, with nothing for the self-employed until June. Sinn Féin Ministers on their Facebook site promote the fact that they hand out food parcels to the poor, reminiscent to me of Donald Trump handing out toilet roll after the hurricane hit the islands in the Caribbean. Sinn Féin's leader here in this House, Deputy McDonald, is an Opposition party leader. That is fair enough, and she can criticise what we do and say it is not enough. She can do that every day but she cannot hide the fact that she is also leader of an all-Ireland party, a party that is in power in Northern Ireland, where the minimum wage is lower than here, where they do not give people £350 a week but they hand out food parcels and boast about it on Facebook. I would be ashamed to do something like that. Do not blame it on the Tories and do not blame it on London. If it was not for their money, it would be even worse..."

The fact is that Northern Ireland, which is regularly referred to as "a state" by academic historians and by politicians, has fewer powers than the Scottish devolved Government, which is never described as the Scottish State, and is unable to function autonomously, as is the Scottish Government. It has what Unionist politicians have described on the BBC Parliament Channel, without being contradicted, as "imposed Coalition". It was recently without a so-called Government for a couple of years because the DUP backed out of an agreement that there should be an Irish Language Act, and it got on fine.

Normal sub-government was re-established on the insistence of Whitehall, supported by Leinster House. We assume Varadkar knows very well that Sinn Féin is not in power in the North, and that his remarks are cheap debating points in response to the sting of Mary Lou's criticisms, which are sometimes over-the-top in proper party political style. But it may be that the thing is deeper than that and that his remarks spring from an essential ignorance of what Northern Ireland is, at least at the level of feelings.

The Northern Ireland system was not established in response to a Six County demand for it. It is not the devolved Government of a British nation, as the British State propaganda describes. That is what the Scottish Government is — and is recognised widely as a stepping stone towards Scottish independence. In Scotland nationalist politics competes with the State politics of the UK, and seems to be winning.

The Six Counties is cut off from the State politics of the UK and there is no Six County nationalist politics striving for in-

dependence. Six-County sub-government exists on the insistence of Westminster. It operates with a fixed budget allocated by Whitehall, and it is spent under Whitehall supervision. There is no Northern Ireland Government in the normal sense. The 1998 Agreement provided for Unionist and Nationalist parties to take up Ministries in a devolved administration without acting together as a Government. That was the conditions of the peace settlement. It is clearly a transitional arrangement, and is incapable of settling down into a routine of stability, because there is no 'Northern Ireland nation'. If Varadkar aspires towards Irish unity, he needs to familiarise himself with Six County realities. And, if it is true that he has a Belfast Branch, he should put it into political action, if only to give himself a stake in the game.

Meanwhile the re-broadcasting by Radio Ulster of his diatribe against Mary Lou may have the side-effect of bringing home to public opinion in the North the superiority of social welfare provision in the South in everything other than the NHS — which remains to be tackled by Sinn Féin.

## EU

continued

Drea obviously thinks, along with many others, that the project was based on an outbreak of idealism after WWII. But, if he believes that, he knows nothing about the reason for the European project or about its founders — Konrad Adenauer, De Gasperi, Mansholt, De Gaulle, Jean Monnet, etc. They had seen Europe destroyed twice in their lifetimes — quite literally. They sought to learn the lessons of history and prevent yet another destruction. It is not simply idealistic to work for your own survival. Indeed, it's a pity they had not also read and absorbed what Roger Casement had warned about in his "*The Crime Against Europe*" in 1914.

But, *better late than never*, they came to realise what had caused this destruction; and they arrived at a view about how such a thing could be prevented ever happening again.

The two 20th century European Wars were the culmination of the traditional British 'Balance of Power policy' towards Europe. That strategy is more than a policy — it encapsulates the innate British approach to Europe, which is imbibed with their mothers' milk by its politicians of all parties.

That is why Britain opposed the European integration project tooth and nail at the outset and why they were not allowed anywhere near Rome when the Treaty was signed.

That is also why Britain left nearly 50 years after joining.

It is obvious that all this means nothing to the author but it also means nothing to other more eminent members of the Centre, such as our own John Bruton. When it comes to idealism, Mr. Drea should have a chat with John. John is a fervent Catholic to the extent that he sees "*The building of an EU is God's work in politics*" (National Catholic Research 41, 2002). If that is not idealism, I don't know what is; but I am quite certain that Catholics like Adenauer *et al* did not rely on God for building the EU and neither did their successors in creating the Euro.

About 20 years ago John was given the job of chairing the Convention that would create an EU Constitution, but if he sought God's help it was not delivered: that idea collapsed into the Lisbon Treaty. The EU project had got into trouble and the cry went up that something had to be done. Giscard d'Estaing came up with this idea of having a Constitution for the European Union. It was a harebrained idea: trying to create something, a Constitution, for the

EU that would be only appropriate when a European *Union* actually existed.

Constitutions reflect, and only make sense for, what exists, for what has been created. But an EU existed only in name and was a work in progress. Preparing a Constitution was putting the cart before the horse. What was needed was an accumulation of particular policies that made sense across Europe, more sense to the peoples of Europe than to the individual member states. Such policies would promote a European *Demos*. The development of such popular policies is the crucial factor that helps all other integrative factors, including the establishment of a common currency and associated policies.

And the absence of such EU appealing policies is what prevents the common currency and other integrative factors being successful in achieving a common *demos*.

In fact, that piece of constitution mongering was a great piece of displacement activity that produced mountains of words but did not advance the project one centimetre: instead it created plenty Euro-scepticism. And this is not being wise after the event—it was spelt out in these pages year after year during its progress.

In fact, another Frenchman spelt it out more than two centuries ago:

“Who would not say the best political constitution is that which has been debated and drafted by statesmen perfectly acquainted with the national character, and who have foreseen every circumstance? Nevertheless nothing is more false. The best constituted people is the one that has the fewest written constitutional laws, and every written constitution is WORTHLESS” (Joseph de Maistre).

It might be said that it’s a case of putting paper before people.

Drea rehearses all the usual problems faced by the Euro and says it’s a hopeless project. But, while clear in his criticism, he is not clear on a solution. Instead he says:

“Rather than tear itself apart on issues like coronabonds, the eurozone needs to allow the member states to breathe fiscally, to take responsibility back to national capitals. Everybody knows it can’t go on like this, but nobody seems to have the courage to acknowledge all that has gone wrong, and all that needs to change. It’s like the euro is exhibiting a strange Stockholm Syndrome-style hold on all parties involved. But perhaps the biggest failing of eurozone politicians (aided by the EU institutions and their add-ons) is to present the future of the

euro as one where it must integrate further or face fragmentation. This binary choice is more than a little intellectually dishonest, and deliberately ignores the example of the most successful monetary union in the world—the United States of America.”

If this means anything it means resurrecting national currencies but he dare not say it despite his self-acclaimed courage of acknowledging “*all that has gone wrong*”. He seems to imagine he is only critic of the Euro, despite the chorus all around us about this, especially from the UK, for decades. He is like a broken record on the subject.

Instead he points to America as the way forward for Europe. What model does America give us to follow regarding currencies? There are no state currencies in America. It has one currency, based on its *Demos*, so no devolution in currency matters there. So no guide for the Euro there—except deepen and integrate more. That should be quite clear to anyone but not to Mr. Drea.

And that is so because there is an American *Demos* that created and backs the ‘*mighty dollar*’. That *Demos* was created by the historic common popular activities such as genocide of the native population, slavery, civil war and Hollywood. These options are not open to Europe, so other means have to be found to create its *Demos*. Mr. Drea’s Centre, once upon a time would have Christianity as its basis for a European *Demos*. Such would certainly be more benign than that of the USA.

But European Christian Democracy has long given up on that and Mr. Drea can get a firsthand account about that from his colleague in the Centre, John Bruton. As Chair of the above-mentioned Convention to create an EU Constitution, he tried valiantly as a good Catholic to have God mentioned in the Constitution and that embarrassing idea was politely ignored. Schuman, much earlier, had proposed Columbanus as patron saint of the EU, as he is credited with being the first person to actually imagine and mention Europe, along with his massive missionary work there in the ‘*dark ages*’. But that did not run, and what self-respecting Irish politician would propose it today! Not even the Healy-Rae’s! They would be more likely to suggest St. Brendan instead, even though he went in the opposite direction to Columbanus.

So if we follow Mr. Drea and the EPP, it looks like America is the model we will be faced with for the EU!

From such a prospect may the Lord, in his mercy, protect and deliver us. Amen.

Jack Lane

## Andrew Hamilton to the rescue?

The Franco-German proposal for an EU €500 billion coronavirus recovery fund is the first attempt at a mutualisation of EU debt. If agreed by all Member States, it will be a breakthrough in the financial arrangements between them. As an integrative EU measure it is potentially very important. *The Irish Times* in welcoming it joined a chorus, hailing it by drawing a very misleading analogy. It described such a Fund as being—

“...as important politically as it is economically, a concrete expression of EU solidarity that many citizens currently find wanting. It can be a turning of a page in the union’s history, which some are comparing already to a “Hamilton moment”—the moment when Andrew Hamilton and the federal government assumed the debt incurred by the states during the American Revolutionary War” (20th May 2020).

This analogy is totally over the top, and such a comparison obscures the differences between the two situations. It is misleading as regards the problems facing the EU-in-the-making in its current form, as compared to the situation that Hamilton was dealing with.

The essential basis for mutualisation of debt between parties is trust, understanding and a clear common purpose among them. The American colonies were each other’s ‘*kith and kin*’ who had fought a life and death war together against a common enemy—Britain. The EU have not done anything similar and in fact it has done the very opposite on a number of occasions. Those European conflicts were ruinous to themselves, and the divisions created remain a most potent factor in relations between the Member States.

By contrast, the American colonies were agreed on all fundamentals of life—including their ‘relationship’ with another common enemy, the Native Americans, which was a policy of genocide. And they also agreed on the relationship with the black population, which was slavery. And of course they also agreed on the wonderful rhetoric of a Constitution that guarded “*life liberty and the pursuit of happiness*”—but strictly for themselves.

Those common purposes and actions created the American *demos* that made Hamilton’s mutualisation possible.

Any comparison with Europe and the EU is therefore dangerously superficial and misleading and is a false basis for promoting a meaningful route for further EU integration.

Jack Lane









## Revisionists and Trees

Part 2

### Enter Haughey

#### Background

Part 1 of this article (*Irish Political Review*, May 2020) described Ireland's astonishingly low level of afforestation, currently just 11 per cent of its land area. This is the second lowest, after Malta (an arid semi-desert rock), in the EU, where average tree coverage is 30 per cent. Nevertheless, the Irish figure actually represents a remarkable renaissance, as at Independence just 0.5 per cent of Ireland was forested.

The near total denuding of Ireland's woodlands was the result of a colonial political economy, in which the sustainable husbanding of a renewable resource, such as woodlands, simply did not occur. From about 1600, Irish woods were regarded by an imposed colonial social stratum as a bountiful natural resource that could be exploited and consumed at great profit to extinction. This would not have been the case if such a thing as "Irish society" had existed as an integrated entity. Such integrated national societies were the context in which sustainable, renewable woodland management evolved in Europe. At the foundation of the Irish state, just 130,000 acres of forest remained.

The concept of sustainable forest management began in Germany, and was enthusiastically proposed for Ireland by the Young Ireland movement. They advocated combining the restoring of a sustainable economic exploitation of forests with a revival of ancient historic woodlands as a cultural treasure. The utilitarianism of the O'Connell and later Redmondite movements had little time for this, but, as with much else of Young Ireland, it was a legacy embraced by Sinn Féin.

The Free State in the 1920s, remembering this ideal of its pre-Treaty past, undertook some very modest re-afforestation, amounting to about 1,000 acres of state land, and in the late 1920s also grant-aided estate owners to plant private forests, though there was little take up of this among the remaining 'Big Houses'.

The Republican Governments of the de Valera era from the 1930s-50s systematically pursued state afforestation on an ambitious scale. By the end of the 1930s, over 3,000 Hectares (= 8,000 acres) of trees were being planted annually. In 1946 de Valera passed a Forestry Act and in 1948 launched a 40-year plan to restore 1m acres of forest. In the Inter-Party Government of 1949-51, Clann na Poblachta, a party established from the Sinn Féin/IRA constituency, ensured the strategy was progressed and expanded. The programme nearly came to a halt under the new coalition in the mid-1950s, but surged again after Fianna Fáil returned to power in 1958.

By 1970 there were 0.5m acres of forest, five times the extent that had existed at Independence, and this rose steadily thereafter, reaching 720,000 acres, or 3.4% of land area, by 1986. By 1988, of all forested land, just 2 per cent was privately planted, the other 98 per cent being State forest. By then, over 70 per cent of all woods in Ireland were young forests planted since 1949. But at 4.3 per cent this was still well under half the forestry cover Ireland enjoys today.

#### Policy Conflict in the 1980s

The EU played an important role in redirecting Irish forest policy. In 1981 it offered to fund a grant scheme for private landowners to plant forests, as part of the Government's programme for developing marginal areas of the West. But this had little take-up, given the absence of a private afforestation tradition, and in total only about 600 acres were planted under the two Fitzgerald Coalitions of 1981-82 and 1982-86.

The private-sector focus of the EU programme reflected a coming global trend across OECD economies. The commercialisation and privatisation of State Enterprise was promoted, as well as the

selling off of state "assets". The Fitzgerald Coalition of 1983-87 undertook several privatisations, notably of Irish Shipping, as well as socialising the debts of failing private entities, such as Dublin Gas and the Insurance Corporation of Ireland (ICI).

The *Single European Act* (SEA) of 1986, which laid the basis for the Single Market and was partly engineered by the Fitzgerald-appointed Irish Commissioner, Peter Sutherland, paved the way for ending State monopolies and State Aids to both private and public industry.

As leader of the Dáil Opposition, Charles Haughey, not unreasonably, presented Fianna Fáil as the champion of the State sector, and criticised the privatisation of Irish Shipping ("*a furtive act of national sabotage*"), as well as of the attempted sale by the Fitzgerald Government of semi-mature State Forests to private owners.

He also attacked underinvestment in State Companies such as Telecom, saying "*if this process of dismantling the State sector is brought much further, the Government will get to the point of dismantling the State itself*".

Haughey of course was no socialist. He championed the transformation of State Companies into commercialised "*corporations*", but did not propose their privatisation.

In the area of forestry, he proposed that the managing of State forests be taken from the Department of Forestry and vested in a commercial semi-state company modelled on the ESB and Telecom. His overall strategy, developed when briefly in Government in 1982 as *The Way Forward*, proposed a lock, stock and barrel overhaul of the economy.

This plan was developed in detail by a high-powered team led by top civil servant Pádraig Ó hUiginn, acting on Haughey's

behalf, along with figures such as UCD/ESRI economist Kieran Kennedy and IDA chief Padraic White. Among other natural-resource-based sectors, the plan identified the commercial potential of forestry.

Within weeks of returning as Taoiseach in March 1987, Haughey, in one of his first moves, transferred 50,000 acres of state forests and lands—including most notably Glengarriff Wood in West Cork—from the Department of Forestry to the Office of Public Works (OPW), to be managed henceforth as public amenities and tourism hubs. He simultaneously published a range of new incentives for landowners to plant trees, which resulting in well over 5,000 additional acres being planted that year alone.

In the two years from 1987 to 1989, Haughey's Government initiated numerous economic and finance-capitalist projects, creating the basis of the later "*Celtic Tiger*". These would include the most far-reaching afforestation strategy since 1948. Needless to say, this goes largely unacknowledged, and Haughey himself is not mentioned once, even in the Department's own 2008 official account of itself, *Irish Forests—A Brief History*. He is simply disposed of through silence and the airbrush.

In 1988, an initiative by Haughey saw forest planting that year alone more than double, and by 1989 Irish forestry had already increased to 4.3 per cent of Ireland's land area.

This was only the start. Within a decade, by 1998, Irish forested land itself had doubled, to over 8 per cent of total land area. The cause of this massive expansion, at a time when the State verged on bankruptcy, was the public/private/EU capital investment formula, developed by the Haughey Government that kick-started the globalised Irish economy that emerged soon thereafter.

### **Haughey's Public-Private Strategy**

In 1987 Haughey negotiated a *Partnership Agreement* between the State and Business, Unions and Farmers. This Agreement, the *Programme for National Recovery* (PNR), incorporated many of the industrial initiatives of the *Way Forward*, including its forestry plans. This led to the founding of several new State Enterprises, not least, in January 1989, a new semi-State forestry company, which Haughey had long advocated, *Coillte Teo*. Ownership of all State forested land was

vested in Coillte, while policy—such as on controlling felling, protecting native forests and habitats etc.—remained with the Department.

The PNR involved a great expansion of productive resources, targeting not just high-end *Foreign Direct Investment* (FDI), and innovative experiments such as the *Financial Services Centre*, to replace the previous Whitaker-designed *laissez faire* model of FDI, which had collapsed ignominiously from 1980, but also scaling up promising domestic industries—of which the beef industry was just one.

Given the National Debt crisis, and the State's chronic lack of capital resources, the PNR placed much stress on mobilising private capital for national programmes. When planning Coillte and the 1988 *Forestry Act*, Haughey set up an Inter-Departmental Group led by Finance, to evaluate "*the comparative advantages and disadvantages to the State of private and public investment in forestry, taking account of the need for a high and stable level of planting and the present state of exchequer finances*". Unsurprisingly, it strongly advised a mixed Public-Private approach with a strong emphasis on private-sector-funded forest planting.

### **Enter the EU**

Haughey achieved a remarkable series of concessions from the EU, allowing Ireland to integrate the development projects of the PNR into a heavily EU-co-financed *National Development Plan* (NDP) from 1989.

Framing disparate EU *Structural Fund* programmes and projects as a comprehensive "*National Plan*" was Haughey's idea, one which so enthused Delors that he extended the practice to other countries and it has since become a standard feature of the EU structural funding system.

In this context, a key concession Haughey achieved was securing Commission approval for private investment in major capital projects to be eligible for EC co-financing.

Such an approach was specifically prohibited under the EU's 1986 financial regulations.

Haughey argued with Jacques Delors that such an innovation would be indispensable in realising an ambitious *National Plan* (NDP), while maintaining budget discipline and the debt/GDP reduction ratio Ireland had committed to adhering to.

Haughey first sought this concession of private sector investment in the National Development Plan roads programme be-

ing eligible for EC co-financing, which he argued the Irish Exchequer alone could never fund. Delors approved it in principle within weeks.

Haughey then sought and secured the same exemption for infrastructure generally, especially water facilities for which an extensive modernisation programme was planned.

In developing commercial forestry and the timber industry, the Government had initially pursued the capital investment route. It secured *European Investment Bank* (EIB) loans when establishing Coillte in 1988 to fund PNR forestry and timber industry projects, and this soon enabled the Government to report "*record planting*" and the establishment of several new private-sector industrial timber plants in 1988, notably at Rooskie in Co. Roscommon and the greatly expanded plant at Scarriff in Co. Clare, both on the Shannon. These industries still exist to this day and continue to thrive.

But Haughey also gambled on securing the same concession from the EU for forestry as he had secured for roads and infrastructure, allowing both private and Government investment to be eligible as "*match-funding*" for EU co-financing, under the NDP. Following a meeting between Haughey and Delors, the relevant EU regulation was amended to enable it. This enabled the further rapid growth of the forestry sector over the years that followed.

Haughey also successfully lobbied to have the same exemption, enabling mixed EU/state/private co-financing to be extended to other areas, particularly tourism projects, and community and local development initiatives. This innovative financing formula would drive the take-off of the "*Celtic Tiger*" economy over the following decade. When the amended EU regulation permitting private co-funding in forestry and timber was secured in May 1989, the draft NDP was immediately amended to incorporate the goal of a doubling of total Irish afforested land and a major expansion of timber processing through the Public/Private/EU investment mix.

### **The Haughey-Delors "Partnership"**

These remarkable concessions were secured due to the special "*partnership*" Haughey forged with the powerful EC Commission President, Jacques Delors, and with the then French and German leaders, Jacques Chirac and Helmut Kohl. The alliance was underwritten on the

Irish side by committing unequivocally to support the then Franco-German aim of achieving European Community political and monetary integration, and cemented by Haughey's facilitating role at EC level in enabling German unification in 1990.

The Irish NDP became the first EC *joint development plan* with any EC member country, and soon became a model for others, though until the 2000s these rarely achieved comparable success. Haughey, in a move much criticised by the Opposition, even appointed an official from Delors' 'cabinet'—Joly Dixon, considered Delors' "right hand man on EMU"—as an advisor to the tripartite policy body at the centre of Ireland's *Social Partnership* system, the NES. C.

A high-level joint Irish-Commission Committee was established, co-chaired by Delors and Haughey themselves, to oversee the role-out of the Irish NDP. Delors described this EC partnership with a member state as "unique in the history of the EC".

The travails of the Irish beef industry in the early 1990—much fetishised by critics of Irish economic policy in general and of Haughey in particular—have tended to overshadow the great industrial successes achieved under this strategy by 1989 in many domestic industrial sectors, not least forestry and timber, the arts, finance, technology, dairy foods, marine, horticulture and construction.

The immediate forestry boom experienced in 1990-91 as a result of this strategy saw the follow-on Social Partnership Agreement, the *Programme for Economic and Social Progress* (1991-4)—the second, and last, concluded by Haughey—continued the strategy of further expanding both State and private sector afforestation and timber processing.

### Post-Haughey

Under the EU-supported NDP programmes, which continued in a series after the initial one launched in 1989, afforestation by the private sector—mostly landowners—which had been marginal before 1989, grew rapidly, peaking in 1995 when nearly 42,000 acres were planted, in addition to 15,280 acres planted by the State company, Coillte. This was the highest level of forest planting ever achieved in a single year in the history of the state.

As with many areas of policy, the economic programmes engineered in 1987-92, and the mechanisms for generating and sustaining them, notably Social Partnership and the Irish-EU "NDP" system,

were continued by the various Governments that succeeded Haughey following his forced retirement in 1992, and were largely identical in form to the prototype programmes of 1987-92.

The State's 1996 forestry strategy, "Growing for the Future", was no exception, and was likewise a product of this policy system and of the forestry strategy initiated in 1988. The 1996 plan adopted an ambitious 40-year target for both commercial and State planting, as well as goals in environmental, amenity and native species promotion. The overall target was to achieve 3m acres of woodland (17 per cent of total land area) by 2030. By 2000, an expansion of forested land by over 1.5m acres was achieved, over 9% of Ireland's land area, and this would rise further to 1.7m acres, or 10 per cent, by 2006. It is now over 11 per cent.

### Modifying Success

There are of course problems with forestation, not least the obliteration of previously diverse and formerly farmed upland landscapes through excessive plantation, often with monocultures such as Sitka Spruce. The Slieve Bloom mountains in Co. Offaly are just one example of this. The advantage of this species is that it grows well in otherwise marginal acidic (peaty) soil and matures very rapidly in Ireland's cool, moist climate. But there is a strong case to be made for more nuanced planting strategies that combine vibrant inhabited landscapes with managed forestry development. This is the type of issue Ireland now has the luxury of considering. It is a problem of success.

In recent years, incentives have succeeded in directing planting away from massive Spruce plantations towards smaller forests set in wider agricultural landscapes. By 2007, nearly half of all new private forests were less than 24 acres in size. Many landowners also increasingly plant small forests for aesthetic, environmental and amenity purposes as well as commercial investment.

There is also a problem of over-planting with specific commercial conifer timber species. These include the ubiquitous Sitka spruce, *Picea sitchensis*, a native of the Pacific Northwest, which was first introduced to Co. Wicklow in the 1830s. The country suffers from an excess of such dense monoculture plantations. Native deciduous broadleaf species account for just a tenth of total forest coverage. But with concerted efforts since 1948, a quarter of State plantations and nearly a third of all new State planting now comprise na-

tive broadleaf species such as Oak, Ash, Birch, Hazel, Alder etc., as well as Yew and Scots Pine.

It may also be noted that Coillte survives to this day as a vibrant State Company. Following the global financial crisis, the Fine Gael element of the new coalition elected in 2011 proposed privatising Coillte, as suggested by the EU-IMF "Troika". But Labour, vigorously backed by the public sector Unions, SIPTU and IMPACT (now Forsa), opposed this, and Coillte remains to this day a public entity.

## Mussolini

continued

Hands on hearts the British can swear that they made Mussolini pay for the crime that left 275,000 Abyssinians dead, as against 4,500 Italians. "The Italians gained territory greater than France and Germany combined."

The reviewer tells us that Musso's next foray was ideologically driven—"supporting Franco's Nationalists against the left-wing government in the Spanish Civil War". He makes no mention of the MI6 Agent Hugh Pollard, who flew Franco from the Canaries to Morocco, whence he launched his attack on Spanish democracy.

Polard later served in the British Embassy in Madrid, at a time when (we are expected to believe from other sources) Graham Greene was seeking to frustrate any attempt by Franco to join the Axis against the British. It is now suggested that Greene, while apparently sympathetic to left-wing Spaniards in the post-Franco decades, was playing the Game which Pollard had been playing since his black-propaganda days in 1920 Dublin.

The reviewer does not mention Emperor Haile Selassie's appearance before the League of Nations in Geneva, demanding that its members honour their Covenant to defend his country from his attack. Nor is there any reference to the statesman who endorsed his demand and was prepared to send troops from his own country to join other troops from the League's members to defend Abyssinia and the League itself.

That Statesman's name was Eamon de Valera, President of the League's General Assembly, and leader of the Irish Government. He was not supported by any other delegate.. De Valera's demand fell on deaf ears at the time.

It has eluded historians, even (or should I say, especially?), in Ireland.

The four founding and permanent members of the Council of the League of Nations were Britain, France, Italy and Japan. When Japan annexed Manchuria, the League did little to stop it. The British and French had given themselves Mandates wrapped up in League ribbons, to administer territories wrested from the Ottoman Empire, supposedly to prepare the inhabitants for independent democratic sovereign rule.

They used artillery bombardment, aerial bombing with high explosives and poison gas, aerial strafing with machine-gun fire to 'police' those territories – notably Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. When, in a democratic act of self-determination Ireland established a Republic in an election “regarded on all sides as a Plebiscite” according to *The Times*, the inhabitants of Palestine were denied a vote on their future. They were lumbered for the next thirty years with a 'Police Force' of largely redeployed Black and Tans, who carried on as they had in Ireland.

And Lord Balfour, who, when Prime Minister led the Government which passed an Act restricting immigration into the UK, aimed largely at Jews, proclaimed himself the friend of Jews who might betake themselves to Palestine.

Although Jewish communities were long established in the Ottoman Empire (long predating the Ottomans), they had shown no enthusiasm to settle in Palestine. Zionism was largely the product of “Christian” anti-Semitism in Europe. It was cynically espoused by Balfour and his successors in Britain and their successor imperialists in the United States.

Mussolini was the darling of the respectable classes, Pope Pius XI was a devoted one, Fine Gael condemned de Valera for not supporting him, the (Protestant) *Irish Times* apparently thought highly of him and Winston Churchill doted on him and particularly admired his rape of Abyssinia. But then, like *The Irish Times* (which hailed Her Hitler's accession to power), Churchill had praise for Hitler as late as 1938.

Despite all the commentators who smear de Valera and sneer at his politics, De Valera never echoed, endorsed or praised the persons, politics, or actions of Mussolini, Hitler or Franco. Nor was de Valera Knighted by the British.

Bookshops and Libraries, even gardening centres, in Britain have shelves groaning with praise of the Commandos, Dambusters, SAS and other popular heroes. But I have yet to see even one pamphlet, let

alone a book, devoted to the history of the League of Nations. A League co-founded by Britain, France, Japan and Italy all of whom wretched on their obligations under its Covenant.

During the League's existence France and Britain 'policed' the lands they had

"Mandated" themselves by aerial bombing with high explosives and poison gas, along with machine-gunning and artillery bombardment of civilians; and Japan annexed Manchuria, while Italy took Abyssinia.

**Donal Kennedy**

## Coming Out Of Lockdown – A Business View

Here are some impressions about how the economy may function in the immediate post-Covid period.

Increased costs, lower productivity and output as well as a loosening of monetary policy by the ECB might well lead to inflation.

Yet there are some businesses that are going to do well: data storage, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) manufacturers (mostly manufacturing companies that have adjusted to this new opportunity). It should be said that some of the PPE manufacturers will make big mistakes. I've noticed there is a lot of rubbish on the market. Some of it is expensive rubbish (the idea that you can mass produce 3d printers is a joke).

That said, it is the one industry that is growing exponentially. The HSE says it will increase its spending from €20m to €1 billion per annum: a 50 fold increase. This doesn't include the demand by non-health sector businesses.

At present the Chinese have cornered the market for PPE, but there are some Irish manufacturers nibbling at the edges.

I'm told DIY stores were booming just before the lockdown and some have carried on (almost like the shebeens of old). Some small builders are doing well (refurbishing houses for working from home, installing 'desk dividers').

Sign makers are doing well for the present: all those signs about social distancing.

Supermarkets are booming, but this may not last.

I heard a report on a marketing survey, suggesting that among the establishments that people wanted to open as soon as possible were garden centres. They came well ahead of pubs and hotels.

There will be big adjustments in business and politics. I've heard that the earliest a vaccine can be tested and approved is eighteen months. It will take another 18 months for manufacturing to scale up to supply the vaccine.

It might be added that, without wishing to diminish the hardship that some people are enduring, a lot of people are doing well. The economic adjustment is unbalanced. Some people are working flat out while others are unemployed.

I notice that Ireland had a record balance of payments surplus in March, driven by pharmaceutical industries which more than counteracted the decline in aircraft leasing. The surplus was also driven by a reduction in imports.

People are saving (partly because there are less opportunities to spend).

John Fitzgerald reckons that Private Sector savings are running at about 10% of income which roughly corresponds to the State's current deficit. So the State deficit is at least sustainable in the short term.

It is likely that there will be a revival of the economy, as restrictions are lifted and pent up demand is released. Nevertheless the economy will take a severe hit, maybe 10%. But my guess is that unemployment will not increase by as much once things settle down. It could be as “low” as 10% (an increase from 5% pre-covid).

The reason for my 'optimism' as regards unemployment is that social distancing will increase costs and reduce productivity in manufacturing and other sectors. So more people required for a given level of output.

There are likely to be problems with commercial construction: the demand for retail and office space will decline, the demand for industrial space will increase.

The idea of high density houses and apartments may be re-thought following the pandemic. Having a garden will be considered a prized asset. I heard the Chairman of the construction industry saying social distancing and new safety protocols will increase costs by at least 10% for houses and by far more for apartments. So both the costs and the lack of demand might reverse the trend for apartment construction.

**John Martin**

**'Keep fast under cover, O Stones.**

(on the death of James Dawson who was a hated landlord from Aherlow, Co. Tipperary)'.  
"Keep fast under cover, o stones, in closet of clay  
this grey haired Dawson, a bloody and treacherous butcher.  
Now in struggle or strife in the fight are his exploits known  
but ravaging and hanging and mangling the poor for ever.  
Though lavish his spending on the proud bright palace of Brian  
his door was shut solid, locked on the meanness within.  
In peaceful Eatharlach, in an angle between two hills,  
Famine he fastened on the people to keep them in thrall..."

*Seán Clárach Mac Dónail*, (1691-1754) poet, scholar and strong farmer. He lived his life in his birthplace near Charleville, Co. Cork, and was mostly known for his Jacobite songs. *An Duanaire. 1600-1900. Poems of the Dispossed.* Edited by Seán O Tuama with verse translations by Thomas Kinsella.

'Bowen's Court is one of the most complex and beautiful books produced by Irish memory. Its author was a magnetic person, a truly modern woman, displaced and yet deeply rooted. I'll always remember how Molly Keane spoke about Elizabeth Bowen; with reverence and love and a kind of fearful admiration. Many have fallen under her spell, even in recent years. Hermione Lee, Victoria Glendinning, and the broadcaster and pilgrim Donncha O Dulaing who wrote his M.A. thesis on Elizabeth Bowen.'

*Thomas McCarthy*, Introduction to 'Bowen's Court'. The Collins Press. Cork. 1998.

## Elizabeth Bowen.

### A Review of Patricia Laurence's biography. Part 4.

Just to go back to Thomas McCarthy's Introduction, he is a local poet and librarian in the Cork City Library—but he is definitely wrong in asserting that O Dulaing completed his MA thesis on Bowen—we have looked for it and it is not there. Down in the Trevor/Bowen Summer School, Mitchelstown, Co. Cork, one year he was giving a talk and when asked later on in the bar by this writer about this elusive thesis, he laughed and said he "might not have given it in". My strong impression was that he never went very far with it because, when I questioned him on local Bowen knowledge, he walked away with a smile saying he had to talk to locals and promised to get back to me which he never did.

In his own memoir, *Walking and Talking with Donncha O Dulaing*, Blackwater Press, Cork, 1998, he wrote about—

"one day in October 1959, having already written for an appointment, I

knocked on the door of Prof. BG. McCarthy's house in 19, Wilton Road, Cork. A Master's Degree was my objective ... I had no choice on the subject .... Almost without preamble she said:

"I think a writer from your own North Cork would be suitable and I think Elizabeth Bowen is the one..."

I was struck dumb. I had never even heard of her...."

Later on, O Dulaing wrote:

"I "attacked" the Bowen subject, which I found sometimes dry, often intellectually taxing but always a great challenge. I discovered that she was born in Dublin but of north Cork stock, from the parish of Kildorrery in the townland of Bowen's Court only a few miles from Doneraile."

There is of course no townland called 'Bowen's Court' and that a local Doneraile man would write this—suggests his knowledge of Bowen or local history didn't go far. And by that time, he had got a good job, part-time teaching in Presentation College, Cork, but by luck he saw an advertisement

on the College notice board from Henry Ford & Son Ltd. Cork who were looking for a "a graduate trainee". He got the job and he was informed that:

"would be employed on a temporary basis by Fords for a salary of £10 per week. So, already I had more than doubled my teacher's wages."

And then he got a job with RTE locally and his career took off and he has since become a very successful "Broadcaster and Pilgrim" as it says on the blurb written on the back of his memoir.

There are two issues which I have to comment on first before I can get on with analysing Patricia Laurence's biography. One is to do with the end comment I made in the May 2020 issue of the *Irish Political Review*. Patricia Laurence, "Professor Emerita of English, City College of New York", USA and Dr. Eibhear Walshe, then of the School of English, UCC were off visiting "Farahy and Bowen's Court". The latter was demolished in 1960 by its new owner, who, after looking at the feasibility of holding on to it employed a firm of engineers to look at the house and give him a report.

When interviewed by us (my husband and myself), he showed us the engineer's report he had commissioned after buying Bowen's Court in 1959 and it simply showed the huge roof to be so unsound that it just was not on to try and keep it, so he did what he needed to do and demolished it—and has since been dammed by our crop of academics/journalists and general oinseachs who have never sought out the truth of the matter.

Elizabeth Bowen, herself wrote an Afterword to the reissue of *Bowen's Court and Seven Winters*, Vintage, London, 1999. Obviously Bowen had died in 1973, but the publishers had got permission from her literary estate to include her 1963 piece. She wrote:

"The buyer was a County Cork man, a neighbour. He already was farming tracts of land, and had the means wherewith to develop mine, and horses to put in the stables. It cheered me also to think that his handsome children would soon be running about the rooms,—for it was, I believe, his honest intention, when he first bought the place from me, to inhabit the house. But in the end he did not find that practicable, and who is to blame him? He thought at one time, I understand, of compromising by taking off the top storey (I am glad he did not). Finally, he decided that there was nothing for it but to demolish the house entirely. So that was done.

It was a clean end. Bowen's Court never lived to be a ruin."

(Old Headington, Oxford, 1963.)

Elizabeth was then living in a flat at the back of her great friend, Isaiah Berlin's, big house. It is clear from her piece that she was in contact with Mr. Cornelius O'Keefe—the new owner. And it is also quite clear that Mr. O'Keefe, in commissioning the engineer's report, was serious in his deliberations about the future of Bowen's Court. Since the elite of Ireland decided to become a province of England, these 'Big Houses' have become their fetish, as has their inhabitants. While Bowen clearly felt that the intentions of her "*neighbour*" were decent, the evening academics and *litterati* of today opine otherwise. The latter pilgrim to the "*empty field*", as Bowen called it. And so Eibhear Walshe brought the American academic Patricia Laurence to see it—the "*empty field*", but now transformed by them—in their *canónings*—into a "*holy site*", a "*place of pilgrimage*"!

In a very recent study by another American academic, *Emergency Writing: Irish Literature, Neutrality, and the Second World War* (Northwestern University Press, Illinois, 2018), Anna Teekell writes thus:

"In 1959, when Bowen could no longer afford its" (Bowen's Court's) "upkeep, the house was sold and promptly demolished by its new owners. Where "Bowen's Court" once meant a house, it is now the title of a book. The space of Bowen's Court is now preserved within the hermetic space of Bowen's Court."

This sturdy analysis, though wrong on some counts—the house was not "*promptly demolished*"—never-the-less is right: the book is the only remaining object—not the house. But our academics still persist in their little devotional pilgrimages without a blush staining their cheeks, while playing bemused and sometimes hostile *a la* 'The Irish Times' to actual religious pilgrimages and especially to those who make them.

The only time that Elizabeth Bowen ever thought of using her 'Big House' for sociable gatherings of the ordinary Irish was funnily enough—during the War. Suddenly she was conscious that intermingling with the Irish could be anticipated with pleasure! After all, we were in all this together—the War I mean. As she pleads in her 1940 essay, simply titled *The Big House*, in *The Bell*:

"'Can we not', big, half empty rooms seem to ask, 'be, as never before, sociable? Cannot we scrap the past, with its bitter-nesses and barriers, and all meet, throwing in what we have?'"

But isn't it interesting that this request comes from "*half empty rooms*", not the owner? Even then, Bowen it seems, can't quite bring herself to ask outright—as the *chatelaine*—for our attendance upon her qualified invitation? And we know, she is not being sincere, since so few Irish people got that request.

Her guests, as we now know, came from the aristocratic core of the English, the great Cecils/Salsburys—Lord David and his wife Rachel. Lord Cranborne, Head of the Dominions Office and Prime Minister Churchill's 'top official go-to' was Lord David's brother. There were also the go-getters from Oxford, Berlin, Bowra et al. And then there were the writers from Bloomsbury, chief among whom were Virginia Woolf—the high priestess herself—who saw Bowen's Court in a decidedly unfavourable light. But what else could one expect from Woolf when she had Knole, "*one of the most famous stately homes in England*" and Vita Sackville-West to herself at the time?

"Elizabeth's home", Woolf waspishly wrote "was merely a great stone box, but full of Italian mantelpieces and decayed 18th century furniture, and carpets all in holes—however they insisted upon keeping up a ramshackle kind of state, dressing for dinner and so on."

*The Sickle Side of the Moon*,  
Letters 1932-35.

Elizabeth should take comfort from Woolf's rather snarling appraisal of Vita when they were first introduced:

"Not much to my severe taste, florid, moustached, parakeet coloured, with all the supple ease of the aristocracy, but not the wit of the artist."

Vita, of course, was a great beauty but doesn't that "*moustached*" send the very spine tingling with its sheer cattiness? Though that didn't stop their affair from flaming into existence.

The other writers came from America, Carson McCullers, Eudora Welty, May Sarton and many others.

One point I would like noted is that Anna Teekell, like so many others, takes umbrage with the Aubane Historical Society and writes that

"Bowen's" (spy) "Reports... can be got from Robert Fisk's 'In Time of War: Ireland, Ulster and the Price of Neutrality, 1939-45' (University of Pennsylvania Press, HB, 1983) and the Public Record Office, Kew."

"They are also reprinted in the volume

published by the Aubane Historical Society, prefaced with a deeply republican "Review of Irish Neutrality in World War 11", by the editors, casting Bowen as a traitor. Bowen, Notes on Eire. Ed. Jack Lane and Brendan Clifford (Aubane, Co. Cork: Aubane Historical Society, 2009" (Underlining -JH).

Maud Ellmann's book, *Elizabeth Bowen: The Shadow Across the Page* (Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, PB, 2004) also falls into the error as seeing many writers amongst them Roy Foster, W.J. McCormack, Declan Kiberd, Clair Connolly *et al* as having:

"attempted to reintegrate Bowen's writings into a distinctive Irish tradition, counteracting the parochial attempts of the Aubane Historical Society to cross her out."

The other point that I have to deal with, as I said in my opening paragraph, has to do with another aspect of how I wrote about Bowen in a previous article. People, I have found don't know Bowen and so, when I mention her, there is general confusion. At our dinner, last November in Kinsale, when sailing is definitely over for the season, there is much levity and *bonhomie*. I met a man who is very high in the Church of Ireland community and when I said I was writing a book about Bowen, he didn't have a clue. Thinking him to be having me on—I didn't bite and was just turning away when he admitted having heard of her, but not in any context in which he could "*place her*".

I gave him some background and tossed off a few novels of hers which I thought might interest him, but without thinking he would take me up on any of it. And that was that until the other day when, after some of our lockdown restrictions were lifted, I heard someone call my name and there he was. With his iPhone! And there on the screen was a shot of a former article in this journal, where I quoted Elizabeth Bowen in my opening quotations:

"*We have everything to dread from the dispossessed.*"

And with great satisfaction, he said basically that I have the wrong stick altogether. Gobsmacked, I asked him where had he got the article and how did he know who I was. But he was so delighted that I had somehow got this wrong that he was not going to be fobbed off.

But I protested that in fact I did indeed know about what I had written and he said "*prove it!*" It was beginning to dawn on me that he thought the "*dispossessed*" of Bowen's was us—the Irish. Of course, Bowen

only cared about her "race" and these were whom she called the "dispossessed".

When I explained that—he was the one who was stunned. The fuller quotation is from her memoir, *Bowen's Court*:

"For these people—my family and their associates—the idea of power was mostly vested in property (property having been acquired by use or misuse of power in the first place). One may say that while property lasted the dangerous power-idea stayed, like a sword in its scabbard, fairly safely at rest. At least, property gave my people and people like them the means to exercise power in a direct, concrete and therefore limited way... I submit that the power-loving temperament is more dangerous when it either prefers or is forced to operate in what is materially a void. We have everything to dread from the dispossessed."

So the Anglo-Irish in their "acquiring property"—what a lovely term—robbed

of all the savage confiscations and murderous activities that accompanied this act—used the power with constraint? Elizabeth Bowen is writing propaganda here and she knows it. But these are her people—in fact they are "her family", so how can she accuse them?

"Better keep" her "trap shut" as she advised a friend who had read of a biography of one of their friends—I think it may have been Stephen Spender but if I have to correct that in the next issue, I will.

Bowen's writings are most suspect when they concern her family and her "race". And many of her biographers have accepted that but the Americans fall into error so easily because of their 'apartness', to use a Bowenesque phrase.

Julianne Herlihy ©

To be continued

## Flu In Bygone Days

The Belfast shipyard is on Queens Island, a short distance out of Belfast City.

When I started work there in April 1946, Dead Man's island was pointed out to me. It wasn't an island, more of a narrow peninsula across Musgrave Channel. To reach it we young teenagers could go there on a hi-jacked raft, which was one of our pranks, whenever we were able to slope off from work.

Dead Man's Island we never landed on. We could see it plainly enough. It had no trees or scrubs, only rough, wiry, yellowy grass. Seabirds didn't seem to go there either, or maybe that was our imagination. It was where the crews of ship who caught yellow fever were buried.

Ships coming into Belfast harbour, with the dead and dying were quarantined somewhere in the middle of Belfast Lough. The dead were buried on this island. It is hard to know how long this practice had been going on but, by 1946, it was over.

No one knows who these dead men were. There were no headstones to be seen. There might have been markers beneath that rough grass but none of us were prepared to go there to find out.

It was the adults who informed us and warned us not to go there to Dead Man's Island, as the yellow fever virus could still be in those graves. It was known that a number of labourers were employed to take the bodies off the ship. They were paid good money and somehow survived the infection.

At that time shipyardmen were obsessed with health issues, and had reason to be. There was death through accidents. Sometimes for weeks running someone would die. At other times six could die in one incident, like in a boiler-room explosion.

Injuries were frequent. The shipyard had first-aid posts everywhere but no doctor for 35,000 men. (There were women working as upholsters and seamstresses, but these were kept well away from the ships. And not forgetting the woman office workers.)

Hardly a day went by when you didn't see a stretcher being craned off a ship, the stretcher being laid on a huge steel bucket. There were no helmets, proper work boots or protective clothing.

Spanners and objects dropped high up in a ship's engine room could cause death or a brain injury. Bared welder's electric cables could be stepped on wearing damp, flimsy shoes and could cause being thrown against a steel bulkhead.

You had to be on the point of death before the shipyard's one and only ambulance took you to hospital. Merely requiring stitches, you were given the fare for the tram to Royal Victoria Hospital, and told to make sure you returned to work on that day.

Eventually, about 1950, one doctor was employed but only for those with an eye injury. Sight was valued over all.

Some mornings a ship would stink

of Wintergreen Ointment, used then for back strain. There were also men with bandaged head and hands. Some would be limping for weeks, others would be vomiting over the side of the ship from stomach trouble.

White asbestos floated in the air as pipe-layers, their bare arms white with the stuff, mixed it with water and sculpted it around the pipes with their bare hands. I look back now and wonder what happened to these big strong healthy men in later life.

Men could be out for months after catching influenza, which turned into pleurisy or pneumonia. This reduced their household to poverty. This was before the NHS, or National Assistance—which didn't pay much anyway and was hard to get.

Sickness Benefit, when it came in with the NHS, would also mean frugality and a difficulty in paying the rent. Meanwhile the ill drifted back looking a shadow of themselves.

That was the Work Front, the Home Front was just as fraught with illnesses.

The flu during WW2, and up to the early 1950s, usually caused people to be bedridden. As a boy, during WW2, I was bedridden for over a week.

During that time mothers usually took their children to bed, up to the age of eight years old, with the hope that the heat of their bodies would cure them.

Other than that, they were isolated on the couch downstairs (the couch being a sort of a working-class chaise-loungé). Every house in Belfast seemed to have one.

As a teenager I again was bed-ridden: this time with the flu for two weeks. It wasn't a choice, I was on the point of collapse. Penicillin was around by then and so was an early NHS. The GP would come to give you injections and it was free. But you were still bed-ridden. Then there were the weeks of recovery, at work, feeling physically weak and with a deathly pallor.

These outbreaks of the flu were looked on as normal.

There were no media reports, even though you would hear of a number of deaths.

Of course this was during the Unionist regime, led by people who never cared too much even for their own loyalist working class, except when it was time for more phony elections.

My father caught the flu before the NHS came into existence. He was bed-ridden for weeks and was eventually carried out as a human skeleton to the hospital, where he almost died. This caused a financial crisis.

The consolation was that my father worked in what was called a gang and they made a collection amounting to £15, two weeks' wages. One of his workmates then made his way out to Carryduff to present the money to us.

That was the method used in the shipyard by the 35,000 workforce. The employer gave you nothing. In fact they might have got rid of you, if you were out ill for too long. The Unions prevented that.

The few Catholic workers also had this compassion from their workmates. I remember one man saying how he was shivering with fear on the tram, with the collection, as it entered the Falls Road.

The sick man invited him back, when he was well, for a drink in his local pub. But he was too afraid to take up the offer.

If you were to be out sick for a longer period, then another collection would be made.

If you died then, if a skilled man, your tools were auctioned at the lunch hour (dinner time) and would be bought at as high a price as the men could afford.

Apprentices were the exception when bidding. The money then went to the widow.

Usually you insured against sickness, before the NHS. It was a shilling a week.

When sick you got one guinea (£1 and one shilling). You only got this for a couple of weeks, if I can remember rightly. You were expected to have savings.

Calling out a doctor, before the NHS, cost a week's rent. My family's rent was ten shillings. On top of that you paid for prescriptions, bandages and other things, according to your illness.

During my father's illness my mother did a bizarre thing out of desperation. She asked the local quarry owner for the use of his phone and phoned the RUC barracks and spoke to the sergeant in command of the area.

She simply said she had no money to call out a doctor and her husband might be dying. The sergeant phoned the doctor to explain this. The doctor arrived the same day and gave his services free, writing out a prescription for free, and telling me to go to the nearest chemist which was in the town of Saintfield five miles away, and I could pick it up for free. A week later he called again for free and ordered an ambulance for my father whose condition had worsened.

The RUC police sergeant I mentioned was married to my maternal aunt. He converted to Catholicism in order to marry

her. We used to see him at Mass with my aunt and their two children in the US Army Chapel on a Sunday during WW2. He carried out his duties as a Catholic better than the most of us, but even as a 12-year old boy I didn't see him as a Catholic.

Thinking of the Two Nations theory now, I realise you can change your religion but you can't change your nationality! He looked like a Protestant, walked like a Protestant, and had the gestures of a Protestant.

He had fought in WW1 as a eighteen year old and bore some of the scars.

My mother had asked him to phone the doctor in Saintfield, to excuse her payment for a visit. She couldn't bear to borrow money from her sister out of pride. She regretted asking him to do this, for she suspected he might have intimidated the doctor. I can't say I ever saw him smile. While commanding Carryduff police barracks, he put an end to the sectarian attacks on our house by laying ambushes for the perpetrators in military fashion.

The constables were notoriously sectarian under a previous sergeant and now they were being forced to come to our aid. But they must have informed the stone-throwers because the ambushes caught no one.

Then he was transferred out of the area. He was required in Tyrone to go IRA hunting. He was well-known for that in South Armagh and had been fired at by an IRA unit raiding a bank. The bullet skimmed the side of his head. He proudly had the peaked cap on display in the barrack with the bullet hole.

I visited my cousins there a lot and, when he was out, we would enter his office and look at his plans for defeating the IRA in Tyrone, which consisted of maps of the Sperrins Mountains showing

escape routes. He eventually disappeared into Special Branch and we never saw him again, nor my aunt.

With his transfer, the sectarian attacks on us began again and the new sergeant did nothing about it.

In relating this story it maybe shows how catching the flu can be highly politicised.

My father's illness was so severe, it would take months for him to recover. He got out of the hospital on a Friday and was expected back in the shipyard the following Monday. He spent the week-end walking the lanes in order to get his balance back. It took him months to recover.

At work his gang wouldn't let him do any heavy lifting, despite what the chargehand thought.

This version of the flu was as severe as today's Covid-19. Except for the Spanish flu post WW1, there was no label until the Asian Flu of 1957-1958. It was only then that there were reports in the press of deaths. It was as bad as what my father and I had had. Neither of us caught the 1957 version. Maybe we were now immune with anti-bodies, having had a severe bout of it.

Flu was a regular occurrence before 1957 and health would never be the same again for a number of people. After a dose of the flu, there would be an outbreak of boils which tormented people still further. Young girls would become almost suicidal when one appeared on their face. Gradually they disappeared with new medical discoveries and the new NHS.

(I'm not saying Covid-19 is a flu but from WW2 to the 1957, the flu was disabling and brought death as much as the virus does today.)

**Wilson John Haire.**  
23.5.2020

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

**COVID**

There have recently been self-interested, neoliberal, calls by some 'eminent' economists to get our nation back to work long before public-minded medical authorities consider at all advisable. This is just the old 'herd immunity' solution which would needlessly endanger our elderly and vulnerable in the sectional interest of the nabobs of our current economic system. This market system is based on the discredited notion that infinite growth can be exacted from our limited resources to benefit a tiny, avaricious, minority

with boundless wealth while subjecting millions of workers around the globe to lives of hard labour, misery and pain. I suggest a more prudent and rational approach would be to allow the politics of this emergency to be underpinned solely by the wisdom of our medical authorities who have nothing to gain apart from the public good. It would be alarming if these true experts were muzzled by a group of charlatans who have a well-documented history of getting everything wrong but their bank balances.

**Simon O'Donnell.** 3.5.20



## Covid-19: Time To Lift The Mind Lockdown?

At least 100,000 lost their lives in the United States as a result of the Hong Kong Flu. It struck in two waves: December 1968 and November 1969. At least a million lost their lives across the globe. But businesses were not closed down. Workers were not laid off. Life went on as usual.

The victims were not even restricted to planet earth. In December 1968, before leaving to take command of the Apollo 8 moon mission, the first manned mission outside earth orbit, astronaut Frank Borman shook hands with the outgoing US President, Lyndon Johnson. The objective was to perform the first manned circumnavigation of the moon as a preparatory step and testing exercise, leading to a future moon landing. On the outward phase of the journey towards the moon, Borman began to feel unwell. Seemingly he had picked up the virus from President Johnson. The matter received little attention or comment at the time.

In 1957 the Asian Flu had struck worldwide. In severity, global reach, and the number of fatalities, it was of similar dimensions to the Hong Kong Flu. In this instance too, no measures were taken to restrict economic and social life.

### A PLAGUE

Up to 21st May 2020, deaths in the United States attributed officially to the Covid-19 virus came to 71,340. That locates the current epidemic within the same general order of magnitude as the two flu epidemics mentioned above. Yet, to judge by what the mainstream media are feeding us, we face a potentially frightful plague.

An amazing example comes from *The Irish Times* of Saturday, 9th May last. The column of economist David McWilliams gloried in the headline *Economic Recovery Depends On A Vaccine*. In his piece McWilliams stated bluntly: “*The strategy is to wait until we get a vaccine*”

We can imagine an economic recovery depending on Government policy, business confidence, international trade agreements, the quality of industrial relations, education and training policies, the absence of conflict and strife, good harvests, changes in technology, the discovery of minerals, oil or natural gas,

innovative credit policies, or the arrival of visitors from another planet to bestow sagacious advice. However, never before has an economic upswing been envisaged as being dependant upon the emergence of a pharmacological concoction, one which has not yet even been invented let alone adequately tested. It is as if we were blighted by a most horrendous pestilence which plunged us into a desperate position. But is this really so?

On the front page of the *Irish Independent* for May 20th last there was a sub heading: Pandemic emergency expected to last for years. But is the situation so long term? Is it so drastic?

The shutting down of so many businesses and the loss of so many jobs has created an atmosphere of insecurity, even of dread. The ceasing of so much economic activity has placed enormous costs upon the State by way of lost tax revenues and the assumption of support payments for those out of work. These policies are not sustainable over more than a few months at the most. There is also the matter of what norms are to be applied as the economy is reactivated. How can a social distancing convention of two metres apply in a hotel, a restaurant, a public house, a dance hall, a football stadium? It is not socially or economically feasible. If normal social and business life is to resume and the economy to thrive the social distancing convention has to go. Normal life needs to resume and to sustain itself normally. Otherwise establishments will not be able to meet their financial commitments and staff will face redundancy.

### MEDIA VOICE

The broadcasting and print media have spoken with one voice, a voice which has convinced the public at large that there is an unprecedented emergency which can be met only by general conformity and good willed co-operation.

In the Internet world of social media and opinion websites there is a more diffuse picture. In the myriad constellations of information, misinformation and nonsense of which the Internet consists, the general conformism alluded to above prevails. But there are exceptions.

Administrative effort is expended to control content on the social media platform Facebook. Similarly management

of the video distribution facility YouTube carries out a campaign to limit access to heretical viewpoints. Search algorithms built into the most used Internet search engine, Google, present results skewed towards the message that we are living through an unprecedented health emergency. But, owing to the enormous scale and amorphous nature of the internet, these efforts have been only partially successful.

### PHYSICIANS

In late April last two experienced physicians based in California, Dr Dan Erickson and Dr Artin Massihi, gave a video briefing where they called for the United States to re-open for normal business and social activities. Erickson said hospitals should refocus away from the perceived emergency and onto their normal concerns:

“When I talk to ER physicians around the country, what is happening—well, because Covid has become the focus, people with heart disease, people with cancer, hypertension and various things that are critical are choosing not to come in, based on fear”.

He went on to say: “*Over the last couple of months we have gained a lot of data*”. What medical personnel were encountering was “*a widespread viral infection similar to flu*”. Statistics were coming in:

“12% of Californians were positive for Covid. The initial models were woefully inaccurate; they predicted millions of cases of death, not of prevalence or incidence but death. This is not materializing... You have a 0.03 chance of dying \*from\* Covid19 in the state of California”.

He elaborated:

“What I want you to see is millions of cases, small amount of death and you will see that in every state”.

He went on to compare the death rate to the regular outbreaks of flu: The numbers—

“...are similar to the flu. If you study numbers in 2017/18 we had 50-60 million with the flu. Similar death rate... We always have between 37,000 and 60,000 [flu] deaths in the US, every single year. No “pandemic” talk. No shelter in place. No shutting down of businesses, no sending doctors home”

His colleague Dr Massihi remarked how doctors were “pressured” to add Covid-19 to death reports for patients who had actually died from other causes: “*to maybe increase the numbers, and make it look a little bit worse than it is*”. He advised that the best way to proceed

was to have the population encounter the virus and acquire immunity in the natural way. He gave the opinion that sheltering in place had detrimental secondary effects, including an increased incidence of child abuse, alcoholism and loss of revenue, which are significantly more detrimental to society than a virus which has proven similar in nature to the seasonal flu which arrived every year.

#### DEATH CERTIFICATES

A doctor based in the State of Montana, with over 30 years practice, Dr. Annie Bukacek, went public in early April regarding the manipulation of death certificates, so as to exaggerate the death rate from the pandemic. Speaking as an individual, without representing any organisation or group, she said “*dying with Covid-19 is not the same as dying from Covid-19*”. A National Vital Statistics memo advised doctors: “*The assumption of Covid-19 can be made without testing*”. CDC (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention) guidelines made for inaccurate statistics.

In conclusion, she commented:

“But based on how death certificates are being filled out you can be certain the number is substantially lower than what we are being told. Based on inaccurate, incomplete data people are being terrorized by fear mongers [into] relinquishing cherished freedoms. Thank you.”

#### IMMUNE FOR LIFE

Prof. Dolores Cahill is attached to the Conway Institute of Bio-molecular & Biomedical Research, School of Medicine, University College, Dublin. She conducted research at the prestigious Max Plank Institute, Berlin for eight years. Also while in Germany she founded her own company. She has published a wide range of scientific papers and holds a number of patents. Originally from County Tipperary, in recent years she has become involved in politics. She is the chair of the Irish Freedom Party, a small conservative euro-sceptic nationalist party, founded in 2018.

Recently she decided to come forward to present her views on how the pandemic is being handled. She was interviewed in May by Dave Cullen, who edits the Computing Forever website. She explained that she had contracted the virus herself in January and into February and so, as such, she is now immune for life. For people under 50 the virus will present no problem except for people with such conditions as Cystic Fibrosis.

She stated that there was no need for the general lockdown. She would be happy

herself to take responsibility for a decision to lift the lockdown and to be held to account. Regarding US Epidemiologist Knut Wittkowski, she expressed full agreement with his stated position that the lockdown was unnecessary.

Rather than hiding ourselves away, she said, we need to be in contact with viruses to keep our immune systems strong. We can boost our immune system with Vitamins C and D, Zinc and good nutrition.

Elderly people do require to be quarantined as they are prone to develop serious complications in response to the virus. The rest of the population are better off to encounter the virus and with that to develop immunity. When a general immunity settles on the population, the virus will not circulate any more. Then the elderly and other categories of persons to whom the virus is a mortal threat can come out of quarantine.

Asked if there was a need for a vaccine she was very sceptical. There was no vaccine for this type of virus. In addition vaccines may not be safe. Currently many vaccines use an adjuvant (a preserving agent) of Mercury or Aluminium, very toxic materials which harm the immune system. She said there was “*no need for a drug*”. There was no need for “*this type of hype*”.

There was an effective treatment available already using a combination of hydroxychloroquine, AZT and large doses of Vitamin C. Hydroxychloroquine cost

10 cent per tablet.

It is revealing that Prof. Cahill’s position on the Government’s approach to the epidemic has been ignored by the media mainstream.

In an exceptional occurrence for the BBC, a dissenting voice was heard on May 17th on the television news. Lord Sumpton, former Justice of the Supreme Court, spoke some provocative words. There was “*a slide into a police state*”. People were being made to “*surrender their freedom*”. There were “*classic symptoms of collective hysteria*”. He thought the press “*echoed and indeed amplified the general panic ...*”

#### RESTRICTIVE ATMOSPHERE OF CONFORMITY

The approach of governments across the world to the current epidemic raises intriguing issues, demanding reflection. But the great majority remain beset by anxiety and are reluctant to question what they are being told. Who wants to be seen to endanger the health of the wider community?

Are we being led or misled? Are the current regulations actually doing more harm than good? Are we being manipulated by interests and forces unseen which hide behind the politicians?

Hard questions need to be asked. There is a physical lockdown. But, more seriously, there is a restrictive atmosphere of conformity; a lockdown of the mind.

Tim O’Sullivan

### Trump’s Vision For Palestine, Part Three

## Conditions For Palestinian Statehood?

In Section 22, the “vision” document lays down an astonishing set of conditions which Palestinians must fulfil before they are deemed worthy of statehood by Israel and the US. It says:

“The following criteria are a predicate to the formation of a Palestinian State and must be determined to have occurred by the State of Israel and the United State ...

The Palestinians shall have implemented a governing system with a constitution or another system for establishing the rule of law that provides for freedom of press, free and fair elections, respect for human rights for its citizens, protections for religious freedom and for religious minorities to observe their faith, uniform and fair enforcement of law and contrac-

tual rights, due process under law, and an independent judiciary with appropriate legal consequences and punishment established for violations of the law.

The Palestinians shall have established transparent, independent, and credit-worthy financial institutions ...

The Palestinians shall have achieved civilian and law enforcement control over all of its territory and demilitarized its population.

The Palestinians shall have complied with all the other terms and conditions of this Vision.”

Few states in this world satisfy these conditions, and none in the Middle East.

Not even Israel – because, according to the US, it discriminates against its Arab

citizens. In its Report on Human Rights Practices in Israel & the occupied territories (published on 3 March 2017, [HYPERLINK "https://www.state.gov/reports/2016-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/israel-and-the-occupied-territories/"](https://www.state.gov/reports/2016-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/israel-and-the-occupied-territories/)2016), the US State Department asserts that one of "the most significant human rights problems in Israel" is "institutional and societal discrimination against Arab citizens of Israel, many of whom self-identify as

*Palestinian, in particular in access to equal education, housing, and employment opportunities".*

Clearly, Israel has some way to go before it is worthy of statehood.

**David Morrison**

(Parts One And Two of this article appeared in the March and April issues of *Irish Political Review*)

## Irish Republican Socialist Politics: *A Reply To Anthony Coughlan*

I assume that Anthony Coughlan's account (*Irish Political Review*, April 2020) of how he and Roy Johnson moved from London to Dublin, and how a liaison was effected with the IRA is accurate. What I wrote in the random reflections (*Irish Political Review*, March 2020) set off by the death of Roy Johnston was only what was said by people who seemed to know and to have some grounds for knowing. His views on the relationship between the Communist Party and the Connolly Association as effected by Desmond Greaves, belongs to a different order of things, however, and are not persuasive.

I may have been mistaken in saying that Greaves was a member of the CPGB Executive, formally at any rate, but I qualified the statement by suggesting that Greaves acted in consultation with Palme Dutt and that "they acted autonomously".

As for the Connolly Association being, or not being, a front organisation of the CP, the answer depends on what is meant by "front organisation". I know that it was not founded by the CP. It was taken in hand by the CP and stabilised by it. Irish Left politics have always been notoriously brittle, and I doubt if the CA would have been there at all in the early 1960s if it had not been preserved by the CP.

I have now got a copy of Roy Johnston's autobiography of himself and his father, and glanced through it — noticing that two pages are made up of a letter I wrote him. He says that Greaves was at a meeting of the Dublin Left as the representative of the International Committee of the CP. And Dutt, I believe, had the say on international affairs.

Johnson was a member of the CP as well as the Connolly Association and the IRA. Coughlan, as I understand it was never a member of any political party. He was only ever a member of the formally non-Party CA, which strenuously asserted that it had no association with the CP but was never believed.

I do not suggest that Coughlan himself did not believe it, but neither do I think that somebody who was completely virgin in the sphere of party-politics was in a good position to judge the matter.

The small Irish Workers' Group got together by Pat Murphy and Liam Daltun in the early sixties consisted mostly of people who had been in the CP, and the CA, some of them having been instructed by the CP to join the CA. They found that they were not allowed to discuss Irish politics in the CA, but were sometimes directed to attend CA meetings and support Greaves if he was having difficulty in restricting discussion.

Daltun himself, having played some part in the 1956 Campaign, had been in the CA, attracted by the name, but not in the CP. And I gathered that he had been very close to Greaves for a while. But he could not confine his mind within the required limits, so he left and moved towards the Trotskyist groups, which had some life in them.

Gerry Golden, one of the original members of the IWG, had been active in the Electricians' Union as a member of the CP. The ETU was exceptionally strong in its field and the CP was strong in the ETU. Golden found out about the ballot-rigging long before the scandal broke. He tried to bring it to the attention of the CP

Executive. The Executive did not want to know. When Golden persisted in his attempt to tell it, he was beaten up.

The CP emerged from the War in 1945 with great expectations. It saw itself as riding on the wave of history. It was tightly organised, and intolerant of inactive members. It was focused on not missing its opportunity, which it was sure would come.

The disowning by the Soviet Party of much of its history in 1956 had a disorientating effect on the British CP, but Roy Johnston, a member of the Hammersmith Branch in the 1960s, could still write: "One could not help thinking in terms of a millenarian religious cult with a remote Utopian vision".

If I had not known members of the CA who had been directed by the CP to attend CA meetings and support Greaves, I would have assumed that it was the case. It just could not happen that a member of the CP could be the Editor of the publication of another body without the party taking a close interest in that other body.

If the Connolly Association had been a free-standing body concerned only with discovering Connolly's views, making them known, and seeing if current policy could be derived from them, it would not have put blinkers on itself when looking at Connolly.

I remember one discussion with Johnston, about Greaves, which I wrote about somewhere. He told me that Greaves had tied up Connolly into a tight Leninist knot which would never be untangled.

There was discontent with Greaves amongst members of the CP,NI. I got to meet some of them in the middle to late 1960s through Eddie Spence, who had married a Catholic and was living in a little street off Durham Street (Belfast). (He was the brother of the famous Gusty Spence, who was not yet famous.) They said that Greaves had completely misrepresented Connolly in many ways and these misrepresentations were the Party line.

I went into the matter a bit and found that there was no doubt about it. 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. His long-term

European affinity was with Pilsudski's Polish Socialists, who located socialist development within nationality—which was anathema to Lenin. And the German Socialists mentioned favourably in the Workers' Republic in 1915-16 were those, now usually referred to as being of the Right, who supported the German state in the War as an act of national self-defence.

A Connolly Association standing on its own ground, whose concern was to discover Connolly's views and publicise them, could not have failed to see what Connolly's position on the War was. A Connolly Association intimately associated with a Leninist party could not see it—or could not say that it saw it. It was obliged to reconstruct Connolly into a virtual Leninist by means of Byzantine thought processes.

Roy Johnston wrote that "*there was a somewhat edgy relationship between the Connolly Association and the British Communist Party; the C.A. competed with the CPGB for the attention of political minded Irish emigrants*". An edgy relationship is just what one would expect between a party and its Front organisation.

Johnson explains:

"In summary, it could be said that the CPGB thought in terms of the 'British working class' and it was hostile to what it regarded as nationalist diversions...; the C.A. tried to mobilise workers in support of Irish interests via a process of lobbying Parliament and influencing opinion-leaders in the Labour Party and trade unions..."

Johnston also records that—

"there was tension between Irish Workers' League [the Communist organisation in the 26 Cos.] and the Connolly Association; Greaves had since the mid 1950s been leading the latter towards concentration of Civil Rights issues in the North, while the IWL emigrants were still organising along with various ultra-leftists groups, to collect money in London for the IWL in Dublin, with the tacit support of the CPGB" (p177).

For Greaves, "*Irish interests*" meant Partition. Nothing else could be discussed by the CA, and it had to be discussed on the assumption that an all-embracing Irish nation existed but had been divided politically by a wanton Act of the British Parliament. And criticism of the Irish state was ruled out of order within the hearing of the English.

The IWL on the other hand was an

organisation which was in principle dedicated to the overthrow of the Irish state as an oppressive class force. And I gathered at the time (i.e., before August 1969), that there were gropings within it for a way of putting the issue of Partition on the back-burner in order to concentrate on Southern state affairs.

Within the CPGB, under the influence of Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin and intervention in Eastern Europe, there was a growing British nationalist tendency, which wanted to begin by rejecting the Party's neutrality of 1939-41 and, as Johnston says, found Irish issues bothersome. (A couple of former CPGB members are at ease with Cork City revisionism today, Geoffrey Roberts in the University and John Lloyd with the *Cork Examiner*.)

Irish emigrants, attracted by Connolly's name, and eager to engage in class politics, were fed this very thin gruel in the Connolly Association. It provided nourishment neither for Socialists nor Republicans. (Johnston recalls how Sean MacStiofain was put off by its entirely unrealistic rejection of force as a means of ending Partition, and its support for the Labour Party which was in practice a thoroughly Partitionist party. Connolly Association stability was insured by disciplined support from CP members which kept the "*ultra-left*" at bay.

Its scheme for outwitting the facts on the ground and ending Partition peacefully was to make an issue of Civil Rights—effectively the allocation of public housing by Unionist Local Governments, *One Man One Vote* in local elections, and the abolition of gerrymandering, of which Derry was the most blatant example.

None of these issues touched the substance on which Partition was founded—the solid support of the Ulster Protestant majority for it.

The demands were met very quickly after August 1969 and Partition is still with us. The concession of the demands was scarcely noticed. What changed things was the 'ultra left' agitation in support of them which was designed to produce a frenzied response from the Unionist Establishment, which had fallen into a mindless routine during the two generations since the artifice of Northern Ireland was imposed on the Six Counties. It was explained to me by one of the managers of the New Left, well before August 1969 that this was the plan. It was strongly disapproved of by the CP/CA network.

The ideology of August 1969 was reckless "ultra-left" agitation. The decisive action was that of a group of Catholic ex-Servicemen from the British forces, who extemporised the defence of the Bogside against the forces of the state. They were not motivated by either Republicanism or Communism. They had served the British State abroad, and were just fed up with the way they saw Catholics being treated at home.

What happened after the administration was destabilised was not what any of those who had played a part in de-stabilising it wanted. The only body capable of acting purposefully was the bit of the IRA that had resisted Roy Johnston's political education. Sean MacStiofain came into his own.

The only 'Irish interest' for the CA, as far as I could see, was the ending of Partition. It rejected the use of force for this purpose. But the only way the Ulster Protestant community could be put in the Irish state was by force. (John Redmond had denied verbally that force would be needed but relied on the British Army to apply it. So did Greaves.)

Greaves saw British democracy as being under moral obligation to do this, apparently thinking that the Labour Party could be persuaded to intervene. But the British State is absolute master of its own morality and cannot be persuaded morally to act against whatever it sees as its interest. And the democracy, having been eased into power by the aristocracy which made the State, is thoroughly British in this respect.

Greaves had a cunning plan for outwitting the gross facts of the Northern situation. He denied that they existed. His way of coming to terms with the 300 year evolution of the Ulster Plantation as a distinct social body was to conjure it away with reference to actions in the first half of 1798 against the Irish Ascendancy Parliament by United Irishmen, though many of these became Unionists as soon as the Union Bill, abolishing that Parliament, was published later in 1798.

His tactic was to get some motions passed by Trade Union Committees and Trades Councils, which included some mild reference to Civil Rights, and to encourage modest demonstrations in support of them, and nudge things along that way. It struck me that this was the kind of thing that could be done by a Party in total power, or by a Party supported by the

power behind the scenes, as was the case after 1945 in the states conquered by Russia in the course of defeating Nazi Germany. As a tactic for gaining power in a region of the British state it was futile.

I do not remember that I ever attended a CA meeting of any kind. I went with Pat Murphy to a talk on Northern Ireland given by Greaves at Marx House. It was an exhaustive breakdown in religious terms of towns and regions in the Six Counties. Pat asked what use this comprehensive account of the religious layout was. I don't recall that he got a meaningful answer.

Affairs in the Six Counties were as they were because the Six Counties were excluded from the political life of the British state in 1921 when the Protestant community was required, against its will, to run a devolved government and win a clear majority at every election as a condition of remaining within the UK state and its welfare state.

Greaves, as I recall, regularly emphasised that Northern Ireland remained entirely under Westminster sovereignty. He never discussed the practical political consequences of the exclusion of the Six Counties from the democratic political system of the sovereign power. And he discouraged the abolition of the Storming system because it was a kind of Irish political body at the same time as it was entirely subservient to Westminster.

In the early sixties, before I was engaged in anything political, I fell in with a group of Belfast people in Camden Town: John Clarke, Robert Stewart, Stanley Dempsey, Jimmy Lavery. They had all been involved in some way with the CP. I never took any interest in the religion they came from. They were all atheists and Communists, weren't they? John Clarke, who I later realised came from the Protestant side, tried to raise some questions in the CA paper. A letter was published with a reply by Greaves. He was complaining that the reply did not meet the point raised. The letter was loosely drafted, enabling Greaves to comment dismissively on an extraneous element. The next time he wrote, the drafting was tightened and the letter was neither published nor replied to.

Greaves liked to quote bits of Schopenhauer, but he did not heed Schopenhauer's advice that an argument should be met at its strongest point.

My only contact with the CA was to go into the shop in Gray's Inn Road

occasionally to buy something. But I found that I was blackballed by it.

I noticed an ad. for a showing of an old film about an ambush. I think it was called *The Dawn*, and that I saw it when I was very young. The showing was in the Co-op Hall in Seven Sisters Road. I went along to it but was told that it was a CA event and that I would not be admitted.

I read in Roy Johnston's autobiography:

"I had an exchange of letters with Brendan Clifford in August 1990, after having reviewed his book on the Belfast press in the 1790s. I was supportive of his analysis and interested to probe his views on the current scene. He was one of Greaves's 'betes noirs', to be classed dismissively among the 'Trotskyes and Potskys and Maos and Bow-wows', and I wanted to get the measure of him as an egregious critical historian.

"I wrote to him, touching on questions like the Campaign for the Separation of Church and State, Canon Sheehan and the All for Ireland League, and Horace Plunkett and the co-operative movement..." (p371)/

About ten years ago I was in the audience at some kind of public meeting in Belfast. A man sitting alongside me began talking to me as if continuing a conversation. It turned out that he was Joe Deighan. I had never seen him before but his name was familiar. He knew me, I assume, because I was Greaves's hate-figure. He said they were grateful to Greaves, since the Communist system had broken up, for having nudged them towards nationalism.

I put it to him that Greaves had grossly misrepresented Northern Ireland as being hegemonised by the Unionist Party. When I came there what I found was that there was no Unionist hegemonic influence, or any attempt at it. There was only a Unionist majority. There was no Unionist patronage system, designed to influence Nationalists. The Nationalist community had the amenities of the British welfare state without any attempt being made to lure them into British politics. They had their own publicly-supported educational system, to do with as they pleased. And in cultural affairs it was they who exerted some influence on the other side. He did not disagree.

That was either a very good arrangement or a very bad arrangement, depending on viewpoint. Politically it was entirely undemocratic as it was disconnected from

the business of electing the Government of the state, and it kept the Catholic community together as a tight Nationalist bloc. Dublin supported it, and always lobbied Whitehall against bringing the North into the politics of the British state.

I had an encounter with Unionist MP Ken Magennis (now a Lord) about it. He said that, if he supported the project of bringing the North within the political life of the state, he could not face his Catholic neighbours in Fermanagh after trying to deprive them of the possibility of achieving their Nationalist ambitions.

That unique combination of oppression and freedom played its part in causing the war, and sustaining it. There is not even a hint of it in Greaves' writings.

**Brendan Clifford**

**PS**

Because publication of this article was delayed, and the Lockdown set in, I came across a copy of another letter I had sent to Johnson, and it might as well be published to keep company with the one he published:

Dear Roy,

I received the note which you sent by Internet a few months ago, but I can't correspond in this modern way which everybody seems to use now. I'm afraid I didn't see your article on the gun-running in Books Ireland, which I thought had lapsed, and I've never seen *Irish Marxist Review*. I gave up on Marxism when it made itself into a self-sufficient philosophy in the 1970s. I had always taken Marx against a background of Kant, and Lenin as a politician in Russian circumstances, but the first Russians I knew were Dostoevsky and Tolstoy and my interest in Russia was independent of Bolshevism.

The Larne gun-running was done in a way that indicated serious preparation for war, the Howth gun-running wasn't, although a series of accidents led to the guns being used.

If averting Partition was the issue, while establishing some all-Ireland structure, William O'Brien's approach was the only one that might have worked. But nobody wants to know about that now.

I don't think I have much to say about the civil war beyond what I said in the article you refer to. Collins broke the consensus of the Dail Government, took affairs into his own hands, made a mess of them.

Back in the sixties I was inclined to be of two minds about Collins. I read the newspapers for the first half of 1922 and saw him purposefully building up the hired Army with which the IRA was destroyed while De Valera kept avoiding

the issue. But Pat Murphy dismissed Collins contemptuously as a fantasist gunman, and said that Dev, for all that he was the only one of them that commanded a comparatively large scale battle, was a statesman. I concluded that (with Collins having jumped the gun, undermined the moral/political ground which Dev had prepared to present Whitehall with a dilemma, and sprung the Treaty on them, attracting the wealthy West British and Redmondite elements to his support), evading the issue, averting a conclusive showdown in which everything was staked, was probably the best that Dev could have done.

I haven't looked at a Marxist publication for decades. They all lost contact with reality in the seventies as far as I was concerned. What was sound in Marx was his investigation of capitalism and I found that the Marxists would not take Capital seriously. I never thought much of Marx as a historian.

About 25 years ago I attended a weekend conference on Robert Lynd in Belfast, and got denounced as a fascist for saying that Connolly supported Germany in the Great War on socialist grounds.

I met Joe Deighan at it. I only knew him as a name but he knew me, and we got talking. He did not deny that Greaves distorted Connolly, but was grateful to him for this and other distortions because they gave them something to hang onto when the Communist Party fell apart.

I had been puzzled by the attraction of Lynd, a writer of trivia, for apparently substantial people. I saw there that the reason was that he was mildly nationalist, mildly socialist and Imperialist, and was sufficiently internationalist for them. This struck me about John de Courcy Ireland in particular.

The History writing that emerges from the Dublin and Cork Universities is abysmal, and without history I don't see how politics can develop. I suppose this is chiefly due to the active interest that Oxbridge has taken in Irish history since 1970, but it must have a basis in the Dublin establishment, with which I have no contact—except briefly with Bill Hyland long ago.

English politicians of the ruling class era could get a basis of historical understanding from Clarendon's Great Rebellion, which is a circumstantial narrative of what went on in England from 1640 to the 1660s—a period which was the training ground of the ruling class. Clarendon's *History* was kept in print for centuries, and was central to England's understanding of itself.

There are two Irish historians comparable with Clarendon. Like him they wrote narrative accounts of events in

which they were major participants, and after reading them you felt you had lived through the period. Gavan Duffy's writings on Young Ireland, and William O'Brian's *Olive Branch, from Parnell to the abolition of landlordism*, should be classics of Irish history, widely available for general reading. But even academic historians seem to write their histories without reading them.

Irish history writing has become increasingly unhistorical, written in a literary vacuum, in the absence of an accumulated body of the literature associated with historical developments such as one gets in England. The real world of these historians seems to be the University department directed by the Professor.

In fiction, I regard Canon Sheehan as the only first-rate Irish novelist, so I could hardly be more out of tune with your Dublin world.

P.S. I have now seen your review in Books Ireland. I have not seen the book by Doherty and Macgregor that you review. It seems from your comments that it is in line with what I wrote twenty years ago in an Introduction to a reprint of Charles James O'Donnell's book on the War published ninety years ago, and what Pat Walsh has said in great detail in his book on Turkey and his recent pamphlet, *The Great Fraud*.

But I don't think it was the gun-runnings that deceived the Germans about British intentions. The deception was practised quite directly by the Foreign Secretary in his interview with the German Ambassador."

\*

Johnson's autobiography provides a useful reminder of the political confusion generated by Greaves through the Connolly Association in the mid-1960s. The CA member—Irish living in Britain—effectively renounced politics, in the name of Connolly. He must not discuss the political life of the Irish state in the hearing of the English, and he must not engage in the British politics that lay behind the CA because the CA must not be seen as having anything to do with the Communist Party. He must discuss nothing but the injustice of Northern Ireland, and must do that only with relation to Partition.

Northern Ireland had no politics. Politics is the business of governing a state. The politics by which the British state was governed excluded Northern Ireland from its sphere of operation. But that was something not to be noticed.

A comparison was made between Apartheid South Africa and Northern

Ireland—between a state and a region of a state. The majority race in South Africa had no vote whatsoever in state affairs. Nobody in Northern Ireland could engage in the business of governing a state, but there was regular voting. The only issue that was there to be voted on was whether to remain within the British state or transfer to the Irish state. No such choice was available in South Africa.

The Nationalist community voted at every election to leave the UK, knowing that the Unionist community would vote to stay in it. In 1969 T.K. Whitaker advised the Taoiseach that Catholics in the North should be discouraged from thinking about the material detail of unification as it would affect most of them, i.e., removal from the comprehensive welfare state. He need not have worried. Northern Catholics were well aware of this great difference between North and South, and there was a degree of contempt in their continuing use of the term "*the Free State*". They voted en masse for transfer to it at every election because they were excluded from British politics, because there was no Northern Ireland politics, and because they could hardly vote for a party that had the Orange Order at its core, and because they knew that their vote would not take them into the Free State. They voted inarticulately against the status quo rather than for any viable alternative to it. No viable alternative was presented to them. The present arrangement was never on offer. It came about as the pragmatic consequence of war.

Greaves, a "*dialectical materialist*", conducted his propaganda entirely on idealist nationalist terms, taking no account of material conditions of working class life or the actual political structure called Northern Ireland. Unionist leaders knew that there could be no political life within the semi-detached system they were required to run. Brookeborough tried to prevent British Party Political broadcasts, introduced in the 1950s, from being carried by the Northern Ireland region of the BBC, because the Parties making those broadcasts would not present themselves to the Six County electorate to be voted on. He was overruled by Whitehall, which said that the BBC was the state broadcaster and that the Six County local government had no authority over it. The implications of this were never considered by Greaves, nor was the mere fact of the exclusion of the Six Counties from the state politics ever mentioned by him that I ever heard.

CA members were directed towards the

Labour Party, which had opposed Partition at the start. But Labour had then boycotted the Northern Ireland structure, leaving it to be dominated by the Ulster Unionist Party. And, when the 26 Counties left the Commonwealth in 1948, the Labour Government reinforced the Unionist position in the North. Mac Stiofain had it right.

In the last 1960s the great issue for Labour was the establishment of a degree of workers' control in industry. The Communist Party opposed it with the slogan "*Kill The Bill!*". And, whether by formal decision or not, the CA position in practice followed that of the C P.

The Trade Unions were then the strongest forces in British society. Purposeful economic management could not be conducted against their obstruction. Harold Wilson therefore tried to engage them systematically in the conduct of the various enterprises, and to bring them together in a central body to determine wage differentials and other matters. That seemed to be in accordance with the Marxist view that Socialism would be produced out of Capitalism. The C P, however, took the view that organised working class power should be kept disengaged from the system, and be systematically antagonist to it, until the moment came for a revolution in which Capitalism would be swept away and Socialism would take its place. This was presented as what had happened in Russia, though it bore little resemblance to what did actually happen.

The slogan of the resistance to Wilson's socialist reform was "*free collective bargaining*", which meant the freedom of each organised group to get as much as it could for itself in the capitalist market place.

This was a strange application of Connolly's views. Before the War he had supported the reformist *Insurance Act*, and during the War the Workers' Republic was full of praise for developments within German Capitalism which he considered Socialist.

The refusal of the Trade Union movement at the peak of its power to engage in organic reform, and its preferences for bargaining in the market place, led to a drastic reduction of its power, and to the decline of the Labour Party as a Socialist force.

It is odd that an organisation in the midst of this, which named itself after Connolly, should have had no distinctive voice in it.

I remarked above that the C A would probably not have existed in the 1970s if the C P had not taken command of it. The prolonged Lockdown has given me time to root out a history of it that we published in 1967, and as far as I know one that has never been contradicted.

The C A began with the publication in 1935 of a duplicated publication, *Irish Front*, by a group of Republican Congress members meeting in a basement flat in Kilburn. Three of the founding members were later killed in Spain. Then in 1938 a Connolly Club was formed and the *Irish Front* was replaced by a printed newspaper, *Irish Freedom*, with Pat Dooley as Editor. Dooley was succeeded as Editor by Flann Campbell. Greaves, who seems to have become involved around 1942, succeeded Campbell as Editor in 1948. Somewhere along the way *Irish Freedom* was renamed *Irish Democrat*.

In June 1960 the I D published "*21 Questions About The Connolly Association*". One question was about Communism. The answer was:

"The C.A. is NOT Communist, and never was Communist. There were some people who tried to introduce a 'Trotskyist' flavour into the Association. They were thrown out, and an others who try the same will follow them."

This was odd. The general idea of Communism was the Russian state, its satellites and its supportive system around the world. Trotskyism, far from being part of that system, was to be fore in denouncing it. From what viewpoint was it self-evident that a Trotskyist flavour was a bad flavour, and that the throwing out of Trotskyists was proof that the CA was not Communist? From the Communist Party viewpoint obviously!

The throwing out of people who had the Trotskyist flavour might be taken as referring to Liam Dalton. (I'm not sure when exactly his rupture with Greaves happened.) But it was much more serious than that.

Four years earlier Pat Dooley had an article in *The Newsletter*: '*J.R. Campbell Should Have Been Britain's Djilas*'. The *Newsletter* was the publication of the Socialist Labour League, a very vigorous Trotskyist group surrounding Gerry Healy. The occasion for the Trotskyist upsurge was the denunciation of the preceding Stalin regime by Khrushchev in 1956 at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, and the Soviet invasion of Hungary to keep it in order within the

Soviet system.

Whether Dooley had been a C P member, or just a close fellow-traveller, he did not have the hidebound spirit proper to a Party member in him. I assume he was not allowed to express his disquiet within the CA and therefore turned to the SLL. He died in 1958 and his obituary in the Newsletter said he had been its staunch friend from the start.

Greaves had to comment on the death of the founding Editor of his paper. He gave no details of Dooley's rupture with the Party/CA, only suggesting that he had become confused and isolated. Dooley's wife sent a letter of protest which Greaves refused to publish, so she wrote about it for the Newsletter.

Flann Campbell then took up the matter, and Greaves was obliged to publish a letter from him, protesting about the way readers had been deceived about Dooley's views on East European developments. Greaves commented: "*We leave to others the stirring up of a controversy over a dead colleague*".

Then, in June 1963, Greaves had a comment on "*the periodical jack-in-a-box organisations that pop up in London peddling the old familiar nonsense that the task of the Irish in Britain is to fight Mr. Lemass*". I assume Liam Dalton provoked that by getting together the group that has kept going ever since, without external support or discipline.

The "*old familiar nonsense*" was very familiar indeed to Greaves. It was the kind of thing he had to root out of the C A when he took it over. As he put it in 1960: "*Much of the ultra-leftism and political exhibitionism of the early days was a hangover from the Republican Congress*", and, in the early post-war years, "*the Democrat was inclined to swing a little too far to the Left*".

The terminology and the positioning were determined for the C A by the Party of which it had no official knowledge. And Greaves' handling of the 1956 crisis did not curb Trotskyism but fed it in its wildest form.

(The last Greaves book I saw was the Sean O'Casey one, about forty years ago. It included a nasty little paragraph about Liam Dalton, not naming him but effectively identifying him. It is in need of some comment.)

**Brendan Clifford**

# Taking The Bloomin' BeJoyces Out Of Zurich!

*Introduction:* I do not begrudge the fun enjoyed by those who wish to annually parade around in silly costumes on Bloomsday, each June 16th, most of whom have probably never read James Joyce's *Ulysses* in full, and whose fun under this year's lockdown will have been severely curtailed. I myself did read it from cover to cover in 1974, and I thoroughly enjoyed it, so I'll have to agree to differ with other contributors to this magazine!

(See [www.drj.ie/essays/citizens-of-the-republic-jewish-history-in-ireland](http://www.drj.ie/essays/citizens-of-the-republic-jewish-history-in-ireland) for my 2007 review of *Jewish Ireland in the Age of Joyce: A Socioeconomic History*, by Cormac Ó Gráda.)

The purpose of this article is to address an exercise in Joycean Tomfoolery that was not such innocent fun. Anthony J Jordan mounted a relentless campaign to have James Joyce, pejoratively described as having been "planted in Zurich", dug up and then transferred over to Ireland for reburial, against the expressed wishes of his grandson Stephen. This campaign involved the smearing of the reputation of de Valera, an abortive attempt to entrap President Higgins, and the recruitment of two attention-seeking but gullible Dublin City Councillors, Dermot Lacey of Labour and Paddy McCartan of Fine Gael, who sought to place a comic opera resolution to that effect before the Council.

Jordan implied that it was Dev who had been responsible for the enquiry from the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs as to whether Joyce had died a Catholic, when in fact it was a solo run by the former student priest and obsessively clericalist Joseph Walshe himself. Nor did the de Valera Government give instructions barring the Irish diplomat in Berne, F.T. Cremins, from journeying to Zurich for Joyce's funeral. Cremins was in fact busy in Berne processing applications for Irish passports for Irish people hitherto holding British passports, one of them compelled to travel to France and who would otherwise have been interned as an enemy alien by the occupying Nazis. Indeed, one of the most shameless aspects of the Jordan campaign was its failure to acknowledge how tirelessly Dev's diplomats in three different countries had been working to

secure the exit from Nazi-occupied France of Joyce's daughter, Lucia, but who had been thwarted by Joyce's own reluctance to apply for an Irish passport on her behalf.

Jordan was at his most ludicrous in charging that, in 1941 itself, the de Valera Government had "thwarted" Joyce's burial in Ireland. How on earth did Jordan expect Joyce's remains to travel from neutral Switzerland to neutral Ireland through wartime Europe—whether via Fascist Italy, or Nazi Germany, or Vichy and then Occupied France? Dev would lose power in February 1948, and it was the Inter-Party Government which was responsible both for the September 1948 repatriation of the remains of Yeats (who had died in France in 1939) and for not taking any similar action in the case of Joyce. As the now leader of the Fianna Fáil Opposition, de Valera did, however, travel to Sligo for the reburial of Yeats.

But, notwithstanding his Free State and Blueshirt apologetics and Anglo-Irish arrogance, in such contrast with the Protestant Republicanism of his artist brother, Jack B. Yeats, there was a fundamental difference between W.B. Yeats and James Joyce. Yeats was both citizen and patriot. It is not that Joyce lacked a profound understanding of what was unfolding in the land of his birth. Quite the contrary. In a letter from Rome to his brother Stanislaus on 25th September 1906, Joyce wrote: "*In my opinion Griffith's speech at the meeting of the National Council justifies the existence of his paper (Sinn Féin).*"

That November 6th, he further elaborated:

"You ask me what I would substitute for (Home Rule) parliamentary agitation in Ireland. I think the *Sinn Féin* policy would be more effective. Of course I see that its success would be to substitute Irish for English capital but no-one, I suppose, denies that capitalism is a stage of progress. The Irish proletariat has yet to be created... For either *Sinn Féin* or Imperialism will conquer the present Ireland. If the Irish programme did not insist on the Irish language I suppose I could call myself a nationalist. As it is, I am content to recognise myself an exile: and, prophetically, a repudiated one."

Joyce had made his choice. Ten years later, as his biographer, Richard Ellmann,

would record:

"Ezra Pound contrived, with the help of Yeats and the acquiescence of Edmund Gosse, a grant for Joyce from the Royal Literary Fund. This was supplemented by a small subsidy from the Society of Authors, and then by a more official benefaction, a Civil List grant awarded Joyce by the (British) Prime Minister (Asquith) in August 1916."

In one of his Epistles, Anthony Jordan drew on a March 1922 letter from Joyce to his brother Stanislaus relating how Desmond FitzGerald announced his intention to propose that the Free State Government should nominate Joyce for the Nobel Prize. It didn't. But Jordan omitted a highly relevant remark in that selfsame March 1922 letter. In his recently published biography *The Enigma Of Arthur Griffith*, Colum Kenny also relates that in March 1922 Desmond FitzGerald, a member of Griffith's Dáil Cabinet as Minister for Publicity, and soon to become the first Foreign Minister of the Irish Free State, called on Joyce in Paris and asked if he intended to return to Ireland. Joyce went on to record the answer he gave: "*I told him not for the present. One redeemed city [Trieste] (and inhabitants thereof) will last me for a few years more*".

Joyce, a British citizen all his life, refused offers of an Irish passport, even during World War Two, when it would have helped him escape from occupied France. To quote the description that his grandson insisted on, Joyce was "*a British author of Irish origin*".

It was the complete contempt shown for the wishes of Stephen Joyce to have the Zurich graves of his parents, father and stepmother left undisturbed that constituted the most reprehensible aspect of the Jordan-Lacey-McCartan campaign. Stephen Joyce passed away this past 23rd January, a year after taking out Irish citizenship. He had frequently proclaimed: "*I am a Joyce, not a Joycean*". And the vultures of the Joycean industry had long prepared to dance on his grave. In the *Irish Times* of 24th February 2020, Terence Killeen penned a "*Month's Mind*"—by way of "*An Irishman's Diary*"—which excoriated the deceased in the following manner:

"James Joyce's grandson was intelligent but did not possess any strong literary appreciation... One lucky auditor had the pleasure of hearing Stephen recite *Ecce Puer*, James Joyce's poem about him, twice in the course of an hour-long call. The recipients of these calls were usually non-professional Joyceans: actors, promoters, performers, journalists, etc. Stephen much preferred to talk to such



people than to the 'professional' Joyceans. It could be tedious, but it was fairly harmless. The other kind, the kind where the business of the Joyce estate was involved, was a much more hard-edged affair. Contentment was the order of the day... As has been well reported, Stephen became an Irish citizen shortly before his death. This was the man who had insisted only a few years ago that a plaque honouring his grandfather in Paris bear the legend "James Joyce, a British writer of Irish origin". So something very fundamental must have happened to have occasioned such a spectacular U-turn. An insistent note in these telephonic non-dialogues was the importance of the Joyce family. Nowhere, outside the *Godfather* movies, was the word "family" intoned with such gravitas and deliberation. Matters were not helped by the fact that his wife, Solange, was frequently listening in to the "discussion" on a party line... Finally, my favourite Stephen story, which has the advantage of being true. He was invited by David Spurr, then professor of English at the University of Geneva, where Stephen used sometimes go to buy wine, to address one of his classes. Things were going surprisingly well, when Stephen hesitated, searching for the name of one of the characters in *Dubliners*. David helpfully, as he thought, supplied it. Stephen's reaction was instantaneous: "Oh, the professor knows it all! What's the point of my being here when the professor can tell you everything?" Anyone watching this scene, not knowing the person involved, would have reflected: 'Well, if that guy doesn't have some Irish blood in him somewhere, I'll eat my hat!'

Well, yes, Stephen Joyce's blood was half Irish and half Jewish. "I was a refugee", as he told Katherine McSharry of the National Library of Ireland in May 2019 (*Irish Times*, February 8, 2020), the one member of the Joyce family fleeing from France to Switzerland in peril of the Holocaust. The anonymous scribe who penned the obituary for *The Times* (UK) this 29th February would charge:

"It is no exaggeration to say that Joycean scholarship was placed in suspended animation by the machinations and avarice of Stephen Joyce, who will have known that the impediments he erected would not survive his death, but who appeared to believe that so long as he was alive he had no higher duty than to protect his grandfather's reputation... His wife, Solange, predeceased him. They had no children and there are now no living descendants of Ireland's most acclaimed and controversial writer."

Direct and indirect charges of "avarice" had, however, been disputed in a letter to the *Irish Times* by Richard Downes 25th February:

"Terence Killeen reflects the predomi-

nant view of the late Stephen Joyce as a tricky, awkward custodian of the James Joyce estate. I have a different take on Mr. Joyce.

In 1999, while resident in the Middle East, I wrote an article for the *London-Independent* describing the work of my friend and translator, Mohammed Darweesh, entitled "The Last Joyce Scholar of Baghdad". Mohammed had recently completed a PhD on the challenge of translating James Joyce's work. He loved Joyce and Beckett but had few to share his literary passions with in Saddam's Iraq. Stephen Joyce got in touch and offered to pay for Mohammed to travel from sanctions-bound Baghdad to London to attend a Joyce symposium in the UK — a considerable challenge and an enormous expense. He was as good as his word and Mohammed travelled to London and on to Dublin in 2000. It was a rare joyful experience for Mohammed, as his country and his life were subsequently torn apart by invasion, conflict, murder and pointless wars."

Perhaps there is now a much stronger chance that the "repatriation" project will die a death. For in his expression of sympathy on the passing of Stephen Joyce, President Higgins bore witness to how he viewed both the finality and sanctity of his grandfather's resting place in Zurich. At this point, however, I will let the following compendium of documentary evidence speak for itself.

**Manus O'Riordan**

#### THE "CARRY ME OVER JORDAN" CAMPAIGN

(1) "Ireland's rejection of Joyce was cause of bitterness for his wife. No officials would go to his funeral." — Anthony J. Jordan, *Irish Independent*, June 18, 2017:

"Desmond FitzGerald, the father of former Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald, himself a poet, called on James Joyce in Paris after the publication of Joyce's *Ulysses*. He promised Joyce that he would propose to the Irish government, of which he was a member, that it should nominate Joyce for the Nobel Prize for Literature. Joyce later commented to his brother Stanislaus that such a proposal could lead to FitzGerald losing his portfolio—and in fact, Joyce was never nominated for the Nobel Prize. Some cemeteries around the world have become major tourist centres due to the graves of famous people. One thinks of Oscar Wilde at Pere-Lachaise, Paris, or Shakespeare in Stratford, England... There is one such grave in Ireland—that of WB Yeats, at Drumcliffe, Co Sligo. Ironically, when Yeats's body was repatriated to Ireland from France in 1948, an opportunity arose for a brief period, to repatriate the remains of an even more famous Irish writer back to Glasnevin cemetery—those of James Joyce... Sean

Lester, the Geneva-based secretary-general of the League of Nations (who had a long meeting with Joyce just a month before his death), asked Frank Cremin, the Irish chargé d'affaires in Zurich, to represent Ireland at the funeral. He did not attend—apparently under instruction from de Valera's government—and Lord Derwent, the British minister in Berne, was the main speaker at Joyce's graveside in Fluntern cemetery."

(2) "Remembering James Joyce, 77 years to the day after his death. After the *Ulysses* author died, in 1941, Ireland declined to honour him as it had WB Yeats."

Anthony J. Jordan, *Irish Times*, January 13, 2018:

"When Frank Cremins, an Irish diplomat based in Berne, informed the department of external affairs in Dublin, where Éamon de Valera was minister, of James Joyce's death, in Zurich, on January 13th, 1941, the department's secretary, Joseph Walshe, responded, "Please wire details about Joyce's death. If possible find out if he died a Catholic? Express sympathy with Mrs Joyce and explain inability to attend funeral." Joyce had lengthy contact with the Irish diplomats in Vichy France before receiving permission to enter neutral Switzerland; he arrived in Zurich with his family on December 17th, 1940. In Geneva he had been met by Seán Lester, the Irish diplomat who was secretary general of the League of Nations, and with whom Joyce spent a most friendly couple of hours. On hearing of his sudden death, Lester sent a wreath and suggested that Cremins might attend the funeral, so that an Irish official would be present. The only diplomat there was, in fact, Lord Derwent, the British minister to Berne."

(3) "Come Back to Erin?" — Anthony J. Jordan, *Dublin Review of Books*, December 13, 2018:

"In June this year President Michael D Higgins paid a historic visit to Fluntern Cemetery in Zurich, where James Joyce is buried. He thanked the Swiss city for maintaining the grave "today and all the days since the 1940s" ... James Joyce's strategy was to write as an exile from Ireland. That this exile should follow him into eternity was not part of the plan. Since his death in Switzerland in 1941, there have been periodic hopes that his body would be repatriated eventually, like that of WB Yeats in 1948. But his wife, Nora Barnacle's, wishes for this to happen remained unfulfilled. At a lecture at the Royal Dublin Society in September this year I detailed how Nora Barnacle's vain attempts were thwarted by Irish governments in 1941 and again in 1948-49. The minister for external affairs in 1941 was Éamon de Valera, assisted by the secretary at the department, Joseph Walshe... When the issue of (Joyce's) repatriation came before John A Costello's government on July 15th, 1949, Sean MacBride refused to support it. A note on the file says "No action" was required. And there the matter has rested officially until earlier this year, when President Higgins made his historic visit to Joyce's grave and spoke of the debt Ireland owes him."

(4) "Remains of literary giant Joyce are still a bone of contention. Nearly 80 years on, the

body of the man who immortalised Dublin still lies in Switzerland.” - Anthony J Jordan, *Irish Independent*, June 16, 2019:

“Since his death in 1941, there have been periodic hopes that his body would be repatriated, like Yeats’s. But eight decades on, the remains of a man who spent his life writing about Dublin are still planted in Zurich. Does President Higgins’s visit to the grave in June 2018 and subsequent speech on Bloomsday make a difference? ...”

(5) “Proposal to repatriate author’s remains to Dublin from Zurich have met resistance from the Swiss James Joyce Foundation” - *The Guardian*, October 17, 2019:

“Dublin city council’s bid to bring James Joyce’s remains back to Ireland has been thrown into doubt, after the director of the Swiss foundation set up in his name suggested the project “will end in nothing”. City councillors Dermot Lacey and Paddy McCartan moved a motion on Monday to bring Joyce’s remains back to Ireland from Zurich. He is buried in the latter city alongside his wife Nora Barnacle. She died in 1951, a decade after her husband. The councillors argue that the plans would honour the wishes of both. “Exile was a key element in his writing but for it to follow him into eternity? I don’t think that was part of the plan,” McCartan said. According Dr Fritz Senn — an eminent scholar who established the Zurich James Joyce Foundation more than 30 years ago and currently serves as its director, the author’s wishes are unclear. “All I know is that there seems to be no evidence that Joyce wanted to return to Ireland or even be buried there,” Senn said. “He never took Irish citizenship when he could have done it. Most Joyce experts would agree.” Senn dubbed the controversy “the Battle of the Bones”, adding that the project “has not been thought through”, and that the diplomatic process required is fraught with difficulties. “The Zurich grave contains four bodies, of Joyce, Nora and Giorgio, the son,” he said. “But there is also Asta Osterwalder Joyce, Giorgio’s second wife, who would have no relation to Ireland at all. There would also be some local resistance on this side. The cemetery where he is buried is called Friedhof Fluntern, and the city is quite proud of the grave. A natural reaction. And then Joyce’s last refuge was Zurich.” ... Senn predicted that Joyce’s grandson, Stephen Joyce, who has guarded his grandfather’s legacy closely over the years, would be unlikely to back the motion. “Everything depends on his vote – negative, most likely,” said Senn...”

(6) See also [www.dublininquirer.com/2019/10/16/what-would-it-take-to-return-james-joyce-and-his-family-to-dublin/](http://www.dublininquirer.com/2019/10/16/what-would-it-take-to-return-james-joyce-and-his-family-to-dublin/) for “What Would It Take to Return James Joyce and His Family to Dublin?”

(7) “We owe James Joyce a final resting place in Dublin. Nora Barnacle wanted him repatriated but was refused. We must right this wrong. “ - Anthony J Jordan, *Irish Times*, October 28, 2019:

“A wealthy American bibliophile and diplomat named John Jermain Slocum visited Europe

in 1948 on a buying spree of Joycean material. He visited Galway, Dublin, Paris and Trieste. In Dublin he was received by president Seán T O’Kelly at Áras an Uachtaráin... On his return to the US in November, he wrote a long, perceptive letter to president O’Kelly. He referred to the recent repatriation of Yeats, asking: “Without discounting the differences between the two men – their different relationships with their country and their countrymen, the difference in their reputation and the love which they inspired – I wonder if it is unreasonable to think that James Joyce might be so honoured someday, and that in so honouring him, his country would be honouring itself? I realise that this proposal is presumptuous coming from a foreigner...” Slocum never received an answer to his letter, as he told Constantine Curran in March 1949. “I have had no answer . . . If you should see him, tell him to get after his secretary. I am waiting for an answer.” The matter came before government in July 1949. A note on the file of the Department of the Taoiseach dated [July 17th](#) reads: “Spoke to Taoiseach. No action.” Unlike his stance in the repatriation of WB Yeats which he enthusiastically supported, Seán MacBride did not support the repatriation of Joyce...”

“There the matter has rested until President Michael D Higgins’s historic visit to Joyce’s grave in Zurich in June 2018. On Bloomsday that same week, he spoke of James Joyce, saying: “We must never forget on Bloomsday the person, the family, and the sacrifices that gave us the groundbreaking literary inheritance that is celebrated all over the world. Ireland owes a debt to James Joyce. Earlier this month I had the opportunity to lay flowers at the grave in Fluntern, where Joyce has rested since 1941, later joined by his wife, Nora Barnacle, and other members of his family. I thanked the Zurich authorities and the gardener who have cared with such sensitivity for his resting place.” I believe that the “debt” President Higgins spoke of could be paid by, at least, a Government offer of a repatriation.”

#### CONCERNING LUCIA JOYCE

(1) Letter to James Joyce, residing in Vichy (unoccupied) France, from Seán Murphy, Irish Minister to Vichy France, November 26, 1940, re Lucia Joyce (1907-82), confined in a mental institution in occupied France:

“Dear Mr. Joyce, I was both surprised and disappointed to receive a note (of which I enclose a copy herewith) from the German Embassy through Count O’Kelly, to the effect that your daughter’s journey to Switzerland cannot take place. I do not know why this decision has been reached unless it is because, as it may be possible to infer from the note, she is the holder of a British passport. I had gathered as I told you at the time from the informal talk which I had with a member of the Embassy during my visit to Paris in August last that her journey would not give rise to any difficulty in spite of her holding a British passport. I may add, however, that there is no doubt that since the month of September, the German authorities have become more strict in regard to the travelling of foreigners. Seán Murphy.”

(2) Letter from Francis T. Cremins, Irish Chargé d’Affaires in Berne, Switzerland,

to Seán Murphy, Irish Minister to Vichy France, January 7, 1941, enclosing a communication from William Warnock, Irish Chargé d’Affaires in Berlin, Nazi Germany:

“I have to refer to the case of Miss Lucia Joyce, a patient in a clinic in occupied France, and to forward herewith, for your information, copy of a reply which I have received from the Irish Chargé d’Affaires at Berlin to whom I had sent particulars of the case at the request of Mr. James Joyce, father of Miss Joyce. Mr. Warnock tells me further in a semi-official note that he could not without special instructions normally make any enquiries regarding this case, as you act for the whole of France, occupied as well as unoccupied. I have informed Mr. Joyce of the substance of Mr. Warnock’s reply. He said that he would await a reply from the American Embassy at Berlin, which was endeavouring to do something, and if the reply were unfavourable he would get in touch with you on the question of an Irish passport. I have had a few cases at Geneva in which some Irish persons in Switzerland with British passports desired to obtain Irish passports. I submitted the cases to the Department and the passports were sent to me. I have just now received passports for this Legation, but I suppose from what Mr. Warnock tells me that I should continue to ask the Department for instructions. If you have any information on this point I would be glad to receive it. F.T. Cremins. Enclosure: With reference to your minute of the 23rd December regarding Miss Lucia Joyce, a patient at a clinic in occupied France, I beg to enquire whether Miss Joyce is an Irish citizen within the meaning of the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act, 1935. There appears to have been considerable difficulty in France in cases where persons of Irish origin hold British passports. I have been instructed by the Department to take no action towards assisting such people without prior reference to Dublin. I suggest that Mr. James Joyce be asked to supply definite information concerning his daughter’s citizenship, and that if she is entitled to Irish citizenship, her case be referred to the Department for instructions. W. Warnock.”

(3) Letter from Seán Murphy, Vichy, to Francis T. Cremins, Berne, January 13, 1941:

“I have the honour to refer to your minute of the 7th inst. with the enclosure thereto concerning Miss Lucia Joyce and to inform you that I have already had occasion to deal with this case. In July last Mr. James Joyce called to see me here in connection with his daughter whom he was anxious to have removed to Switzerland. As she holds a British passport I informed Mr. Joyce that I could not officially intervene on her behalf, having no *locus standi* in the matter. I undertook, however, during a visit which I proposed to make to Paris in August to raise the matter unofficially if a suitable occasion presented itself and in particular to endeavour to ascertain whether there would be any objection to Miss Joyce’s leaving France in view of the fact that she was seriously ill. She suffers from a mental disease known as *Hyperthuria* which apparently sometimes reduces her to a serious and dangerous condition. I did in fact visit Paris in August and found an opportunity of mentioning the case to a member of the German Embassy. He gave it as his personal opinion that

no difficulty would be put in the way of Miss Joyce's journey on the part of the occupying authority. He asked, however, that a note on the case be submitted so as to elicit a definite reply. This was in fact done. I did not either in my conversation or in the note conceal the fact that Miss Joyce held a British passport although I did explain that she was in a position, if she so desired, to apply for and probably obtain Irish nationality. On my return to Vichy I informed Mr. Joyce that I gathered from the conversation I had had with a member of the Embassy in Paris that there would be no obstacle put in the way of his daughter's going to Switzerland. In November, however, I received a note from the German authorities to the effect that a journey to Switzerland by Miss Joyce who holds a British passport could not take place. The contents of this note I communicated in due course to Mr. Joyce. He later asked me whether I thought there was anything further I could do in the matter. I said I did not think there was in view of the contents of the German note. He then enquired whether it would be well to have his daughter obtain an Irish passport. I told him she was perfectly entitled to claim citizenship by registration and that, if she should apply for registration, I would be prepared to issue her a passport valid for one year pending the decision of the Minister for Justice on her application. I added, however, that, in view of the fact that the Germans had already considered her case and, therefore, knew she had a British passport, it was quite possible that her holding an Irish passport, issued subsequently might not weigh with them in securing her permission to leave and that her applying for one at that stage might only be regarded by them as a ruse. I suggested that in all the circumstances the best thing to do might be for him to endeavour to get his daughter out of France through the good offices of the American Foreign Service, entrusted with British interests. I understood from Mr. Joyce, before he finally left for Switzerland, that he intended to try this course. In view of the history of this case I would suggest that you inform Mr. Joyce that if he wants to use the good offices of our service for securing permission for his daughter to leave France, he should continue to address himself to this Legation. I may state that I was surprised to learn that he had approached you independently on that subject, especially as he does not seem to have informed you of what he knew of my efforts in this respect already. I should stress that I have told him repeatedly that I had no official standing for intervening in this case as long as his daughter held a British passport.

On the first occasion in which he raised the matter (in July) I clearly implied to him, without actually suggesting that she should do so, that by far the best way to handle the matter in my opinion would be for his daughter to take out an Irish passport. If he had decided on this course in the first instance, I have no doubt that she would have been allowed to undertake the journey to Switzerland long since. He, however, showed no inclination to follow it at the time. I may add that he has never suggested applying for an Irish passport for himself and that his son also holds a British passport although at one time, when it looked as if he might be refused a French exit visa for that reason (being of military age), he did enquire about the procedure for getting an Irish one. He did not, however, pursue the matter, presumably because he was

able to get an exit visa on his British passport. If Miss Joyce should apply for citizenship I shall, of course, consider the case of the issue to her of an Irish passport on its merits. I do not think, however, that there is any further action of any nature which can be taken by us on her behalf as long as she holds, a British one. Seán Murphy."

JOYCE IN ZÜRICH - Pdraig Rooney, 'Irish Times', November 24, 2015:

"Since 1920, Joyce, Nora and their two children had been living in Paris, where the writer had achieved fame and squandered some fortune. Now, with Paris occupied, they were on the move once more. Joyce was almost blind in those last months of 1940. He and his family were ... near Vichy... The Swiss Aliens Police rejected Joyce's initial application for visas on the supposition that he and his family were Jews. Swiss writer Jacques Mercanton put the authorities right on this point. Joyce himself privately declared he "was not a Jew from Judea but an Aryan from Erin". The mayor of Zürich and other notables vouched for him. Cantonal authorities wanted a guarantee of 50,000 Swiss francs, later reduced to 20,000. The Joyce family eventually succeeded in gaining permits.

In December 1940 they entered Switzerland by way of Geneva and spent the night of December 14th at the Richemonde Hotel. Sean Lester, acting Secretary-General of the League of Nations and a Belfast man, had tea with the Joyce family on the Sunday afternoon: "The famous Joyce is tall, slight, in the fifties, blue eyes and a good thatch of hair. No one would hesitate in looking at him to recognize his nationality and his accent as Dublin as when he left it over thirty years ago. His eyesight is very bad and he told me it had been saved some years ago for him by the famous Vogt of Zürich, who had also operated on de Valera... They were going to settle in Zürich, where they had some good friends. I said I thought it was an unusual place for him to choose and asked, what about Suisse Romande? His wife then intervened and said that Zürich had always been associated with certain crises in their life [...]: they had spent their honeymoon there; it was there that Joyce's eyesight had been saved and now they were going back in another crisis. They liked the solid virtues of the people.

It was those solid Swiss virtues that supported them as the world again turned to war. Joyce wrote to the Mayor of Zürich to thank him. "The connection between me and your hospitable city extends over a period of nearly forty years and in these painful times I feel honoured that I should owe my presence here in large part to the personal guaranty of Zürich's first citizen." ... Joyce died in Zürich on January 13th, 1941, aged 59, and is buried next to Nora in the city's Fluntern Cemetery, within a lion's roar of the zoo..."

WHY JOYCE REMAINED IN ZÜRICH - Ulick O'Connor (Ed), *The Joyce We Knew—Memoirs of Joyce*, 2004:

"Sean Lester had lived beside me... in Dublin, and as a schoolboy I met him on a few occasions when he was back on leave from Geneva... His son-in-law Douglas Gageby wrote Sean Lester's biography, from which this extract is taken: James Joyce arrived in Geneva on Sunday, 15 December 1940, Lester dates this

entry in his diary Monday, 16 December: "Joyce told me that he had only spent 10 days in Ireland during the last 30 years... He seemed to have gone first to Trieste, where he taught English. His children were born there and they did not speak any English until they were 20, and in the family asides over the teatable, I noticed it was always in Italian. I said to Joyce, "Why do you not go home? I myself would like so much to do so." "I am attached to it daily and nightly like an umbilical cord." ... It was true he kept Radio Eireann going on the wireless all the time... The second time I mentioned the question of his returning home ... when I spoke of getting home in the present circumstances, he said the journey would have been quite possible for him, but he felt it would not have been very dignified to go home in the present circumstances. Speaking of the daughter who has had a bad nervous breakdown and who has been in a sanatorium for two or three years, he said she was a very gentle and sweet creature; he had apparently gone to visit her every weekend and that at first Sean Murphy [the Irish Minister to France] obtained permission to leave the occupied zone; Count O'Kelly, who had acted for Murphy, said that when the application was made to the German Commandant in Paris, the latter granted it at once, having read and admired Joyce's work. The visa given by their Vichy government for the exit of his son, in view of very strict application of the rule preventing foreigners, and especially belligerents (the Joyces all had British passports) under the age of forty to leave the country, was difficult to understand and had astonished them. The application had been made for four visas: Joyce, wife, son and eight-year-old grandson; they did not understand how it had been granted, but perhaps it was again the magic of Joyce's name. Less than a month later Joyce was dead." "

[Note: What goes unremarked in accounts of Joyce's exit from Vichy France to Switzerland, is the fact that while James Joyce was admitted on proclaiming that he himself was not Jewish, his grandson would, by either Judaic or Nazi criteria, be most definitely classified as Jewish, although not by religion. Stephen Joyce (born 1932) was the son of Giorgio Joyce (1905-1976) and his New York Jewish wife Helen Kastor Fleischman (1894-1963). That marriage broke down and ended in divorce. Following Helen's own nervous breakdown in 1938, she was placed in a New York mental institution, but had recovered by 1946.—MO'R].

## DEATH IN ZÜRICH

(1) Blog, *Dublin Review of Books*, January 13, 2015:

"In December 1940 James Joyce left Vichy (unoccupied) France for Switzerland, having managed to persuade the authorities there, after a first refusal of entry, that he was not Jewish (in Joyce's own words "que je ne suis pas juif de Judée mais arien d'Erin" – that I am not a Jew of Judea but an Aryan of Erin). He spent Christmas Day in Zurich with his friend Sigfried Giedion... On January 9th, Joyce and Nora dined with Paul Ruggiero at Frau Zumsteg's restaurant on the Kronenhalle, but Joyce had no appetite. At home afterwards he was overcome by cramps. A doctor was called, who administered morphine, but on the

following day he had to be taken by ambulance to the Schwesterhaus vom Roten Kreuz. An X-ray showed he had a duodenal ulcer... At one o'clock in the morning of January 13th, Joyce woke and asked for his wife and son, but he died at 2.15am before they arrived.

"On January 15th the body was carried up the hill to Zurich's Fluntern cemetery and the funeral ceremony was held in the Friedhofkapelle in the presence of the immediate family and Lord Derwent, British minister to Bern, the Swiss poet Max Geilinger and Professor Heinrich Straumann. The tenor Max Meili sang Monteverdi's "Addio terra, addio cielo". Joyce's daughter Lucia, in a mental institution in France, told of her father's death and burial in Zurich, said: "What is he doing under the ground, that idiot? When will he decide to come out? He's watching us all the time." Nora stayed on in Zurich. One of her chief recollections of her husband was the pleasure he took in sounds. She took visitors up to the cemetery, which adjoins the Zoological Gardens, which Joyce had compared to the ones in the Phoenix Park in Dublin. "My husband is buried there," she said. "He was awfully fond of the lions - I like to think of him lying there and listening to them roar." " Source: James Joyce, by Richard Ellmann.

(2) Telegram from Francis T. Cremins, Berne, to Joseph P. Walshe, Dublin, Secretary, Department of External Affairs, January 13, 1941, reporting on the death of James Joyce:

"Sudden attack of stomach trouble Thursday night, Doctor advised go to hospital. On Friday morning Surgeon agreed and operation performed but something had burst resulting in perforation of stomach poisoning system, best specialist called, blood transfusions given. Slight hope up to Sunday evening then burst again and death 2 a.m. Monday. Patient bright, conscious up to Sunday evening. Best advice available, everything possible done by friends, doctors. Mrs. Joyce, son well as possible I had already sent letter of sympathy sending now more formal letter and explaining inability to leave here. Only last week he telephoned coming to see me. I had been trying to do something to obtain permission for daughter to leave occupied France for Switzerland. I have no information so far other matter."

(3) Letter from Francis T. Cremins, Berne, to Seán Murphy, Vichy, January 20, 1941:

"I have to thank you for your minute of 13th January, 1941 relative to the case of Miss Joyce. I presume that you have since learned that Mr. James Joyce died on the night of the 12th January after a couple of days illness. I do not know if Mrs. Joyce, or his son, will now pursue the question of getting Miss Joyce out of France, but if any further approach to me is made, I will inform them as you suggest, that they should continue to address themselves in the matter to you. That was in fact his inten-

## Neutrality and VE Day

For the generations born in Ireland since the end of the second World War, it is understandably difficult for some of them to envisage the state of public opinion on the issue of Irish neutrality during that conflict.

There has been much comment, mostly of a critical nature, on the morality of Ireland's policy of neutrality during the conflict, which in 1945 led to students on the roof of Trinity College burning the Tricolour and throwing it on to the lawn beneath.

There are some who even regard Ireland's stance as not so much neutral but pro-Nazi. These critics make no reference to countries like Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and Sweden which adopted a policy of armed neutrality, while most of the nations embroiled in the war remained neutral until they were invaded or attacked, including the US and the Soviet Union.

During the war years, the fallout from partition following the Anglo-Irish conflict was still vivid in the public mind, seeing as how it was just 17 years since the guns of the Civil War had fallen silent, and for both sides in the bitter internecine bloodbath the British were still the common enemy.

The decision of Dáil Éireann — not just that of Éamon de Valera or the government — to remain neutral in all probability avoided an outbreak of a second civil conflict here.

Critics ignore the fact that all political parties in the Dáil, along with public opinion outside, favoured the policy of neutrality. Indeed just one TD, James Dillon, voiced disapproval at our neutrality.

Even those Dáil members who were strong supporters of the Allied cause, and there were many, voted to remain neutral.

Furthermore, proposals from Churchill in 1940 for the offer of a united Ireland as a *quid pro quo* for Irish entry into the war were rejected by de Valera. Our neutrality, sovereignty and independence were not for sale.

Despite our position as a non-belligerent neutral state, Ireland did not introduce a prohibition on her citizens opting for foreign enlistment before or during the war, nor did Ireland introduce conscription into her armed forces.

**Tom Cooper**  
*Irish Times, 13.5.20*

tion, as he told me, when I spoke to him on the telephone after hearing from Mr. Warnock, that he had received the necessary forms from you. He said that he would if necessary raise the matter of the Irish passport if efforts which were being made by someone in the American Embassy in Berlin failed to produce results. I see now that I should have sent on his request to you. He had explained to me all that you had done for him, expressing his gratitude for it in unmeasured terms, and had informed me that you had secured the permission in August which was only cancelled in Nov. before he was in a position to avail himself of it, the delay on his part being due to delay in obtaining the necessary entry permit for Switzerland. He enclosed me a note giving all the details regarding his daughter and asked me to send it to our Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin, as he thought that that would help the efforts which were being made. It was a useless move as our Chargé d'Affaires could not take any action, but that did not occur to me at that time. I took it that the matter was simply at a new stage. In view of what Mr. Warnock said, I have raised the question with the Dept. as to whether I have authority to supply Irish passports in lieu of British ones without reference to the Dept., as I have now several such applications from Irish persons in Switzerland, one of whom states that she may have to return to France. For their information, I gave the Dept. a brief account of

the Miss Joyce case (as it was that which raised the issue in my mind) in explaining how I had been in touch with Mr. Joyce. They wired to me for details regarding his death. These latter I gave in a telegram, followed by a minute. I note in particular the last paragraph of your minute. If Mrs. Joyce, or Mr. Joyce, Jr., writes to me in the matter I will pass on the communication at once to you and inform them that I have done so. Mr. Joyce had informed me also that the Swiss entry permit would expire on the 31st December, but that he had no doubt that he would be able to secure an extension. F.T. Cremins."

TO BE CONTINUED

Next month:

SOME IRISH TIMES LETTERS

On-line sales of books,  
pamphlets and magazines:

<https://www.athol-books-sales.org>

Does  
It  
Up

Stack  
?

## 'Closed' AGMs

The Covid-19 Crisis is not a crisis to be wasted by the computer/IT industry. As soon as society was declared to be in lockdown, every techie became hyper alert for the opportunity to promote Zoom and Webinar and any other apps which could be used to link people together. Suddenly business meetings and community meetings were up and running on the web, whether necessary or not. Necessity was not a consideration at all, even though it should be the primary consideration because—even before Covid-19 came on the scene—IT (Information Technology) was using over 25% of our energy resources. But ignore that, don't let awkward facts get in the way! Techies must press on, regardless!

Various public companies in Ireland and in the UK rushed to hold their Annual General Meetings (AGMs) as 'closed' meetings with contacts available over the web in varying formats. Most of these AGMs could quite easily have been adjourned to a later date so as to enable shareholders to attend and speak and vote and listen to the Company Directors giving an account of their stewardships as required by the Companies Acts.

Company Directors are always apprehensive about the Annual General Meeting because, although these meetings are run to a well-worn formula—well—shareholders do not always be so quiet and ten years ago some angry shareholder attended Bank AGMs armed with missiles such as eggs and tomatoes which were let fly at the Directors at the top table so as to express dissatisfaction at the bankers' performance.

Bank of Ireland Group issued the following Notice:

"The Annual General Meeting will be held at 11.00 am on Tuesday 19th May 2020 at Baggot Plaza, 27-33 Upper Baggot Street, Dublin 4 with Shareholders having the ability to listen to the meeting by telephone and the ability to vote by submitting a proxy form in advance of the meeting..."

And then some guff about:

"The well-being of Shareholders, employees and service providers is a primary concern..."

Basically, the Shareholders were deprived of their rights to speak and to be heard and to ask questions. This sort of behaviour is enabled by briefings of the larger shareholders in advance of the AGM, a procedure which has been going on for many years and which should be prohibited by law because it is very close to insider dealing. In this procedure, it has become customary with some public companies to invite their bigger shareholders to a meeting or even to lunch with Directors and Senior Executives of the company—and naturally conversations take place and perhaps arrangements are made for a game of golf and so on. So the bigger shareholders do not need the protection of the Companies Acts. The Companies Acts are just to protect the small people.

Not so small was the predicament of one Mr. Michael Chadwick, who is reported in the *Irish Examiner*, 29th April 2020 to be the largest Shareholder of Grafton Group plc. which owns Woodies DIY.

Mr. Chadwick claimed in the High Court that he and other Shareholders were shut out from a 'closed' AGM. Mr. Chadwick's lawyer claimed the AGM was to be conducted by four "*company insiders*" and was "*a bit Stalinesque*", and that there was no need to hold the AGM now because it could lawfully be held on any date up to August 7th. In this case there was no effort made to use technology to inform the shareholders as the AGM proceeded.

The Company rather weakly responded by saying the AGM had to be held because notice for it issued in March and Grafton's 6,268 Shareholders had been told not to attend and instead to forward proxy votes to the Chairman. (Something does not stack up here because surely, if Grafton could communicate to Shareholders not to attend, Grafton could just as easily have told them that the AGM was postponed or adjourned?)

In any event, there is no doubt that the statutory provisions of the *Companies Acts* were being broken: the High Court Judge appeared to agree with the law being broken—and the Judge gave as one of his reasons that Mr. Chadwick was alone in his complaints and other Shareholders did not object!

This was a hearing of Mr. Chadwick's request for an injunction to stop the AGM

until a full case is heard but, of course, once the AGM. was permitted by the Judge to proceed—the law is broken and then a *fait accompli* will be presented to the Court when the full case is heard.

### CONSTITUTIONAL CASE

However, perhaps Mr. Chadwick may consider himself lucky compared with Mr. John Waters and Ms Gemma Doherty, both of whom were personally attacked by a High Court Judge when they merely asked the Court for permission to bring a case before the High Court about the constitutionality of recent laws and regulations for which the Covid-19 Pandemic was given as a reason.

The Judge saw himself as the gate-keeper and, although he did not have the Constitution of Ireland on his side, he resorted to refusal and to some personal invective saying:

"... the applicants gave speeches, engaged in empty rhetoric and sought to draw parallel to Nazi Germany which is absurd and offensive. Unsubstantiated opinions, speeches, empty rhetoric and a bogus historical parallel are not a substitute for facts."

The facts referred to by the applicants were so well known by the majority of the population of Ireland—and surely were and are well known to every High Court Judge and to the Senior Counsel in Court acting for the State, the Dáil and for the Seanad—that it looks very unnecessary and pedantic of the Judge to require proof at the stage where the applicants were seeking leave to bring their substantive case before the High Court. It surely is of great public interest that certain Acts and Regulations of a draconian nature were purportedly passed by the Dáil elected on 8th February last and the outgoing Seanad, which ceased to exist on the 29th March 2020, which was the day before Polling Day 30th March 2020, and presumably duly signed into law by the President of Ireland.

And was the passing of the Acts and Regulations organised by persons who are **not** the Taoiseach **nor** the Ministers, but simply persons who under the Constitution merely carry on "*the duties*" of these offices until their successors shall have been appointed. The question surely arises:

How comprehensive is that word "*duties*"? Does it include organising the formulation and the passing of laws and the intentional convening of a Dáil and Seanad with intentionally reduced numbers as is apparently what occurred?

And then the question is: Is there a Cabinet, when three members of the outgoing Cabinet lost their seats on 8th February 2020 and are still, even though rejected by the electorate, acting and carrying out their "duties"?

The Judge said he could not question the manner in which the Dáil and Seanad operate because, as the Senior Counsel for the State said, the Applicants' case is a "full frontal attack on the doctrine of Separation of Powers".

However that doctrine is not a law in itself. It is simply a convenient formulation to enable the Courts to protect themselves from the encroachments of the Dáil or by the executives of the State.

In the case of *Crotty v. An Taoiseach*, Finlay CJ, referred to the *Separation of Powers* as fundamental to all of the provisions of the Constitution and he provided a description of this doctrine as it applied to the judiciary. He wrote: the separation of powers—

"involves for each of the three constitutional organs (of the State) not only rights but duties also; not only areas of activity and function, but boundaries to them as well, with regard to the legislature, the right and duty of the courts to intervene is clear and express. Articles 15.4, 34.3.2. and 34.4.4. vest in the High Court and, on appeal, in this Court the right and duty to examine the validity of any impugned enactment of the Oireachtas, and if it be found inconsistent with the Constitution, to condemn it in whole or in part."

Finlay CJ, continues:

"With regard to the executive, the position would appear to be as follows:

This Court has on appeal from the High Court a right and duty to interfere with the activities of the executive in order to protect or secure the constitutional rights of individual litigants where such rights have been or are being invaded by those activities or where activities of the executive threaten an invasion of such rights. This right of intervention is expressly vested in the High Court and Supreme Court by the provisions of Articles 34.3.1. and 34.4.3. and impliedly arises from the form of the judicial oath contained in Article 34.5.1."

The appearance of the Applicants, Ms Gemma O'Doherty and Mr. John Waters, to seek permission to bring their challenge before the High Court was necessitated by this 'case management procedure' and the Judge has attempted to cut them off at the gap, so to speak, by seeming ignorance of Mr. Justice Finlay's excellent summing

up of what the Constitution means in this context.

The Applicants' case is so obviously meritorious and in the public interest that the Judge's decision should be appealed.

Or do they have to seek "leave to appeal" next? Is it right that these "leave to

..." Procedures are like stumbling blocks placed by the judiciary in the way of citizens who seek access to the courts?

In the meantime, I hope all of the High Court Judges will be reading up on J.M. Kelly: 'The Irish Constitution' to which I am obliged for sourcing my knowledge of the Constitution.

Michael Stack ©

## Labour Comment continued:

### LABOUR IN GOVERNMENT

Year	Seats	Con.&Supp.	Total Dail Seats
1932	7	F.F.	153
1933	8	F.F.	153
1937	13	F.F.	138
<b>Coalitions</b>			
1948	14	F.G.	147
1954	19	F.G.	147
1973	19	F.G.	144
1981	15	F.G.	166
1982 Nov.	16	F.G.	166
1992	33	F.F.	166
		F.G./D.L. ('94)	166
2011	37	F.G.	166

Since 1932, Labour have shared power in Coalition governments for a total of 26 years, plus 5 years 1932-1938 in a Confidence & Supply arrangement with Fianna Fail, a total of 31 years. Of the 26 years of Coalition, over 24 of those years were shared with Fine Gael and a short period 1992-1994 with Fianna Fail.

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#### Michael Collins

In the introduction to his interview with Fianna Fail leader Micheal Martin ("The man who would be Taoiseach", Sunday Independent, April 26), Philip Ryan explained the photograph of Martin had been taken adjacent to the Leinster House memorial to Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins.

He continued: "The latter was murdered by anti-Treaty republicans supported by Eamon de Valera during the Civil War." He added: "And Martin could even be in the Taoiseach's office on the centenary of Collins's death in August 2022."

It would have been too much to expect that Martin himself would want to puncture the feel-good factor of his full-page spread.

But I was surprised at the failure of a

single other Fianna Failer to dispute that characterisation of the party's founder in the following Sunday's letters page.

It would seem that a silent clause in the FF- FG framework for Martin becoming Taoiseach involves the erstwhile Soldiers of Destiny rolling over and accepting the caricature and character assassination of Dev in Neil Jordan's Michael Collins movie as a founding myth for the projected inter-party marriage.

Michael Collins had been neither murdered nor assassinated. Nor, indeed, had been his anti-Treaty opponent, Cathal Brugha. In military engagements during the Treaty War, both Brugha and Collins were killed in action, each with their own guns blazing.

Manus O'Riordan  
Sunday Independent, 10.5.20

## DAVITT continued

converted the latter from a mere sterile parliamentarianism, impotent for good, into a virile force transforming the whole social system, and bringing a political revolution within the grasp of the agitators. It would show how a political majority so strong that it left the socially privileged class absolutely without the political support of the socially subject class yet left untouched the real causes of the social misery of the latter. It would illustrate how a subject nation, kept by the bayonets of foreign army beneath the heel of native tyranny, by transferring the fight from the political battle ground of words to the social and economic battle ground of acts, succeeded in almost conquering its freedom, and in quite humbling the pride of a long dominant class, and by thus demonstrating what could be done and was done by a subject nation warring on the economic field against native and foreign tyrants combined, it would also demonstrate what could be done by the working class of any independent nation should it resolve to make its political activity one instrument and expression of its economic struggles, and its economic struggles in factory, workshop and mine the generating force of its political passions and programs.

As we have again and again pointed out, the Irish question is a social question, the whole age-long fight of the Irish people against their oppressors resolves itself in the last analysis into a fight for the mastery of the means of life, the sources of production, in Ireland. Who would own and control the land? The people or the invaders; and, of the invaders which set of them, the most recent swarm of land thieves, or the sons of the thieves of a former generation? These were the bottom questions of Irish politics, and all other questions were valued or deprecated in the proportion to which they contributed to serve the interests of some of the factions who had already taken their stand in this fight around property interests.

Without this key to the meaning of events, this clue to unravel the actions of 'great men', Irish history is but a welter of unrelated facts, a hopeless chaos of sporadic outbreaks, treacheries, intrigues, massacres, murders and purposeless warfare. With this key all things become understandable and traceable to their primary origin; without this key the lost opportunities of Ireland seem such as to

bring a blush to the cheek of the Irish Worker; with this key Irish history is as a lamp to his feet in the stormy paths of to-day.

Yet, plain as this is to the Irish Socialist, it is undeniable that for 100 years, or since the Act of Union of 1800, all Irish political movements ignored this fact, and were conducted by men who did not look below the political surface. These men, to arouse the passions of the people, invoked the memory of social wrongs such as evictions and famines, but for these wrongs proposed only political remedies such as changes in taxation and transference of the seat of government from one country to another. Hence they accomplished nothing, because the political method of fighting was unrelated to the social subjection at the root of the matter.

Political agitators talked of sending men to Westminster to complain of English tyranny, but conducted no campaign against the rack-renting landlord on his estate, and as a result the adhesion of an overwhelming majority of the tenants to the political agitators lightened no economic burdens, stopped no evictions, and accomplished nothing.

The Land League stepped in to alter all this, and transferred the real seat of war from the hustings to the estate, from the 'floor of the House of Commons' to the rent office of the landlord and the homestead of the tenant. It instructed the people to resist eviction, to refuse to pay rack-rents, to terrorise land-grabbers—the scabs of the agrarian struggle—and to boycott and ostracise all offenders against the welfare of the tenant.

It made adhesion to the cause of the tenants synonymous with the call of Irish patriotism, and thus emphasised the point we have so often laboured, viz. — that the Irish question is a social question. As a result of this change of base it revolutionised Irish politics. The men and women who had, with a grin on their faces, cheered the orators who talked of a "Parliament on College Green" and after cheering went home to scrape together the landlord's rent by denying themselves the comfort and even necessities of life now listened to the practical talk of men who told them to resist their tyrants at once, and so listening they straightened up mentally and morally and kept their rents in their pockets, held their harvests, kept a grip on their homesteads, laughed in the face of the landlord whom they had hitherto feared, and so broke the back of Irish landlordism.

And this great change was the result

of bringing the Irish fight down from the cloud land of sentiment on to the hard basis of a fight, day by day, between the producers and the owners for the control of the means of livelihood—or to the basis of a class struggle. That the Land League did not entirely succeed in its mission was due chiefly to one flaw in the original theory of its campaign, viz. — that its promoters not being in agreement as to their ultimate ideal were unable to educate their followers against the fallacy of accepting concessions which divided and disorganised their forces when at the flood tide of success.

That lesson—the lesson of its failure, Socialists have already learned and know how to profit by; the other lesson—the lesson of its strength, is not so widely realised. It is this—the strength and power of the political agitation of the Land League lay in the fact that its representatives were the servants and mouthpieces of a class who were already organised and holding the means of production with a revolutionary intent. They were not asking government to give them possession, they were already in defiant possession and demanding that such possession be legalised.

Their base of operation was secondarily at the election booth, primarily on the farm; they thought the organisation of an estate against its landlord a thousand times more important than the capture of a parliamentary seat. Rather they knew that the seat would inevitably follow the fate of the estate.

In all this they showed their wisdom. And hence we claim that, although the Socialist agitators of to-day in their political activity fulfil well the work of agitators as did the Irish agitators of the past, yet if they would find and utilise to the fullest all the latent revolutionary material and strength they require they must do as the Land League did—take hold of the daily fight in the workshop, and organise it in a revolutionary manner, with a revolutionary purpose and direction.

(The Harp, August 1908.) Republished in James Connolly: Selected Political Writings, (ed. Owen Dudley Edwards & Bernard Ransom), New York 1974.

**CORK FREE PRESS:** In the Context of the Parnell Split. Contents: Aftermath of the Irish Big Bang; Redmondism; Fenians; Clericalism; The Land War; Russellites; Land & Labour League, and All-For-Ireland League? An Irish pluralist political development originating in County Cork. 168pp. Index. €12 inc. postage. Publisher: Aubane Historical Society. FROM: jacklaneaubane@hotmail.com



**LABOUR**

# Comment

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## James Connolly:

### Michael Davitt

## A Text for a Revolutionary Lecture (1908)

(The Harp, August 1908.)

We have received at this office a copy of a book entitled the life of *Michael Davitt, Revolutionary, Agitator, and Labor Leader*, by F. Sheehy Skeffington. [1908]. The book is published in London by Fisher Unwin, and has already evoked a storm of criticism and protests from the various reviewers of Ireland and England, a fact that will not seem in the least extraordinary to those of our readers who will take the trouble to dip into the book itself, as we would strongly advise them to do.

For our part we do not intend to place before our readers any mere formal review of the production of Mr. Sheehy Skeffington, but rather to utilise the incident to point the moral which may rightly be drawn from the facts of that stormy period of Irish history during which Michael Davitt was a central public figure.

On one point of dissent from the author's appreciation of his hero's qualities will be found centred all the criticism which we would offer, were we to devote space to a more extended review. The point is this:

In dealing with the incident of the Parnell Commission Mr. Skeffington says Davitt's conduct "*revealed his possession in the highest degree of great intellectual acuteness, resourcefulness, and knowledge of men*".

Our own opinion of Davitt's character as revealed in his whole history is far other. We conceive of him as an unselfish idealist, who in his enthusiasm for a cause gave his name and his services freely at the beck and call of men who despised his ideals and would willingly, but for their need of him, have hung himself as high as Haman.

He abhorred clerical dictation in politics, yet when the psychological moment arrived to give it a death blow, when it was grappling to destroy the one leader who with himself could rally all the democracy of Ireland—Parnell—Davitt, instead of taking full advantage of the event which threw Parnell into the democratic ranks and uniting with him against clerical interference in politics, foolishly threw away his opportunity, misjudged the whole situation, and fought with all his force and aggressiveness to establish the priesthood in full control of secular affairs in Ireland.

He fought and campaigned for the Labor Cause in England, yet for the sake of harmony in the ranks he also supported and campaigned for a party—the Home Rule party—whose leaders were the bitterest enemies of the newly enfranchised workers of the Irish cities.

Again and again have the industrial proletariat of Ireland closed in grapples with the representatives of Irish capitalism, but never was the voice of Davitt raised in such a fight on behalf of labor. We are convinced that he was quite as sympathetic to the cause of Labor in Ireland as in England, but he had surrendered himself into the control of men who were quite willing to play upon Labor sentiments in England, where such Sentiments might be made a menace to British aristocracy, but were determined to scotch and oppose such sentiments in Ireland where they might become a menace to themselves.

Thus in his later days Davitt became the idol of the revolutionary English democracy, and disliked and distrusted by the revolutionary working class democracy of Ireland. A poor ending for such a career, and solely due to the fact that he did not possess that knowledge of men of which his biographer gives him credit. Honest himself, he believed implicitly in the honesty of others, and became the tool of political crooks and social reactionaries.

But it is as the Father of the Land League that Davitt will live in history, and not in the light of the failure of his later career; and it is with that phase of his activity we wish to deal today. We believe profoundly that a close study of the events of that time would immensely benefit the militant Socialists of all countries.

It would help to demonstrate how the union of the forces of social discontent with the forces of political agitation

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