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Is The Party Over?

The party system of the Republic is in ruins. It has destroyed itself. Fianna Fail under Micheál Martin decided to be Fianna Fail no longer. And it joined with Fine Gael in an act of extreme hubris (until it saw which way the wind was blowing!). It required the society to celebrate the contribution of the Royal Irish Constabulary to Irish freedom. Martin and Varadkar thought they had wiped the state clean of the history that brought it into being and could now write what they fancied on it. And now, having dominated political life for about 90 years as antagonists, they have not between them enough seats to form a Government.

Bertie Ahern, who played an important part in making Fianna Fail a nondescript party, said on the day when the results came through, that it is up to Sinn Féin, as the party with the most votes, to form a Government. Varadkar took up that cry the following day. But it isn't Sinn Féin's responsibility. In a party-political democracy—which is the only real kind by Western standards—parties with seats in Parliament are what count.

Ahern accorded Sinn Féin a virtual 48 seats, but what they have got is 37. If votes rather than seats are to be what counts, a new system is needed.

In the 1930s the Fine Gael policy was to abolish the Parliamentary system of party politics. The best academic minds of the time—including Professor Tierney of UCD and Professor Hogan of UCC—supported that policy. But Fianna Fail, supported by Sinn Féin and the omnipresent Illegal Organisation, preserved the party-system.

Ruth Dudley Edwards, a befuddled remnant of a decayed intellectual elite, says that she is ashamed of her country because its voters have "*intentionally or unwittingly just endorsed a fascist party*". And she says that Hitler, when he became the largest party in parliament, "*wasted no time in establishing his brutal dictatorship*". Sinn Féin

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'Civil war' politics is dead — long live 'Civil war' politics!

The current prediction that there will be a grand coalition between FF and FG for the first time in Irish politics is hailed as a wonderful development and part of the '*maturing*' that we are all encouraged to be going through nowadays—and who could possibly admit to wanting to remain immature?

However, a perceptive view was put by Dr. Ciara Kelly that this may happen but not as expected. She says "*I always thought FF and FG would eventually coalesce, in a symbolic ending of our Civil War legacy politics. But I was only half-right. They may merge—but Civil War politics are alive and well—but the opposing sides going forward won't be FF and FG. They'll be SF and FG*" (Sunday Independent, 16.2.2020).

She goes to say that this will mean "*Irish politics is coming of age and evolving into opposing left and centrist factions—as is normal elsewhere. The fact that no one expects FG to go into coalition with SF shows that they are each other's natural opposition. The fact that no one knows*

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The Israeli Embassy Finds Its Irish Murdoch Mouthpiece Targeting President Higgins!

This past December's British General Election saw an unprecedented intervention by a foreign power.

No, not by the Russian bogeyman, but by the State of Israel, and its Chief Minister was Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, Chief Rabbi of the UK and the Commonwealth, whose assumption to that high office saw his synagogue praise, not just his religious role when previously Chief Rabbi of Ireland, but also the

parallel role he had played in representing the interests of the State of Israel in Ireland. Rabbi Mirvis is one of those Israeli propagandists who seeks to silence criticism of his Nation State by defining anti-Zionism, even when voiced by its Jewish critics, as nothing less than anti-Semitism at its very worst. He proceeded to characterise the British Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn—a lifelong opponent of anti-Semitism, but

also a champion of Palestinian rights—as a thoroughgoing anti-Semite, by charging that anti-Zionist critiques of the State of Israel from within the ranks of that party amounted to a campaign of poisonous anti-Semitism "from the very top".

Rabbi Mirvis's principal outlet was *The Times* (UK), the Murdoch press's British 'paper of record'. On November 26th, the *Times* delivered a rabbinical anathema in triplicate—Rabbi Mirvis's own column, and two supporting articles from the paper's

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

Irish General Election Under The Microscope

(back page)

Due to pressure of space, the Index for 2019
has been held over to the next issue

members and apologists, of course are exulting in the Irish election results, some enjoying themselves insulting supporters of Breege and Stephen..." (Belfast Telegraph, 10.2.20).

If democracy fails in a state, the state still has to be governed. Germany in the 1920s was a weak state surrounded by enemies. It was deliberately constructed to be weak by the conquerors of 1918 assembled at Versailles (who also refused to recognise the elected Irish Government). The Parties installed by the victors in their German system, and required to make a false confession of war-guilt on behalf of the German people, floundered. A State is organised power. The Weimar State had no power in itself and its Social Democrat and Centre Parties did not bring power to it. In the power vacuum the Communist Party built up its own power, as did the Nazi Party against it. Hitler did not steal the power of the State by gaining a majority in Parliament. He brought power to the State and suppressed the Communist threat, which in fact melted away to a considerable

extent—as fascist power would probably have done if it had been Communist power that had brought a sense of purpose to the conduct of the state.

It would have been better from our point of view if things had gone the other way about. But that is how it was. And we cannot disagree with Winston Churchill's view that Fascism saved capitalist civilisation from Communism in the 1920s and 1930s.

Professor Keogh of Cork had a paranoid vision of Fascism at the burning of the British Embassy in February 1972 (after the wanton British Army killings of Bloody Sunday in Derry). Dudley Edwards has it today. In 1932 Fine Gael was founded as a Fascist Party because of the delusion that De Valera was a catspaw of the Illegal Organisation, which was an agent of Moscow, and that a Communist system would be imposed under cover of freeing the state from the Treaty restrictions. But the Fine Gael story now is that it must defend democracy

against a revival of the Fascism that Fine Gael brought to Ireland but failed to establish.

Newton Emerson, who moved out of the self-imposed Ulster Loyalist ghetto some years ago, and has aspired, with a degree of success, to become a sophisticated commentator on all-Ireland affairs, has regressed woefully under the shock of the Sinn Féin vote. His *Irish Times* column on February 10th was headed, "*Supporters In South May Not Be Aware Of What Is Now Over The Threshold*". He never quite says what he thinks is over the threshold but, out of the Northern experience, conveys the sense that it is ominous.

He argues that the vote for Sinn Féin has nothing to do with the IRA. The southern electors "*want change on housing and healthcare, or just somewhere else for the democratic pendulum to swing*".

That is an interesting phrase. In Northern Ireland there was no "*democratic pendulum*", and that is why there was a war. Northern Ireland was sealed off from the workings of the democratic pendulum of the state. We made a great deal of noise about that fact for twenty years and were opposed by every strand of Unionism all along the way.

The Nationalist community could find no remedy through the democratic pendulum of the state because the state disengaged itself from them.

Emerson says that, in the North, "*republicans are steered endlessly towards politics*". Who steered them?

The War was fought to a point where the State was willing to consider a drastic alteration in its Northern Ireland 'state'. A Peace Process began and disruptive backsliding was prevented by the occasional military action. The War was ended by a transitional arrangement. Martin McGuinness, former CiC IRA, met the Queen. While he was meeting her, Gerry Kelly said that, put in the same circumstances again, they would do the same thing all over again.

What has happened in the North is what the IRA intended to happen after the change from the Southern to the Northern leadership in 1977. It adopted what used to be called "*the stages theory*", and the Good Friday Agreement is in accordance with the two-nations view that we advocated back in 1969.

Michael McDowell says "*we still face the undeniable reality that Sinn Féin is far from being a conventional*

democratic party" (Irish Times, 5.2.20). He does not explain how it would have been possible for any tendency to be conventionally democratic in a region of a state which excludes it from the vital democratic institutions by which it functions.

The effective meaning of 'democratic' in the North was 'pacifist'. Pacifism was tried for fifty years. It was futile.

Anne Harris, former Editor of the *Sunday Independent*, who wrote an eloquent defence of the Official IRA atrocity at Aldershot, sees Gerry Adams as arranging for Mary Lou to be "caught in a pincer-like movement" of Republicanism as she tries to escape into something else (*Irish Times* Feb 11). And she wonders—

"how she, a middle-class woman from Dublin's leafy suburbs would handle her republican movement's legacy issues. Those same issues dogged the election campaign—she didn't handle them well and they are not going to go away as the perpetrators inevitably become more visible. If she wants a 32 county republic, there is much she must confront. 'Keep people from their history and they are easily controlled' warned Marx'. (We do not recall the *Sunday Independent* under the Harris Editorship doing much to keep the history of the people to the forefront!)

Who is trying to keep the people from their history just now? This who tried to put the RIC on the Glasnevin Wall.

History is at a discount in the Republic, especially Republican history. Sinn Féin in the South is brittle because of it.

There was a war in the North. Wars against powerful states are not waged without sufficient reason. The Provo War brought about an enduring change in the political structure of the North. The Official Republican War, praised by Anne Harris, was an absurdity. There is only one regular Republican publication in the Republic: *Saoirse*. It dissents from the compromise settlement made in the North by the Adams/McGuinness compromise, and still takes issue with the Treaty settlement, realistically in historical terms. A rupture occurred between the leadership (represented by

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Casement: A Reply To Jeff Dudgeon's Criticism

Mr. Dudgeon has again taken me to task this time over *The Philadelphia Exercise* (*Irish Political Review* January, 2020) which he has kindly re-titled *The Philadelphia Experience*. He complains that I did not mention his book because he "was undeserving of mention"; in fact, I explained that I felt unable to engage with it and gave the reasons. Indeed, it would have been unkind of me to engage with it. Many others have given his book attention and certainly much more attention than my book has received.

Irish Political Review readers will understand my preference for fact-based evidence rather than the opinion and speculation favoured by Mr. Dudgeon. My research is substantially based on HM Government documents in the UK National Archives and my conclusions are tightly conditioned by what those documents state and do not state. I confine myself to a few of Mr. Dudgeon's contentions in his lengthy letter to the February *Irish Political Review*.

Mr. Dudgeon writes: "*The Gavan Duffy reference concerns the disappearance of many Casement documents...*" But Duffy's reference does not concern the disappearance of any documents. Mr. Dudgeon imagines both the existence and disappearance of sexually incriminating papers without evidence of either. Duffy's statement makes no reference to the contents of the cases and there is no evidence the contents were destroyed. Most likely they were retained and later passed to Gertrude Parry.

The Ward document is not a copy but is *the original* from DPP files as submitted by hand to Sir Charles Mathews, therefore it ought to be signed by Ward, the purported author, but is not.

Mr. Dudgeon agrees that the Montevideo story is false; then he relocates it to Rio de Janeiro in 1909 but does not explain why Ward reported Montevideo in the first place. Other than Ward's report, there is no evidence that Christensen said anything about Montevideo.

Mr. Dudgeon writes: "*As it was plain that the previous meeting of the pair was also of a sexual nature*", By "*previous meeting*" he means the one in Montevideo or in Rio de Janeiro but not both. This is plain to those who believe in the veracity of Ward's report of the meeting in Montevideo which Mr. Dudgeon does not believe.

Mr. Dudgeon writes: "*This is exemplified by the failure to locate Casement's possessions in London despite considerable effort*", This is demonstrably false. MI5 recorded the Ebury Street address in early 1915 and this fact is noted in KV documents. MI5 also recorded the address of the shipping & storage agents Allison & Co. at the same time. Mr. Dudgeon would have us believe that, due to a failure of imagination by MI5, the 'considerable effort' did not involve visiting either address during the following 15 months.

Mr. Dudgeon writes: "The first [betrayal] in October 1914 was to inform about Casement and his arrival in Norway en route to Berlin". Here, Mr. Dudgeon avoids reference to the Findlay memo of 29th October, 1914, a document which is analysed in Chapter 11 of my book where it is demonstrated that no betrayal took place.

Finally some small corrections.

"*He visited me at his rooms.*" This should be at *my* rooms.

Mr. Dudgeon asserts that this story is "... *an issue I alone have drawn attention to* ..." This is simply untrue. Three other authors mention this Philadelphia incident although not in detail: Inglis, Andrew and Ó Síocháin. My research began with the Andrew version.

Inspector Ward was killed in September 1916, not in 1917.

There is no error in my US spelling of *jewelry* which is now the dominant spelling of the word.

Scotland Yard officers saw Christensen once not twice.

There are three things Mr. Dudgeon ought to do in order to give his position some coherence:

- 1 – *produce* the witness testimony which definitively proves the material existence of the bound diaries before August 1916,
- 2 – *demonstrate* that the Findlay memo is true,
- 3 – *demonstrate* that the biographies do not contain the deceit and misinformation identified in Chapter 6 of *Anatomy of a Lie*.

After his 25 years of Casement research this ought to be relatively easy for him. If he cannot do this, he ought to heed Wittgenstein: "*Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.*"

Paul R. Hyde

Is The Party Over?

continued

Rory O Brady) that declared war in 1970 and the leadership that made a tactically advantageous interim settlement in the North in 1998.

In the North much is understood and does not need to be said. But then Sinn Fein expanded into the South where there was no understanding of the North and the State was trying to slither away from its origins. It did very well on marginal issues and a name which had historical overtones but little connection with political history. It has now become too popular, and its popularity too uncomfortable for the down-at-heel Establishment, for its superficiality in these matters to continue.

A British Secret Service policeman, Drew Harris, with expertise in the Northern Ireland chicanery, was appointed head of the Gardai by Leo Varadkar and Charles Flanagan, who then went on to cause the embers of Republican sentiment in society to flare up by proposing to honour the contribution of the RIC to Irish freedom. (Flanagan is the son of an eccentric Fine Gael Anti-Semite of the 1930s, is himself politically eccentric, and it is said that Varadkar is his protégé.)

Harris has now chosen to be politically active. He has made a statement that Sinn Fein is led by the Army Council. We should hope so! It stands out against the flotsam of the Establishment by having a sense of social reality and a coherence of purpose. It is a real party. Where do real parties come from? Fine Gael and Fianna Fail both come from fighting a war against Britain, which they would now like to forget, and then from fighting a war against each other. As they lost connection with their origins they became Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

The IRA fought a war against Britain in the North. The whole time it was engaged in that war, Fine Gael and Fianna Fail held the subversive view that the British State in the North was illegitimate, and was a usurpation of Irish sovereignty, while also denouncing Republican resistance to the illegitimate regime.

Sinn Fein brought a negotiated end to the war on advantageous terms for its community. The people who fought the war to an orderly conclusion are still there. It matters little whether they have the form of an Army Council or

not. They are of a kind with what Fianna Fail was for a generation after dumping arms—and which it has now well and truly ceased to be.

We cannot really recommend that Southern Sinn Fein should inform itself by reading *Saoirse*, but they would benefit immensely from Pat Walsh's two volumes outlining *The Catholic Predicament In 'Northern Ireland'*.

'Civil war' politics

continued

what FF will do shows that they're no longer really the opposition to anyone."

But what "*is normal elsewhere*" these days? Where exactly are politics becoming more left and centrist? More right-centrist and right would be a more accurate description. And what does it matter anyway what happens elsewhere unless it makes sense here?

Before writing off '*civil war*' politics, it might be as well to define what they were all about. The conflict was not between '*left*' and '*right*', or any variation on that theme, despite many left and right policies being carried out by both parties. These policies were additions to their base but not the basis of the parties. Some may consider this regrettable but those who simply regretted it for the past century have never been able to establish a new ground of division, and, as Dr. Kelly rightly predicted, it will again take another format.

However, Dr. Kelly's alternative is misguided and assumes that the actual Irish electorate have been yearning for a left/right policies for a long time and that, as SF has become the left alternative, the electorate will have its heart's delight. QED?

The '*civil war*' split was not a civil war in any meaningful sense. It was a war for or against '*The Articles of Agreement*' signed on 6th December 1921 without the Irish Government's consent. Those '*Articles*' turned the existing Republic into a Dominion. In other words, the conflict reflected the latest variation on the relationship that some Irish people wanted with the UK against others who wanted a more independent relationship. That fundamental issue had dominated Irish politics for centuries. It will continue to do so in new variations for the foreseeable future—if nothing else, Northern Ireland and Brexit will see to that.

* **Catastrophe: 1914-1968** by Pat Walsh . Volume One of *The Catholic Predicament In 'Northern Ireland'*, *Catastrophe And Resurgence*, 334pp. €24, £2

* **Resurgence: 1969-2016** by Pat Walsh. Volume Two of *Catastrophe And Resurgence*, 586pp.. €30, £25

CLARIFICATION: In "*Excising Joe Clarke and Dennis Dennehy from the RTE website's footage*", which appeared in the February's *Irish Political Review*, it should have been made clear that Joe Clarke was an usher and not an elected representative in the First Dail.

If, in this scenario Sinn Fein becomes the other half of the '*civil war*' politics divide, it is surely not going to ignore or become in some way indifferent to the relationship between Ireland and the UK and become just another left wing party? If it does, it will go the way of countless others.

It was formed, every breakaway from it was formed, and its present formation is accountable by the relationship between Britain and Ireland at different points in history. Can it become a different species of politics and discard its political genes? It would do so, no doubt, if Britain did likewise, but that is not going to happen. *Au contraire* I would suggest in the Boris Johnson era. Therefore it would be a case of "*plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*".

Jack Lane

Israeli Embassy

continued

political correspondent, Henry Zeffman, one with the headings: "*Labour antisemitism: Corbyn not fit for high office, says Chief Rabbi Mirvis. 'New poison' in the party has been 'sanctioned from the top'.*" Mirvis's own article carried the rhetorical and hysterical heading of "*What will become of Jews and Judaism in Britain if the Labour Party forms the next government?*" Mirvis was not just accusing Corbyn of negligence in tackling anti-Semitism; he was accusing him of being its chief architect. "*A new poison—sanctioned from the very top*" has no other meaning. Mirvis portrayed Corbyn as little else but a reincarnation of Hitler.

Under the heading of "*The 'Apartheid made me' Rabbi and Jews who actually fought racism*", I have analysed the Mirvis intervention in considerable detail in an article published in two sister publications of *Irish Political Review*, the February 2020 issue of *Labour Affairs* and the First Quarter 2020 issue of *Church & State*. This article particularly hailed the role of those proud Jewish Freedom Fighters—Joe Slovo, Ruth First, Denis Goldberg and

Ronnie Kasrils—who defeated Apartheid in their own South Africa, but who had no hesitation in also taking an outspoken stand against Zionism and "*the violent apartheid of the Israeli state*", to quote the words of Joe Slovo himself, at whose 1995 funeral the Chief Rabbi of South Africa pronounced:

"Let not those religious people who acquiesced, passively or wrongly, with inequalities of yesteryear, let not those religious people dare to condemn Joe Slovo, a humanist socialist, who fought all his life for basic decency, to reinstate the dignity to which all human beings are entitled."

Ben Levitas is the son of the Irish Jewish veteran of the Spanish Anti-Fascist War, Maurice Levitas (1917-2001), and nephew of the lifelong anti-racist and anti-Fascist activist, Max Levitas (1915-2018). The Levitas brothers numbered many immediate relatives among the victims of Hitler's Holocaust—a paternal uncle killed in France, a paternal aunt massacred with her husband and all her children in Lithuania, and a maternal aunt massacred with most of her family in Latvia, with the exception of a daughter who had emigrated to Palestine and a son serving in the Soviet Red Army. But the *Times* refused to publish a letter from Ben Levitas that refuted Rabbi Mirvis's character assassination of Jeremy Corbyn, wherein he pointed out:

"My uncle Max Levitas fought Mosley's Blackshirts at Cable Street in 1936 and remained an anti-Fascist activist until he died late last year aged 103, when the *Times* honoured him with a full-page obituary. He remained a Corbyn supporter to the end and saw attempts to label the Labour party antisemitic as a smear campaign. In his memory, I would like to remind readers that Ephraim Mirvis does not speak for all Jews on this matter. Max Levitas knew well what it was to fight racism. He had its true measure. In recent times he shared platforms with many from John Bercow (for the charity Jewish Care) to Corbyn himself. He would I am certain have recognised Bercow's fair judgement when the ex-Speaker said earlier this month that in 22 years of knowing Corbyn he had 'never detected so much as a whiff of antisemitism'. Jeremy Corbyn paid warm tribute to Max as the main speaker at his packed memorial service earlier this year, alongside the local Labour MP Rushanara Ali and the local Rabbi. Antisemitic? Not from where I was sitting."

ATTACKING PRESIDENT HIGGINS

The *Times* (UK) no longer prints an Ireland edition, although it does carry a few Irish reports online. The exception is each Sunday, with the Ireland edition of *The Sunday Times*. In his 'Atticus' column for the paper's Irish edition this past January 26th, John Burns opted to become a *de facto* spokesperson for the Israeli Embassy in Dublin with, under the

heading of "*Higgins risks unholy row by not going to Jerusalem*", the following inspired spin concerning the President of Ireland:

"Monarchs, presidents and prime ministers travelled to Jerusalem last Thursday to remember the Holocaust. Among those at the Yad Vashem remembrance were Vladimir Putin, Emmanuel Macron, Prince Charles and US vice-president Mike Pence. Where was Michael D Higgins? The Department of Foreign Affairs confirms an invitation was sent to him by President Reuven Rivlin of Israel. 'We regret it was ultimately not possible to participate in this important event', adds the department. Why not? According to the president's official diary, he had no engagements on Thursday, or indeed Friday. Aras an Uachtarain points out that the president sent a message on behalf of the Irish people to the event, but would not clarify why Higgins was unable to attend in person. The president will be at a Holocaust memorial day commemoration in Dublin today and then travels to Krakow to attend a commemorative event at Auschwitz-Birkenau tomorrow. So could it be he just didn't fancy a trip to Israel, a country with which Ireland has perhaps the worst relationship of any EU state?"

See [HYPERLINK "https://president.ie/en/diary/details/president-attends-the-holocaust-memorial-day-commemoration-2020/speeches"](https://president.ie/en/diary/details/president-attends-the-holocaust-memorial-day-commemoration-2020/speeches) for the address by President Higgins at the Holocaust Memorial Commemoration in Dublin this January 26.

It is noteworthy that, in his press statement serving the interests of the Israeli State, John Burns trivialised the Holocaust Memorial Commemoration in Dublin itself, notwithstanding the prominent role played by each Israeli Ambassador to Ireland since the first such ceremony in 2003. President Higgins has given an address at the ceremony on four occasions—2012, 2015, 2019 and, now again, this year. I myself have attended most such ceremonies from the very first to the most recent, not least because it also honours the political victims of the Holocaust and the central role of the Soviet Red Army in the liberation of the extermination camps. The Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration in Ireland takes place on the Sunday nearest to the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. As the accompanying memorial booklet relates, under the heading of "*Liberation*":

"From the summer of 1944, the Soviets were advancing from the east, liberating and dismantling Nazi camps on their way. They first reached Majdanek in July 1944, soon followed by Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka. They reached Auschwitz-Birkenau on 27 January 1945."

The booklet further honoured the political victims thus:

"The torching of the Reichstag national parliament building in 1933 gave the Nazis a pretext for brutally suppressing communists and, later, social democrats... In memory of the political victims of the Holocaust: communists, socialists, trade unionists, and other opponents of the Nazi regime who were

persecuted and murdered the Nazis."

The booklet for the 2019 commemoration had also recorded:

"It is with much sadness that we learned of the death of **Max Levitas** who passed away in November 2018, aged 103 years... Max was a veteran of the Battle for Cable Street which took place in 1936 when Oswald Mosely, leader of the British Union of Fascists, and 3,000 of his followers (Black-shirts), attempted to march through a largely Jewish part of London's East End... Many of the Irish dock workers stood in solidarity with their Jewish neighbours to successfully prevent the march through their community. Max was proud of his Irish and Jewish roots and throughout his life, actively opposed antisemitism and fascism. For many years he attended the national Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration in Dublin. He is fondly remembered."

And, indeed, at one such ceremony Max was invited to light a memorial candle honouring the political victims, as I myself was on four occasions between 2003 and 2016, and as was, in 2018, my partner Nancy Wallach, daughter of the Polish-born New York Jewish veteran of the Spanish Anti-Fascist War, Hy Wallach, who had endured seventeen months incarceration in a Fascist concentration camp in Spain, 1938-39.

Now, however, we need to get back to reviewing the Jerusalem ceremony. There was every reason for the Russian President to be present at Yad Vashem. The Polish Government was not going to host and facilitate him giving an address at Auschwitz which would acclaim the Red Army as its liberating force. But Putin could, and did, give such an address in Jerusalem.

See [HYPERLINK "http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/62646"](http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/62646) <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/62646> for the address by President Putin at the Holocaust Memorial Commemoration at Yad Vashem this January 23.

But there was also every reason for the President of Ireland NOT to be present in Jerusalem on that occasion. Apart from Putin's call for international cooperation to bring about peace, both Israel and the USA abused such Holocaust commemoration by turning the occasion into a Jerusalem rally for war against Iran. Under the heading of "*Holocaust forum: Netanyahu urges world to unite to confront Iran*", the BBC reported that Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu called on the international community to "*join the vital effort of confronting Iran*". It further reported that US Vice-President Mike Pence, who spoke shortly after Netanyahu, maintained that "*Iran's nuclear programme posed a security threat to all nations, not just Israel*". His rallying cry was "*The world must stand strong against the Islamic Republic of Iran*".

In its reporting, the *Times of Israel* was more detailed with the quotations it provided. Under the heading of *"Pence: In the spirit of Holocaust remembrance, we must stand strong against Iran"*, it recorded: *"US Vice President Mike Pence called for the world to stand up to Iran, drawing a parallel between the Islamic Republic and Nazi Germany."* Calling the ayatollahs' regime the *"tyrants of Tehran"*, Netanyahu said Israel *"salutes President Trump and Vice President Pence for confronting the Tyrants of Tehran... I call on all governments to join the vital effort of confronting Iran."*

SF's RÉADA CRONIN

The *Sunday Times* attack on President Higgins over his non-attendance at such a Jerusalem rally fizzled out like a damp squib. But, three weeks later, on February 16th, it ran a front page report by Mark Tighe, headed: *"Mossad ended Jeremy Corbyn campaign tweets new Sinn Féin TD Réada Cronin"*. It ran:

"Réada Cronin, a newly elected Sinn Féin TD, accused the Israeli secret service of 'sinister' interference in the UK general election to ensure defeat for Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party. She made the claims on Twitter two months ago. Cronin...has repeatedly alleged Labour's defeat was partly due to Mossad, the Israeli secret service. On November 30, in response to a tweet calling Corbyn an 'anti-semite', Cronin wrote: 'Mossad. Interference. In. The. British. Election. Brits. Being. Led. By. The. Nose.' On December 12, the day of the election, Cronin tweeted: 'Mossad have involved themselves in dirty tricks in elections not too far away'. When a tweeter who identified himself as a 'UK Jew' said her assertion was laughable, Cronin dismissed him as a 'Mossad-bot' and added: 'When the Nazis come back and they are on the march it'll be Jeremy Corbyn [that] will stand with you. You are a disgrace to your forefathers.' After the exit poll showed the Conservatives would win, Cronin tweeted: 'So sorry for Jeremy Corbyn. A decent, principled man done down by lies, deceit, fake news and the sinister activities of Mossad Secret Service.' ... The Israeli embassy in Dublin said: 'Everyone should be disturbed by newly elected Sinn Féin TD Réada Cronin's history of comments that consist of paranoid, hate-driven conspiracy theories.' ... Gideon Falter, head of UK charity Campaign Against Antisemitism, said Cronin had shown herself unfit for public life. 'Conspiracy theories about Mossad are the standard fare of far-left anti-semites,' he said. Alan Shatter, a former Fine Gael minister who was one of the few Jewish politicians in Ireland, said ... 'The deputy should publicly detail her evidence that Mossad was responsible for Corbyn's defeat. In the absence of such evidence, she should publicly apologise for her tweet and delete it.'"

Now, there are many things wrong with various statements in this account. Deputy Cronin was mistaken in her conclusion that

the Israeli intervention was decisive in Corbyn's defeat. I myself do not believe—quite apart from the energy dissipated in combatting false accusations of anti-semitism—that the Mirvis intervention played any such decisive role in the British Labour Party's defeat. This was a Brexit Election pure and simple, hammering home even more sharply the choices that had been made in the 2016 Referendum. The soul of the Scottish nation remains European, while the soul of the English nation has been more emphatically shown to be Brexit. Notwithstanding his professed rhetoric about saving *"the soul of our nation"*, Rabbi Mirvis did not speak for the soul of either the English nation or the Scottish nation, but rather set out to pursue the interests of the Nation State of Israel. But, while not being a decisive electoral intervention, its unprecedented character, not least its relentless character assassination of Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn, nonetheless required closer scrutiny.

Cronin rightly highlighted Corbyn's record as a committed opponent of anti-Semitism and, while being mistaken in regarding the Israeli State's interference in British politics as being decisive, she was also correct in highlighting the nefarious character of that interference. Alan Shatter demanded that Cronin produce the evidence, but it would require the financial resources of either a well-funded Intelligence service or a well-resourced media operation to illustrate all the dots and commas of what was, after all, a secretive Israeli Secret Service conspiracy. But, by their fruits shall ye know them. Occasionally the mask slips. Three years ago a senior political officer at the Israeli Embassy in London spoke rather too freely to an undercover reporter from Al Jazeera TV. Shai Masot had not been shy enough, and had been recorded on camera boasting of his plans to *"take out"* a British Tory Junior Minister at the Foreign Office whom he deemed too sympathetic to the Palestinian predicament, of having a £1 million budget for trips by Labour Party members to Israel, and of hoping that Corbyn might be prevented from becoming British Labour Party leader.

See [HYPERLINK "https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/08/israeli-diplomat-shai-masot-plotted-against-mps-set-up-political-groups-labour?CMP=share_btn_link"](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/08/israeli-diplomat-shai-masot-plotted-against-mps-set-up-political-groups-labour?CMP=share_btn_link) www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/08/israeli-diplomat-shai-masot-plotted-against-mps-set-up-political-groups-labour?CMP=share_btn_link for more details.

When the documentary was transmitted, the British Government demanded the expulsion of Masot, and the Israeli Ambassador was compelled to apologise—the moral of the story being not to be so loose-tongued as to get caught out the next time! And Gideon Falter, head of the self-styled UK *"Campaign Against Antisemitism"*, and who has now issued a call across the Irish Sea—via the Ireland edition of the *Sunday Times*—to demand that Cronin should be *"taken out"* of Irish politics, had

complained to the British media regulator Ofcom that the Al Jazeera documentary had been *"anti-semitic"*.

But Ofcom comprehensively rejected all five complaints about the documentary:

"We considered that the allegations in the programme were not made on the grounds that any of the particular individuals concerned were Jewish and noted that no claims were made relating to their faith... Rather, it was our view that these individuals featured in the programme in the context of its investigation into the alleged activities of a foreign state (the State of Israel acting through its UK Embassy) and their association with it... Ofcom did not consider that such a critical analysis of the actions of a foreign state constituted anti-Semitism, particularly as the overall focus of the programme was to examine whether the State of Israel was acting in a manner that would be expected of other democratic nations" (see [HYPERLINK "https://freespeechonisrael.org.uk/ofcom-al-jazeera/"](https://freespeechonisrael.org.uk/ofcom-al-jazeera/) \ "sthash.9O2TIQB1.dpbs" <https://freespeechonisrael.org.uk/ofcom-al-jazeera/#sthash.9O2TIQB1>).

And what now of President Higgins? The Israeli Embassy in Dublin and the Ireland edition of the *Sunday Times* may well have concluded that it made sense to allow its attempted furor about the President's 'failure' to go to Jerusalem to fizzle out. But what of the President's reported remarks after the other commemoration that he did attend, at Auschwitz on January 27th? For President Higgins described the World Jewish Congress President's charge that *"anti-Zionism is nothing but anti-Semitism"* as *"completely inappropriate"*, *"bad"* and *"a shame"*. Under the heading of *"Higgins says claim UN stance on Israel is anti-Semitic 'inappropriate'"*, Derek Scally reported in the January 29th issue of the *Irish Times*:

"At Monday's ceremony to mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, WJC president Ronald Lauder said that 81 per cent of UN resolutions criticising countries in the last seven years were directed at Israel... adding that *'anti-Zionism is nothing but anti-Semitism'*. Mr Higgins said the intervention by Mr Lauder, the son of Hungarian Jewish emigrants to New York, created a sense of *'discord'* in the tent at the Birkenau event... *'It was completely inappropriate. It was bad and a shame. You sensed, too, in the long row in front of me, a certain frisson'*, said Mr Higgins."

And with those remarks, the President of Ireland also rejected the diktats of both the Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, and the State of Israel. It is unlikely that the Israeli Embassy and its Irish Murdoch mouthpiece will leave that issue lie still for too long.

Manus O'Riordan

(Continuing our series on the events of 1920 with the help of the daily newspaper of the First Dail, the *Irish Bulletin*.)

LEST WE FORGET (15)

The following are the Acts of Aggression Committed in Ireland by the Military and Police of the Usurping English Government, as reported in the Daily Press, for the Week Ending:- FEBRUARY 7th, 1920.

Summary

Date - February	2th	3th	4th	5th	6th	7th	Total
Raids	300	51	-	99	6	13	469
Arrests	92	-	1	20	5	4	122
Sentences	-	-	9	1	3	-	13
Courtmartials	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Suppressions & Proclamations	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
Armed assaults	-	1	-	1	-	-	2
Murders	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Daily Total	392	55	12	121	15	17	612

The Sentences passed for political offences during the above six days totalled 2 years, 10 months.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd, 1920.

Raids:-

Throughout Ireland armed military and police raided the residences of prominent Republicans. Over three hundred houses were forcibly entered in the early hours of the morning. The inmates were turned out of their beds at the point of the bayonet, women and children as well as men, and were herded together in one room, under military guard, while the main body of the military ransacked every room. In many cases when the door was not opened rapidly enough at the knocking of the troops it was battered in by the butts of their rifles. Mothers of men "wanted" were threatened with imprisonment if they would not disclose their sons' whereabouts.

Arrests:-

Coincident with these raids wholesale arrests were made. In Dublin twenty-seven arrests were made, including those of: - Mr. R. C. Barton, Member of Parliament for East Wicklow. Mr. Jos. McGrath, Member of Parliament for St. James' Division of Dublin. Mr. J. V. Lawless, Member of the Dublin Corporation. Mr. S. Brennan, Member of the Dublin Corporation. Mr. Henry O'Hanrahan, Sinn Fein Director of Organisation. Unsuccessful efforts were made to arrest many other Republican Leaders including:- Alderman J. MacDonagh, Member of Parliament for North Tipperary. Mr. F. Fahy, B.A. - Member of Parliament for South Galway. Mr. E. Duggan - Member of Parliament for South Meath. Mr. R. Mulcahy - Member of Parliament for the Clontarf Division of Dublin. Alderman S. MacGarry, Newly elected Alderman of Dublin Corporation. In the provinces similar arrests took place. Twenty two prominent Republicans were arrested in Cork City and County. In Limerick city thirteen were arrested.

In Co. Tipperary ten were arrested; in Thurles four and in Co. Clare seven. The total number of arrests in this military "drive" was 83. Messrs. J. Redmond and P. Doherty were arrested on a charge of "intimidation" arising out of the protest by motor drivers against the Order under the terms of which they must apply to the British forces in Ireland for permission to drive their cars. Five arrests were made on January 27th at Drimoleague, Co. Cork. The names of the men arrested have not been published. Two men whose names have not transpired were arrested at Limerick City on a charge of firing at policemen. They protested their innocence but were brought before the local magistrate, when it was found that there was no evidence to justify their arrests. They were subsequently released.

Militarism:-

The Manchester Guardian of this date contains the following:- "All the Constabulary barracks in Co. Donegal have been sand-bagged, loop-holed and armoured, and the roofs have been rendered bomb-proof".

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3rd, 1920.

Raids:-

Large forces of military and police raided upwards of 50 houses in the Aghern district of Fermoy, Co. Cork. Armed police raided the residence in Dublin of Mr. Cathal O'Shannon, editor of "The Watchword of Labour", the official organ of Irish Labour.

Court martial:-

At Ship Street Barracks, Dublin, Mr. Terence Smith Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, was courtmartialled on

a charge of having a revolver in his possession. Mr. P. Byrne, also of Mullingar, was tried by the same courtmartial on a charge of having in his possession six rifle cartridges. Decisions will be announced later.

Proclamation:-

A play entitled "The Dawn of Freedom" which was to be staged at the Gaelic League Hall at Loughrea, Co. Galway, was proclaimed by the English Military authorities.

Provocation:-

In the streets of Dublin an armed demonstration was made by the English troops quartered in the city. They traversed the city streets in small bodies accompanied by armoured cars and Motor Lorries. These patrols halted at various points in their parade through the city. In view of these facts and that this parade took place when the citizens were stirred to the deepest resentment by the rounding up, two days previously, of many of their elected representatives, the demonstration seems to have been arranged in order to provoke hostile acts from the large crowds which the parade of troops attracted. Evident preparations were made by the Military authorities in Dublin to deal with such hostile acts by wholesale violence.

Armed Assault:-

During this provocative parade the crowds who had gathered in Sackville Street hooted the troops who immediately turned upon them with fixed bayonets. In the subsequent stampede many were injured, including several women and children. In the course of this parade also many young men were held up in the principal Dublin Streets and had their persons searched by the troops.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14th, 1920

Arrest:-

Mr. M. Whelan was arrested by armed police at Enniscorthy Co. Wexford. No charge has been brought against him.

Sentences:-

At a "Crimes" Court at Ballinasloe, Co. Galway, nine young men arrested on 29th of January were sentenced to one month's imprisonment each on a charge of holding a Sinn Fein meeting in the local Town Hall. At Limerick city a similar provocative parade to that which occurred in Dublin the previous day, had results which seem to be more in keeping with the desire of the military authorities to create a cause for bloodshed. Patrols in the same

manner as in Dublin paraded the Limerick streets at a time when the city was seething with indignation at the arrest of many of its prominent citizens. The troops were hooted as they passed through the principal thoroughfares. At O'Connell Street some boys exploded a fog-signal. Immediately the troops opened fire sending volley after volley indiscriminately through the streets. Two victims fell at the first volley: Mr. R. O'Dwyer who was on business premises was shot dead by troops who fired into his house; and Miss Lena Johnston when crossing one of the principal thoroughfares was shot through the back and died some hours later in extreme agony. No attack was made on the troops. No warning was given that the troops were about to open fire.

Militarism:-

The merchants, magistrates and townspeople of Newcastle-West, Co. Limerick, have signed a strong protest against the arrest of nine of their fellow townsmen who had organised themselves into a Vigilance Committee to protect property and life which were left unguarded by the local police who were entirely engaged on activities against the supporters of the National Movement. The London Daily Mail of yesterday's date contains the following editorial comment:- "In this country (England) we are mere spectators of the guerrilla war which Dublin Castle is carrying on – at our expense and with an army of 50,000 British soldiers – against a section of his Majesty's subjects." "Scores of men have been arrested, we are not told what they are accused of, nor whether, when or where they will be brought to trial".

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5th, 1920

Raids:-

Armed police raided upwards of eighty private houses in the County Galway. At Youghal, Co. Cork, military and police raided six private houses. Troops fully armed raided a dance-hall at the Grand Hotel, Ennis, Co. Clare (see below). At Dundalk, Co. Louth, ten private houses were raided by armed police and military. Armed police raided a house at Blarney, Co. Cork. At Waterford city a house was similarly raided.

Arrests:-

Mr. M. Carolan recently elected a member of the Belfast Corporation was arrested on a charge of unlawful assembly. The unlawful assembly consisted in a meeting of Mr. Carolan's constituents after the declaration of the poll. Mr. M. Quinn of

Inch, Co. Clare, Chairman of the Ennis Rural District Council was arrested. Mr. J. Reidy of Inagh in the same county, and two men whose names have not transpired were also arrested.

Messrs. John, James and Jos. McQuill, three brothers, T. Laying, P. Flynn, W. Atkinson all of Dundalk, Co. Louth, were arrested by military and police. In the same county Messrs. Jas. Callan, Ravensdale, To. O'Dwyer, B. Rafferty, and P. Rafferty of Greenore were also arrested. At Youghal, Co. Cork, Messrs. P. Magner, Urban Councillor, Ml. Kelleher and Jas. Keogh were arrested. Mr. Patrick Dalton was arrested at Waterford, and Mr. W. McAuliffe at Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick. No charge has been preferred against any of the above men.

Sentences:-

Mr. Ml. Davern of Ballydine, Co. Tipperary, who was tried by courtmartial on January 26th at Victoria Barracks, Cork, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour, on a charge of carrying ammunition and explosives.

Armed Assault:-

At Ennis, Co. Clare, military in full war-equipment, raided a dance hall and at the point of the revolver held up the young men attending the dance, and having overpowered them searched their pockets.

Provocation:-

Lord Monteagle writing to the Press refers to the recent municipal elections as an opportunity given to the Irish people to select exactly the kind of representative they needed most, and stated that the elections promised to be fruitful of much good. "But" his Lordship continues, "my hopes are sadly dashed by the fresh outburst of wholesale arrests last Friday and Saturday so soon following these elections, and including so many of those recently elected. Why those particular men? And why at this particular time? The conjunction is ominous. What did his attempt to arrest the five members profit Charles I? The immediate result of Charles' action was to precipitate civil war. I refuse to believe that the Government contemplate such a possibility. Would that I could feel assured that they are not unconsciously sitting on the safety valve."

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6th, 1920.

Raids:-

Military and police raided three houses in Limerick city. At Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick, military and police raided the residences of two prominent

farmers and arrested them. A large force of military and police raided and occupied the town of Templederry, Co. Tipperary.

Arrests:-

At Limerick city, Messrs. John Moran, Prospect Hill, John Cahill, Catherine Street, and T. Kelly, Carey's road, were arrested by Military and Police. No charge has been brought against these men. At Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick, Messrs. Denis Leahy and John Hartnett, farmers, were arrested. No charge was brought against them. Both men were members of a local Farmers Vigilance Committee organised to protect property left unprotected by police who are devoting all their energies to the suppression of the National movement.

Sentences:-

Messrs. Philip Magner, M. Kelleher and J. Keogh were tried at Youghal, Co. Cork, on a charge of being found in the Sinn Fein Rooms on December 11th. They were sentenced to seven days imprisonment for "unlawful assembly". At the time of the "offence" the three men named were engaged in work in support of the Sinn Fein Candidates at the Municipal Elections.

Suppressions:-

On the removal of military prohibitions from Tipperary Town the members of the local Social Club re-occupied their club rooms. The police immediately notified them that the Club could not be reopened and if the members gathered there they would be ejected.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7th, 1920

Raids:-

At Sligo the Young Republican Club was raided and occupied by armed military. A strong force of military and police were drafted into Derry city and in the early morning were surrounded and searched the residences of ten prominent Republicans. At Mitchelstown, Co. Cork, Military and police raided two private houses.

Arrests:-

At Derry City, Messrs. Caldwell, Hyndman, 30 Philip Street, Jos. McMurray, Ferguson Street, and Wm. McVeigh, Magazine Street, were arrested by military and police on a charge which has not been stated.

At Mitchelstown, Co. Cork, Mr. M. O'Sullivan was arrested. No charge was preferred against him.

The following are the acts of aggression committed in Ireland by the military and police of the usurping English Government, - as reported in the Daily Press for the Week Ending: - FEBRUARY 14th, 1920.

S u m m a r y

Date, February	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th	14th	Total
Raids:-	307	234	134	1	203	320	1,199
Arrests:-	3	5	-	1	3	13	25
Sentences:-	-	-	2	3	1	1	7
Courtmartials:-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Proclamations & Suppressions	-	2	1	-	-	-	3
Armed Assaults	1	2	-	1	1	1	6
Deportations:-	60	-	-	3	-	-	63
Murder:-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Daily Total:-	371	243	137	9	209	336	1,305

The sentences passed for political offences during the above six days totalled 4 years, 5 months & 3 weeks.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9th

Raids:-

Upwards of 300 houses were raided and searched by military and police in a big military "drive" through Co. Wicklow. Making the town of Arklow their centre the armed forces spread out to a distance of twelve miles on each side, entering and searching every house in that area which was known to be occupied by a person who sympathised with the National movement. Troops also entered many gardens and farms and dug them up. At Limerick City military and police raided the Irish National Forrester's Hall, and searched it. Police and Military raided some six houses at Clondalane, Kilworth and Coolmohen, Co. Cork.

Arrests:-

In the Fermoy district of Co. Cork, Military and police arrested Messrs. J. Fanning, P. Leddy and P. Buckley. No charge was made against these men. They were removed under armed guard to Cork Jail.

Armed Assault:-

Large forces of military and police were rushed into Co. Meath where in the early morning they took possession of all the roads and held up civilians at the point of the bayonet overpowering them and searching their persons.

Deportations:-

Sixty prominent Republicans were deported from Dublin and Cork. They were some of the men arrested in the "round up" of January 31st and without charge or trial have been sent to Wormwood Scrubbs prison, England. They were taken in handcuffs through the streets. Among these deportees were many elected representatives of the Irish people.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10th

Raids:-

In the entire County of Wexford, large bodies of military raided upwards of 200 houses taking away all shot-guns

although these are necessary to farmers for the

preservation of their crops, and permits had actually been given to these farmers to have such guns in their possession. At Magherafelt, Co. Derry, a large force of Military and police raided the residence of Mr. W. J. Hinphay. At Ballagherty in the same county, military and police raided over a score of houses. At Maguire's Bridge, Co. Armagh, armed police raided and searched twelve houses. The residence of Mr. Joseph O'Gorman, Crumlin, Co. Dublin was raided and searched by police who turned Mrs. O'Gorman, who is ill, out of bed.

Arrests:-

Mr. W. J. Hinphay, Magherafelt, Co. Derry, was arrested on a charge of endeavouring to obtain arms. Mr. F. Corrigan of Curraghmacall, Co. Tyrone, was arrested on a charge of possessing arms. Messrs. John Casey, William Casey (butchers) and T. Maher (farmer) were summoned to a Crimes Court at Templemore, Co. Tipperary on a charge of "unlawful assembly". The unlawful assembly consisted in attending a fair at Kilcommon, Co. Tipperary two months ago when the district was under strict martial law and all fairs and markets were decreed suppressed.

Proclamations and Suppressions:-

At Kilfinane, Co. Clare, a play dealing with the National movement was proclaimed by the British military authorities and three motor lorries of military and police were drafted into the village to suppress any attempt to stage it. A dance held at Castleiney, Co. Tipperary, in aid of the Irish language revival was interfered with by armed military who took up position in the village hall where the dance was being held.

Armed Assaults:-

In the county of Wicklow, armed military and police patrols have taken up positions in the public roads and there they hold up peaceful country people at the point of the bayonet, and overpowering any resistance search them. At Killarney, Co. Kerry, armed military and police assembled in the roads after dark and held up every pedestrian in the district.

Treatment of Prisoners:-

An aged priest from Portumna, Co. Galway, called at Mountjoy Prison, Dublin in order to visit a parishioner who is serving there a sentence on a political charge. He was informed that he would not be allowed the visit unless he submitted to his being searched by the prison authorities. He pointed out that he had a permit from the Chairman of the Visiting Justices granting him this visit, but the prison authorities refused to allow any visit without a search of the priests person.

Militarism:-

Mr. W. B. Yeats the celebrated Irish poet and dramatist stated to a press interviewer in America, in which country he has just arrived from Ireland:- "Ireland is living in a state of suppression. On a recent trip from Ireland to England my baggage was all searched. My mail is constantly opened by the Governmental authorities. Such innocent matter as pamphlets about the Irish theatre movement are held up until the censors are satisfied they contain nothing political. There is no such thing as free speech in Ireland".

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11th, 1920

Raids:-

In the district of Castlemartyr, Co. Cork, and neighbouring areas, armed military and police raided upwards of eighty private houses. Between four and five o'clock in the morning a force of thirty military fully armed, raided 9 Iona Drive, Dublin, the residence of ex-Alderman J. J. Farrell, recently Lord Mayor of Dublin. The military forced their way into the house and searched every room in it, turning Mr. Farrell's daughter and maids out of their beds in the process. Mr. Farrell in a subsequent letter of protest to the Press says:- "If raids like this are to go on, people with bad hearts, or in a delicate state of health, are liable to lose their lives from fright, and people suffering from influenza are not improved by being kept standing." Armed police raided the residence at 1 Nelson Street, Derry, of Mr. James McGlinchey. The raid took place in the early morning. When the police knocked at the door the inmates were all asleep, and the door not being immediately opened it was smashed in by the police. The residence of a man named Duffy in the same street was also raided, the police in this case also smashing in the door. Armed police raided a dance hall at Keady, Co. Armagh while a Sinn Fein dance was in progress. In the entire county of Armagh, police armed with rifles, bayonets and hand grenades raided and searched upwards of 50 houses.

Sentences:-

Mr. Terence Smith of Patrick Street, Mullingar, who was courtmartialled at Dublin on February 2nd, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour, on a charge of having in his possession an unloaded revolver.

Proclamations and Suppressions:-

At Keady, Co. Armagh, while a dance, held by the Local Sinn Fein Club was in progress, armed police raided the dance hall and took possession of it.

Murder:-

At the inquest held into the cause of the death of Mr. Robert O'Dwyer, Limerick, evidence was given by the Police and military that they fired 150 shots through the streets and many civilians swore that there was no firing whatever by the citizens. The military and police opened fire without warning and without cause. The Jury found that Robert Dwyer was killed by rifle shots fired by the patrol and added:- "They (the Jury) strongly condemn what they consider was the indiscriminate firing of the patrol on that night, sufficient provocation not being given for what the Jury consider murder in the case of Richard O'Dwyer".

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12th, 1920

Raid:-

At Drum, Co. Roscommon, armed police raided the residence of Mr. Redican, and arrested him.

Arrest:-

Mr. Redican, Drum, Co. Roscommon, who was liberated from Galway Jail on Saturday last, was arrested in bed on a charge of failing to report himself to the police. Mr. Redican had served a sentence of six months for "unlawful assembly".

Sentences:-

Mr. T. Daly, merchant of Bandon, Co. Cork, was sentenced in that town to 2 months' imprisonment with hard labour, for collecting for the Irish Self Determination Fund, without a permit from the British Military authorities. At the same Court Mr. Ml. Crowley of Castletownbere, Co. Cork, was sentenced to 14 days imprisonment for unlawful assembly. At Mullingar, Mr. Michael McCoy charged with unlawful assembly was sentenced to five months imprisonment for refusing to recognise the right of the Court to try him, and consequently declining to give bail for his future "Good behaviour". Mr. M. Carolan, recently elected a member of the Belfast Corporation was sentenced to six months imprisonment on a charge of unlawful assembly. The unlawful assembly consisted in Mr. Carolan addressing his constituents after his election.

Armed Assault:-

At Youghal, Co. Cork, a public welcome was given to three men released after serving sentence for political offences. A meeting was held and one of the released men, Mr. P. Magner, member of the local urban Council, was about to address the gathering when a charge was made by armed police who were suddenly rushed to the scene. They attacked the crowd with the butt-ends of their rifles injuring very many. Women and children as well as men were among those seriously injured.

Deportations:-

Mr. Maurice Collins, Parnell Street, Dublin, who was recently arrested without charge in the round-up on January 31st, was deported to Wormwood Scrubbs prison. Two other men whose names have not been published were similarly deported to Wormwood Scrubbs.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13th, 1920

Raids:-

At Allihies, Co. Cork, armed military and police raided and searched over 200 houses. Police and military raided and searched the residence at Richmond Hill, Rathmines, Dublin of Mr. John Doyle, recently elected member of the Rathmines Urban Council. Mr. Doyle was Sinn Fein Election director at the Municipal Elections. A large force of police armed with rifles and hand- grenades raided Emlagh House, Castleplunkett, Co. Roscommon the residence of Mr. J. Brennan, for whose arrest they held a warrant. Mr. Brennan was not at home. At Kilfadda, King's Co. the residence of Mr. M. Hogan was raided by police and searched.

Arrests:-

Messrs. M. Fitzgerald and T. Fenton, Caherdaniel, Co. Kerry, were arrested on a charge of unlawful assembly. Mr. J. Carroll, Ballyquirk, King's Co., was arrested on an unknown charge.

Sentences:-

Mr. Ml. Kirwan of Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment with hard labour on a charge of having in his possession "seditious" literature.

Armed Assault:-

At Templetuohy, Co. Tipperary, a big force of armed military and police occupied the village. Armed outposts took possession of the entrances to the village and all pedestrians were held up at the point of the bayonet and being overpowered were searched.

Court martial:-

Mr. R. C. Barton, Member of Parliament for West Wicklow, was tried by general court martial at Ship Street Barracks Dublin, on a charge of making "seditious" speeches on Feb. 2nd, 1919. On the occasion of the alleged offence Mr. Barton was addressing his Constituents. He refused to recognise the right of the court martial to try him. The decision of the Court has not yet been promulgated.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14th, 1920

Raids:-

At Dublin still another round-up was attempted by the British Military authorities. In the early morning raid were made upon the houses of prominent citizens. Upwards of a score of residences were forcibly entered, the doors being battered down in several cases. The inmates were then turned out of bed – no opportunity being given to the women-folk to dress – and were herded into one room under an armed guard while the rest of

the armed forces ransacked the house. At Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow, large forces of military and police raided upwards of a hundred houses. To the neighbouring towns and villages large bodies of armed troops were also rushed, and over a wide area the military and police forcibly entered and searched approximately two hundred houses. The raids which began in the early morning continued until late into the afternoon.

Arrests:-

At Dublin in the round-up above mentioned eleven arrests were made. The names of these arrested are:- Messrs. T. Atkins, recently elected member of the Dublin Corporation, John P. Atkins, his brother, an American citizen, James Staines, brother of Mr. M. Staines, Member of Parliament for St. Michan's Division, Dublin, William and George Ashton two sons of Mrs. A. E. Ashton recently elected member of the Dublin Corporation, WM. and Gerald Cullen, father (aged 65) and brother of Mr. T. Cullen, architect, recently a Sinn Fein Candidate for the Rathmines Urban Council, P. O'Donohoe, F. McPartland, nephew of Mrs. A. E. Ashton, P. O'Reilly and – Upton. Unsuccessful attempts were made to arrest Alderman M. Staines, M.P. At Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow, Messrs. James Murtagh and William Errity were arrested on suspicion.

Sentences:-

Mr. A. McGinley, of Dungloe, Co. Donegal, has been held in prison for nine weeks on a charge of collecting for the Irish Self-Determination Fund. He has now been handed over to find evidence on which to convict him.

Armed Assault:-

Murder:- Mr. J. O'Brien, merchant of Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow was shot dead by police who suddenly opened fire on civilians in the Streets of that town. At the adjourned inquest on Miss Helena Johnson, at Limerick City, the Jury found the following verdict:- "That Helena Johnson's death was caused by shock, the effects of a wound inflicted by a rifle bullet fired by the police without orders from their superiors, which we strongly condemn, as there was no provocation. It is what the jury consider murder." Miss Johnson was shot down in the streets of Limerick when a military and police patrol opened fire upon the civilians without any provocation. At the inquest the military authorities endeavoured to prove that they had been fired upon but contradictory evidence on their part caused the collapse of their case.

The North came South

In 2016 the *Irish Political Review* termed the then election the “*anti-Sinn Féin election*” and the tortuously built FG-FF “*confidence and supply*” Government that followed it the “*anti-Sinn Féin government*”. How even more true those descriptions pertain to current events is patently obvious. Whether the Sinn Féin achievement in becoming the largest party in the south, and garnering most Dail votes for its leader as Taoiseach, represents the “*seismic*” event much talked about in the media, or proves a pyrrhic victory, remains to be seen. Leadership skill, political coherence and chance events will determine which.

The southern State, before it was turned into a *de facto* Republic in the 1930s, has been here before. The Cumman na nGaedheal-led Governments of the 1920s can be fairly described as “*anti-Sinn Féin*” Governments, cobbled together as the professed ‘only alternative’ to a regime of “*gunmen and communists*”. In a 1927 moment of truth, after Fianna Fáil entered the Dáil, there was briefly a threat of a type of ‘left-led government’”, when Labour and some minor parties, such as the (Redmondite) National League as well as Independents, made it clear they would seek to form a minority government “*externally*” supported by Fianna Fáil. This was in part because Labour leader Tom Johnson, despite Howlinesque ‘reservations’ about the semi-constitutional nature of de Valera’s party, accepted that that party had successfully “*stolen Labour’s clothes*”, with its programme of anti-austerity, housing, employment and other measures which Labour supported and the electorate clearly liked. Groups outside the Dáil, such as the Sinn Féin remnant, the communists and the IRA, also broadly supported the proposition.

The threat of such a government was finally sunk by a judicious and hardly accidental intervention by *Irish Times* editor Bert Smyllie, who way-laid National League TD John Jinks — a Sligo man he knew from his time as Editor of a Sligo paper — by bringing him for a drink, thus ensuring his absence from the Dail, and hence the failure of a vote of No Confidence in the Cosgrave Govern-

ment. The anti-Sinn Féin system continued to 1932 when, despite ever more hysterical warnings of the equivalent of today’s threat of an “Army Council”/“Republican socialist” dictatorship, de Valera formed his first Minority Government with Labour Party acquiescence. The rest, as they say, is history.

Fianna Fáil then was as little, or, depending on your view of what “socialism” is, every bit as “socialist” as Sinn Féin is today, arguably even more so. All “socialisms” are qualified “socialisms”. In preparing the ground to transform the backward, agricultural, militarily-vulnerable, poverty-stricken and famine-prone Russia of the 1920s into the mighty industrialised Soviet Union of the 1930s, that once most orthodox of socialists, Vladimir Lenin, decided to qualify his “socialism”. Henceforth it would be “Marxism-Leninism”, with the emphasis on the latter part. In reaction, west European socialists began their long journey in the wilderness by declaring that their own “socialism” also differed from the accepted definition of the time — which was class war leading to a socialised economy. Henceforth they would be strictly “*democratic socialists*”, with the former bit taking precedence.

Even European Christian Democracy started life in 1945 as “*Christian socialism*”, again with the emphasis on the first bit, a legacy that survives in the name of the powerful Bavarian wing of German Christian Democracy, the “Christian Social Union”. China today has its “*socialism with Chinese characteristics*”. The qualifying adjective in all these cases is what has made these movements powerful political forces to be reckoned with. So why should Sinn Féin not also present us with its own qualified socialism — “Republican socialism” — with the emphasis oscillating between the two parts?

Is Sinn Féin a “*populist*” party, as its critics claim? “*Populism*” is meant to be an unflattering term, applied with distaste to parties which interrupt the established seesaw of alternative dominant parties by appealing to the electorate with a programme they like. The electoral game

involves much extravagant rhetorical posturing, masking what is in fact a quite narrow consensus on what possibilities for “*change*” electoral politics actually allow. Outsiders who threaten to break the mould with popular political programmes are decried as a threat. That is, until it happens, when it quickly becomes the new norm.

Is Sinn Féin a “socialist” party, as it itself claims? Well, it is “Republican socialist”, which the electorate interprets as a willingness to provide Irish solutions to Irish problems, probably much as the Chinese understand “socialism with Chinese characteristics”. Eoin O’Broin has been the star socialist performer for Sinn Féin in this election. He is seen to have a solution to the housing crisis because he wrote a book on it.

A good friend of the current writer, who is very much a serious cerebral socialist (i.e. he refuses to countenance escape-hatch ‘qualifications’ to that term, and rigorously applies the science of *Das Kapital* to economic propositions), read O’Broin’s book and could find nothing very particularly socialist in the solutions proposed: Financial supports to assist young people get on the housing ladder, strengthening the housing “market”, public cost-price house-building on publicly-owned land, rent controls, land taxes, etc. O’Broin, who is nothing if not electorally fine-tuned, also opposes high-rise high-density housing and Property Tax on the “*family home*”, that uniquely Irish version of the piggy bank for accumulating wealth. Any impositions would be solely on those nasty “*developers*”. It is all very much “*socialism with Irish characteristics*”!

But, somewhat depressingly, O’Broin takes inspiration for his proposals, not from the clear precedents for such a policy in the radical housing policies particularly of the de Valera governments of the 1930s-50s, implementing a policy — as near to O’Broin’s as makes no difference — on a grand scale. He does not so much as mention these, falling back for inspiration instead on the British Labour politician and Left hero, Aneurin Bevan. This genuflection to British leftist models is one of the

flaws in Sinn Féin's "*Irish socialism*" — it simply can't accept that the "Free State" did many progressive things in its day. If it is to be "*Irish socialism with British characteristics*", we can predict that Sinn Féin will one day come a cropper.

The business lobby, Ibec, keen to remind people of its own significance just two days before the election, warned of the "*threat*" to Ireland's current extraordinary economic prosperity inherent in Sinn Féin's manifesto. A few days after the election, it came out to calm the horses on the stock exchange, declaring the threat non-existent, having more recently actually read the manifesto.

The Central Bank too tried to influence the early talks on government formation by warning against any return to "*excessive*" public spending. But, overall, following a one-day downward blip, the stock exchange returned to its routine of lucrative money-making and the bond markets continued to perform exceptionally well, with foreign investors wholly unperturbed at the possibility of Sinn Féin entering government in Dublin, as initially seemed a likely scenario. There would in Ireland be no Mitterand moment, when capital flight, spurred by a socialist manifesto, nearly crashed the entire French economy in 1982.

The Irish Times too analysed the suddenly significant Sinn Féin Manifesto, only to find it to be largely compatible with Fianna Fáil's promises of some more effective social democratic interventions than the previous Government's. A few minor compromises and a FF-SF arrangement, with maybe a Green or Soc. Dem. add-on, could provide "*stable government*", the paper concluded.

It soon became obvious that policy was not at all what made SF participation in government 'unacceptable' to either Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael or, as it transpired, Labour, the three long-time revolving components of Dublin government arrangements.

The problem was the threat that this time the North had come South, and this could not be tolerated.

Micheál Martin's insistence on why he couldn't enter government with Sinn Féin was floundering badly with the public, until, Smyllie-like, the ex-RUC/PSNI/M15 operative and current Garda Commissioner, Drew Harris, threw him a lifeline with his statement that the Garda largely concurred with a PSNI/M15 analysis that found that Sinn Féin and "the IRA" were jointly "*overseen*" by a body known as the "*Provisional Army Council*", though

it was admittedly now a largely toothless, unarmed body, fully committed to the "democratic process". As Tommy Gorman of RTÉ put it, it was more an Old Boys' network, but with some veterans retaining a wealth of political and negotiating skills since the days they negotiated with Britain to bring the end of a war and a transition to the precarious arrangements of the Good Friday Agreement. The Sinn Féin leadership, in other words, had an impressive array of "*political advisors*" to call upon.

The southern Establishment's fear of the North encroaching on its territory goes to the fundamentals of the State. All sides agree this to be the case. Sinn Féin has rather ludicrously described its electoral success in the Republic as heralding the end of "Civil War politics". But in fact it was the part of the party — the true Legion of the Rearguard that refused to follow de Valera in his proposal to accept the fact of defeat in the Civil War and to work the Treaty to unravel it, and which for forty years thereafter sought a means to rekindle the national conflict. Sinn Féin is the Civil War party *par excellence*, the party of the "*unfinished business*". Or, at least it was until the Northern minority, abandoned by Dublin in 1970, took its surviving shell and transformed it into the framework for its own resurgence within the British straitjacket. There it now stands, confronting the most important compromise de Valera had had to make.

In his book on the first two decades of Irish foreign policy, Aengus Nolan states that de Valera was convinced that Britain had imposed the peculiar and unstable institutional arrangements it did on the North as a means of ensnaring the Free State and to provide a permanent lever of British influence over its development, so as to minimise the extent to which it would break free of British oversight. And in reality every step taken thereafter by the south to increase its sovereignty was virulently attacked precisely on the basis that it was "*abandoning the North*". Unfortunately, Nolan gives no source for his assertion regarding de Valera's view of the matter, but it certainly rings true and explains the decisive action taken by de Valera to curtail any intrusion of Northern affairs into those of the southern State. It was, as he saw it, a clear choice between achieving full state Sovereignty or returning to a form of Redmondite Hibernianism. He opted to engineer as sovereign a State as he could, prevented attempts to organise Fianna Fáil in the North, and reluctantly left the Northern Catholics to their fate. He believed only a successfully sovereign and more economically robust Irish state

could return to the question at some point in the future.

The arrival of Sinn Féin as the sole party in Ireland (apart from People before Profit) with a 32-county presence and representation has transformed this scenario. Indeed, electorally it is now the largest party in both the Republic and the British Province (which is not a state). Agitation in the southern media reflects a sudden southern concern to try to decouple Sinn Féin south from Sinn Féin north. This must be resisted.

Has the moment to return to resolve de Valera's quandary now come? The current writer does not think so, or at least not yet. The GFA and its arrangements are understandable only as a compromise hacked out on the basis of an implicit acceptance by the IRA of the fact of there being two Irish nations, and agreement to manage an evolution of relations between the two through a continual negotiation of local governmental arrangements between them, on an assumption of Britain continuing for the time being as the State umbrella in which these evolve. This had proved a framework acceptable to both dominant "communities".

There is much to despair of in the continued refusal of Sinn Féin to accept the achievements of de Valera and others in achieving and developing a successful and democratic sovereign Republic — no mean feat in the Europe of the 20th century. O'Broin's deferral to British leftism and Mary Lou's continued deprecation of the Free State and all its works are symptoms of this mental attitude.

On the other hand the party's treatment of the "Border Poll" issue has shown political acumen. Initially declared a Sinn Féin "Red Line", it was notably absent from its election manifesto. The new position was that any government of which it formed part would have to undertake "*preparations*" and "*preparatory measures*" for an eventual such Poll, though without a time limit being set. This is to be welcomed. What this means in practice is reviving a Dublin government pro-active policy of "engagement" with the North, strengthening the North-South Ministerial Council — which successive Irish governments have allowed wither on the vine — and possibly organising a "New Ireland"-type forum to discuss and debate the many facets of shared economic, political and cultural matters between North and South with a theoretical eye towards possible eventual unification. Such an approach would avoid ensnaring the Republic, and can be only for the good.

Irish Labour: a perennial wonder

All of which leads us to one of those perennial questions. How is it that Irish Labour, with a tiny membership, which has experienced occasional waves of support before contracting again to near obliteration, never quite goes away?

1992 was the year of the “*Spring Wave*”, a cry for liberal and structural reform in the aftermath of some state corruption cases; and the election of Mary Robinson as President in 2011 brought the “*Gilmore for Taoiseach*” wave in response to the financial crash and the implosion of the Fianna Fáil party. There was nothing new in these protest movements, as similar waves had occurred before for the party: in 1943 against wartime wage restrictions, and even as far back as 1922, against the Sinn Féin failure to resolve its Treaty split. The occasional Labour wave is a phenomenon of the Republic just as surely as is its rapid subsidence to near obliteration soon after.

Irish politics for decades can be described in terms of periods of division until a consensus on economic policy is achieved, followed by competition between parties representing different variants of social democracy as to how

the resultant growth should best be administered. Deep divisions on economic policy have only occurred rarely, notably in the run-in to the substantial economic transitions of the 1930s, the 1960s and the 1990s. When each of those transitions proved successful, the new system was adopted by all as the new consensus. The 2020 election was notable for its almost total consensus on the economic model powering away in the background. None of the ostensibly more “socialist” parties, including Sinn Féin, advocated nationalisation of industries or even particularly radical changes to the existing corporate tax model. All support continued membership of the Lisbon Treaty-defined liberal-market EU, though some claim to want to “reform” it. On economics, it was an election about how to spend the surplus, with even the priority areas for this not a matter of dispute.

Nevertheless, Labour, the redistributive party *par excellence*, in theory at least, almost disappeared again, swamped by the social democratic offerings of others. Yet, the operative word here is “almost”.

While, since the 1930s, all parties have

accepted the principle of the welfare state, and all have participated in significant expansions of it, Labour, the second oldest party after Arthur Griffith’s Sinn Féin, was the force which, through its Trade Union and British Labour connections, brought the expansion of welfare and state social provision to the fore of politics ever since 1912. Other parties adopted aspects of Labour’s agenda piecemeal, always in response to clear voter insistence on it.

But the expansion of these other parties’ welfarist promises was always reactive, while Labour’s was fundamental and principled. In the recent election, Sinn Féin was seen as the most realistic party in this regard, and benefitted accordingly, much as Fianna Fáil had done after 1926. Sinn Féin is reminiscent of that early Fianna Fáil and, as we have seen, is hardly credible on the “socialist” issue.

The Irish electorate has hedged its bets with Sinn Féin, ensuring that something of a Labour Party—supplemented for variety’s sake with a bit of “Purple Labour” (Soc. Dems.)—is present in the mix. If the Irish Labour Party didn’t exist, it would probably have to be invented. Just to be sure, to be sure . . .

On Representation—And Misrepresentation

—Of The People And Of The Facts

In 1906 John Redmond’s party secured 82 Parliamentary seats. Only 5 of them had been contested., and 77 of them had been uncontested. More votes in Ireland were given to Unionists than to Redmond’s Party. Unionists were not short of funds nor rich friends in comparison to Redmond’s Party. Some questions might be asked:-

Why did the Unionists not contest all, or even a majority of all Irish seats?

Why didn’t Unionists at the time shout

—“*We wuz robbed?*”

Why don’t anti-Nationalist commentators today, for instance Professor Richard English and Eoghan Harris, question the right of the 82 Redmondites to claim a majority of seats with a minority of votes?

Readers might infer from their replies or failure to reply the validity of their objections to Sinn Féin’s claim for an Irish National Mandate in 1918.

In the United Kingdom as a whole the Liberals in 1906, under the leadership of Henry Campbell -Bannerman, won a landslide and the Tory Prime Minister Arthur Balfour (the Bloody Balfour of Mitchelstown infamy), lost his seat.

But he didn’t lose his composure. He addressed his supporters, saying that, in office or out, his party should continue to direct “the affairs of this Great Empire.” He was not deluded, for the previous year he had established the Committee of Imperial Defence and the Entente Cordiale with France to plan the destruction of Germany. The

incoming Prime Minister Campbell

Bannerman knew nothing of the Committee of Imperial Defence, though Liberal Imperialists such as Herbert Asquith and Sir Edward Grey who were to initiate the Great War were members of it.

Balfour and the British ruling classes cared nothing for the opinions of the peoples of the Empire, nor even for the peoples of the United Kingdom. In 1906 the House of Lords could block any Bill passed by the Commons except a Money Bill.

David Lloyd George described the Lords as “Mr Balfour’s Poodle” before he himself became a Great Warlord.

Donal Kennedy

Exodus To Connacht

“... If they call you “Papishes”
accept it gladly for a title.
Patience, for the High King’s sake.
Deo Gratias, good the name!

God Who art generous. O Prince of Blessings,
behold the Gael, stripped of authority.
Now as we journey Westward into Connacht
old friends we’ll leave behind us in their grief.”

Daibhí O Bruadair (c. 1625-1698)

An Duanaire 1600-1900

Poems of the Dispossessed. Edited by Seán O Tuama

with verse translations by Thomas Kinsella.

The Dolmen Press. Portlaoise, Ireland. 1981.

“We have everything to fear from the dispossessed.”

Elizabeth Bowen. *Bowen’s Court.* 1942.

Elizabeth Bowen

‘*Elizabeth Bowen: A Literary Life*’ by Patricia Laurence (Palgrave Macmillan. 2019) is the latest book about Bowen and it is written by an American scholar from the City College of the City University of New York, founded in 1847 and the oldest of colleges: indeed it is considered “a flagship” one at that. Laurence self-describes as a “*Writer, Professor, and Critic*”, and the blurb for her book is one that intends to tick all the boxes in a forthright and ambitious manner. She intends this book to:

“reinvent Bowen as a public intellectual, propagandist, spy, cultural ambassador, journalist and essayist as well as a writer of fiction....”

This is a tall order and, during my review of this book, we’ll see how she stands up her claims. The book was reviewed in ‘*The Irish Times*’ by Ian d’Alton on the 21st December 2019. The heading was:

“A deep dive into both writer and character: Patricia Laurence’s rich, kaleidoscopic book interweaves Bowen’s literary and intellectual life with her personal one”.

But the huge photo above the review is of Bowen in her field outside Bowen’s Court with a horse and cart is captioned thus:

“Elizabeth Bowen at Bowen’s Court, her Co. Cork ancestral home in 1962.”

The paper did exactly the same thing in 24th December 2016 when ‘*The Weight of a World of Feeling: Reviews and Essays by Elizabeth Bowen*’, edited by Alan Hepburn was reviewed by Eibhear Walshe. I wrote a letter to the paper, which remained unacknowledged, pointing out their obvious mistake—Bowen had sold her house in 1959 and it had been demolished in 1960 so the picture couldn’t be dated 1962. But no correction was ever printed and now they do exactly the same again. And yet there in the text of both reviews is the date of sale and demolition of Bowen’s Court!

Ian d’Alton’s review had to be taken in context with his latest book: *Protestant And Irish: The minority’s search for place in independent Ireland, A collection of exploratory essays* edited by Ian d’Alton and Ida Milne. Cork University Press, 2019. His chapter is titled: ‘*No Country? Protestant ‘Belongings’ in Independent Ireland, 1922-49*’.

His online CV very much indicates his priorities stating he is a

“historian, primarily of southern Irish Protestantism with some time spent in universities like Liverpool, Cambridge and Trinity College, Dublin where he is now a ‘Visiting Research Fellow’ at the Centre for Contemporary Irish history. Since 2017, he has been a member of the Church of Ireland Historical Centenaries Working Group.”

He also was a—

“senior Irish public servant working in the Department of Finance and latterly headed up from 2007-2012 the State owned company Housing Finance Agency plc.”

d’Alton begins his review by comparing Hermione Lee’s biography and that of Patricia Laurence, noting how the former called out: “*the Bowen unwillingness to face up to reality*” but Laurence “*refreshingly interprets Bowen’s life as a rule-maker and a risk-taker in both love and letters*”. d’Alton cites Charles Ritchie’s lover’s gaze thus:

“The contrast between her face and body seems symbolic... It is a powerful, mature rather handsome face. But the body is that of a young woman ... Naked she becomes poetic, ruthless and young.”

This appraisal is at the beginning of their affair, when Bowen was forty-two and he was a comparatively young diplomat of thirty-five starting out his career in the Canadian High Commission in London. Those seven years between them would tell as their love affair went on and he became the rotter who terribly crippled her life.

d’Alton repeats, as does Laurence, that old *canard* about the American young poet and lesbian, May Sarton, who stayed once in Bowen’s Court as having had a “*Saffhic affair*” (d’Alton capitalises the “S”) with Bowen—the latter accepted Sarton’s courting ritual and praise of her genius, but there were no physical fondlings. d’Alton goes through the usual pacing of Bowen’s life being particularly prone to the usual adjectives.

“Charming ...occasionally snobbish, in later years she came rather to like the American glitz and easy manners. However, she dropped people ruthlessly, and her behaviour could be casual, unpredictable and somewhat disconcerting....”

One feels d’Alton is genuinely taken aback at her sexual shenanigans as he quotes from Victoria Glendinning’s biography published in 1977—

“less than five years after her death. It was a necessarily reticent work with gaps and silences about Elizabeth’s love life, describing her as a ‘respector of the conventions (but) ... not a conventional person’.”

Gasps d’Alton:

“That’s putting it mildly. Laurence lifts the lid in a chapter specifically devoted to ‘Loves and Lovers’, and here we have the first comprehensive account of her romantic entanglements, male and female,

placing these within the louche and loose morals and deliciously dangerous liaisons of 1930's Oxford and London."

It seems that d'Alton cannot bring himself to see these goings on continuing in a Co. Cork Protestant big house, which they most certainly did and right up to Bowen's Court demise and beyond to the end of her life.

As d'Alton goes on, one can see how he barely camouflages his moral indignation, writing:

"Bowen was married to a" (English) "decorated war hero, Alan Cameron, whose influences on her psyche has been downplayed by the Bowen academy... Cameron provided a stability that had not been her lot in a fractured and dislocated childhood and she set great store by this. Bowen was excessively fortunate that Cameron seemingly tolerated her dalliances and affairs, and she took full advantage of that. All he wanted was for her to come home. Which she always did."

But d'Alton here in this summing up is quite wrong. All Bowen's biographers acknowledge Alan Cameron's tremendous influence on her. As did her friends and family—especially the latter, some of whom were quite critical of the way Bowen behaved towards her husband. Captain Alan Cameron was a recipient of the Military Cross and was gassed in the trenches of the First World War. But he had been educated in Radley and Oxford and in 1921 he had been made Assistant Secretary for Education for Northamptonshire and they were able to move into a tiny house there after their marriage.

Cameron, who was homosexual, taught Elizabeth Bowen to dress and he gave her what we'd call today a "make-over". She was not as tall as was made out by some of her biographers, but she had big hands and feet and so out went the awful home made attempts at dress-making (her wedding dress drew criticism from her aunts who saw how crooked her hem was—so typically 'Bitha' as they chastised her), and now she was delighted to be restyled by her husband. He decided to get her shoes especially made in London by the top shoemakers with a British Royal Warrant, 'Lobb Ltd', who were the bespoke shoe-makers on St. James's Street: they were to serve her for the rest of her life. According to Patricia Craig, "*Belfast born and bred*" (Roy Foster's phrase in a rebuke of Aubane), whose biography was written in 1986 and published by Penguin, London:

"Under the influence of her husband she took to wearing better clothes, or at least clothes more in keeping with her

strong-boned Anglo-Irish appearance, tailored suits and dresses and well-made shoes..."

Thus shod and clothed, she attracted the sexual attentions of both men and women but she remained firmly heterosexual. Hermione Lee in her Virago biography simply titled '*Elizabeth Bowen*' (1999, London) got quite cross with writers and academics who either wanted to 'queer' or 'politicise' the writer. The effects of such scholarship according to the formidably scholarly Lee, was "to flatten out Bowen the writer".

Today this type of conduct is called 'appropriation' and, in my opinion, there is no better word to describe what happened and is continuing to happen to Bowen—both the writer and the person. This also applies to what d'Alton slyly refers to her "identity". He praises Laurence's analysis writing:

"Laurence's valuable contribution is to discuss Bowen's identity (was she English or Irish or even "British"?), within a more transnational perspective." (Brexit has a lot to answer for—JH).

d'Alton insists on Bowen's "multiple allegiances", stating that: "they were not out of kilter with many Southern Protestants at this time."

Then d'Alton goes on in a way similar to Robert Fisk in his book '*A Time of War*' (1983) to now carefully qualify everything he writes next about Bowen.

"If her contribution was to 'spy' for the British Ministry of Information, it was little different in kind to that of the many from Ireland who volunteered to fight fascism by joining the British military. Neither could be held to imply that they were 'anti-Irish' (Italics—JH)."

Here I recall John Le Carré's brilliant book '*Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*'. Surely d'Alton is not comparing the work of a soldier with that of a spy? What would the RAF pilot, Brian Inglis—who famously stated that, if Britain invaded Ireland, he would be the first back to defend the latter, his "country"—make of that?

Let us be very clear that Elizabeth Bowen had no time for "multiple allegiances". When it became clear that Britain was going to war with Germany, she immediately made herself available to the British to do whatever they asked. As it was, and Laurence to her great credit makes absolutely clear, she was what was they (Ministry of Information initially) wanted and she was sent over to Dublin, where a

flat was made available to her for her spying work. It just demeans her importance to call her very valuable work "activities" or spying with quotation marks. She was very proud of what she accomplished and was to state at the end of World War Two that: "*I had a good war*", as had Louis MacNeice—(but behind the desk at the BBC!); and as did Bowen's other great friend and MI6 operative/spy Graham Greene, who through his constant travel put himself in the way of some danger.

d'Alton ends his review with an appalling piece of psycho-babble about Bowen's Court being her "child" while: "*The book Bowen's Court was its offspring—a grandchild to Bowen's imagination*". In the end, it took an American scholar, Heather Bryant Jordan, to foreground Bowen's spying in her magisterial book: '*How Will the Heart Endure: Elizabeth Bowen and the Landscape of War*' (Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, USA, 1992).

I wonder if d'Alton is aware of that book, where his "people" were trashed by Bowen in a letter to her London handlers: The worst defeatism, on behalf of Britain, "that she met in Ireland and tried to counter... has been among the Protestant Anglo-Irish" and she despaired of her fellow Protestant students of Trinity College, Dublin. Bryant Jordan continued with the observation that Bowen was able to "maintain a certain personal immunity" that—

"allowed her to shape her own identity in asserting her differences from the predominantly Catholic country of her birth. With more than a hint of frustration the Protestant writer wrote to London, 'one reason why one cannot deal with Ireland is that she has this vast super-rational element'..."

Bryant Jordan adds:

"Her suspicion of Catholicism runs as an undercurrent throughout the report... Bowen related in this November, 1940, missive to the ministry that she was not convinced of the correctness of her interpretation of England's situation. Since she had been there" (Ireland) "she had 'emphasized'... (I hope rightly) that England has no wish that Eire should enter the war".

Her days in Dublin only served to confirm her insecurity about her tenuous personal, racial, and national position. She confessed to dubiety concerning the British Government's expectations of her for this job that paid about one hundred pounds a year. Here, Bryant Jordan herself conflates Bowen's insecurity as a new spy and her

doubts as to whether she is getting things right with her ideas of nationality.

In all her writings, Bowen was again and again at pains to state plainly that her “race” (her own word—JH) was the Anglo-Irish, whatever their faults, and she did acknowledge that they did have many.

Laurence writes in Chapter 7, headed ‘Art and intelligence’, where she breaks down sections into various headings. The first is ‘Art and Politics.’ It begins with this sentence:

“HG. Wells famously declared, ‘I’ll be damned if I lend myself to any government propaganda.’

“Bowen did... She lent herself as a writer to what she was enlisted to do, to spy on neutral Ireland at a time of great difficulty and importance and to write reports for the British Ministry of Information. She was also a wartime writer; later, a journalist covering peace conferences and a lecturer for the British Council. She was a cultural ambassador, a propagandist contributing to a morale-boosting film script and postwar situation reports; a public intellectual participating in panels on BBC’s Third Programme; and a member of the British Royal Commission on Capital Punishment... She challenged Well’s assertion that any writer of repute who collaborated with the state failed ‘to grasp his real significance in the world’.”

Bowen defensively stated that “‘she did not lose her independence’, or get into ‘low company’, or fall short of ‘the essential aristocracy of...her profession’ as a writer as Wells had warned.”

Laurence’s next heading is: ‘Pen Portrait of a Nation: Reports from Eire 1940-42’ (the blockings are by Patricia Laurence—JH), which I will deal with in a later article. The next blocked heading is: ‘Cultural Fallout.’

On the opposite page are two facsimiles of ‘A North Cork Anthology’ by Jack Lane and Brendan Clifford (Aubane Historical Society, Aubane, Millstreet, Co. Cork). And then below that is the Contents page, where one reads ‘Elizabeth Dorothea Cole Bowen, CBE’ (Commander of the British Empire) and there is a line through her name. Laurence refers to this as

“Fig.7.2 North Cork Anthology, erasure of Bowen’s name, Table of Contents Rights and Courtesy, Jack Lane, Aubane Historical Society, Ireland.”

Laurence noted:

“In 1993, Frank” (sic) “Clifford and Jack Lane of the Aubane Historical Society of County Cork were the first to target Bowen’s spying activities after Robert

Fisk’s 1979 revelations. The same exigency that drives Derrida to write things under erasure (sous rature)—to write a word and then cross it out but then print the word and the deletion—motivated Clifford and Lane in their treatment of Bowen in *The North Cork Anthology*.” (Italics—Patricia Laurence.) Though they included a few passages from ‘The Last September in the anthology, a black line is drawn through her name in the table of contents to mark her exclusion (Fig.7.2).

“At the same time that she and her writing are present, she is denied status as a North Cork resident (though born in Cork)” (Laurence is wrong—Bowen was born in 15 Herbert Place, Dublin—JH) “or even an Irish author, asserting that her themes and characters were drawn from English culture. The absent “trace” of Bowen’s past as an English spy in Ireland is present in their reading though the gesture is now discredited. How do we incorporate local complexity into the transnational and rethink and breathe new life into this debate?”

“The Dublin media responded with outrage to Lane and Clifford’s charges, and Fisk revealed that demonstrations surfaced in the 1999 centenary celebration of her birth at University College, Cork, where Clifford and Lane distributed some of her espionage reports in a pamphlet, ‘Notes on Eire: Reports to Winston Churchill, 1940-1942; more reports followed in 2009.”

That conference was covered extensively by the *Irish Political Review* at the time so the account is out there for all to see and it has never been challenged.

I don’t know where Robert Fisk stated that such demonstrations occurred, but I certainly attended the conference and saw no evidence of any demonstrations—though I am quite sure some of the Irish academics/journalists present would have loved if such demonstrations had taken place. But *cowards* at heart—they were not the ones up for such a robust response. No—the responses have been of another nature entirely—censorship: and in my next article I will reveal those who kept trying to silence Aubane and, if that was not successful, then a process of revilement was initiated by that most urbane of academics—Roy Foster—who is promoted by Patricia Laurence to being “a Professor of Irish Literature living in England”. We have always maintained that Foster is to fiction what the late great Brendan Bradshaw was to history, so it is nice to see our theory validated by Patricia Laurence.

Laurence goes on to state that the:

“contretemps persisted, and in 2007 a debate about Bowen’s wartime activities

surfaced again in the *Irish Examiner* as English and Irish writers and politicians took sides. Declan Kiberd” (Professor) “in a radio broadcast charged Lane and Clifford with being ‘awful Neanderthals’ for which he later apologised...”

Somewhere in our archives there is a tape of that programme, but it was also written up in the pamphlet ‘Envoi, Taking Leave of Roy Foster: reviews of his made up ‘Irish Story’ by Brendan Clifford and Julianne Herlihy (Aubane Historical Society, 2006). The programme was RTE Radio 1’s ‘Off the Shelf’, and was presented by Andy O’Mahony. The book that was being reviewed was ‘The Irish Story’ by Roy Foster. The two reviewers were not historians; they were the journalist/critic, John Boland of ‘The Irish Times’, and Declan Kiberd, Professor of Anglo-Irish Literature and Drama at University College, Dublin.

Julianne Herlihy. ©

To be continued.

A ‘Vulture Fund’ Problem!

Henderson Park, a British property company, has objected to a tax bill of up to €65 million in stamp duty and capital gains tax on the purchase of an Irish company, Green Reit. The deal was struck before the October Budget.

The dispute seems to be over *retrospection*. Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe gave a tax incentive; the company acted on that basis; and then the tax was withdrawn. The company says this is unconstitutional. It’s a bit of a grey area. The investment was made before the tax change, but the company’s argument is that it was already committed by then.

But overall this is what has happened over the last nine years of FG-led government.

Following the financial crisis FG felt (foolishly) that it needed to revive the property market. It also considered that the preponderance of part-time landlords with only one or two properties was also a bad thing. So it encouraged corporate investment in property, including residential property. This attracted foreign investment (“vulture funds”).

This, of course, raised property prices, with disastrous consequence for FG’s own constituency (people trying to get on the property ladder). It seems that FG has realised its mistake and is trying to withdraw these tax incentives.

John Martin

Home And Away . . .

The British State, in the form of BBC Northern Ireland, launched a propaganda about a comment made many years ago by Sinn Féin's Conor Murphy, who is now Finance Minister in the restored Stormont sub-government, about an incident that happened a dozen years ago, and Mary Lou McDonald, leader of Sinn Féin in another state, was held accountable for it. Day after day, during the four days before the Election, the matter was given pride of place in Radio Ulster's premier programme, *The Nolan Show*.

The incident was the killing of Paul Quinn in a private quarrel involving cross-Border economic activity. Just what the quarrel was about has never been brought to light. Because this happened in the South, it was the responsibility of the Dublin authorities to investigate the killing but they brought no charges against anybody over it. Conor Murphy said he had investigated the matter for the IRA and found that the IRA was not involved. He gave the opinion that it happened in a dispute involving criminal gangs.

And now, so many years later, it is that comment which was given propaganda treatment by the BBC, and was taken up by the Southern media.

Quinn's mother insists that her son was not a criminal. She has been insisting on that for many years, but the BBC took no interest in her complaint until a political use was found for it in the Southern election.

Quinn was not a convicted criminal. Murphy apologised for the form of his comment, but he refused Mrs. Quinn's demand that he should say that her son was not a criminal.

In Northern Ireland the law is everything on some occasions and is nothing at all on other occasions. If Paul Quinn was not convicted of a crime, he could not have been involved with a smuggling gang. On the other hand, Gerry Adams was charged with being a member of the IRA, tried, and found Not Guilty—but from the BBC viewpoint, which is also that of the Dublin Establishment that is now quaking because Sinn Féin got the highest number of first preference votes in the February Election, he is a criminal and all right-thinking people know it.

Which reminds us of an enlightening interview with Adams on RTE Radio

by Keelin Shanley, who died during the Election campaign. She put it to him that important people were accusing him of being Chief of Staff of the IRA, so why didn't he take action to clear his name? If she was accused of being Chief of Staff of the IRA she would sue the accuser for libel. Adams explained that what applied in her case did not apply in his. To win a libel action you had to show that you were being defamed in the eyes of your peers. It might be that the accusation would destroy her reputation in her milieu, but his reputation could only be enhanced amongst his generation in the North by the suggestion that he was commander of the IRA. In other words, it is not libellous to give somebody more credit that is his due.

The facts of life in the nationalist community in the North and the Establishment milieu in Dublin are utterly different.

The official position of the Dublin Establishment for many years was that Northern nationalists, subjected to clever Sinn Féin propaganda, did not realise that when they voted for Sinn Féin they were voting for the IRA. So Garret FitzGerald made a point of warning them before every election that a vote for Sinn Féin would be taken to be a vote for the IRA. And after every warning by FitzGerald the Sinn Féin vote increased.

In the view of Northern nationalists there was no basic incompatibility between Sinn Féin and the SDLP. Each had a part to play. Dublin efforts to establish incompatibility were countered by an increased vote for Sinn Féin. When the SDLP fell into the hands of a leader who took the Dublin view in earnest, Seamus Mallon, the voters brushed it aside.

The official media discredited itself in voters' eyes in the North away back in the early 1970s. And now, for the first time, this has happened in the South.

The Paul Quinn scandal fell flat. Stimulated by BBC propaganda there were Unionist demands that Conor Murphy should resign. But the Government, having just managed to patch the devolved system together again, wasn't having any of that. And the BBC, accused of blatantly manipulating the Quinn issue against Sinn Féin in another state, went into self-defence mode. Stephen Nolan brought Mrs. Quinn on his programme and asked if it was true that clever and influential people had manipulated her into raising the

issue of her son for election purposes in the South. Of course not, she replied. She had been trying to raise public interest in the matter for ten years. Which was entirely true. And it was the manipulators who were asking her if she had been manipulated. And, after the Election, Nolan tried to put the matter to rest with one of his long, self-righteous monologues.

But the Quinn propaganda did have an influence on the Southern Sinn Féin leadership. It made Mary Lou uneasy. It is clear that she wanted Conor Murphy to say more than he was willing to say, or than was warranted by the circumstances.

Northern Sinn Féin is a war-party. Its constituents are a community which sustained a long war of a kind unknown in Ireland since the 17th century—a much more intense war, placing much greater strain on the populace than the War of Independence. And the change brought about by maintaining the war for so long and conducting it to a negotiated settlement was much more than a mere change in political arrangements.

Southern Sinn Féin, though it was created from the North, has operated in a society that was bewildered by the Northern War and could not be at ease with it. And the issues on which it gathered popular support in the South had little to do with the Northern situation.

Bertie Ahern, in an RTE comment, observed that the 26 Counties has now become a modern European state in which Coalition government becomes the norm and the Government is not chosen by the electorate but is constructed by haggling within the assembly of political fragments returned by the electorate.

It has also become European in the sense that it is now a state without a history. That was inevitable in a Europe that was twice reduced to a shambles by Total Wars launched by Britain. The European nations got themselves together into a degree of alliance after the last Total War, but it is too fragile to discuss where they came from, the political developments of the 1920s and 1930s and the first half of the 1940s.

Europe now lives in a kind of official retreat from the world, meditating on an official ideology of beautiful sentiments.

In olden times—in the era of pre-history: let us say before 1990—there was a nursery rhyme that went:

“What are little girls made of?
Sugar and spice and all things nice,
That's what little girls are made of!”

That rhyme is now out of order, for course, since little girls have been constructed into sex objects, but, suitably adjusted, the rhyme expresses the modern European ideal of the world.

The war launched by the British Empire in August 1914 was described by Roger Casement as *The Crime Against Europe* and by James Connolly as *The War Upon The German Nation*. It was not entirely successful at that point. It needed a second Total War in 1939-45 to finish the job.

The culminating event of the second of these was the terror bombing of German cities. In February 1945 the city of Dresden was fire-bombed in an act of destruction of no military value. The historian Andrew Roberts, who likes to blurt out the truth, explained in a popular radio programme about forty years later that the purpose of that great act of sheer destruction of cities was to burn into the mind of Germany the moral maxim that it must never again act contrary to British wishes.

The Germans did not get the message immediately. The post-War generation of politicians, which had experienced British conduct towards Europe in the 1920s and 1930s, took part with Italian and French politicians, in forming what became the European Union. Their purpose was anti-British. They saw Britain as it was—which, in present-day usage, means that they were Anglophobes. They were determined to cut Britain out of European affairs: to end British balance-of-power manipulation of European conflicts.

Britain expected those Christian Democratic moves towards European unity to get nowhere. When that European project began to succeed Britain applied to join. Its application was rejected. De Gaulle said bluntly that British interests were hostile to European well-being.

The pre-War generation of post-War European statesmen passed away. Their knowledge of Britain from direct experience was not effectively communicated to the post-War generation. When Britain again applied for membership sixteen years later, it was admitted. It set about eroding the Treaty of Rome project from within. Random expansion proved to be the most successful method of doing this.

The European project was launched by three big states and three small ones which were familiar with one another and had a fair degree of common culture and a sense of themselves as European. There are now more than four times as many states in the EU as signatories of the Treaty of Rome, and many of the new members had

no share in the experience that led to the formation of the European Steel and Coal Community in which it all began.

Britain's 2nd Total War was a watershed event for most of the EU nations. Few of them have had continuous existence for a century. Some of them may be close territorially to what they were a century ago, but only a few have had continuous existence as a regime since 1939. The British strategy after declaring war in September 1939, losing in France in June 1940, and bringing its army home, was to demonise the French democracy for making a settlement when its declaration of war on Germany led to defeat and occupation, and to spread the War everywhere by means of the Royal Navy, which still ruled the waves.

The strategy of spreading the war maintained instability in Europe and led to the German/Russian war, in which a number of EU countries fought on the side of the Germans. That poses some very delicate problems for would-be EU historians.

Poland proposes as a basic historical assumption that Russia started the World War by making an agreement with Germany to invade Poland and share it out between them, with the implication that Russia should have come to the defence of Poland against Germany. It takes little investigation to discover that Poland refused to make an agreement with Russia in 1939, and imagined itself marching on Berlin. And the Russian intervention in Poland came a fortnight after the start of the German/Polish War, after the Polish State had collapsed: and the part of the Polish state occupied by Russia was an area gained by Poland when it defeated Russia in the War of 1920.

Britain's only realistic prospect, after June 1940, of not losing the war it declared on Germany in 1939—or of not having to negotiate a settlement with Germany, which in the British view would have been a defeat: Germany had no aim of conquering Britain—its only hope, lay in bringing about a German/Russian War. It succeeded. The British propaganda then depicted the German state as a force of pure Evil, intent on conquering the world—just as in 1914. It was the enemy of all civilisation—including Bolshevism! Just how it had arisen out of disarmament in 1932 to world conquering seven years later was not explained.

If we are to take the British propaganda of 1941-44 in earnest, the conclusion must follow that Stalin saved Europe. But a book published some years ago, *Stalin In Europe*, somehow fails to notice that fact.

Europe cannot face its history, and so it has been in mental thrall to Britain, and it is not certain that Brexit will break the spell.

The British party dispute over Brexit has been taken as evidence that there is a substantial European element in British life. There isn't. There is only party-politics. What one part proposes, the other must oppose whether it means it or not. The critical point for Britain in the EU was the creation of the Euro. Tony Blair, in Messianic mode, wanted to put Britain into it. Gordon Brown, representing actual Labour, kept Britain out. And, now that it is out, Britain will work at opening up balance-of-power possibilities again.

Ireland is one of the few European states not subjected to regime changes in the 1939 Total War and its consequences. The others that spring to mind are Spain and Portugal. But the history of British politics is not an immediate affair for them as it is for Ireland, which had to assert itself against Britain in order to remain out of its war. But Ireland has been behaving as if it was one of the European states that had been put through the mill and was timidly emerging from an unthinkable history.

Why is that? It's because of the North.

The Dublin Establishment asserted that the Ulster Protestant community was part of a general Irish nation, but it did not act as if it believed what it said. The organised intellectuals of the state, the Universities, took no interest in the 300-year history of Protestant Ulster, and never devised a way of appealing to the Irish national instinct which official dogma said was present in them. And, if what was meant by the assertion that the Ulster Protestants were part of the nation was that they were subject to it regardless of whether they were part of it in any other sense, that was never actually said.

The Constitution adopted in 1937 denied the legitimacy of British Northern Ireland, and asserted the *de jure* sovereignty of the 26 County state over the Six Counties. When the substantial nationalist minority in the North undertook to challenge illegitimate British rule in arms, Dublin condemned its actions as criminal while continuing to assert its own right of sovereignty, and to deny legitimacy to the British regime throughout the 28 years of the war, until the IRA—the Illegal Organisation that was ever-present in Irish political life, as a necessary component, since the 'Treaty'—gave permission in 1998 for the sovereignty claim to be dropped.

Because it was morally incapable of acknowledging basic facts of life in the North, the Dublin Establishment was induced to accept responsibility for bringing about the war in the North, by the way it had taught history, so it set about destroying its history. But 'revisionism' had no actual effect on undermining the war in the North, which was caused by the way Britain chose to govern it, and which had nothing like it anywhere else in the world.

It is now taken aback by the swing towards Sinn Féin in the election, which threatens to destroy the party-system which emerged from the Civil War and was a source of stability because it was internally generated.

Sinn Féin in the South does not have the quality of the Northern party. It is in many ways an import: It's business should be to take the place of Fianna Fáil, and be what Fianna Fáil was for a couple of generations after it emerged from Sinn Féin in the mid-1920s. Michael Martin has made that possible. The only question is whether Sinn Féin's dismissive attitude to the State made by Fianna Fáil will allow it to take over from Fianna Fáil.

PS

The *Irish Times* took up the Quinn affair editorially on February 19th. It says in effect that Sinn Féin is unfit for office, North or South, because it does not say exactly what Quinn's mother wants said—which in substance is that he was not involved in smuggling. It says "despite its electoral success on both sides of the Border, political opponents will continue to raise legitimate questions about its commitment to democratic norms".

Democracy is a particular way of governing a state. It cannot be done without elections or against elections. According to the British prototype, it consists of the adult population voting for a party to govern the state. The Treaty State imposed by Britain against the Republic, and eagerly supported by the *Irish Times*, tried in the mid-twenties to subordinate voting to "democratic norms", and was apparently willing to exclude elected representatives of the majority from the Dáil by use of the Treaty Oath. This was a significant factor in bringing about the long ascendancy of the Anti-Treaty Party. We doubt that a precise formulation about Paul Quinn will be adequate as a replacement for the Treaty Oath. But there are reasons of an entirely different kind against Mary Lou being made by the Taoiseach.

History As A Riddle

"If the two main parties acknowledged that there is no policy difference between them, they could form a coalition and agree to rotate the office of the taoiseach," writes Ryle Dwyer, *Irish Examiner*, (31/1/2020).

This is a regular theme these days by Mr. Dwyer and other pop historians - the non policy differences between the two parties on policies. But he goes one further to claim that there was no real difference between them and their antecedents to begin with nearly 100 years ago. Even those who accept there is not much policy differences nowadays could hardly deny that a difference did exist that entailed a serious military conflict and a different attitude towards the relationship with Britain that has lasted nearly 100 years. Why did this happen?

According to Dwyer: *"This revolved around the Treaty oath, which had been worded by Collins with IRB backing. Even though the Treaty did not meet his own full aspirations, or those of the Irish people, Collins contended that the agreement provided the freedom to achieve their aims without having to resort to further warfare. After negotiating with the British, he was convinced they would fight, even though it was not worth fighting about, especially when he believed that the full Irish goals could, in time, be achieved by peaceful means. The small difference between Collins and de Valera was allowed to distort Irish politics, and led to the Civil War, the greatest Irish tragedy of the 20th century. It poisoned Irish politics for much of the rest of the century."* (Emphasis added). 31/1/2020.

Collins could get independence by peaceful means even though the British would fight it? Does Mr Ryle go in for riddles? Or does he read what he writes and if so does he understand what he writes? I begin to doubt it. If he does both then there is some serious idiocy abroad, either on his part today or on the part of Collins and de Valera a century ago. It's worse than the type of stuff found in the "*Horrible History*" series—it is idiotic history. Maybe Ryle Dwyer could create a whole new historical genre. He could move Irish history writing beyond revisionism into another realm.

What was this 'small difference'? Dw-

yer does not spell it out. It is so obvious it is almost banal but Mr. Dwyer does not state it because he seems unaware of it. It was the choice between succumbing under a threat of renewed war to the destruction of the existing State or committing to the defence of it, i.e., the existing legitimate State that was voted for overwhelming by the people and who voted for it again and again and fought to defend it for three years. This is hardly a "small difference" while words retain any meaning.

In the modern age there is no greater collective political achievement than the establishment and maintenance of an independent state. It is the *leitmotif* of world politics today. By contrast all internal political policies of a state are interchangeable between parties as the issues are civil, conventional, local, just looking after the shop. That is what the party differences in Ireland have become as was shown so graphically in the recent elections.

The conflict between Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil was truly national—the state's relationship with other states, primarily Britain for obvious reasons. The conflict between the parties reflected therefore the basic fact of nation's basic international political life. It reflected the *raison d'être* of the state itself. The differences and conflicts between states big or small is the very stuff of all serious political life.

The revisionist onslaught of the last half century has made that essential fact almost a non issue in Ireland. It has become 'mature' to be nothing in particular in the world except what others wish to make you. That cannot last except for those who themselves wish to be what others make them.

Jack Lane

A correspondence with Professor Emerita Patricia Laurence, City College of New York

Professor Laurence published a new biography of Elizabeth Bowen last December, "*Elizabeth Bowen – a literary life*." I had been in contact with Professor Laurence when she asked for permission to use Aubane's publications on Bowen and to supply her with an up to date copy of our publication of her reports to the Ministry of Information.

Jan 24, 2020

Dear Patricia,

I am glad to see your book on Elizabeth Bowen has been published. I have ordered a copy via Amazon.

All the best, Jack Lane

02/02/2020

Dear Jack,

Thanks for your note and ordering the Bowen biography: you'll find some discussion and illustration of *The North Cork Anthology* that represents a strand of thinking on Bowen. In the book, however, you'll find that I try to liberate Bowen from just English and Irish categories of thinking and debate and place her in an international context. I include in her life story her relationships to people and places in different countries. Good friends, Isaiah Berlin, Russian emigre; William Plomer, South African radical; Charles Ritchie, Canadian ambassador; Eudora Welty, American; Virginia Woolf and Rosamond Lehmann, English; Sean O'Faolain, Irish; and Krista Woolf, German spy for Stasi--to name a few. And I highlight also her love of Paris and Rome, in addition to London and Cork. I appreciate your sending the published reports and though I tried to find more in the National Archives in Kew, no luck. Just your editions, and one, perhaps from Walshe's book. Some according to Fisk destroyed in the blitz and various conflagrations in Ireland. I guess....

What do you think? Also, I got a good review in *The Irish Times* in December, and hope this augurs well for the book as it may be received differently in Ireland and England.

Best, Pat Laurence

3/2/2020

Dear Patricia,

Thank you for your email. I have not yet received the book from Amazon.

I am rather surprised by Mr. Fisk's suggestion that some of her reports may have been destroyed by "*various conflagrations in Ireland*." There is no evidence whatever for such a claim - as far as I am aware. No evidence has come to light that any of Bowen's reports were seen by, or reported to, the Irish Government or indeed seen by anybody else in Ireland. They were secret, as they make clear, and meant for very few eyes in Whitehall as befitting the patriotic work she was doing.

Otherwise, as they included reports, *inter alia*, about a member of the Irish Government's own parliamentary party and many other leading figures in Ireland they could not possibly have gone unnoticed. And if it was the case that they were noticed it would have negated her work and she was too serious a person to allow such a thing to happen.

It is belittling her to suggest otherwise.

In any case, it seems a bit comical that the Irish Government of the day would need the views of a paid British spy to tell it what the mood of the country was.

I look forward to reading your book.

All the best. Jack Lane

4/2/2020

Dear Patricia,

I got your book yesterday. As you know, I was looking forward to it as the advertising blurb made it clear that Elizabeth Bowen's activity in Ireland during WWII constituted espionage and the book confirms this view. This is '*progress*' indeed in Bowen studies and I warmly welcome it in putting the record straight. Congratulations!

It was the widespread assertions to the contrary that first interested us in the *Aubane Historical Society* in her reports nearly three decades ago. We did not engage with her as critics of a literary figure but who in these well written reports provided very valuable insights into the wartime period which were all the better for being secret and therefore very frank. They were also useful in bringing a sense of reality to Mr. Churchill about the situation in Ireland. Our only regret is that her many other reports have disappeared and it is most regrettable that her many biographers and admirers have not provided us with more of them.

I do not wish at this stage to comment on the main content of the book itself but simply to take issue with your assertion about "*careless editing by the Aubane Society*". (Page 219) I would readily admit that our publications, produced for the most part "*on a wing and a prayer*" could do with better editing but not in the context of what you were dealing with when making that comment.

That context is when you are comparing two lists of Bowen's wartime reports to the Ministry of Information - our collection, culminating in the third edition, published in 2009, and that of Eibhear Walshe in "*Elizabeth Bowen's selected Irish writings*," published in 2011 by Cork University Press when you had a Fulbright Foundation fellowship at UCC.

As you correctly say, his collection omits 3 reports included in our collection. You do not note that he also omitted a fourth, dated 31/7/40. As our full collection was published and launched in Cork two years before his it remains a mystery as to why Mr. Walshe - and yourself - should have allowed those reports to be omitted. His '*selected Irish writings*' by Bowen are therefore very '*selected*' indeed and unfair to his readers.

Then you claim that we omitted a report on 12 April 1941 but we did not because that was

not a report to the MOI but an essay published in the *New Statesman* by Bowen.

You go on to write that we did not include reports for 20/2/1942 and 19/7/1942. But we did and they are on pages 52-3 and 55-59 respectively of our 2009 third edition which I sent you some time ago, as you have acknowledged.

You comment that "*The differences in the number of letters in these two editions, and the somewhat careless editing by the Aubane Society suggest the need for further study*."

I have to say that the only '*further study*' needed is by Mr. Walshe to update his number of reports and by your good self to acknowledge all the reports we have published, which you must be aware of - and not to misrepresent another item by Bowen as a report to the MOI. Careless editing? Where is ours? That old adage about people in glass houses and stones come to mind.

I should also add that our Mr. Clifford's first name is Brendan not Frank (pages 208, 344) but he hardly minds as he has been called many names and as it happens, inadvertently, minus the capital letter, it would be most appropriate in his case.

I hope that in any future editions the above corrections will be made.

You assert that "*While Bowen's kaleidoscopic self and actions would escape nationalists such as Clifford and Lane who demanded fixed selves and stable positions from Irish authors, Bowen was 'unstuck,' as she said, from a particular country or place*." (p. 210). But your book makes it perfectly clear, as Bowen did herself, that when it really mattered, '*when the chips were down*', i.e., in war, she "*stuck*" very firmly with one country and place, England, '*come rain or shine*' and that is the ultimate proof of anyone's nationalism. Her '*kaleidoscopic self*' was always contained and understandable within that essential position.

On the other hand, when a war began in Northern Ireland over half a century ago we maintained that there were two nations in Ireland and that the island was an actual '*kaleidoscope*' in national terms. This was more consequential and more problematic for Irish nationalists than anything Bowen had to cope with in her national identity. By contrast she had a very '*fixed self and stable position*' in relation to her nationalism and on that solid basis her '*kaleidoscopic self*' was of a purely literary character/

Yours sincerely, Jack Lane

cc Palgrave Macmillan
Irish Political Review

*

(To be continued, perhaps....)

The World Outside The Socialist Oasis

There is an idea that are two histories in Ireland. But if you look closer you could find three histories—Irish South, British North and Catholic North. I am not convinced the Catholics North see themselves as part of the bigger Irish population of the South. We have developed differently over a century when partition divided the country. But it's all open to argument. Living in England I have to also have had to come to grips with a fourth history, as I see it.

Another history intruded back in 1940s/1950s—the history of the Soviet Union and of Eastern Europe and of China. As teenagers in Belfast we wanted to turn our backs on Irish/Ulster history and take on this new, or at least make new history. The slogan was: '*A new man in the street.*' Man meant humanity back then. But in the end we just couldn't shake off our backgrounds. It was always there in our thoughts and in our actions.

Northern Ireland is an odd place. You have two national groupings mingling in the cities and the towns and sometimes in the rural areas. Your antenna is always twitching to recognise each other. It is the way they talk, the words they use, the way they walk, the facial recognition, and most times you will recognise what persuasion the other person is. Catholics were said to walk unsteadily on their own soil while the Protestant virtually marched on it as conquerors. They are also able to publicly air their own opinions in the workplace and in social situations without fear, while the Catholic remains mute. They can parade the city centres in their red, white and blue, whether it's Orange parades or just youth organisations like the scouts or the girl guides. Catholic youth have to stay out of sight and make do with mirror images of the Protestant organisations by calling it Catholic, like a greening of the boy scouts. But do that in your own ghetto, not in the city centre.

So maybe there is some outside help with this dilemma with a number of youth joining the communist movement, small but powerful and being led by Trade Union leaders, Protestant, with its Nationalist representative in the honorary position of General Secretary, without power and where he won't be able to upset the Protestant workers led by his Trade Union comrades. But you only learn that later.

In the meantime, as a youth, you are sitting with your Protestant comrades and they are only too eager to make you welcome. A number of them are the sons and daughters of the Trade Unionist leader running the Party. They are not exactly proletarian for they dress well and speak well and have good table manners. They are either university students or at training as teachers. One girl, a sixteen year old, is able to lift the phone in the party bookshop and send a telegram of support to the French Communist leader, Jacques Duclos, who has been arrested for having a pistol in his car. I had never used a phone in my life and I was teenager of 18 years old. It's a great learning curve for gaining confidence as a young teenager, especially a Catholic one. One word would describe being part of these young people as being delightful.

The more proletarian members also have ambitions. They either learnt to have one in this Young Worker's League, or joined because it was their nature to have ambition. One became a champion weightlifter and later trained the athlete Mary Peters who got gold at the Olympic Games. He later went on to build the biggest gym in Belfast. Another one somehow drags himself out of the shipyard and attend Queens University, and in adult life to become a lecturer.

We are lectured on Marxism by the honorary General Secretary who learnt his Marxism at the Lenin school in Moscow in the early 1930s. He will not touch on Ireland, North or South, not ever, not like when the Party was the CPI in the 1930s and is now the CPNI.

We have social occasions like a mock election when we take the roles of would-be MPs—Nationalist, Labour and Unionist. I opt for Unionist, maybe as laugh or for irony's sake. The Secretary of the YWL supplies me with plenty of Unionist political brochures and handbooks. We are all asked to study our various roles and read up on them. A week later we say our piece in turn. I win as the Unionist. That brings panic from the Secretary who warns me not to speak a word of this 'outside this room'.

Big Annie runs the party bookshop in Church Lane, in the centre of Belfast. She is a working-class Protestant from East Belfast and knows her Marx, Lenin and Stalin. She could have been an early

pioneer of the Two-Nations theory for she thinks the Northern Catholic belongs down South. She has been reading Stalin on nationality and will lecture we youth on the subject. When she gets angry, if as a Catholic, I challenge her why this should happen in Northern Ireland. But she drops the political clothes and instead mouths off in East Belfastian: '*If they don't like it up here they should go down South!*'

She has a son in the British Territorial Army, and is also a member of the YWL. It takes a lot of persuasion by the members to get him to resign from the Territorials or resign from the Young Worker's League. He chooses to stay in the YWL.

(In later years the UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force) will sound, in its social policy, much like the programme of the CPNI.)

Annie definitely believed in Protestant nationality. Among the books on the shelves is '*Roman Catholicism Against the 20th Century*'. I wasn't too keen on the religion myself and bought a copy. I never got to read it for my mother burnt it when I was out. But somehow Big Annie and her outbursts made me feel she was just sectarian beneath the so-called Marxian veil. When I complained to members of the Party EC they apologised for her *indiscretions* and said that was 'just Annie'.

Of course she was on the EC herself. They spoke of self-development in the Party and constructive self-criticism but very little of that was happening. The Party was a kind of oasis away from the problems of Northern Ireland.

Big Annie would chat away to RUC Special Branch when they visited the bookshop every Saturday to stand there all day surveying everyone who entered. Her idea was they might let something slip that would be useful. She also introduced me, along with a new member, to the YWL, to District Inspector Sproule, giving his name and rank and giving mine. She said they knew mine already so why pretend. Sproule would have cosy chats with some of us, which was like quoting a travel guide about the wonders of Australia for young men. (He never spoke to the girls like this.) '*Why waste your talents here.*' His other spiel was that, if Northern became communist, they would need him even more.

The Branch were ambiguous about the Party. Some saw it as a bulwark against Catholicism while others were very suspicious of the YWL. Their idea was that the young were liable to want something different from the old order. They were right, of course.

When sections of the YWL visited Milltown Cemetery up the Falls Road for the

1916 Uprising commemoration, we were so harassed by Special Branch on the way back, the group swore not to go there again. We were stopped and very angry exchanges began. It was mostly a lecture on why young Protestants shouldn't be up and letting down their parents who were decent folk. They were Branch men we hadn't seen before, and one was puzzled as to who I was. A friend of mine immediately said I was a Protestant, and they let us go. Naturally I was angry at this, but I was told it was to save me from arrest. They knew themselves they wouldn't be arrested. Two of them had fathers in the Party, EC members, and leaders of Trade Unions.

And so the ambiguity went on. You might come out of a meeting in the rooms above the bookshop and find the street filled with the RUC. Was the bookshop going to be raided and all of us arrested? It didn't happen. In the street the usually polite branch men were now surly and angry and would start getting you by the lapels and telling you that one day you would be crawling up the street on your hands and knees. On a Saturday night on the way to a dance you would be stopped and sneered at: *'I know who you are'*, or *'I discovered you.'*

When a mate of mine answered: *'And now I know who you are'*, the Branch man pulled open his jacket to reveal his gun shoulder holster.

To say: *'Relax, it's Saturday night'* seemed to drive them mad and you could be grabbed by the lapels with such force you had your shirt torn.

Belfast seemed saturated with them and Saturday night in Belfast city centre was no exception.

Occasionally on a Saturday night we went through an ongoing building site to the hoardings surround it and managed to paste up posters announcing the *Stalin-Five-Point-Peace-Plan* for the passing merry-makers. We would then walk normally with the crowd and pass the hoarding where we had pasted the posters and watch the reaction of the crowd. And there was Sergeant MacKay of Special Branch pulling them down and ripping them up. A mate of mine, with a hell of a bravado, went up to him and asked him what he was doing. Mackay's answer was: *'I was on my way to see a picture and now you give me this work to do.'*

Mackay was the most amiable of the Branch, whether it was pretence or not we were never to know. He would stop you in the street and discuss films. He loved going to the cinema. He never discussed anything else or threatened you. He was

the spitting image of Jeff Chandler, a Hollywood actor, and therefore you could never miss him on the crowded pavements of central Belfast.

Slipping out in the middle of the night we would paint slogans on walls announcing the *Stalin-Five-Point-Peace-Plan*. Maybe we were obsessed by it all. Back then the RUC patrolled mostly on foot. They wore boots with leather soles and metal protectors. If you put your ear to the pavement you could hear them coming some distance away. But no matter how thick you put the paint on it was always gone within a couple of hours.

By this time you might be asking about the Catholic population and their part in anything. Well, it was time to leave the socialist oasis, for a while anyway.

Four of us, I an apprentice woodworker, two would-be teachers at training college and another studying accountancy decided to visit the Catholic Markets area. Three were Protestants and myself a Catholic. It was the bravery, even the arrogance of youth. No adult Party member would dare come up here as communists. I had never lived in a Catholic area and this city Markets area was also a mystery to me. I knew they celebrated the Feast of the Assumption on the 15th of August, also known as *Our Lady's Day*. I wandered in there once for the curiosity of it. The people had taken the tables from the their houses and lined them up in the middle of the street to eat and drink cheap wine and sing bawdy songs. One they were singing, to the tune of the Al Jolson number with the words *'When The Red Red Robin Comes Bob Bob Bobbing along Along, Along'*:

"When the red red biddy runs down
your diddy
you're drunk, you're drunk..."

My reaction was to run out of there when a large female approached me smacking her lips.

The Markets area also had the biggest celebration of all Catholic areas for the Indian Day of freedom when it also fell on the 15th of August, 1947, also known as *Our Lady's Day*. I know in my own area of Carryduff the only other Catholic family near us had the mother with tears in her eyes as she told us she had just heard it on wireless.

It was still the era of elderly women wearing the shawl, of black material, worn over the head. They had this leather purse and that opened like an accordion. One compartment held a few copper coins and another usually held tobacco snuff. They

were very poor ladies and most of them had worked in the mills as young women. Now they all seemed to smell of snuff.

A few of the old men around wore a mismatch of old jacket and trousers with a *'buck lep'* (flat cap) and a silken white muffler that hid what wasn't a proper shirt. White canvas shoes was the footwear. You could guess these had been the unskilled workers, labourers, sorters of rags in choking conditions, maybe. Or worked in a small factory making glue out of animal bones

This was during a time when it was obligatory to wear you suit and tie at weekends and in the evening when going out, plus a short-back-and-sides haircut. Your tie was not to be too bright or you would hear murmured criticism from passing pedestrians.

My own family was always living on the edge but this scene in entering the Markets area was the worse I had ever seen. We were wearing our obligatory suits and carrying clipboards that Saturday morning. Suddenly there was the squeal of children shouting: *'Polis! Polis!'* as they ran away.

The doors to the two-up-and-two-down houses began to open and a woman's head would cautiously peep out. We explained we were collecting signatures for the *Stalin-Five-Point-Peace-Plan*. At the first house the woman immediately signed. We were just testing the water and didn't think we'd get any signatures. The woman who signed then nodded to the woman next door who also signed. We couldn't believe it. My thoughts were, if they thought we were Soviet agents, then we would also hate the RUC. That whole street signed.

One of our number asked why some were asking: *'Have you come to help us.'* He said he had very little money and couldn't do that. Of course the help they wanted was something different and beyond the Protestant mind at that time.

I think if we had promised the Red Army was on their way to free them the woman would have kissed our hands and put out the flags.

The Markets area was being continually raided by the RUC, with their men folk being dragged off to the Crumlin Road Prison under the *Special Powers Act* whenever a member of the monarchy visited. They wouldn't be released until that *dignitary* left N.I. That could mean two weeks inside. And, if the arrested had a job, they would probably lose it. There were also other RUC raids in which homes were destroyed, with the floorboards torn up and mattresses ripped open, supposedly

looking for arms. The men, again, might spend a few days in a police cell.

The Markets area was also a favourite place for the young Ian Paisley to target as he and his followers paraded on the fringes in Cromac Square and preached against Catholicism and the almost non-existent IRA. But even he dared not go into the centre of the Markets area. Demonstrators against him were immediately seized by the RUC and charged with violent behaviour.

What was remarkable was that it was the women who did all the signing, while the men lurked in the background. They sure were defending their men. Generally it was the women who were on the frontline against danger. I have read similar cases in *The Islandman* by Tomas O Crohan when it was the women who were stoning the British custom officers (or some other British officials) from the cliffs as they tried to land from a boat. One woman almost throws her baby at them when she runs out of stone. I'm just wondering if they thought: *'they wouldn't dare touch a woman'*. Whatever it was they were doing it with the utmost bravery.

My mother was the first to open the door to shout and swear when our house in Carryduff was under sectarian attack with stone-throwers. My father couldn't get a look-in nor could I as child. As my father tried to get her away from the door in case she got hit with stones she would fight him off.

So the children of the Markets area ran away at the sight of us, thinking we were the *Polis*. But that was to change twenty years later. Living in London I wrote a film script for the BBC about the young living under the conditions of the war situation. It was to be filmed with a mixed cast in both Catholic and Protestant areas. Short Strand, a small Catholic area, under constant loyalist besieging and on the edge of the much bigger Protestant East Belfast, was not to be one.

The English director didn't quite know where he was. He relied on me as a guide, though Belfast had changed since I left. One morning he insisted on having a look at Short Strand. He had hired a taxi and also asked for an RUC escort when I told him it would be a dangerous area. I knew I should have told him I wasn't going in there, but felt reckless while looking for adventure. It was place where you could be dead before you could explain your were one of them. The director also called for RUC support. It was just going to be suicide. Short Strand has got the closest community ever and that goes back many generations. They have defended

their area to the death in the past. There had been negotiations to get permission to enter other Republican areas and this was granted. But we had heard nothing from Short Strand, so obviously we weren't welcome.

So along comes the taxi and along comes the RUC escort—a District Inspector, in civilian clothes, alone, except for a bible on the passenger seat of the unmarked car. He was a born-again fatalist. The director expected an armoured vehicle or two! With the director was his assistant, a Protestant girl from BBC Belfast. She was obviously very nervous, though she didn't think we would dare go into Short Strand. I couldn't believe my ears when I heard the District Inspector say to her: *'Don't worry, daughter, we have another life.'*

The District Inspector then drove in followed by our taxi. The director sat with driver, while I sat in the back with the girl who was almost screaming with fear as she clung to me. We drove further up the street with director looking for a gap in the two-up-and-two-down houses. He had been told a bomb had recently gone off in the house while it was being assembled. We came to the

Gap: he studied it a while. The District Inspector had stopped to indicate it. We drove on and came to mountain of old tyres on top of which was young lad sorting them out. When he saw the cars he fell down the mountain and ran off. The taxi driver, a Protestant, then said: *'That's it, let's go.'* We did but then the director wanted another look at the gap in the houses and asked for the taxi to be reversed. Which it was.

We then entered another street to leave. Passing other streets, the taxi driver advised us to get our heads down as he himself crouched over the steering wheel. I knew he expected bullets to fly. I could see the car of the District Inspector a long way, off leaving Short Strand. The taxi driver assured us that the District Inspector was known in Short Strand and trusted. As far as I know, there were a few born-again members of the RUC who refused to carry arms even when in uniform.

The taxi-driver kept saying: *'Ach sure they know me around here... wouldn't do me a bit of harm.'*

The taxi couldn't catch up with the District Inspector. At the entrance/exit, there being only one way in and out, a crowd of children, ranging from toddlers to maybe five years old, appeared as if out of nowhere and blocked our escape. it was like a scene out of a sci-fi film. The girl was crouched in the well of the car while I was having admiration for these kids. The Catholic

kids had ceased to run away. I felt the children were holding us until the adults got their Kalashnikovs out of their hiding places. The taxi driver then took a handful of change out of his pocket and threw it on the ground. The kids scrambled to pick up the coins and we were free to go.

In the end the BBC didn't go through with the project. I thought at first they had lost their nerve about filming in the war-torn streets of Belfast. The truth was much more logical. In order to film in PIRA-controlled and UDA/UVF areas, I suggested there had to be negotiations with the people running them. So a small team was set up to do that. BBC Belfast agreed to this, though we had critics within that organisation.

Then the British Army demanded a copy of the script and that had to be handed over to a Major in British Army Intelligence in a meeting at the Europa Hotel, where he read it. (All of this for a simple story about how war affects the young teenager)

At the Europa there were all sorts of things going on, all sorts of people up to all sorts of things. There were, for example, a couple of girls, with cars waiting outside, to take US and foreign journalists into PIRA areas, to show them the damage the RUC and British Army were doing and to interview the inhabitants. No doubt there were loyalists also lurking there, plus MI5/MI6 agents. It was a kind of *Casablanca*, as depicted in the Humphrey Bogart/Ingrid Bergman film were all kinds of foe meet on agreed neutral ground..

Passes, in the meantime, had been issued to the film crew and some members of BBC Belfast, allowing them to enter Republican/Loyalist areas. Somehow this probably became too much for some higher authorities in BBC London and maybe the British Army. It was a recognition that the British authorities had lost control of these areas. Filming was stopped in Belfast and we all left for London. The story was made in a studio in London. Media critics said it needed to be made on the streets of Belfast. Little did they know!

Later I learnt the BBC was having a clear-out by erasing the film reels and TV tapes in order to re-use them. My work was gone. Light entertainment they kept.

But there was something more valuable happening in Northern Ireland, the uplifting of the Catholic spirit to fight oppression. These children would never run away ever again.

Wilson John Haire
23.2.20.

Some Forgotten History

Last August I found myself at a meeting in Skibbereen at which I understood that I was to say something about the West Cork historian, A.M. Sullivan. The meeting turned out to be about Kilmichael and other events in the War of Independence in West Cork. A very useful account was given of the crucial Battle of Crossbarry, in which a body of the IRA was ambushed by the British Army and had conducted a successful fighting retreat. It demonstrated that the IRA had become something more than a hit-and-run group. It had become an Army capable of fighting a battle in a complex situation, over an extended area, under effective command. It was an orderly retreat under pressure, leaving the IRA force intact and the British with nothing to show for their efforts. It was soon followed by the historic event of the Truce—a negotiated stand-off between the Army of the Empire and the “murder gang”.

It was worth being at Skibbereen for the account of Crossbarry given by Sean Kelleher. But I did not see how A.M. Sullivan could be fitted into the structure of the meeting. Con O’Callaghan and Sean Kelleher alternated in describing various incidents in the war. If I had been called in turn after each of them had spoken, I would have had to find some way of fitting Sullivan in, but I had no idea in advance it would not be. Fortunately I was not called and the meeting continued for three hours without me.

It was a very big meeting, arranged to clash with the West British affair organised by Simon Kingston elsewhere in Skibbereen, with a former Taoiseach advertised as the main attraction. The room in the West Cork Hotel that was booked for it was filled to overflowing. An adjoining room, separated by a moveable partition was opened and that too was filled. And it was obvious that people had not flocked in to hear about A.M. Sullivan.

I assumed after an hour that I was there by mistake. I was certainly there by default. Because the meeting was held in August, people were on holiday. I agreed to be there, holidays not being part of my lack of a lifestyle.

After three hours it seemed that the meeting was winding down towards an end. I think the Chairman (Donnchadh Ó Séadhgha) thought so too. But the audience stayed put.

It seemed certain that I was there by

mistake. But I did not regret having come to it because it was a kind of meeting I had never been at before.

I was about to leave when the Chairman, faced with an audience that expected more, called on me to speak.

I began by explaining that I seemed to be there by mistake. I had nothing of any consequence to contribute to a discussion of the War of Independence. My view of Irish affairs was formed in North-West Cork and West Belfast. In North-West Cork there was only one small ambush. My grandmother heard the firing at it across the hill from Clonbanin to Doireleigh, and that was the extent of my personal contact with it.

I do not recall the sequence of what I said. It probably had no internal sequence. But at some point I said that the Northern War was ten times longer than the War of Independence, was sustained under more difficult circumstances, and was concluded with an orderly retreat and a temporary settlement.

I made no actual mention of Michael Collins, but I assume it was understood that I was contrasting Adams & McGuinness with Collins.

Collins took matters into his own hands in early December 1921. He made his own agreement with the British War Cabinet and browbeat his colleagues on the negotiating committee to sign. He did this in breach of the instructions of the Dail Government, having given no hint to the Government of his intention. He did this as a member of the IRB conspiracy, assuming that he would carry the IRA with him, and hustle the Dail into line.

He did not carry the IRA with him—not even all those who were also sworn into the IRB. He broke the IRA, and soon found himself obliged to make war on it with a mercenary Army paid for and supplied by Whitehall.

Adams made a settlement for something less than the aim for which war was declared by Rory Brady in 1970 but, unlike Collins, he kept the Army pretty well intact while doing so.

Collins carried some of the IRA with him, but he lost the main body and had to make war on it in order to secure the deal he had made with the British War Cabinet.

He got himself killed in a wild adventure

into enemy territory. The Government which he left behind depended for social support on sections of society that had not supported the independence movement. It set itself the task of pulverising the Republican movement. It won the War but failed to snuff out the IRA. The Free State therefore rested uneasily on a society which had an Illegal Organisation as an integral part of it.

As the prospect of British military intervention in support of the Treaty system receded, the electorate returned to voting Republican, and the Free State was put under challenge within its own system within a few years. In 1932 the anti-Treaty Party, now called Fianna Fail, took office electorally, and was protected from the threat of Treatyite physical challenge by the Illegal Organisation.

Fianna Fail carried most of the Republican sentiment with it in its anti-Treaty operations in the 1930s, culminating in the Economic War and the achievement of effective independence in 1938. But, because of the North, the Illegal Organisation remained part of the life of the state. Its numbers may have been few in the 1940s, but it had definite existence as an ideal presence.

My mother, the younger daughter of a blacksmith, and without property, had married, romantically and imprudently the younger son of a small farmer. She was, I reckon, a moderate Fianna Failer. She rarely discussed politics but always made a point of buying Brian O’Higgins Christmas Cards. And the Wolfe Tone Annual was always around.

The declaration of neutrality against Britain in 1939 consolidated the success of anti-Treatyism. I just remember the last Treaty event in Boherbue village, in which a Blueshirt assembly was warded off. I cannot remember any further talk of Blueshirts.

My mother, who was a very convivial person, established her house (built for her, by relatives on both sides I reckon, when I was a few years old) into what was called a Roving House. People gathered there to play long, convivial card games and talk. Regulars in the company were Jack Thade, who raised a family on the acre of land that went with his Labourer’s Cottage, and was definitely De Valeraite; Gerald Cronin, who was a medium-sized farmer, a fount of traditional music, and, as I discovered thirty years later, an active Blueshirt; and Dan Garret, the younger brother of a small farmer, a friend of the satirist Knocknagree poet, Ned Buckley, and himself a satirist of all that was going

on, particularly of priestly sermons. So I reckon I grew up amidst conversations that laid the Civil War to rest—and that appreciated the broadcasts of Lord Haw Haw.

This may be slightly off the point, but it lies somewhere close to it.

Collins acted as if there was no constitutional medium in Irish political life, only a rebellion organised by conspiracy. He came to grief because conspiracy had been overtaken by constitutionalism.

Irish national life was abolished by comprehensive British military conquest in 1689-90, and the Penal Laws (of a kind with Hitler's Nuremberg Laws) operated by the Protestant Colony based on the conquest. All that preceded 1691 was crushed. The Protestant Colony with its Parliament declared itself to be a nation—the Irish nation. It refused to act as the centre of a national development that embraced the Presbyterian Colony in the North and the large remnant of pre-1691 Ireland that refused to wither though deprived of property, the professions, education and any culture but what could survive without any of the above.

Grattan urged the Parliament that bears his name to draw the Irish into it and hegemonise them with its own ideology. It refused. It remained exclusive.

Wolfe Tone tried to bring about the same thing by organising a popular movement to put pressure on Parliament. Parliament responded by criminalising the reform movement. Tone then went for a development through French conquest. It failed because of "*Wind and Weather*" in 1796.

The provoked rebellions of 1798 had no material hope of success, and the different parts were discordant with each other in national sentiment.

O'Connell came back to Ireland as an English radical; took part in the suppressions of 1798 and 1803; was drawn into the movement for Catholic representation in Parliament about ten years later and brought it to success. When Catholic entry to Parliament was achieved, O'Connell switched the movement to Repeal of the Act of Union.

Emancipation was supported by the Ulster Presbyterian community—actively by some, not opposed by others. It had something to gain from Emancipation, being itself marginally subject to the Penal Laws. It opposed Repeal of the Union. It had settled down quickly under the Union and had nothing to gain from a restoration of the Irish Parliament which, when it existed, had been exclusively Anglican Protestant.

The Repeal movement was in the first instance a Protestant Ascendancy movement. O'Connell had taken part in it as an eccentric Catholic—the first admitted to the Bar. But, after he achieved comprehensive Catholic enfranchisement, Repeal would not have restored what the Ascendancy wanted.

The Government conceded Emancipation to the mass pressure organised by O'Connell, which had substantial Presbyterian support. It stood firm again Repeal and made preparations to dragoon the Monster Meeting at Clontarf, which is to say, to set the soldiery on it. O'Connell backed down.

The Young Ireland movement developed under O'Connell's wing, but after Clontarf he disowned it. Its leading light was Thomas Davis, an Anglican Protestant. He appealed to the Protestant gentry to take up the cause which Grattan had put to them in the 1780s and which they had balked at then. They balked at it again. And that ended the possibility of an Anglo-Irish development of nationalism in Ireland.

One of the fashionable revisionists—I do not recall whether it was Lord Bew or Carroll Professor Foster—commented that Davis became a Catholic nationalist, implying that he adopted a sectarian stance. What he did was remain a nationalist after the Anglo-Irish Protestant gentry as a body repudiated it. They might still have exerted very considerable influence on national development. They were in decline under the Act of Union but they were not yet a spent force. They were still in possession of the land, were the power in the localities, were still dominant in the professions, and their Church was still an organ of the State.

But, after Emancipation, Repeal would not have restored the comprehensive Ascendancy that had been theirs before the Union. Exclusive Protestant nationalism had had its day. It seems that nothing less was acceptable to them. Rather than take part in a broader national development, they preferred to wither as a privileged Protestant stratum and to criticise the native population, which was prepared to undergo a nationalist development without them, as Catholic-nationalist, meaning exclusively sectarian.

The potato-blight, which Imperial handling turned into a mass Famine for the native population, brought an end to O'Connellism, and also to Young Ireland. O'Connell left no political structures behind him. He created the movement which he led, and it depended entirely on him.

The Young Ireland body used itself up in a hopeless rebellion against the Famine State. Only Gavan Duffy survived as a politician. He formed a tenant-right party known as the Independent Party. It gained seats in Parliament but was soon destroyed by Whitehall bribery. Duffy, in disgust, emigrated to Australia.

But two durable forces were created by the Famine: the IRB conspiracy, and the open constitutional nationalism of the Bantry Band, which formed itself in opposition to the IRB.

I could feel, when I mentioned the *Bantry Band* at Skibbereen that it was a forgotten phenomenon. Its core consisted of the Sullivan brothers, Tim Healy and William Martin Murphy. What it did was devise a nationalism for the native population which had survived the two colonialist developments—the Presbyterian and the Anglican. That native population still constituted the vast majority of people on the island, despite having been halved by the Famine. One could say that it had been abandoned by its betters—they had no doubt that they were its betters.

The Sullivans accepted things as they were after the Famine and they built on them. What existed was a peasantry with no public rights, except the right to send a member to Parliament. So they constructed a course of development for peasant action, and shed no tears for the lost gentry—the gentry which had always been alien.

The IRB, a revolutionary military conspiracy, did not approve. Reform would entangle the peasant mass in individual property concerns and spoil its potential as a mass revolutionary force.

The Sullivans, who had their noses to the ground, did not see any potential for revolutionary military conspiracy in the post-Famine situation, but they discreetly assisted the Fenians in various ways—despite IRB orders to assassinate A.M. And T.D., without ceasing to be a constitutionalist, celebrated as heroic martyrs the men who were executed as murderers by the Government. He wrote *God Save Ireland!*

A.M.'s history, *The Irish Story*, along with T.D.'s poems, were one feature of the constitutional national movement. Parliamentary cretinism was another.

Roy Foster delivered an Oxford lecture against A.M. Sullivan's history, and published a book against it. But he chose not to mention A.M. Sullivan, the West Cork historian, when launching the West British 'West Cork History Festival'. And his

denunciation of Sullivan's History is not a criticism of it. Foster does not demonstrate any factual errors or misconceptions in Sullivan's History. His purpose was not to improve on Sullivan's History, but to pour scorn on the very idea of a narrative history of Ireland.

Sullivan's book went through a great many editions between 1867 and the Great War. Foster says he led Irish history into a wonderland of free invention. I could find nothing like that in it. I assume that what Foster meant was that Sullivan led the Irish astray by giving them the notion that they had a history.

And Sullivan certainly did that. He told them that they were not a remnant of the past, capable only of periodic wild disturbances, but were a people of ancient lineage who were functional in the modern world and had a purpose in it. They were a stable people of the modern world. They were not merely in flux under external intervention, but had their own inertia: and that is a great part of the effective meaning of *Constitutional*.

In its Great War, the British Empire propagated the doctrine of national self-determination for the purpose of subverting the Hapsburg and Ottoman Empires. And then it assembled miscellaneous groups of people into nation-states and told them to vote in parties, giving State authority to the party that got most votes (provided it was 'moderate' by British standards), with the minority party obeying the majority party while opposing it vigorously.

In most of these states (within Europe), this system did not hold, one reason being the lack of prior national development. There was no Yugoslav nation, only the Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian and Bosnian peoples. And there was no Czechoslovak nation: there were Czechs, Slovaks, Germans, Hungarians in the Czechoslovak 'nation'-state, all of them minorities.

In Ireland a strong national development preceded the 1918 Election. It was not a mere product of Redmondite Parliamentary demagoguery, or of IRB conspiracy either. It detached itself easily from the Redmondite Westminsterism and British Constitutionalism and by its vote established Irish constitutionalism.

The IRB had played an essential part in raising the military force that challenged the mass recruiting for the British wars on Germany and Turkey, but 1916 was far from being an exclusively IRB event. The major battle was conducted by a constitutionalist democrat with only a token involvement in the IRB: De Valera. And,

while the IRB contributed to the formation of the new, Republican, Sinn Féin party in 1917, by doing so it contributed to the *de facto* marginalising of itself.

Because the Irish voters took their votes in earnest while the new democracy at Westminster authorised its Government to continue governing Ireland, there was war. The part played by the IRB in the war was Intelligence and assassination of enemy agents in Dublin. What obliged the British to negotiate was the emergence of fighting groups around the country which engaged in military actions on an increasing scale. The groups were much more extensive in their range than the IRB, and their general view of things was not that of the IRB. They took the Dail as having established a Republican Constitution, which was the focus of their loyalty. And it was on that fact that Collins's Treaty effort foundered.

The IRA was formed here and there around the country on local initiative to challenge the British attempt to overrule the Dail. It was IRB in some places but not in others. The Dail Government took the opportunity given by the Truce to regularise its haphazard structure and commission it as the Army of the Dail.

This has been represented as a move by De Valera to undermine Collins while he was away in London negotiating. The only sense this makes is that the real army was the IRB under Collins' command and that the Dail system was little more than pretentious make-believe.

That would not have been an obviously nonsensical view at the time, but it proved not to be the case that the IRA was an instrument of the IRB, not of the Dail.

It is said that De Valera insisted on sending Collins to London to get him out of the way, and then made him a scapegoat for the inevitable compromise.

A more plausible view is that, as Collins was the 'extremist', it was necessary that he should be implicated in the inevitable compromise. He had condemned De Valera's suggestion that Britain might be accorded some military rights in Ireland for its own defensive purposes internationally, on the lines of the US/Cuba arrangement. And he had said that the effort necessary to gain Dominion status could gain independence.

In London he would either have to carry these positions in negotiations with the enemy, or agree to compromise. What was not expected was that he would go against the instruction from his own Government without consulting it, unilaterally agree to

a compromise, put pressure on the whole delegation to sign it, and then have the Treaty broadcast around the world as an accomplished fact, leaving it to come to the Irish Government as a news item in foreign newspapers.

This was done on the authority of the IRB. But it was found that the IRB writ did not run with the bulk of the IRA.

A long time ago—in the late 1960s I think—I read the newspapers for the first half of 1922, to find out what had happened. What I found was Collins energetically building up a paid army, while De Valera made ineffectual efforts to make terms with the Treatyites which would ward off an all-out conflict. He appeared to have got it with the Election Pact for the 1922 Election: to reproduce the Dail as it stood in January, and then have a Government with a majority of Treatyites and a minority of anti-Treatyites.

Collins was summoned to Whitehall and ordered to break the Pact. If he did so, it was by means of an equivocal statement on the eve of the election which said nothing definite. The Pact provided for a majority of Treatyites to be elected. When that happened, it was claimed that the Election had been about the Treaty and that the Treatyites had won.

A short while later Collins was instructed by Whitehall to act militarily against the Anti-Treatyites and he did so. (I came across a document in the British archive in which he complained that Whitehall was making it too obvious that it was pulling his strings, but I've mislaid it. But it would be surprising if he had not made such a complaint.)

Eoin Neeson was of the opinion that Collins thought that the shelling of the Four Courts would satisfy Whitehall and have no further consequences. This depended to a considerable extent on Liam Lynch, who was certainly not in De Valera's pocket. But he was a strong constitutionalist. He took the shelling of the Four Courts to be an act of war on the Constitution, and he returned to Munster and prepared for war. And the project which Collins launched on 6th December 1921 fell apart in his hands.

Collins's *realpolitik* foundered because it did not take account of the reality that IRB conspiritorialism had been superseded by a popular sense of Irish constitutionalism. That was what I gathered from a dispassionate reading of the 1922 newspapers.

(Somewhere around the age of ten I was taken to a wedding reception at the Hi B

(Hibernian) Hotel in Mallow, to celebrate a liaison between North-West Cork and the Collins family. I don't remember who the bride was. My relatives included O'Connors, O'Keefes, Murphys, Horans, Cullotys, Godsils, and Moylans. It was the only full-dress wedding reception I have ever been at. There was an air of excitement about it, a sense of reconciliation between rival dynasties—it was some years before Fine Gael declared the Republic. And afterwards it was found that somebody on our side had left his overcoat in a car belonging to the other side, away down in West Cork, and so there were further interesting contacts.)

The fact of an Irish constitutional existence, beyond the accidents of politics, is demonstrated by the fact that it could bear the disruptive force of a 'civil war', discard it as British mischief-making, and reassert the normality of the Republican position only a few years after a defeat inflicted by methods that put the Black and Tans in the shade.

The effect of the 'civil war' put the defeated party in power ten years later, kept it there for almost 20 years, and ensured that it was the dominant party for a further forty years, until it set about destroying itself by reneging on its anti-Treaty heritage.

But there was a body of the population of the country which lay outside this national development. It rejected O'Connell's Repeal movement, having supported the Catholic Emancipation movement. It raised an Army against John Redmond's Home Rule movement. And it supported the British attempt to put down the Dail Government, only agreeing to set up a semi-detached Northern Ireland Home Rule system to help the Empire to confuse the issue in its conflict with Sinn Fein. It described its agreement to operate a Northern Ireland system, instead of being simply a region of the British state, as its "*supreme sacrifice*" for the Empire. And it was that "*supreme sacrifice*" that led to the Northern War.

The Ulster Protestant Colony was different in kind from the Anglo-Irish Colony. It was established partly by Plantation and Partly by migration—by migration in Antrim and Down, which were its core. It was not part of the Protestant Ascendancy. It was a rounded society, not a parasitic social stratum. It took part in Grattan's Volunteers and the early United Irish movement whose position was not separation from Britain but to bring the Presbyterian and Catholic communities under the sway of the Anglo-Irish colony, by marginal rep-

resentation in the Colonial Parliament, so as to establish a substantial British nation in Ireland under the Crown. After 1798 it settled down immediately under the Union. The idea that it was ever Irish nationalist in any meaningful present-day sense is a combination of misunderstanding, due to inadequate historical treatment of the matter, and wishful thinking.

When the Provisionals declared war for the purpose of ending Partition in 1970, I was certain they would fail and—living in West Belfast—I issued a weekly publication against it, which had some effect.

What gave the war popular support was not Partition but the mode of internal Six County government which accompanied it. When a Northern leadership took over from the original Southern leadership, it gradually shifted things towards internal restructuring which put an end to the sham democracy and in its place set up what was in fact a kind of *two-nations federation*, under which the majority status of the Protestant community was negated.

Adams and McGuinness carried through an interim settlement in those terms, with the stated purpose of shaping military momentum into political momentum. The element that insisted that the war against Partition should be carried through to the bitter end was curbed chiefly by political persuasion. And the IRA thus achieved a triumph, instead of being ground down in the course of a few years more.

At Skibbereen I did not time myself, but I'm sure that I spoke for less than twenty minutes. What I have set out here is what I think I said, but it was said in very condensed form, leaving it to be developed in discussion if anybody was interested. And, in case people didn't know, I explained that I was the notorious two-nationist of 1969.

But there was no discussion. Sean Kelleher commented that all I had said in distinguishing between the two colonies was that Britain put more people into Ulster than into the rest of the country. I had no opportunity to reply. The obvious reply was that the colonists in Antrim and Down, who are the core of the problem, were not put there but came there. How they came to be there may make no moral difference—I don't know what 'moral' means in such things—but it made a great practical difference, as did the fact that the Ulster colony was self-sufficient, while the Anglican colony exploited the native population and was incapable even of feeding itself by any other means. The former is more durable than the latter.

After the meeting I found that there was

an eagerness on the part of some people in the audience to discuss what I had said. That was possibly sufficient reason for its abrupt closure.

PS: I said at some point that, with regard to war and morality, the first question for an authentic historian should be about how it was possible for the war to happen. Right and wrong are hardly ever determined independently of the cause of the war but follow from its outcome. The Northern War was on conventional assumptions a war that could not happen. But, since it happened, it is necessary to ask how. And likewise with 1916 and 1919-21.

Britain on the other hand is a war-fighting state. It has fought more wars than any other state in recorded history. It is by its nature predisposed towards war. Periods in which it killed nobody are exceptional in its history. But the Irish, conquered, subjugated and closely policed for two centuries—how could they have launched an organised act of war in 1916? And the small nationalist community in a corner of the pioneering liberal-democracy of the world, why did it declare war on Britain and how did it sustain the war against the British Army for 28 years?

Brendan Clifford

Seamus Mallon

The obituaries on Seamus Mallon are interesting exercises in denialism.

The *Guardian* piece, written by its former Belfast correspondent, Anne McHardy, actually says that "*Gerry Adams brought the IRA into the peace process after 1996*" (24 Jan.), as if the Peace Process had been going on independently of Sinn Fein/IRA, mastered by the SDLP, which put pressure on the Republicans to come into it!

The institution which was brought into the Peace Process by pressure exerted on it from outside was Mallon's SDLP. Mallon was a late-comer to it. He never really got the hang of it. And his party went into drastic decline because of his handling of it.

There had been many peace processes over a quarter of a century, which came to nothing because they were not processes within the war. The outstanding one was that of the Peace People in the 1970s, which got plenty of British State and other backing. Because it was disconnected from the War, it flared up for a moment and then just went out.

The Peace Process that worked was conducted chiefly by the leaders of Sinn Fein/

IRA, collaborating with the leader of the SDLP, John Hume, but not with the SDLP — all conducted with the covert collaboration and support of Taoiseach Haughey.

Mallon, the Deputy Leader of the SDLP, was fiercely hostile to what Hume was doing. And it was Mallon who was representative of the Party. But Hume had built *himself* into a political force, and, when he made clear his refusal to kow tow to the constitutional nationalist squeamishness of Mallon's majority, Mallon did not have it in him to do anything more than sulk.

Nothing of this appears in the *Guardian* notice.

The *Irish Times* notice was a Supplement, consisting of a long editorial, along with articles by Daithí O'Ceallaigh, Conor O'Cleary, Stephen Collins, and Eamon Maillie.

Maillie is not an *Irish Times* clone. During the War he tried to give a reality-based account of what was going on. Maillie is from South Armagh and was Christian Brothers-educated, like Mallon, but his fundamentally different understanding of things in the North is, surprisingly, allowed to come through clearly in the *Irish Times*.

Mallon made a point of being an Agnostic. It is hard to see what point there is of making a point of it in Northern Ireland, or indeed anywhere else — and most of all within Catholicism, which does not take its theology to be a branch of science.

Protestant theology, in its fundamentalist Biblical enthusiasm, did take itself to be a branch of science for a couple of generations, not heeding Catholic warnings that Christian belief belongs to a different order of things than Physics, and that the Bible was not a scientific manual. The result was that Protestantism undermined itself, and sickened of itself, and came to hate the theology that had been the spiritual driving force in its Imperialism, justifying it in the destruction it wreaked on the world. But it did not sicken of empire.

In the British Army, in the days of Conscriptio, when the masses had to be systematised for Church Parade, Agnosticism, Atheism and that sort of thing was treated as Methodism. They were fancy notions for which a war could not be fought and on which a State could not be founded.

The life of the world, in its basic driving forces, cannot be reduced to the status of an object and subjected to scientific knowledge of itself. Its driving forces are beliefs.

The Roman Catholic world had many Orders and varieties of Belief and many modes of expressing them, and this did not obstruct the scientific treatment of what was so treatable. It was never a

closed world, as was the world of English Biblicalism at its most intense, which undermined itself by confusing matters of belief and of scientific knowledge.

When all the scientific knowledge of things that science can gather has been gathered, life still remains to be lived, and human life cannot be the life of a thing.

Mallon was an Orator and an actor/playwright by vocation. He revelled in theatricality. He was born into the culture which had preserved these things against the assault of Protestant iconoclasm. And yet he felt the need to declare himself an Agnostic against that culture, as if his talents were being stifled within a Yorkshire Biblicalist cult.

That would not merit a comment if he had not chosen a career in Catholic politics in the Six Counties when, under the imposed Northern Ireland system, political life could only take the form of aggravation between the Catholic and Protestant communities.

He became the leader of the major Catholic party at the moment when the actual Protestant versus Catholic structure of politics was given

official recognition by the Hume-Adams-Blair Good Friday Agreement.

Why, as an earnest Agnostic, did he not designate himself as *Other* under the GFA system?

The SDLP was riding high in 1998, on the strength of what Hume had done with it — or to it. Hume handed it over to Mallon, who frittered it away because he would not participate in the *realpolitik* of the situation, which was unacceptable to his irrelevantly alien ideology.

And, after he had brought the Party low and retired, he persisted in exerting pressure from the sidelines to prevent his successors from making the accommodations that would keep it in the game. It has been left to Colm Eastwood to break free from his constrictive influence and make some accommodations with reality. Undoubtedly, the modest resurgence the SDLP saw in the recent election, is a reward for the deal which its leader made with Sinn Féin and other Remain parties, to maximise the opposition to those who support British Brexit.

Trump's Vision For Palestine

If the US is OK with Israeli annexing the West Bank, why is it sanctioning Russia for annexing Crimea

At a ceremony in the East Room in the White House on 28 January 2020, President Trump [unveiled](#) his 181-page "[vision](#)" for Israel/Palestine to an audience of enthusiastic cheerleaders, many flown in from Israel for the occasion. While he spoke, the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stood by his side and afterwards he welcomed the President's "vision" ecstatically.

And well he might. The "vision" was written for him, if not by him. According to US Ambassador to Israel [David Friedman](#), it is the "*product of more than three years of close consultations*" between Trump, Netanyahu and their senior staff. Understandably, therefore, it gives Netanyahu almost everything he has ever wished for politically. In essence, the document contains proposals for the future of Israel/Palestine agreed between the US and Israel.

Trump's favours to Netanyahu

Of course, this is not the first incidence of Prime Minister Netanyahu, and Israel, receiving political favours from President Trump. Already, under the Trump administration —

— in December 2017, the US recognised Jerusalem as Israel's capital and, in May 2018, moved the US embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv

— in August 2018, the US ended financial support for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).

— in September 2018, the US cut \$25 million of financial support for 6 hospitals for the care of Palestinians in East Jerusalem

— in September 2018, the US closed the PLO office in Washington

— in February 2019, the US ended financial support to the Palestinian Authority

— in March 2019, the US recognised as Israeli sovereign territory the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights (which Israel took over by force in 1967 and has subjected to military occupation ever since)

— in November 2019, the US declared that the 130+ Jewish-only settlements in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Golan Heights are "not per se inconsistent with international law" (in the [words](#) of US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo)

Perhaps, the US flagrantly breaching the nuclear deal it signed with Iran (and other states) should be added to this list. When he unveiled his "vision" on 28 January

2020, President Trump boasted:

“As everyone knows, I have done a lot for Israel: moving the United States Embassy to Jerusalem; recognizing — (applause) — recognizing the Golan Heights — (applause) — and, frankly, perhaps most importantly, getting out of the terrible Iran nuclear deal. (applause)”

A much bigger favour to Netanyahu

Now, the President has done Netanyahu (and Israel) a much bigger favour - he has undertaken that the US will henceforth recognise a lot more Israeli-occupied territory as sovereign Israeli territory, this time territory East of the Green Line, that is, in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem).

In recent months, Netanyahu has said that he would annex to Israel (a) the Jordan Valley and (b) areas surrounding the Jewish-only settlements in the West Bank. It is probably not a coincidence that annexations along these lines are at the heart of the President’s “vision” for Israel/Palestine.

After the President unveiled his “vision”, Netanyahu responded ecstatically:

“This is a historic day. And it recalls another historic day. We remember May 14th, 1948, because on that day, President Truman became the first world leader to recognize the State of Israel after our first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, declared our independence. That day charted a brilliant future.

“Mr. President, I believe that down the decades — and perhaps down the centuries — we will also remember January 28th, 2020, because on this day, you became the first world leader to recognize Israel’s sovereignty over areas in Judea and Samaria that are vital to our security and central to our heritage. (Applause) ...

“For too long — far too long — the very heart of the Land of Israel where our patriarchs prayed, our prophets preached, and our kings ruled, has been outrageously branded as illegally occupied territory. Well, today, Mr. President, you are puncturing this big lie. (Applause)

“You are recognizing Israel’s sovereignty over all the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria, large and small alike. (Applause)”

Israel seized the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) by military force in June 1967 and has colonised it relentlessly in the ensuing years transferring over 620,000 of its citizens across the Green Line into Jewish-only settlements.

If some or all of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) becomes sovereign

Israeli territory on a permanent basis, then with the blessing of the US Israel will have acquired territory by military force in flagrant violation of the first principle of international law. The US can no longer complain about Russia annexing Crimea, not least because that was done with the consent of the people living there.

A false notion: Israel an occupier

This US recognition of Israeli sovereignty over first the Golan Heights and now parts of the West Bank was foreshadowed during the Trump presidential campaign by his advisory team on Israel. This consisted of Jason Greenblatt, who was until recently his chief negotiator on Israel/Palestine (along with his son-in-law, Jared Kushner), and David Friedman, who is now US Ambassador to Israel.

A [joint statement](#) by Greenblatt and Friedman on 2nd November 2016 contained the following short but very significant sentence:

“The false notion that Israel is an occupier should be rejected.”

That principle has been implemented in respect of the Golan Heights and now in respect of part of the West Bank. In addition, it is reflected in US State Department documents, which no longer refer to the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), Gaza and the Golan Heights as “the occupied territories”.

The internationally agreed position

The Security Council has always regarded the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) as Israeli occupied territory and never as territory belonging to the State of Israel. Thus, Security Council Resolution 2334 passed on 23 December 2016 specifically called upon UN member states to “distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967”.

The same is true of the # International Court of Justice (“the principal judicial organ of the United Nations” in the words of the UN Charter). In its July 2004 Advisory Opinion [Legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory](#) it left no doubt that Israel was the occupying power in the West Bank under international law:

“The territories situated between the Green Line ... and the former eastern boundary of Palestine under the Mandate were occupied by Israel in 1967 during the armed conflict between Israel and Jordan. ... All these territories (including East Jerusalem) remain occupied territories and Israel has continued to have the status of occupying Power.” (Paragraph 78)

All, or nearly all, states in the world (apart from Israel and the US) accept this UN position that the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) is Israeli occupied territory.

Most states also accept the UN position that, along with Gaza, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) should form the territory of a Palestinian state, with its capital in East Jerusalem, existing alongside Israel in its pre-1967 borders — and that any adjustments to the pre-1967 borders by way of land swaps must be agreed between Israel and Palestine. The EU has always been very firm on the latter point, saying:

“The EU will recognize changes to the pre-1967 borders, including with regard to Jerusalem, only when agreed by the parties.”

Of course, a “two-state solution” along these lines is not going to happen. It’s not going to happen because Israel has no intention of reversing its aggression of June 1967 and withdrawing from the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) so that a Palestinian state can be established. And there is no chance of sufficient external pressure being brought to bear on Israel to force it to withdraw — which is what should have been done in the wake of Israel’s aggression in June 1967.

A Palestinian “state”

Trump’s “vision” document does propose the creation of a Palestinian “state”, of a kind arrogantly dictated by the US and Israel. They have decreed that its territory would consist of Gaza plus those parts of the West Bank (about 50% of it) not already selected by them for annexation to Israel — and that it would have a capital on the outskirts of East Jerusalem, not in Jerusalem itself.

Its West Bank territory would consist of a number of non-contiguous chunks, linked together by a network of roads, bridges and tunnels and surrounded by territory to be annexed to Israel — and therefore with no access to the outside world except through Israeli-controlled territory.

At Israel’s insistence, the Palestinian “state” would be demilitarised, and Israel would retain the right to make armed incursions into its territory to ensure that it remained demilitarised and, in Israel’s opinion, non-threatening to Israel. Hamas and other paramilitary groups in Gaza would have to disarm, recognise the State of Israel (with its greatly expanded territory, presumably) and hand over control of Gaza to the Palestinian Authority or

“another national or international body acceptable to the State of Israel”, to quote from Trump’s “vision” document.

If this “state” were ever to come into existence, it would mean the continuation of Israeli occupation for Palestinians with Israel still in control of all the land between the Jordan and the Sea.

(For more on the US/Israel requirements for a Palestinian “state”, see Endnote below)

Negotiations with Palestinians?

Responding to President Trump in the White House on 28th January, Netanyahu said:

“Mr. President, ... because I believe your peace plan strikes the right balance where other plans have failed, I’ve agreed to negotiate peace with the Palestinians on the basis of your peace plan. (Applause)”

Later he qualified this by saying that Palestinians had to “agree to abide by all the conditions” in the “peace plan” (see Endnote below) before Israel would be prepared to “negotiate peace” with them.

Trump had earlier said that the territory he had allocated to a Palestinian “state” would “remain open and undeveloped for a period of four years” during which Palestinians can “negotiate with Israel, achieve the criteria for statehood, and become a truly independent and wonderful state”.

None of this matters, of course, since the “peace plan” is completely unacceptable to Palestinian leaders and to the Palestinian public: an [opinion poll](#) carried out by Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research found that 94% of Palestinians were opposed to it (despite President Trump’s [judgment](#) that: “It’s very good for them. In fact, it’s overly good to them.”).

Are annexations going to happen?

Are the proposed annexations going to happen? Almost certainly, they will, whether Netanyahu remains Prime Minister or is replaced by Benny Gantz. Palestinian opposition will count for nothing. Both Trump and Netanyahu made it clear on 28 January that the annexations are going ahead. Trump said:

“We will form a joint committee with Israel to convert the conceptual map [published in the “vision” document] into a more detailed and calibrated rendering so that recognition can be immediately achieved.”

In his response to Trump that day, Netanyahu said:

“Regardless of the Palestinian decision [to enter into negotiations], Israel will preserve the path of peace in the coming years. ... At the same time, Israel will apply its laws to the Jordan Valley, to all the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria, and to other areas that your plan designates as part of Israel and which the United States has agreed to recognize as part of Israel. (Applause)”

For obvious reasons, Netanyahu hoped that visible progress could be made on this prior to the Israeli General Election on 2 March. However, the Trump administration vetoed that and insisted that the joint US/Israel mapping committee first complete its work of defining precisely the territory to be annexed. The committee has now been set up – it is [headed](#) by the US Ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, who explained that the US was anxious that the annexation process was completed properly in one go and the US didn’t have to recognise several incremental annexations.

It is possible that, after the election on 2nd March, Netanyahu will be replaced as Prime Minister by Benny Gantz, the leader of the Blue and White party (who was formerly head of the Israeli military). Will that delay or prevent the annexations going ahead? That’s unlikely, since from the outset he has expressed support for Trump’s plan: on 27 January after he was briefed by Trump himself about it, he [described](#) it as “a significant and historic milestone” and said:

“Immediately after the elections, I will work toward implementing it from within a stable, functioning Israeli government, in tandem with the other countries in our region.”

The President himself is bound to be keen to complete the annexations before his re-election campaign, because that would please the Evangelical Christian voters who form a significant part of his electoral base – and it would ensure that, if he lost the election, his Democratic successor would be faced with a *fait accompli*.

Almost all the Democratic presidential candidates have expressed opposition to his plan: for example, Senator Elizabeth Warren [said](#):

“Trump’s ‘peace plan’ is a rubber stamp for annexation and offers no chance for a real Palestinian state. Releasing a plan without negotiating with Palestinians isn’t diplomacy, it’s a sham. I will oppose unilateral annexation in any form – and reverse any policy that supports it.”

But would a Democratic president attempt to reverse the annexations? That’s very doubtful, since it would require at

the very least the US to threaten to cut off military aid to Israel.

What is to be annexed

Under the Oslo Agreement, the Israeli-occupied West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) was divided into three areas. The largest, Area C, with around 61% of the land area is where Israel has built 130+ Jewish-only settlements.

Israel treats Area C as if its sole purpose is to serve Israeli needs, expanding settlements there relentlessly, their population having more than tripled since the Oslo Agreement was signed in 1993. Israel doesn’t consider itself obligated in any way to the estimated 200,000 Palestinians living in Area A, banning virtually all construction and development by them. When, having no other option, Palestinians build without permits, their buildings, including their living quarters, are liable to be demolished by Israel, with the residents themselves being billed for the demolition costs.

Most of the approximately 2.5 million Palestinian residents of the West Bank live in Areas A and B, which consist of 165 disconnected “islands” surrounded by land designated as part of Area C.

In total, Israel has transferred over 413,000 of its citizens into Area C. A further 209,000 Israeli citizens now live in Israeli-occupied East Jerusalem. Colonisation of occupied territory was and is contrary to international law – to be precise, it is war crime contrary to Article 8.2(b)(viii) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which states that “the transfer, directly or indirectly, by the Occupying Power of parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies” is a war crime.

Up to now, Israel has treated the settlements in Area C as extensions of its sovereign territory, applying most of its domestic laws there and allowing settlers to vote in Knesset elections. Now, the settlements are to be annexed and treated as an integral party of Israel. Here, we are talking about **all** the settlements and the land around them being annexed to Israel, not just a few located close to the Green Line. This avoids any political difficulties for an Israeli government from having to uproot Jews from outlying settlements and repatriate them to Israel.

The fact that the settlements are widely spread across the West Bank makes it difficult to construct a contiguous territory to be annexed to Israel. Nevertheless, Trump’s “vision” document claims that “approximately 97% of Israelis in the West

Bank will be incorporated into contiguous Israeli territory". But, 15 of the settlements are planned to be in enclaves within "*Palestinian territory*" with dedicated access routes connecting them to Israeli-controlled territory. (By "*Palestinian territory*", we mean the territory in the West Bank generously assigned to a Palestinian "state" by the US and Israel).

It is Trump's "vision" that this territory with its attached enclaves become sovereign Israeli territory. Conquest and a 50-year programme of colonisation is about to bear fruit for Israel.

Jordan Valley

The US has also agreed that the Jordan Valley be annexed to Israel. Trump's "vision" states bluntly:

"The Jordan Valley, which is critical for Israel's national security, will be under Israeli sovereignty." (p12)

East Jerusalem

When the US has recognised Jerusalem as Israel's capital in December 2017, it didn't formally recognise East Jerusalem as sovereign Israeli territory, even though Israel had long since treated it as such.

After capturing and occupying the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in June 1967, Israel greatly expanded the city by annexing West Bank land and applying Israeli law to the expanded city. From then on, Israel regarded the expanded Jerusalem as an integral part of Israel. This was not accepted by the Security Council, which has always regarded it (and the rest of the West Bank) as Israeli occupied territory, as did most states in the world, including the US, apart from Israel.

On Jerusalem, Trump's "*vision*" states bluntly:

"Jerusalem will remain the sovereign capital of the State of Israel, and it should remain an undivided city." (p17)

That would seem to be a statement that the US now recognises all of Jerusalem, including occupied East Jerusalem, as sovereign Israeli territory.

International reactions

The Ambassadors of three Gulf States —Oman, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates—attended the ceremony in the East Room in the White House on 28th January, when President Trump unveiled his "*vision*" for Israel/Palestine, and were publicly thanked by him for their attendance.

Afterwards, it was suggested that they attended the event because they were given the false impression that his "*vision*" included a Palestinian state with its capital in East Jerusalem, whereas in reality there is no Palestinian state and no capital in East Jerusalem.

A few days later representatives from the three states joined the other members of the Arab League in unanimously rejecting what they called the US-Israeli deal, [saying](#) that it "does not meet the minimum rights and aspirations of Palestinian people". However, no action was proposed.

The EU was unable to make an official statement criticising the US proposals because that required unanimity amongst the 27 member states. The EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell couldn't [achieve](#) unanimity because, as a result of lobbying by Israel, at least six states (including Italy, Hungary, Austria and the Czech Republic) objected.

Borrell issued a critical [statement](#) on his own, warning that "steps towards annexation, if implemented, could not pass unchallenged". Those are empty words - on the Israel/Palestine issue the EU is now paralysed.

When the Security Council held a meeting on the US/Israel proposals on 11th February, the EU was not in a position to present an official policy on the proposals.

However, a [joint statement](#) issued by Belgium, France, Germany, Estonia and Poland at the Security Council had the merit of robustly restating EU policy:

"The annexation of any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, constitutes a breach of international law, undermines the viability of the two-State solution and challenges the prospects for just, comprehensive and lasting peace. In line with international law and relevant UN Security Council resolutions, we do not recognise Israel's sovereignty over the territories occupied since 1967."

The UK, by contrast, limited itself to expressing "*concern*" at the about possible annexations.

A draft Security Council resolution critical of the US/Israel proposals was not pressed to a vote because it was not going to get the nine positive votes necessary to force the US to veto it.

The sad conclusion is that there is no pressure worthy of the name on the US/Israel that might persuade them not to go ahead with the proposed annexations.

Crimea

To say that, in the past, the US has applied double standards in its response to Russia's takeover of Crimea compared with Israel's takeover of Palestinian territories is a gross understatement.

In 1967, Israel took over territories whose populations were overwhelmingly opposed to being taken over by Israel. But no economic sanctions have ever been imposed by the US to force Israel to withdraw. Quite the contrary, Israel has been showered with US tax dollars over the years and today it receives more US aid (mostly military) than any other country in the world.

By contrast, in 2014 Russia took over Crimea whose population was both overwhelmingly Russian and overwhelmingly in favour of being taken over by Russia (and was part of Ukraine in 2014 rather than Russia because of an arbitrary decision in 1954 by the USSR Supreme Soviet to transfer it without its consent from the Russian SFSR to the Ukrainian SSR). Nevertheless, Russia was immediately subjected to economic sanctions by the US, sanctions that are still in force today.

With the President's recognition of Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights and now great swathes of the West Bank, the divergence in standards has widened further. To be consistent, the President should immediately recognise Russia's sovereignty over Crimea and lift the economic sanctions imposed on Russia because of its takeover of Crimea.

David Morrison

NEXT MONTH:

Endnote: US/Israel requirements for a Palestinian "state"

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"PRESS COUNCIL VS 'IRISH TIMES'

Phoenix, 14th February 2020:

"Has the Press Council become the editorial arbiter between the *Irish Times* and complainants who demand fairness and transparency in the 'paper of reference', as its journalists now like to describe it?

Recently, Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign spokesperson Betty Purcell threatened the newspaper with the Press Council unless it came clean on the Israeli funded visit to that country by the IT's Mark Paul and his subsequent article lionising the Israeli Defence Forces. A "clarification" was published within days acknowledging that Paul's article "involved a visit to Israel... organised and funded by the Europe Israel Press Association (see *The Phoenix*, 31/1/20).

As well, Griffith College's head of journalism and media, Dr Niall Meehan, asked the Press Council to require the IT to publish his letter about an issue close to the newspaper's editorial values and campaigning journalism, the Ryan Report into child abuse in institutions. Meehan was central to the discovery last November that the Ryan Report had overestimated the number of children in institutions (1936-1970) fourfold; the true figure is 42,000 circa, not 170,000 as initially calculated. The Commission to Inquire Into Child Abuse singled out Meehan's role as "precipitating the steps that led to the publication of the corrective material".

Strangely, the IT then refused to publish a letter from Meehan expanding on the issue and pointing to other confusing statistics. One was the number of abuse testimonies from victims heard by Ryan, and Meehan referred to different figures reported by the IT itself in the same edition (November 30), both incorrect.

More pointed was Meehan's remarks about the failure – by a variety of agencies and for a number of reasons – to report on the extent of child abuse in Protestant ethos institutions, in particular Smyly's orphanages in the Dún Laoghaire area. Meehan has written on this over a number of years.

Following a blizzard of correspondence between Meehan and the newspaper about its refusal to publish his letter, the media academic complained to the Press Council on December 16. There then followed further voluminous correspondence involving the Press Council and IT editor Paul O'Neill. Finally, on January 28, two months after the IT first reported the errors in the Ryan Report, the newspaper deigned to publish Meehan's letter of just over 400 words, tucked away in the bottom right-hand corner of the letters page.

Why must it take such tenacious efforts by an expert in the field of historic child abuse – an issue the IT has almost made its own – and similar pressure from the Press Council to force publication of a letter mildly critical of the newspaper?"

The letter (28 January 2020):

COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE CHILD ABUSE

Problems with the report of the 2009 Commission to Investigate Child Abuse (CICA, the "Ryan Report") go beyond inflating numbers detained in industrial schools and reformatories, from approximately 40,000 to over 170,000 (see *Irish Times*, 26, 27, 30th November). As acknowledged officially, I alerted CICA last May to the error, first recognised publicly by Eoin O'Sullivan in 2015.

The Commission report is unclear also on how many abuse testimonies, in total, were heard. Hence, *The Irish Times* is itself unsure. Simon Carswell wrote on November 30th that the Commission "heard evidence from almost 2,000 people". An editorial comment the same day has, "a total of 2,490".

CICA's Confidential Committee reported hearing evidence from 1,090 former residents. Investigations Committee lawyers appear to have spoken to 493 witnesses, giving a total of 1,583. Various figures can be found scattered in different parts of the 2009 Report. It is unclear if any double counting is involved. In addition to its inflated numbers I alerted CICA also to errors of omission. Its report said nothing about a matter I am researching, the extent of abuse in Protestant ethos Smyly's orphanages.

It appears that few (if any) Smyly's victims spoke to CICA. They thought it, as reported to me, a "Catholic thing" or "for Catholics". Why don't we know for sure? Testimony given to CICA was not broken down by institution. Institutional case studies were based on receiving testimony from 20 or more residents of particular institutions, 19 Roman Catholic, one state. However harrowing the experiences detailed, this self-selection methodology is not the full story.

Within a state-licensed sectarian system of welfare provision, one side of the sectarian fence was ignored. Consequently, confirmed persistent abuse in Smyly's institutions did not (and does not) feature in media reports. Protestant communities are largely unaware of it. Fate has smiled on Smyly's, if not on Artane, Goldenbridge and Letterfrack.

The problem is replicated in the Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB). Though Protestant-ethos abuse victims spoke to the RIRB, it too refuses to provide an institutional breakdown for the 15,581 people the RIRB compensated. The RIRB refuses also to state how much compensation, per institution, was paid to victims. As a result, we do not know how much Smyly's abuse cost the taxpayer.

Furthermore, unlike Roman Catholic Religious Orders, the Church of Ireland ethos institution did not contribute to the state's controversial abuse compensation fund. The entire budget of Caranua, that helps abuse victims, is drawn from that fund. Some of those assisted are from Smyly's.

It is unknown how much RC money was used to attempt restitution of Protestant-ethos abuse. That is because Caranua, too, refuses an institutional breakdown.

The government should instruct, with necessary funding, CICA, the RIRB and Caranua to provide the essential statistical information outlined here. It should never have been denied in the first place. This initiative should be in addition to reversing plans to close off research on abuse files, as proposed in the Retention of Records Bill (see Letters, 4th December).

Niall Meehan

<https://www.facebook.com/niall.meehan/posts/10163244795905294>

THE RISE AND RISE OF CHINA

When Quassem Suleimani travelled out of Iran to visit Baghdad on Friday 3rd January 2020 on a peace mission at the invitation, it is reported, of the United States, he trusted the USA not to attack him. But the USA murdered him and murdered Abu Mahdi al Muhandis and seven others who were with them at the time. The assassinations, it seems, took place outside Baghdad Airport in Iraq and a drone was used to bomb their convoy. The USA triumphantly claimed responsibility for the murderous act. President Donald Trump tweeted:

"A lot of lives would have been saved if he had been hunted down years ago" and went on to claim that the Iranian General was plotting "imminent and sinister attacks. We caught him in the act and terminated him."

The killings were in the nature of the sting of a dying wasp. The USA is no longer, and has not been for some time, the most powerful State on Earth. That distinction must rest with China.

The Chinese BeiDou satellite navigation system is the latest in their *Positioning, Navigation and Timing* (PNT) Systems. It is more advanced than the USA's Global Positioning System (GPS), the technology for which is now twenty-five years old. The GPS (USA) and GLONASS (Russia) both came into full use in 1995.

But before these systems became fully operationally in 1995, the technology had moved on because, as soon as a new weapon is invented or deployed, a new shield will be invented to counter the new weapon and so Jammers began to be used against GPS. Jammers are technology as old as radio transmission and were used in both world wars in the 20th century against radio and radar transmissions.

GPS signals are very weak, which makes it easy to jam them and so GPS was subject to jamming at an early stage in its development. But a lot of money was at stake for the US developers in the military sector and so the use of jammers was hushed up and only whispered about among technicians. However, in 1997 at

the Moscow Air Show, a Russian company 'Aviaconversia' offered for sale a portable GPS/GLONASS jammer, which consumed only 4 watts of energy and had a range of 150km to 200km. This sort of blew the cover away from GPS and GLONASS and showed that these technologies were easily disrupted.

But, for some strange reason, the reports of disruption hardly ever appeared in the public media. Huge money was being made by US companies in manufacturing and selling GPS equipment, not only to the USA and other states' military and naval forces, but also to the private maritime sector and eventually even down to wristwatch and cellphone technology. Even though the manufacturers knew that the technology was so easily disrupted. Another factor making GPS less than totally reliable for navigational use is the capability by the USA to intentionally alter the transmitted data for military purposes.

For example, at one time during the Iraq/US war, I was a guest aboard a yacht which was racing out of Crosshaven, Co. Cork in the Ford Cork Week Regatta. There was a dense sea-fog when we got to the starting line and so the start was delayed and we had to use the engine to motor up and down waiting for the fog to clear. The wind, merely a light breeze, was from NW i.e. off the shore, and so, to get a good start when the race did begin, the tactician on board wanted to stay near the shore end of the starting line. We were in quite dense fog by now. The fog signal on Roche's Point Lighthouse was sounding mournfully. I suggested, diffidently, to mind the rocks. The navigator said the GPS showed we were well off the shore in deep water and therefore were quite safe.

After a while, the offshore wind blew the sea-fog away and PANIC! We were in, of all places, Rocky Bay, with dangerous rocks all around — and this yacht drew over 2 metres in depth. The GPS showed we were several nautical miles from where we actually physically were!

We inched out of Rocky Bay and we were very lucky. We did not touch any rocks. Sailors get quite prayerful in these circumstances! At the yacht-club bar later that evening, it turned out that other yacht navigators were also using GPS that morning and someone who seemed to know what he was talking about said it was usual for the US military to degrade or alter the GPS signals when a military event was going on in Iraq, so as to confuse the enemy or to conceal what was going on.

So GPS cannot be wholly relied upon and older technologies, such as echo-

sounders and distance logs, are more reliable as well as, when the sun or the stars are visible, the use of the clock and sextant to determine approximate location.

Another reason why GPS is unreliable is the use of 'spoofing' as it is called. Spoofing occurs where receivers of GPS signals are deceived with incorrect information, which can be targeted at individual ships or tanks or at groups of ships or tanks. Iran has claimed it captured a USA drone by feeding it false information and getting the drone to land in Iran. First, the US denied this could happen. Then technology moved on and spoofing equipment has now become available to everybody. It is easy to use and cheap and can imitate a constellation of satellites.

It is not only the equipment of the USA and its allies which is falling behind Russia and China and North Korea and Iran, but also the educational level of technicians and mathematicians in the USA, France and UK and their allies is way behind. A glance at the 'Contents' page of *The Journal of Navigation*, published by Cambridge University Press, will show that ninety percent of contributors of learned articles have non-European names and most of them seem to be Asian.

China may be the furthest ahead in the PNT race to control the skies and the seas as well as the land. But Russia is more open about its prowess. Russia regularly jams or spoofs NATO exercises. GPS (USA) and GALILEO (EU) operate on precise wavelengths and the Russians are able to precisely jam and spoof on these wavelengths and at the same time operate their own GLONASS system uninterrupted.

This requires technology of a high order and Russia and China have it. Russia makes no secret of this. China is more reticent. China's BeiDou system has more satellites in the skies than GPS, in over 130 countries, and China is proposing to issue a whole new system at low level involving putting up 120 new satellites in orbit at 700 km altitude broadcasting signals at a higher power.

As China goes ahead, USA and its allies are sliding backwards. When GPS was introduced about 1995, the DECCA system throughout Western Europe was abandoned and dismantled. It had been an essential navigational system for the fishing industry and was not dependent on satellites. Then in 2010 the USA and Canada abandoned their eLoran system and the EU followed by abandoning

eLoran in 2015. China on the other hand is maintaining and strengthening Loran and other backup systems not dependent on satellites.

China's Loran system can be used not only on the oceans but also on its enormous land mass, so as to guide not only warships and tanks and other military equipment but also planes and drones in the skies overhead.

Cars, trucks, buses and ships are being designed to navigate and position themselves, based on GPS which is so vulnerable and which is operated by the US military. The US military is on record as declaring that civil use of GPS is interfering with their operations and that they will not release to civil operators any future changes to their GPS. This will of course make GPS more unreliable in civil use, and so more dangerous.

QUO VADIS?

It looks very much as if China is winning the PNT war.

Also China is winning the trade war. China's 'Belt and Road' plan is a long term plan for the next fifty to one hundred years and it is well on the way already. Costco, the Chinese transportation company, the biggest in the world, is moving in on Europe. Costco has recently bought the port of Peirais (spelled Piraeus and various other ways)—which is the port of Athens in Greece. Examination of a chart of the port shows that it is extensive at present and, significantly, that it has enormous potential for expansion on the land side as well as in the Aegean Sea. This purchase of the port is an indication of China's intent to trade directly with Europe and Africa. Piraeus will be connected by the 'Belt and Road' system with China.

And all this is happening without our media mentioning a word! I wonder why our leaders affect no interest in these developments which could go a long way to making all of us—the ordinary members of the EU—cognisant of such very important political events. Our main-stream media does not service our interests and one can only wonder about that. Maybe the Covid-19 virus, which is used relentlessly by US/UK to try and interfere with China and our perception of it—has been the retaliation China was going to get from the West all along. If so, the Chinese response will be very interesting to see and I don't think we will have to wait that long for it to happen.

Michael Stack ©.

ELECTION concluded

Limerick City (4): Outgoing TDs: Michael Noonan (FG), Jan O'Sullivan (Lab.), Maurice Quinlivan (SF), Willie O'Dea (F.F.)

Best guess: Willie O'Dea (FF) Maurice Quinlivan (SF) Kieran O'Donnell (FG) and one of the following three: Jan O'Sullivan (Lab) James Collins (FF) or Brian Leddin (GP).

2020: SF 1, FF 1, FG 1, GREENS 1. G P gain, LP loss-Jan O'Sullivan.

Limerick County (3): Outgoing TDs: Niall Collins (FF) Patrick O'Donovan (FG) Tom Neville (FG). **Best Guess:** Niall Collins (FF) Patrick O'Donovan (FG) Tom Neville (FG)

2020: FG 1, FF 1, IND. 1 (ex-FF). FG loss, Ind. gain.

Longford-Westmeath (4): Outgoing TDs: Robert Troy (FF); Kevin 'Boxer' Moran (Ind); Peter Burke (FG); Willie Penrose (Lab). **Best guess:** Fianna Fáil two; Fine Gael one; Independent one.

2020: SF 1, FF 2, FG 1. LP loss-Willie Penrose

Louth (5): Outgoing TDs: Gerry Adams (SF); Declan Breathnach (FF); Imelda Munster (SF); Peter Fitzpatrick (Ind); Fergus O'Dowd (FG). **Best guess:** Sinn Féin, Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil are certain of one seat each. After that, it's likely to be a dog-fight between the second candidate for each party, Independent Peter Fitzpatrick, and Ged Nash of Labour, for the final two seats. On the basis of the local election results, and despite the departure of Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin should take a second, with the final seat likely to go to Labour if the party has a wind behind it nationally.

2020: SF 2, FG 1, IND. 1 (ex-FG), LP gain, FF loss.

Not since the foundation of FF in 1926 has it been without a seat in Louth.

Mayo (4): Outgoing TDs: Enda Kenny (FG); Michael Ring (FG); Dara Calleary (FF); Lisa Chambers (FF). **Best Guess:** Even with impressive performers, it's hard to see either the Greens or Sinn Féin change the status quo here.

2020: FG 2, SF 1, FF 1. F.G.'s highest vote. SF gain, FF loss.

Meath East (3): Outgoing TDs: Thomas Byrne (FF), Regina Doherty (FG), Helen McEntee (FG). **Best guess:** As is. Two Fine Gael (Regina Doherty and Helen McEntee) and one Fianna Fáil (Thomas Byrne).

2020: SF 1, FG 1, FF 1. SF gain, FG loss.

Meath West (3): Outgoing TDs: Shane Cassells Fianna Fáil, Peadar Tóibín Aontú, (Ex-SF) Damien English Fine Gael. **Best Guess:** Fianna Fáil 1, Fine Gael 1, Aontú 1.

2020: SF 1, AONTU 1, FG 1. (No FF seat)

Roscommon-Galway (3): Outgoing TDs: Michael Fitzmaurice (Ind), Denis Naughten (Ind-ex FG), Eugene Murphy (FF). **Best guess:** No change.

2020: IND. 2, SF 1. SF gain, FF loss. This election is the first in Roscommon since 1922 that neither FF or FG won a seat.

Sligo-Leitrim (4): Outgoing TDs: Martin Kenny (SF), Marc MacSharry (FF), Tony McLoughlin (FG), Eamon Scanlon (FF). **Best guess:** MacSharry (FF), Harkin (IND), and two from Scanlon (FF), Kenny (SF) and Walsh (FG). Given its myriad of problems here, the sneaking suspicion is that Fine Gael could be left without a TD in Sligo for the first time in the history of the State.

2020: SF 1, FF. 1, IND. 1, FG 1. FF loss, Ind. gain.

Tipperary (5): Outgoing TDs: Jackie Cahill (FF), Alan Kelly (LP), Séamus Healy (IND), Michael Lowry (IND), Mattie McGrath (IND). **Best guess:** Michael Lowry (IND), Mattie McGrath (IND), Alan Kelly (LAB), Jackie Cahill (FF), and a close call for the fifth seat between running mates Garret Ahearn (FG), Mary Newman Julian (FG) and veteran Séamus Healy (IND).

2020: IND. 2, SF 1, FF1, LAB. 1.

Ind.loss, SF gain. No FG TD. Seamus Healy (Workers' and Unemployed Action) TD for 16 years lost out. Alan Kelly is in prime position for leadership of LP, brother of Declan Kelly, the multi-million magnate of public relations firm Teneo with global H.Q. in New York.

Waterford (4): Outgoing TDs: John Deasy (FG), Mary Butler (FF), David Cullinane (SF) and John Halligan (Ind). **Best guess:** With so many well-known names not running it is difficult to call. However, Mary Butler (FF) and David Cullinane (SF) are both likely to keep their seats. There is likely to be a Fine Gael seat here too. There will be a battle for the fourth which could see the Green Party, Labour and Independent Matt Shanahan as contenders.

2020: SF 1, FF 1, IND. 1, GREENS 1. FG without a Deputy for the first time since its foundation. The Redmond legacy looks dead and gone!

Wexford (5): Outgoing TDs: Brendan Howlin (Lab) Paul Kehoe (FG) Micheal D'Arcy (FG) Malcolm Byrne (FF) James Browne (FF). **Best guess:** All existing five TDs could be returned to the Dáil. Another scenario would see Paul Kehoe, Sinn Féin's Johnny Mythen and Verona Murphy fighting for the last seat.

2020: SF 1, LAB. 1, FF 1, FG 1, IND. 1. Mythen lost his local govt. seat in May, yet, topped the poll with double the vote of Howlin! Murphy defied the 'dare not mention brigade' on Immigration by taking the third seat—I wouldn't fancy her as a fore-woman, but her experience in trucking business around Rosslare, she just might have some idea of the impact of Immigration. Byrne, an LGBT supporter who took Mick Wallace's seat in the May by-election lost out. Howlin has resigned as leader of the LP.

Wicklow (5): Outgoing TDs: John Brady (Sinn Féin); Pat Casey (Fianna Fáil); Stephen Donnelly (Fianna Fáil); Andrew Doyle (Fine Gael); Simon Harris (Fine Gael). **Best Guess:** John Brady (Sinn Féin); Pat Casey (Fianna Fáil); Stephen Donnelly (Fianna Fáil); Simon Harris (Fine Gael). The last seat a battle between Steven Matthews (Green Party) Andrew Doyle (Fine Gael) and Billy Timmins (Fine Gael).

2020: SF 1, FG 1, SOC. DEM 1, GP 1, FF 1.

SD, GP gains, FG, FF losses. Donnelly's SD past almost came back to haunt him.

ELECTION continued

2020: FF 2, FG 1, SF 1. The Pretender to the Throne hobbles in on the 6th count! What an ego blow!

Cork South-West (3): Outgoing TDs: Jim Daly (FG), Margaret Murphy O'Mahony (FF) and Michael Collins (Ind). **Best guess:** 1 Fianna Fáil, 1 Independent and 1 Fine Gael. However, on a bad day Fine Gael could lose its seat and Fianna Fáil could win two seats.

2020: FF 1, IND. 1, SOC. DEM. 1. FG loss. Holly Cairns (SD) is the girl-friend of the successful F.F. candidate, Christopher O'Sullivan, Mayor of Co. Cork. A bolt from the blue!

Donegal (5): Outgoing TDs: Joe McHugh (FG), Pat 'The Cope' Gallagher (FF), Charlie McConologue (FF), Pearse Doherty (SF), Thomas Pringle (Ind). **Best guess:** 2 FF; 2 SF, 1 FG.

2020: SF 2, FF 1, FG 1, IND. 1. SF gain. FF loss. SF's highest vote 45.1%. Niall McConnell who styled himself as a 'Drain the Bog' candidate, running on a pro-Christian, anti-immigration ticket 580 votes.

Dublin Bay North (5)

2020: SF 1, FF 1, FG 1, Soc. Dem. 1, LP 1. The successful Soc. Dem. candidate, Cian O'Callaghan, left the Lab. Party in 2013. **LP, SD gains. 2 Indep. losses.**

Dublin Bay South (4)

2020: GP 1, SF 1, FG 1, FF 1. Turnout here fell to less than half the electorate. **SF gain, FG loss.**

Dublin Central (4): Outgoing TDs: Paschal Donohoe (FG); Mary Lou McDonald (SF); and Maureen O'Sullivan (Ind). **Best guess:** Paschal Donohoe and Mary Lou MacDonald will get a seat each for Fine Gael and Sinn Féin. The Social Democrat's Gary Gannon, Fianna Fáil's Mary Fitzpatrick and Neasa Hourigan of the Green Party are likely to be battling it out for the last two seats.

2020: SF 1, FG 1, GREENS 1, SOC. DEMS. 1. Green and SD gains. F.F.'s lowest vote 10.3% in Bertie Ahern's heartland and no seat.

Dublin Fingal (5): Outgoing TDs: Alan Farrell (FG), Darragh O'Brien (FF), Joe O'Brien (GP), Louise O'Reilly (SF), Brendan Ryan (LAB).

NOTE 1: Joe O'Brien (GP) elected after by-election in November 2019 to fill seat vacated by Clare Daly

NOTE 2: Brendan Ryan (LAB) not standing. **Best Guess:**

Darragh O'Brien (FF) and Joe O'Brien (GP) will comfortably return while Smith should hold for Labour. Fine Gael will muster a seat - with a tentative nod given to Farrell.

It's too close to call between Clifford-Lee (FF), Mulligan (Inds4Change) and O'Reilly (SF) for the final seat, with the destination of Daly's old vote the great unknown.

2020: SF 1, FF 1, GREENS 1, FG 1, LP 1. No change.

Dublin Mid-West (4): Outgoing TDs: Eoin Ó Broin (SF), Mark Ward (SF), John Curran (FF), Gino Kenny (PBP). **Best guess:** Sinn Féin's housing spokesperson Eoin Ó Broin and Fianna Fáil's spokesperson on national drugs policy John Curran are likely to retain their seats in the top two positions in Dublin Mid-West. The final two seats in the constituency are expected to be contested by Fine Gael councillor Emer Higgins, People Before Profit TD Gino Kenny, recently elected November by-election TD for Sinn Féin Mark Ward, and Independent councillor and former Green Party TD Paul Gogarty.

2020: SF 2, FG 1, PBP 1. FG gain, FF loss.

Dublin North-West (3): TDs: Róisín Shortall (SD); Noel Rock (FG); Dessie Ellis (SF).

2020: SF 1, SOC. DEMS 1; F.F. 1. FF win, FG loss. Shortall former LP. FG's lowest vote 11.1% and no seat.

Dublin Rathdown (3): Outgoing TDs: Catherine Martin (Green Party), Josepha Madigan (Fine Gael), Shane Ross (Independent). **Best guess:** Green Party TD Catherine Martin is likely to hold her seat here without too much difficulty. There is also at least one Fine Gael seat, with Josepha Madigan the likely front-runner but by no means a certainty. There will be a gripping battle for the final seat which is likely to see Shane Ross, Neal Richmond and Lettie McCarthy slug it out, with Shay Brennan not too far away. Richmond may have the edge over Ross.

2020: GREENS 1, FG 2. FG gain, Ind. loss (Shane Ross). Madigan, a gender quota candidate in 2016, first gender quota minister, daughter of Paddy Madigan, former member of F.F., a leading landlord's advocate. His wife was also a barrister and all six children entered the legal profession.

Dublin South-Central (4): Outgoing TDs: Aengus Ó Snodaigh (SF); Joan Collins (I4C); Catherine Byrne (FG); Bríd Smith (Sol-PBP). **Best guess:** One Sinn Féin, one Independent (Joan Collins), one Fianna Fáil, final seat between Fine Gael, PBP and possibly the Greens if it's a spectacular day for that party nationally.

2020: SF 1, PBP 1, GREENS 1, IFC 1. GP gain, FG loss.

Dublin South-West (5): Outgoing TDs: Colm Brophy (FG); John Lahart (FF) Katherine Zappone (Ind) Sean Crowe (SF), Paul Murphy (Sol-PBP). **Best guess:** A possible gain for Fianna Fáil or the Greens.

2020: SF 1, FG 1, FF 1, GREENS 1, RIS 1 (Paul Murphy). GP gain, Ind. loss.

Dublin West (4): Outgoing TDs: Joan Burton (LP), Jack Chambers (FF), Ruth Coppinger (Sol-PBP), Leo Varadkar (FG). **Best Guess:** Varadkar (FG), O' Gorman (GP), and Chambers (FF), with slight preference for Coppinger (SOL-PBP) over Donnelly (SF) and Burton (LAB).

2020: SF 1, FG 1, FF 1, GREENS 1. SF, GP gains, SPBP, LP loss Joan Burton.

Dun Laoghaire (4): Outgoing TDs: Sean Barrett (FG), Maria Bailey (FG), Mary Mitchell O'Connor (FG), Richard Boyd Barrett (PBP). **Best guess:** A possible gain for Fianna Fáil and the Greens.

2020: PBP 1, GREENS 1, FG 1, FF 1. A Trotskyist tops the poll and SF records its lowest vote 9.6%.
FF, GP gains, 2 FG losses.

Galway East (3): Outgoing TDs: Ciaran Cannon (FG); Anne Rabbitte (FF) and Seán Canney (Ind). **Best Guess:** 1 FF; 1 FG; 1 Ind. **Three sitting T.D.s returned.**

Galway West (5): Current TDs: Eamon O Cuiv (FF) Sean Kyne (FG) Hildegard Naughton (FG) Noel Grealish (Ind), Catherine Connolly (Ind).

Best guess: FF 1, FG 1, Ind 2, GP 1. Connolly was ex-LP.

2020: FF 1, SF 1, IND. 1, FG 1, IND. 1.

SF gain, FG loss. Mairead Farrell (SF) is a niece of the late Mairead Farrell shot dead in Gibraltar in 1988. *Irish Times* claims Grealish's remarks on African Asylum seekers helped rather than hindered his election.

Kerry (5): Outgoing TDs: Michael Healy-Rae (IND) Danny Healy-Rae (IND) Martin Ferris (SF) Brendan Griffin (FG) John Brassil (FF). For the first time in 87 years the Labour party had no candidate on the ballot paper in Kerry for a General Election. **Best guess:** Michael Healy-Rae (IND) Danny Healy-Rae (IND), Brendan Griffin (FG) John Brassil (FF) and either Pa Daly (SF) or Norma Foley (FF).

2020: IND. 2, SF 1, FG 1, FF 1. Norma replaced John Brassil for the FF seat.

Kildare North (4): Outgoing TDs: Catherine Murphy (Social Democrats) Bernard Durkan (Fine Gael), James Lawless (Fianna Fáil) and Frank O'Rourke (Fianna Fáil). **Best Guess:** 1 SD, 2 FF, FG should win a seat here but the question is which one of its candidates will win, also you can't rule out the Greens.

2020: SOC. DEM. 1, SF 1, FF 1, FG.

SF gain, FF loss. Emmet Stagg (LP) eliminated second count.

Kildare South (4): Outgoing TDs: Seán Ó Feargháil (FF), Fiona O'Loughlin (FF) and Martin Heydon (FG). **Best Guess:** Seán Ó Fearghail as former Ceann Comhairle will be automatically returned. Fiona O'Loughlin Fianna Fáil, and Martin Heydon Fine Gael are safe here and there will be a battle for the last seat between Mark Wall of Labour and Patricia Ryan of Sinn Féin with the Greens and Independents muddying the waters as well.

2020: SF 1, FG 1, IND. 1. FF loss, Ind. gain. Cathal Berry, the successful Independent spent 23 years in the Irish army before qualifying as a GP.

Laois-Offaly (5): Outgoing TDs: Barry Cowen (FF), Charlie Flanagan (FG), Sean Fleming (FF), Carole Nolan (Independent-ex SF) and Brian Stanley (SF). As Barry Cowen noted in his campaign launch, any election where Fianna Fáil won three seats in Laois-Offaly they ended up in government.

2020: SF 1, FF 2, FG 1, IND. 1.

ELECTION continued

ship were completely dysfunctional from any "class politics" point of view. The working class treated them accordingly with contempt. Labour was down to one TD in Dublin by 1963.

But Labour made FF, providing much of its programme in the 1920s and keeping Dev in power in the 1930s. It then transitioned to an anti-FF mudguard for FG from the late 1940s, down to today. Prior to that it had complemented FF, giving it the details of welfare state policy.

What is it now for? On the plus side Labour championed British style socialism in Ireland—or at least the welfare state bit of it. It abandoned the unions and the economy in focusing solely on issues of poverty and public services. But it kept these things on the agenda though thick and thin, which FF then implemented under pressure from it. When it was in government in the Inter-Party period, the 1970s and 1980s, it certainly expanded the welfare state. In the 1990s it updated all the equality stuff. Since then it's been purely 'FG light', epitomised by Rabbitte and Gilmore. Once FG itself became 'FG light', what purpose Labour?

In a nutshell, Labour is a Treaty party and never got fully over that mentality.

Alan Kelly wants to go "back to the Labour roots": it could start by reading Fr. Sean Healy's call for "a new era of social dialogue" in the business pages of the *Irish Independent*, 13.2.2020.

Aontu

The leader of Aontú has said, despite not reaching 2% of first preference votes in the General Election, that they are "delighted" at the support they've received from the electorate. Aontú received over 50,000 votes in the General Election.

Although the party will miss out on State funding, which was just 0.1% from their grasp, Peadar Tóibín TD was positive about the party's future.

"Obviously we're a brand new political party, we're not funded by the state whatsoever, we were locked out of most of the media debates, and yet we managed against all the odds to actually build a political party", he told *The Irish Catholic*.

Although Mr. Tóibín is still the only TD in his party, he explained they are building up support, saying:

"We have really good results down in the likes of Cavan, Monaghan, in Cork North-West, in Mayo, we have good foundations in other places such as Donegal and more."

2018 Abortion Referendum

An interesting trend in the General Election results: In the final Dáil vote on legalising abortion in 2018 (revoking the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution), 15 TDs voted against this Bill. Each was re-elected in last month's General Election. Several of them topped the poll.

It's remarkable that not one of them lost their seat in an unpredictable election with a massive move towards change and Sinn Féin.

Meanwhile, many high-profile TDs who had been most vocal and active in favour of legalising abortion lost their seats, including Joan Burton, Jan O'Sullivan, Catherine Noone, Kate O'Connell, Ruth Coppinger, Regina Doherty and Katherine Zappone.

The Millennials

According to Gerry Kearns of Maynooth University fewer than half of Sinn Féin voters had given the party support at the previous election (45%) and, indeed, some 16% of Sinn Féin voters had switched from Fine Gael and 11% from Fianna Fáil (*Irish Times*, 20.2.2020). In the same-sex marriage referendum on 22nd May 2015—Thirty-fourth Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland—the turnout was 61%. Last month's turnout was 63%. Does that not debunk the 'Youth vote' baloney?

Voter Turnout since 2002:

2002: 63%; 2007: 67%;
2011: 70%; 2016: 65%;
2020: 63%

(*CONSTITUENCIES*: (There are 39 multi-member constituencies, that elect 160 TDs (Ceann Comhairle is automatically returned). (*Projected Election results are by RTE.*)

Carlow-Kilkenny (5): Fianna Fáil is pushing for three seats in this 5 seat constituency. Fine Gael (with two outgoing TDs) and Sinn Féin (with one TD) are battling to hold what they have, writes Conor McMorow. **Outgoing TDs**: Pat Deering (FG), Kathleen Funchion (SF), John Paul Phelan (FG), John McGuinness (FF), Bobby Aylward (FF). **Best guess** is 2 FF, 2 FG and 1 SF.

2020: FF 2, FG 1, SF 1, GREENS 1.
FG loss.

Cavan-Monaghan (5): **Outgoing TDs**: Heather Humphreys (FG), Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin (SF), Brendan Smith (FF), Niamh Smyth (FF). **Best guess**: Heather Humphreys (FG), Matt Carthy (SF), Brendan Smith (FF), Niamh Smyth (FF) and one from Robbie Gallagher (FF), TP O'Reilly (FG) and Pauline Tully (FG).

2020: FF 2, SF 2; FG 1. SF gain.

Clare (4): **Outgoing TDs**: Pat Breen (Fine Gael); Joe Carey (Fine Gael); Timmy Dooley (Fianna Fáil); Dr Michael Harty (Independent) **Best guess**: Pat Breen TD (FG); Timmy Dooley TD (FF) and Cllr Cathal Crowe (FF). The last seat will be a real battle between Joe Carey (FG) and Michael McNamara (Ind). **SF gain; FG loss.**

2020: FF 2, FG 1, SF 1, IND. 1
(McNamara-ex LP).
SF gain; FG loss.

Cork East (4): **Outgoing TDs**: Kevin O'Keeffe (FF) Sean Sherlock (LP) David Stanton (Fine Gael) and Pat Buckley (Sinn Féin). **Best guess**: FF 2; FG 1; LP 1.

2020: FF 1, FG 1, SF, LP 1. No change.

Cork North-Central (4): **Outgoing TDs**: Mick Barry (Sol/PBP), Dara Murphy (FG), Jonathan O'Brien (SF), Pádraig O'Sullivan (FF). **Best guess**: Fianna Fáil's Pádraig O'Sullivan should be able to repeat his by-election performance. There is also a Fine Gael seat here too with Colm Burke the frontrunner. Thomas Gould from Sinn Féin should retain the seat held by Jonathan O'Brien. The last seat is likely to be a fight between Solidarity's Mick Barry, John Maher from the Labour Party, and the Green Party's Oliver Moran. If the results of the by-election carry forward, Labour's John Maher could snatch this seat from Mick Barry.

2020: FF 1, FG 1, SF 1, Solidarity 1.
FF cock-up deprived them of a seat.

Cork North-West (3): **Outgoing TDs**: Michael Creed (FG), Michael Moynihan (FF), Aindrias Moynihan (FF) **Best guess**: Barring a major upset, Cork North West will remain a three-seat carve-up between Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil. The only question is which party will have two seats and which will have one when the votes are counted.

2020: FF 2, FG 1. All outgoing T.D.s elected. FF's highest vote 39.4%. The Aontu candidate polled 3,877. No SF candidate.

Cork South-Central (4): **Outgoing TDs**: Simon Coveney (Fine Gael), Mícheál Martin (Fianna Fáil), Michael McGrath (Fianna Fáil), Donnchadh Ó Laoghaire (Sinn Féin). **Best guess**: Mícheál Martin, Michael McGrath and Simon Coveney should all be elected without difficulty. The fourth and final seat is likely to be a contest between Sinn Féin's Donnchadh Ó Laoghaire, Fine Gael's Jerry Buttimer and Green Party councillor Lorna Bogue. This will be a nail-biter, and if Coveney and Buttimer don't manage their vote, Bogue could just have the edge.

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ELECTION continued

The biggest cock-up of all in Michael's master plan was the hounding of Kenneth O'Flynn out of the party in Cork North-Central, following his election as Alderman in the May local elections, and then putting up three candidates — Flynn stood as an Independent and received almost 4,000 first preferences, leaving the other two FF candidates trailing, until he was eliminated in the last count.

In response to Fianna Fáil leader Micheál Martin's claim that Fine Gael was the party of privilege, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar suggested there has never been "class war in Irish politics and it shouldn't start now".

There was a further shock for the FF party in Louth where outgoing TD Declan Breathnach lost his seat, meaning the party has no TD in the Border constituency, nor has the party a seat in Bertie Ahern's old heartland in Dublin Central. That's bad enough, but Ms McDonald, the kingmaker is now top dog in Bertie's Drumcondra. Dublin Mid-West relates the same sad story of decline. The same in Dublin Rathdown. Dublin South-Central, Meath West, and Roscommon-Galway all strongholds of old Fianna Fail.

"Micheal Martin and FF were a one-man show. It was another risky move which risked boring voters and wearing out the artist" (Mandy Johnston is former government press secretary for Fianna Fail.)

Micheal himself created history as the first FF leader not to top the poll in his own constituency, having to wait for the sixth count.

Fianna Fail have now the second lowest number of seats in the party's history — surpassed only by the disastrous 2011 election with 20 seats.

Kerry TD John Brassil lost his seat and was replaced by running mate Norma Foley.

In Carlow-Kilkenny, Bobby Aylward lost his seat after one term in the Dáil. His brother Liam Aylward served in a number of ministries during his Dáil career.

Mr. Aylward's seat was taken by Fianna Fáil Senator, Jennifer Murnane O'Connor. It was Ms Murnane O'Connor's second attempt to win a seat after narrowly losing

out in 2016. She is a close political ally of long-serving Carlow-Kilkenny TD, John McGuinness, who also retained his seat.

In Meath West, Shane Cassells lost his seat. Eugene Murphy also lost his seat to a Sinn Féin candidate in Roscommon-Galway.

Fiona O'Loughlin lost her seat in Kildare South. Long-serving Fianna Fáil TD and MEP, Pat 'The Cope' Gallagher, will not return to the Dáil. He was first elected in 1981. Former Minister of State John Curran was also unsuccessful, as was Frank O'Rourke in Kildare North.

"We came into office to take over an army that had been opposed to us in a civil war, a police force that had been organised by our opponents in a civil war, a civil service that was built up during ten years of our opponents' regime" (*De Valera*, 8.11.1933).

Martin's leadership

Fianna Fail is in political disarray, but that was not begun by Martin: it began when the crisis in the North broke out in 1969, and Jack Lynch's feeble and inadequate response. Haughey attempted to instil the spirit of the party's founding fathers and got nothing but grief in return.

Roy Foster was hailed by former Taoiseach, Enda Kenny as the "*supreme Irish historian*", the sophisticated peddler of fake history, supported by the academic industry and the Dublin media, and a substantial element of Iveagh House. Martin has gone along with this guff.

Fianna Fail has now repudiated its anti-Treaty, slightly constitutional, origins as defenders of the Republic established in January 1919 on the foundation of the Election of December 1918. This was done in effect under Bertie Ahern and was decisively confirmed by Micheál Martin. The repudiation was not done by Proclamation supported by reasons. It was announced discreetly in letters to the press by party intellectual Martin Mansergh.

The Irish State has been in flight from the memory of itself for two generations.

The political sucker punch of February 8th will undoubtedly revive the memory of many thinking members of Fianna Fail: even if it fails to move party leader, Martin!

"For the first time in Irish history, every single one of Ireland's 32 counties is represented by an elected Sinn Féin T.D., M.P. or M.L.A."

Labour Party

Labour: 1st Pref				
2002	2007	2011	2016	2020
11%	10%	19%	7%	4.5%
Labour: Seats				
21	20	37	7	6

In 2011, the Labour Party won 37 seats: in 2020 Sinn Féin won 37, but what a contrast in the reaction to the two parties. Labour was taken for granted in 2011, we all knew where the 37 were bound, foremost in that decision were the rump from Democratic Left—had Labour a modicum of political spine, they would have gone into opposition: they would have been the official Opposition for the first time in their history, the only alternative would have been a FF/FG Government, yes, possibly an early election would have followed, but that is what politics is all about, leadership and vision you allow for such a contingency but alas! A measure of that party's predictability was in the TV debates when Micheal Martin mentioned a possible revival of Labour's fortunes.

February the Eighth marked the lowest number of seats ever attained by the Labour Party in Leinster House.

Since the 1970s at the latest, all Irish parties have not been so much "centrist" as offering competing versions of social democracy. Apart from the PDs' pretence at such a stance, Ireland has never produced a convincing liberal or neo-liberal party. But the Civil War trumps everything. This is still a row over maximising state sovereignty and how far you dare to go with it. Labour are pessimists on that front, still essentially Treatyites.

As a competitor within the social democratic spectrum, Labour has been handicapped by its Treatyism and "anti-nationalism". For decades it has obsessed over "*keeping Fianna Fail out*", with a bizarre narrative about FF as uniquely "*evil*" needing to be excluded from power (a term actually used by the Conor Cruise O'Brien, and the Democratic Left element). They just couldn't see the wood for the trees. Their opposition to Lemass's tripartism and Haughey's Social Partner-

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**LABOUR**

Comment

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2020 GENERAL ELECTION TO 33rd DAIL

(Saturday, February 8, 2020)

Irish General Election

Seats	FF	SF	FG	GP	LP	SD	S/PBP	IND./Oth.
160	38	37	35	12	6	6	5	21

It goes without saying that this was an extraordinary election with a surprise performance by Sinn Féin who were as surprised as anybody else by the result! Is it a flash in the pan or a real break with the two party system? Or will it be replaced by another two party system with SF being

one and Fine Gael the only other, obviously conservative, party?

That will be determined by how Fianna Fáil and SF relate to each other. Can SF steal FF's clothes or vice versa? and more especially those of the FF that turned the State into a progressive and independent

country following the Party's foundation in 1926? One or the other has to happen but there is no indication that either leadership can bring that to fruition and, if that remains so, that could mean FG are the long term winners in party terms.

1st Pref %	SF	FF	FG	GP	LP	SD	S/PBP	IND./Oth.
	24.5	22.2	0.9	7.1	4.4	2.9	2.6	15.4

These are extraordinary figures. Indeed, eight months previously, the party that lost half its Local Government seats attained the highest number of First Preference votes. Throughout the various debates there was little or no worthwhile discussion of Brexit, the North, the EU or Globalisation—not a whimper regarding Immigration—the electorate appeared to be out for blood and to give FF and FG a good kick in the political behind.

Fianna Fáil losses

Fine Gael lost 15 seats; Fianna Fáil lost 6 seat—Thirteen sitting Fianna Fáil TDs have lost their seats.

The two biggest upsets were Clare TD Timmy Dooley, and Mayo's Lisa Chambers.

Timmy Dooley was a major casualty. However, his running mate, Clare County Councillor, Cathal Crowe, was elected. Mr Crowe made national headlines when he announced he was boycotting a State commemoration of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

F. Fail	2002	2007	2011	2016	2020
1st Pref	41%	42%	17%	24%	22%
Seats:	81	78	20	44	38

In Cork, two Fianna Fáil TDs were replaced by their running mates. Prominent Cork South-West TD Margaret Murphy

O'Mahony, a favourite of the leadership, lost her seat. However, Fianna Fáil councillor and Mayor of Cork County Christopher O'Sullivan was elected. Mr. O'Sullivan's partner, Holly Cairns, who was running for the Social Democrats, also won a Dáil seat.

In Cork East, Kevin O'Keeffe lost his seat. The one-term TD is the son of long-serving Fianna Fáil politician, Ned O'Keeffe. Kevin was out of kilter with the New Age Fianna Fáil profile of leader Martin. He was replaced in the constituency by 22-year-old Fianna Fáil councillor James O'Connor in his first attempt to win a Dáil seat. O'Connor is a Trinity man and has a family background in Fine Gael.

Mr. O'Connor is in tune with Fianna Fáil leader Micheál Martin and justice spokesman Jim O'Callaghan—all compatible with the new Fianna Fáil bloodline.

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