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Part 1

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# IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

August 2022

Vol.37 No.8 ISSN 0790-7672

and *Northern Star* incorporating *Workers' Weekly* Vol.36 No.8 ISSN 954-5891

## Irish Media: Culture War!

Ireland is a neutral State in which neutrality enjoys the force of tradition and has the backing of a clear majority of the electorate. As a means of allaying public concerns that neutrality might be abandoned, a triple lock defence was introduced following the rejection of the EU's Nice Treaty by referendum in 2001. The triple lock means that Irish Defence Forces cannot serve abroad without the approval of the Government, the Dáil and the UN Security Council.

Since February 24th the *Irish Times* has championed the NATO narrative of the Ukraine War. Taking such a stance in Ireland signifies a deeper commitment to the Western Alliance than the dutiful war propaganda being produced in NATO countries; it signifies intent to undermine the existing policy and bring Ireland into the NATO fold, if not in name, then in substance.

The stance of the paper is of course closely attuned to the will of the Government but the paper has been an instigator and an influencer rather than a reflector of national opinion in recent decades. The following is the first paragraph of a recent editorial:

"In 1970, when Germany signed a contract for the first major Russia-Germany gas pipeline, its government promised NATO, worried about strategic dependence on Moscow, that it would never allow its reliance on Russian gas to go above 10 per cent" (21 July 2022).

This statement is breath-taking in the way it treats the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 as though it never happened. In 1970 NATO was a defence alliance. In the decades following 1991, after its reason for existence had disappeared, and for reasons privy to the US political and military leadership, the Alliance spurned requests

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## Whither the Protocol?

The Northern Ireland Protocol is a conundrum. But, like vacuums, nature abhors conundrums. How to have two Customs Unions operating in the same place at the same time? Which means essentially two States competing for power in the same territory. That cannot go on indefinitely and the ambiguity has to be resolved: Deciding who is in ultimate political control cannot be put off forever.

According to the Protocol the EU has that position of control in matters of trade with the EU: the European Court of Justice is the final arbitrator in disputed trade matters between it and Northern Ireland, even though it is not in the EU. The Protocol providing for this arrangement has been agreed in a Treaty between it and the UK and forms the legal basis of the Protocol.

However, the UK plans to break that Treaty, according to a Bill going through Westminster, as it is a hindrance to trade within the UK. The Bill plans a war of

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## Remembering David Trimble

Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble got the Nobel Peace Prize for allowing himself to be intimidated by Prime Minister Tony Blair into not rejecting the agreement made between Blair and the IRA for a re-structuring of the Northern Ireland system of the British state into a kind of federal arrangement between

the two national communities in it, which ensured that in future neither of them would be in a position of governing the other, and that, when there was a devolved Government, each of them would run bits of it on a par with the other, regardless of electoral returns. This system replaced Direct Rule from Westminster.

There-made Northern Ireland was then set in Constitutional aspic so that there could be peace.

It is necessary to remind ourselves of what the Agreement actually was, in the face of the propaganda barrage of two states which tells us that it was something entirely different.

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

Statement: 1914

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from Russia to integrate with the West, and instead expanded eastwards through accepting former Warsaw Pact countries into membership and creating military bases on their territories.

Referring to agreements made during the Soviet period as being relevant to the present crisis with regard to Russia is like treating modern Germany as a continuation of the Third Reich. The regime operating in Russia in 1970 was entirely different, constitutionally and politically, to that which came into being in 1991. And NATO, when it was a defensive alliance, was qualitatively different to the organisation that purposefully created antagonistic relations with Russia in the late 1990s and throughout the 2000s, probably under the influence of Zbigniew Brzezinski's strategic thinking.

The *Irish Times* is pro-NATO, and it is also a firm supporter of the game being played by the von der Leyen Commission in Brussels. On the first day of the War, von der Leyen proclaimed that EU Sanctions

will have the aim of gradually destroying the industrial base of the Russian economy. When Russia took defensive measures, she complained that "*Russia is blackmailing us. Russia is using energy as a weapon*" (NBC News, 21 July).

Maybe economic measures were not the panacea she thought they were!

Having ditched the Christian Democratic approach that characterised the Brussels institutions in their formative years, the Commission has filled the ensuing vacuum with doctrinaire liberalism in which hatred of Russia—Russophobia—became a convenient means of whipping up emotion. But such ideological posturing, especially when it is little more than a cover for abject subservience to the US, is not the stuff that will engender a European *demos*.

On July 20th the Commission initiated a *European Directive* to force a reduction in gas consumption in all EU States from August through to March. It contained a provision for the Commission to shift rationing from voluntary to mandatory ac-

tions. Meeting as the *European Council* on July 26th, the Energy Ministers of the EU approved the draft legislation but scrapped the provision for the Commission to assume mandatory powers. The national Governments have sensibly decided to retain control of their energy policies rather than ceding it to an executive body with an ideological agenda.

This will be a disappointment to the *Irish Times*. The editorial referred to above concludes as follows:

“But, crucially, Putin has demonstrated his ability to weaponise energy exports by stymying Europe’s ability to comfortably fill gas storages ahead of the winter, leverage that he will use again to divide European capitals. That reality has prompted the EU Commission to call on member states to cut consumption over the next eight months by 15 per cent. It is likely to propose mandatory measures to energy ministers next week” (21 July).

Von der Leyen wanted the Member States to entrust their energy supplies to the care of her Commission; they have turned her down. Europhile expectations, including those of the *Irish Times* editorial writer, have once again proved to be unrealistic.

In line with its historical roots, the paper abhors the idea of an Irish State conducting its affairs as an independent Republic. Since Brexit has closed off the possibility of the State becoming a British satellite, the EU has become the best hope of an external entity that might subsume the force of upstart nationalism. But the Europhiles at the *Irish Times* are pursuing a will-o'-the-wisp. Since Brussels became addicted to market fundamentalism and all that goes with it, the idea of a European superstate has become pie in the sky.

The EU is an association of states with developed national cultures. The peoples of the EU, whatever about their disconnected elites, still live through the medium of national culture and will continue to do so for as long as anyone can see into the future. When the EU makes progress, as when it created the single currency, it is by dint of being consonant with national interests.

If the *Irish Times* intelligentsia desires to make this country more European, they should look to the national tradition. Our most European of political leaders, Charles Haughey, was steeped in that tradition.

**RECENT MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS**

The *Irish Times* has backed a loser in

plumping for the von der Leyen Commission, and it is snubbing the pro-neutrality majority in the electorate by uncritically championing NATO's narrative, but, judging by recent developments in the strange world of Irish media, we shouldn't be surprised that editors and opinion formers are becoming disorientated. It seems that the Irish media industry as a whole is unable to honestly diagnose its own problems.

An article reviewing the *Digital News Report Ireland 2022* by Dr. Dawn Wheatley, a media specialist at Dublin City University, had the title, "*Our news media are not perfect, but we should resist importing partisan conflict*" (IT, 15 June). The gist of the piece was her belief that Irish media tend not to fuel the sort of divisions that appeared in 2016 with events like the Brexit vote and the election of Donald Trump.

Around the same time a controversy blew up when *Dublin Pride* dissolved its media partnership with RTE because the transgender issue had been debated on Joe Duffy's *Liveline* radio programme in a manner unacceptable to the LGBTQ+ community.

The controversy drew staunchly ideological responses from Jennifer O'Connell and Una Mulally in the *Irish Times*, both repeating the argument that transgender debates being conducted in the US and Britain should not be imported into Ireland. O'Connell said:

"While other countries were getting caught up in toxic culture wars in recent years, Ireland was making peaceful and uneventful progress towards a more inclusive society for trans people" (IT, June 18).

Describing how she had led a workshop informing journalists about the transgender discourse, Mulally said:

"Along the way, I've implored journalists to understand how inauthentic discourse can cascade, how right-wing fearmongering and manufactured moral panics can often take on the facade of reasonable debate, and how Irish media must utilise common sense to understand that our reality—where the Gender Recognition Act has existed in legislation for seven years—does not need to fold in on itself by importing phony discourse" (IT, 20 June).

Then in July the media was once again in the news. After sitting on the Report of the *Future of Media Commission* for almost a year, the Government published it on 12th July. According to itself the Report is "*one of the most comprehensive examinations of the media system ever*

## Power Politics

I refer to Roger White's letter in July *Irish Political Review*, *Russia And The Ukraine*. Here it is stated that Russia threatened to detonate a

"...nuclear bomb off the coast of Donegal to create a 200 metre high tsunami wave to destroy both Ireland and Britain. The Russians broadcast that possible military action a number of weeks ago on Russian State TV. They threatened to obliterate Ireland as collateral damage in the destruction of the old Cold War enemy Britain..."

This is a tendentious account of what transpired. In fact, a television programme pointed out that, in the event of the Ukrainian conflict escalating into wider hostilities, the Russians had the power to annihilate Britain, with Ireland as collateral damage:

And, in fact, it was not the Kremlin that mentioned the threat. It was a Russian television programme with invited television personalities.

The youtube link is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-JN5yVfB34>

Eileen Courtney

*undertaken in the State*", its key issue being how public service journalism is to be funded now that a large portion of advertising revenue has switched to the tech companies behind social media.

What is noticeable in all this debate on the media's role is that the real problems are never mentioned.

### FALSE DISCOURSE

Arguments from Wheatley, O'Connell and Mulally about preventing the import of culture wars from the US and Britain are rich to say the least. In the last fifty years there hasn't been a scrap of thought in the Irish media space that hasn't been imported from the Anglosphere. Neo-liberalism, the LGBT agenda, sympathy for NATO, anti-Catholicism, anti-nationalism, have all been pushed relentlessly while issues like the Mother and Baby Homes have been used to discredit Independent Ireland.

Dr. Wheatley presents the cohesion of the Irish media as a good thing when, really, the public here is being short changed by not having access to different perspectives. Anyone who dissents from the prevailing '*cohesion*' is treated as a troglodyte. Such a media regime must be having harmful effects, whether by giving disproportionate prominence to certain viewpoints, causing disaffection among conservatives, fomenting group-think, or curtailing mental freedom. The partisan culture wars in the US and Britain have deeper causes than the existence of conservative media: and placing all the blame on conservatives is itself an instance of partisanship. Liberal intolerance on issues like abortion is at least part of the problem.

The controversy over how the transgender issue is debated highlights the excessive power enjoyed by LGBT rights advocates in the *Irish Times* and elsewhere. As this is being written, it has been announced that the Tavistock Centre in London, a clinic providing a "*Gender Identity Development Service*", is being decommissioned by the National Health Service in Britain following an official investigation. In an article headed "*We will look back with horror at the mutilation of children done in the name of medicine*", Suzanne Moore writes:

"This rush to put someone on a medical pathway (puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, double mastectomy) at an age when they could not possibly understand the irreversibility of some parts of the treatment was mutilation done in the name of medicine... Groupthink and the importation of a particular ideology about gender identity prevailed, much to the dismay of brave souls such as Sonia Appleby who spoke up about it" (*Daily Telegraph*, 28 July).

There have been others in Britain—children's author, Rachel Rooney, and novelist, J.K. Rowling, deserve special mention—who have been subjected to witch-hunts because they dared to question the validity of transgender ideology. The key point is that malpractice has been made possible because of fear generated by the LGBT lobby.

In wanting to close down debate on the issue, Mulally and O'Connell were promoting the sort of groupthink that facilitated the '*service*' being provided at the Tavistock Centre. No counter balance was provided by the *Irish Times* to their articles.

## THE DEMONISATION OF SINN FEIN

Sinn Féin Councillor Mícheál Mac Donncha posted the following on his Facebook Page on July 26th.

“RTÉ just can’t help themselves can they? Their new *‘Reeling in the Years’* series 2011 episode, in covering the general election that year, never mentions that Sinn Féin went from 5 Dáil seats to 14, including Gerry Adams. But blanket coverage of the English monarch’s visit of course.”

It is an apt comment and a reminder of other failings of the Irish media: pro-British leanings and bias against Sinn Féin. Following a honeymoon period after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, all branches of the media participated in a campaign accurately described as the demonisation of Sinn Féin, a campaign that invariably intensifies at Election time. That it has been counterproductive is evidenced by current Opinion Poll ratings with Sinn Féin on 36%, Fine Gael on 20% and Fianna Fáil on 17%. At the least these figures show a level of distrust between public and media.

So, a less than complete list of problematic areas for the Irish media might include the following: pro-NATO bias and an absence of coverage of the case for neutrality, despite its majority backing; misplaced faith in further EU integration; antipathy to the republican/nationalist origins of the State; abandonment of the journalistic standards achieved by earlier generations, especially those of the *Irish Press*; excessive reliance on UK and American media culture; lack of conservative, as against progressive, representation; excessive power enjoyed by the LGBT lobby; bias against Sinn Féin; and a failure inside the industry to acknowledge these problems.

Notwithstanding the above, in the circumstances that unreliable social media, controlled by US tech firms, has become increasingly influential, there is a case to be made for having a publicly-funded news service staffed by experienced journalists dedicated to the public good.

The Future of Media Commission proposed the adoption of an "*explicit tax approach*" encompassing, "*a stand-alone media tax or an integrated tax that is classified as a core expenditure item which is funded out of general taxation*" (IT, 12 July). This would have the purpose of making up the shortfall created by the loss of advertising revenue to social media.

An appropriate response by taxpayers to that proposal might be: *‘sort out your profession and we’ll consider it!’*

## Whither the Protocol?

continued

attrition against the Protocol. The *‘Henry VIII’* clauses in the current Bill are designed to do this—and they are aptly so named in this instance, as he began the original English war against European influence in Britain.

The British plan is to whittle away the Protocol by *‘salami tactics’* until the sausage is no more. And all good dialecticians know that increasing quantitative change leads to qualitative change at some point, i.e. in this instance there is no more sausage or Protocol!

How could this be stopped? The EU and Ireland appeal to the sanctity of law and the reputational damage to the State that does such a thing. The UK does not mind this. It’s water off a duck’s back, especially in the case of any negative judgement from the European Court of Justice. They have just broken World Trade Organisation rules by extending steel tariffs against China. Anybody with any knowledge of the UK’s history should not be surprised at this: especially with regard to Ireland, beginning at Limerick *circa* 1690.

All States which believe that it’s in their interest to break *‘international law’* will do so, if they can. Like the UK they could quote the legal right of *necessity*. And Might is Right in this area.

Such issues are usually resolved by war. Law is severely limited in international relations, to the point of being non-existent when convenient.

In this case it would entail a Trade War launched by the EU to enforce its legal rights and a repudiation of the Withdrawal Agreement that it made with the UK. That could develop into a full scale Trade War between the EU as a whole and the UK. And that could mean tariff barriers across the board, inevitably meaning that the trade border with Ireland would be along the Irish land border. Gone would be the seamless travel across the Border, which has so far survived Brexit.

Another major consequence would be that the EU would insist on its own State Aid and VAT rules applying in Northern Ireland, even though it is not in the EU.

Is the EU willing to undertake such a trade war? And would it relish such a war in present circumstances, in which Europe proclaims political unity with the UK as

vital to cope with the alleged threat to Europe and the world posed by Putin?

Would all 27 Member States upset their trading relations with Britain, and would they all welcome the consequent breach in relations—especially those in Eastern Europe who see Britain as their leader against Putin? Would all put their money where their mouths are? Would Ireland—as the best boy in the EU class on the Ukraine issue, as with many others—welcome this development?

The EU assumes that its members would be of one mind, as they agreed some time ago the terms of the mandate on which it negotiates. However, it might be advisable for the EU leaders to get that mandate renewed to see if it still applies in the context of a serious confrontation with the UK over the Protocol.

Taoiseach Bertie Ahern spelt out the problem recently:

“If we were to get to a position that the bill is passed and that there’s no checks at all coming into Northern Ireland... that is a position that isn’t sustainable by the European Union. That would raise the question of what happens in the single market in Northern Ireland”, he said. “Then the argument is where are the checks done for the Republic of Ireland? Are they done in ports in Europe? If there’s no land border, where does that go? That would ultimately raise the question of the single market in the Republic. So all these things are slippery slopes” (*Sunday Business Post*, 22.6.22).

The slippery slope for Ireland is to have to choose between a land border with the UK in Ireland, to protect the Single Market here, or a border with the EU Single Market in mainland Europe, with Customs checks on Irish goods entering it. Ireland would then be effectively outside the Single Market.

The choice that dare not speak its name is in the offing! But who would propose the necessary border? The old *raison d’etre* of Northern Ireland—being used to influence Southern Irish politics—reasserts itself with a vengeance!

Great hope has been placed in the resignation of Boris Johnson as providing an escape from this dilemma! But the Second Reading of the Protocol Bill passed with a ‘comfortable’ majority. And it went through its Committee Stage without amendment, as the Brexiteers see its passing as the final act of their successful campaign. And they were supported by their traditional Unionist sympathisers, who have not gone away!

Many nationalists console themselves

with the thought that English Unionists are prepared to treat N. Ireland as a backyard, and that's true—but they also regard it as *their* backyard. And backyards can have many uses.

All candidates in the contest to replace Johnson pledged to see the anti-Protocol Bill become law. And, as Minister Liz Truss has got the Bill this far, she is very likely to see it through if elected leader, or if she is in the new Cabinet. She has the zeal of the convert. And she is very likely to beat the very rich, very well-educated, and very clever bean-counter.

Then the ball will be clearly in the Commission's court and any reliance on legal efforts alone to counter it will look rather pathetic.

The ideal solution, from official Ireland's point of view, would be a land border that's invisible—one that all would pretend does not exist! And then averting eyes from any transgressions! Maybe modern Irish diplomatic talent could rise to the task as illusions seem its natural medium.

**Jack Lane**

## The President's Defence of Neutrality

In the tension that has emerged between President Michael D Higgins and the Government over the war in Ukraine, the President is performing an invaluable service to Irish democracy. The Constitution requires that he exercises his powers "on the advice of the Government" but he is also allowed some discretion. In this instance he has merely let it be known that he holds an opinion on the conflict in Ukraine that is consistent with Ireland's neutrality.

The dispute began when a letter from Sabina Coyne Higgins, the President's wife, was published in the *Irish Times* on July 27th. In the letter Sabina argues persuasively for peace negotiations and finishes by quoting an anti-War peace

anthem composed in 1916 by Gustav Holst and Clifford Bax, "Turn back O Man, and quit thy foolish ways". In response a number of prominent academics tweeted their disagreement and various media organisations interviewed Ukrainian public representatives and citizens so that Ukrainian opposition to peace negotiations could be registered in the discussion.

Sabina's letter was posted on the website of the President and later withdrawn. Then, on July 30th, Fianna Fáil Senator Malcolm Byrne issued a statement demanding that the President "affirm Ireland's strong support for Ukraine". It is a virtual certainty that, in releasing his statement, Byrne had the backing of Taoiseach Micheál Martin. Senator Byrne's intervention has been endorsed by Fine Gael Senator John McGahon and their positions have been highlighted on RTE television news bulletins.

It is clear that Sabina's view is shared by the President. Indeed, he made his views known in the Address he gave at the launch of the Restored *Eire* Sign in Howth on April 9th (see Report in *Irish Political Review*, May 2022). In the course of that speech he said:

"The rise of the bellicose language of militarism must end. There is a special role for peoples and countries who embrace neutrality to be active in making the case for diplomacy to the very end, in demanding full humanitarian access to all civilians in need. We must seize every glimmer of hope through diplomacy, reflect on that great principle that is lodged in the words of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and its affirmation that "recognition of the inherent dignity, and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family, is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world".

"These times, these events, however challenging, are times when diplomacy is tested. It is a time when multilateralism must come to the fore in our international institutions. The citizens of the world were coming together when they sought the peace that is contained in the Charter of the United Nations, not only as an alternative to war, but as our best hope for humanity's future" (President of Ireland website, Media Library, Speeches).

## Remembering David Trimble

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It was not Trimble's achievement, but it could not be achieved without him.

It was necessary for him not to reject it, and he accepted it to the extent of not saying that he rejected it. He happened to be the man in place at the time, who had to bend before a force that he could not resist.

He took the Official IRA as his advisers and their interest was to try to put humiliating conditions for participating in Power-Sharing on the Provisional IRA.

It was therefore left to Rev. Ian Paisley, the primal force on the Unionist side, to take the Agreement in hand and make it functional—and destroy Trimble's Party, the Official Unionist Party, by doing so.

The other thing done by the Agreement was to let the Dublin Government take measures to drop its Constitutional Claim

to the Six Counties. This Claim had been an embarrassment to it since May 1970, but it did not dare to take measures to repeal it until Gerry Adams said it would be OK.

David Trimble got the Nobel Prize for allowing himself to be intimidated by Tony Blair into not rejecting the Agreement made between Blair and the IRA for a restructuring of the Northern Ireland system of the British state into a kind of federal arrangement between the two national communities in it, which ensured that in future neither of them would be in a position of governing the other and that, when there was a devolved Government, each of them would run bits of it on a par with the other, regardless of electoral returns.

The re-made Northern Ireland was then set in Constitutional aspic so that there could be peace.

The Howth Address failed to attract the attention it deserved back in April but, through the controversy over Sabina's letter, its message is finally getting through, thanks in no small part to the opposition of prominent individuals and latterly of the two Government Senators

What can be said of the Government's position? From the start of the War, Micheál Martin has backed the belligerent stance of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and of NATO itself. He and the representatives of his Government have talked about the need for a debate on neutrality while acting as though the policy no longer exists.

The immediate response of the Irish public to the Russian invasion was one of solidarity with the people of Ukraine—at Howth the President was clear that he shared that sentiment—but a majority of voters, as shown in opinion polls, see no contradiction in holding that view while continuing to support neutrality. It is also

possible that, as the months have gone by, the idea of the war as a proxy intervention by the US has filtered down to a wider tranche of public opinion.

Reading the public mind is always a dangerous estimation but where the sympathies of the public lie in this dispute will eventually become known. It cannot be discounted that the majority that continues to support neutrality will side with the President and Sabina rather than the Government. The people who constitute the Irish elite, not just in political circles but across the entire upper middle class, lost faith many decades ago in the ideals that define Irish national identity and there is a price to be paid for that. The Irish political system may now be characterised as an elite that has become disconnected from its base, not a problem that can be fixed by eloquent newspaper columns or slick PR.

Before now it has not been publicly known how important the support of Sabina, and also of the daughter, Senator

Alice Mary Higgins, may have been to the success of the Higgins Presidency. Down the years Sabina was well known as a political figure in her own right and as a backer of small campaigns that fulfil an important role in the political process. Likewise, Senator Alice Mary has spoken on the platforms of anti-War meetings and is a solid supporter of neutrality. The Higgins Presidency has extended the diplomatic reach of the Office: and Sabina and Alice Mary may have assisted in that work.

In the present *contretemps*, and in the row over his declining an invitation to attend the Armagh Commemoration of the founding of Northern Ireland, the President has shown more than a little political ability, a commodity in short supply in the Government parties and entirely absent among contemporary academics. All in all, it's a pity the Constitution prevents the political couple from standing for a third term.

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## Sometry

Sinn Féin, in pursuit of unity with the Unionist population, has decided to adopt the Home Rule practice of commemorating/celebrating, the Battle of the Somme.

The Somme was without doubt an impressive event. Until the nuclear bombing of defenceless Hiroshima by American democracy, was there ever such a great slaughter of human beings in so short a time as was inflicted by the German defences on the attacking British infantry—which walked steadily into machine-gun fire throughout the whole of a Summer day?

The casualty figure usually given is 50,000.

This mode of 'attack' was then repeated daily for a number of months.

There must have been a 'great idea' fermenting in the minds of those British infantry regiments which motivated them to keep at it day after day, week after week, month after month—with no appreciable gain of territory to show for it.

There *was* a great idea. British Imperial dominance had to be preserved whatever the cost.

The Allied casualty rate in attack was higher than the German attrition rate in defence. But attack was necessary for the maintenance of Imperial dominance. And the population of the Allied countries was much bigger than the population of Germany, so that it could incur more casualties and still win.

It was a *People's War*—a war of peoples—and was welcomed as such by the British propaganda. And the British were determined to show that they were the superior people, by winning

The Home Rulers did not only commemorate the great event on the Somme: they took part in it. But that did not impress the Ulster Unionists and incline them towards unity.

It was against the Home Rule movement that the Ulster Volunteer Force was formed. The UVF was not disbanded when the Home Rule

Party declared itself loyal to the Empire, supported the Empire at War, demonised the enemy which the Empire presented it with, and recruited cannon fodder for the War. As the Unionist historian, Philip Orr, once explained on Radio Eireann, the First World War was, to Unionist eyes, an incident in the Home Rule conflict. That being so, Home Rule professions of loyalty were discounted as having an ulterior motive—as being part of a plot against them.

The loyalism was faked for a purpose that had nothing to do with the preservation of the Empire. And therefore Home Rulers died in vain on the Somme not far from where UVF men died. The UVF was kept in readiness to give battle to the Home Rulers at home when the War ended.

Spurious gestures of Loyalty by nationalists of whatever hue are wasted. Loyalists recognise immediately that they are not the genuine article. And that makes them sinister. □

# The Morrison Report

## Biden goes to Jerusalem and Jeddah

At a meeting of the Arab League in Beirut in March 2002, Saudi Arabia made a proposal for a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. This was based on the creation of a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders and the achievement of a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 194. In exchange for this, the Arab state members of the League promised to normalise relations between Israel and the Arab state members of the League.

The proposal was endorsed unanimously at the Beirut meeting of the League and re-endorsed, again unanimously, at a meeting of the League in Riyadh in March 2007. It has also been endorsed by the 57 Muslim states of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC), including Iran.

Israel has never responded to this Arab Peace Initiative, despite the offer of peace and the normalisation of relations with the whole Islamic world contained within it. Israel was simply unwilling to pay the price, that is, ending the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and the creation of a Palestinian State on that territory.

Now, thanks to President Trump, Israel has hopes that it can have normalisation of relations with the Arab world without paying the price. Three Arab states — Bahrain, Morocco and UAE — have been persuaded by the US to normalise relations with Israel while its occupation of Palestinian land continues unabated. To pressure Morocco/UAE into ratting on the Palestinians, the Trump administration recognised Morocco's long-standing claim to Western Sahara, having refused to do so in the past, and promised the UAE that it could buy F-35 fighters from the US.

The normalisation agreements between Israel and these Arab states have come to be known collectively as *Abraham Accords*. Egypt has a Peace Treaty with Israel arising from the 1978 Camp David Agreement and Jordan made a Treaty with Israel in 1994, in which it relinquished any claim to the West Bank, but neither have normalised relations to the degree envisaged in the Abraham Accords.

The Biden administration has taken up this Trump initiative with enthusiasm. Listen to this from the Joint Declaration which Biden signed with Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid on 14th July 2022 on his visit to Israel:

“Israel thanks the United States for its ongoing and extensive support for deepening and broadening the historic

Abraham Accords. The countries affirm that Israel's peace and normalization agreements with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Morocco constitute a critical addition to Israel's strategic peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, all of which are important to the future of the Middle East region and to the cause of regional security, prosperity, and peace. ...

“The United States welcomes these developments and is committed to continuing playing an active role, including in the context of President Biden's upcoming visit to Saudi Arabia, in building a robust regional architecture; to deepen the ties between Israel and all of its regional partners; to advance Israel's regional integration over time; and to expand the circle of peace to include ever more Arab and Muslim States.”

Biden was scheduled to meet King Salman and the Crown Prince in Jeddah the next day and there was an expectation in Israel that this would be the occasion for an important announcement, perhaps that Saudi Arabia was ready to normalise relations with Israel. But no such announcement occurred.

Saudi Arabia did announce that it would allow overflights by Israeli civil aircraft, which will take hours off flight times from Israel to India and the Far East. In addition, direct flights from Israel to Saudi Arabia by aircraft carrying Muslim pilgrims would now be permitted.

Before he left Jeddah for Washington, Biden called the overflights decision “*a big deal, not only symbolically but substantively*”, adding that “*this is the first tangible step on the path of what I hope will eventually be a broader normalization of relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia*” [1].

In a similar vein, Prime Minister Yair Lapid welcomed the “*opening of Saudi airspace to Israeli airlines*” as “*the first official step in normalization with Saudi Arabia*”, adding “*this is only the first step*”.

However, Saudi Arabia went out of its way to pour cold water on this, Saudi

Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan saying that the decision to open airspace to civilian overflights had “*nothing to do with diplomatic ties with Israel*” and was “*not in any way a precursor to any further steps*” toward normalisation [2].

A further indication that Saudi normalisation with Israel was not imminent came from Saudi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Adel al-Jubeir, in a CNN interview. He made it clear that, while normalising ties with Israel as a “*strategic option*” for Saudi Arabia, a two-state solution between Israel and the Palestinians was a “*requirement*” for that to happen. Normalisation would come at the end of this process, not at the beginning of it, he said [3].

(\*)

Prior to Biden's visit to the Middle East, speculation was rife in Israel that the US had much bigger objective than merely pressuring Arab states to normalise relations with Israel. What was being planned by the US, it was suggested, was a defensive alliance of some kind between Israel and Arab states against Iran. Israel boasted in advance that it was already co-operating with unspecified Arab states in bringing down Iranian drones and this was just the beginning.

There was a hint of development of this kind in the Joint Declaration signed by Biden and Lapid, which talked about “*building a robust regional architecture*” and “*advanc[ing] Israel's regional integration over time*”. However, nothing emerged into the public domain after Biden's visit to the Middle East to suggest that a development along the lines of a joint Arab/Israel defence arrangement against Iran was offing.

(\*)

As for Biden's policy on the Israeli-Palestinian issue, he revealed that on arrival in a few garbled words muttered at Ben Gurion airport:

“We'll discuss my continued support — even though I know it's not in the near-term — [for] a two-state solution. That remains, in my view, the best way to ensure the future of [an] equal measure of freedom, prosperity, and democracy for Israelis and Palestinians alike.”

In other words, he's going to do nothing!

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- [3] Saudi minister: Peace with Israel 'strategic option' but not before 2-state solution, *Times of Israel*, 16 July 2022

## The Helen Thomas question

At a White House press conference on 22nd April 2010, Helen Thomas, a veteran White House reporter, posed the following question to President Obama:

“Mr President, do you know of any country in the Middle East that has nuclear weapons?” (See [youtu.be/s3Oz8M\\_FnV4](https://youtu.be/s3Oz8M_FnV4)).

Obama’s answer was as follows:

“With respect to nuclear weapons, I don’t want to speculate. What I know is this: if we see a nuclear arms race in a region as volatile as the Middle East, everybody will be in danger and one of my goals is to prevent proliferation generally. I think it’s important for the United States in concert with Russia to lead the way on this.”

There, Obama engaged in the absurd pretence that he didn’t know that Israel possessed nuclear weapons. He engaged in the absurd pretence because it is official US policy, and has been for more than 50 years, never to comment on Israel’s nuclear programme and, in particular, never to mention the fact that Israel possesses an arsenal of nuclear weapons.

The US took this vow of silence in 1969: to be precise, on 26th September 1969, when US President Nixon made a secret, unwritten, agreement with Israeli Prime Minister, Golda Meir, in a one-to-one meeting in the Oval Office in the White House.

How did this extraordinary agreement between the US and Israel come about?

The story begins in the early 1950s when Israel started a programme to develop nuclear weapons. For many years, it went to great lengths to keep the existence of this programme secret from the US, because it feared that the US would put pressure on it to halt the programme.

After the US became aware of the existence of the nuclear facility at Dimona in 1960, the Kennedy administration insisted on inspecting it to confirm Israel’s assertion that it was for civil purposes only. US inspectors visited the facility seven times in the 1960s, but never found direct evidence of weapons-related activities—because Israel went to extraordinary lengths to hide it from them. So, although inspectors suspected the wool was being pulled over their eyes, they were unable to prove it.

When the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty* (NPT) became available for signing in 1968, the Johnson administration pressed Israel to sign and declare its nuclear programme, which by then the US was certain existed. Israel assured the US that it would not be the first country to “introduce” nuclear weapons into the

Middle East, but refused to confirm to the US that “*non-introduction*” meant “*non-possession*”—and it refused to sign the NPT, because that would have meant giving its nuclear weapons programme.

The issue was finally resolved by the deal between Nixon and Meir in September 1969, at which point the US ceased sending inspection teams to Dimona and stopped pressing Israel to sign the NPT.

Under the deal, the US agreed not to acknowledge publicly that Israel possessed nuclear weapons, while knowing full well that it did. In return, Israel undertook to maintain a low profile about its nuclear weapons: there was to be no acknowledgement of their existence, and no testing which would reveal their existence. That way, the US would not be forced to take up a public position for or against Israel’s possession of nuclear weapons.

The US has maintained this vow of silence ever since. This Column is not aware of any instance in which an official US spokesperson has admitted that Israel possesses nuclear weapons, nor of any official US document that has done so, nor of any UN or other resolution for which the US has voted that has done so.

Equally, Israel has kept its side of the bargain—and never admitted that it possessed nuclear weapons. Its standard answer when asked if it has nuclear weapons is to say “*we won’t be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East*”, and to repeat that *ad nauseam* if questioned further.

Here’s an example from a CNN interview by Piers Morgan with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on 17th March 2011:-

MORGAN: Do you have nuclear weapons?

NETANYAHU: Well, we have a long-standing policy that we won’t be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East and that hasn’t changed.

MORGAN: You don’t have any?

NETANYAHU: That’s our policy. Not to be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East.

That’s a lie, of course—Israel was the first state to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East. It did so over 50 years ago in the late 1960s.

Had Israel admitted publicly that it had nuclear weapons, it would have been difficult for the US to avoid taking a position against Israel’s possession of nuclear weapons. The Nixon/Meir deal has been very successful in preventing public disagreement between the US and Israel on this issue.

(\*)

I recalled the Helen Thomas question when I was watching President Biden’s

press conference in Jerusalem with Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid on 14th July 2022. Wouldn’t it have been delightful, I thought, if President Biden was faced with the Helen Thomas question, as he stood there beside the Prime Minister of the one Middle East country that has an arsenal of nuclear weapons? God knows what gobbledygook would have come out of Biden’s mouth in response, but it would have been interesting to watch Lapid’s face as Biden spoke.

## Absentee Property in Israel

Villa Hanna Salameh was built in 1932 at 2 Balfour Street in Jerusalem, near the official residence of the Israeli premier. It was built by Hanna Salameh, an Arab Christian businessman who was the representative of General Motors in the region [1]. It is a spacious, beautiful building that retains signs of its first owner—above the gate, for example, is an iron grating with the words “*Villa Salameh*”.

In 1948, Hanna Salameh left Jerusalem and moved to Beirut and his house was expropriated by the Israeli State under the *Absentee Property Law*.

The Israeli Prime Minister’s official residence is undergoing renovations and the newly appointed Prime Minister, Yair Lapid, will temporarily move into Villa Haana Salameh.

Prime Ministers David Ben-Gurion and Levi Eshkol were both offered expropriated property to live in, but considered it inappropriate for Prime Ministers to live in such property. Apparently, Yair Lapid is of a different mind.

(\*)

President Trump moved the US Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. This was done by moving the name plate from the Embassy building in Tel Aviv to the building housing the US Consulate in Jerusalem. His successor in the White House has decided not to reverse this and there is now a requirement for an Embassy building in Jerusalem.

Israel plans to have a large diplomatic compound in an area of Jerusalem known as the *Allenby Complex*, in the expectation that other states will follow the US in moving their embassies to Jerusalem. The new US Embassy building is to be in this compound. [2]

However, several Israeli families have presented documents testifying that some of the land chosen for the diplomatic compound belonged to them before 1948, but was expropriated under

the *Absentee Property Act*. The respected Palestinian-American Professor, Rashid Khalidi, whose family had owned part of the land, said:

“The fact that the U.S. government is now participating actively with the Israeli government in this project means that it is actively infringing on the property rights of the legitimate owners of these properties, including many US citizens.”

It will be interesting to see how the Biden administration handles this.

(\*)

Anna Roiser has summarised the overall effect of the *Absentee Property Law* (APL) as follows [3]:

“The APL was enacted in 1950, ostensibly to address the management of property left by the 750,000 Palestinian refugees displaced from Israel during the 1948 war. In reality, the law provided not for management but for permanent expropriation. Its dual purposes were to expand Jewish control over land, and prevent the refugees from returning to their homes, considered necessary to ensure a substantial Jewish demographic majority in Israel.

“The broad wording of the APL meant that almost every Palestinian who left their home during the war became an ‘absentee’ under Israeli law. This included those who had remained within what became Israeli territory, creating the paradoxical legal status of ‘present absentee’. All property belonging to absentees became ‘absentee property’, and could be expropriated by the state without compensation. Legal geographer Sandy Kedar estimates that Israel’s Palestinian-Arab citizens had around 40–60% of their land expropriated, giving lie to the claim that the APL’s purpose was solely to manage abandoned property.

“Historian Shira Robinson estimates that in total the APL resulted in the expropriation of over 10,000 shops, 25,000 buildings, and almost 60% of the country’s fertile land. Most of the expropriated land was transferred to the Jewish National Fund (JNF), achieving the transfer of huge swathes of land privately owned by Palestinians into communal Jewish ownership. Robinson records that by 1954 more than one-third of Israel’s Jewish population lived or worked on absentee property. Although some mistakenly suggest the expropriation of Mizrahi Jews’ property by Arab states in the 1950s negates the effects of the APL, it was not the Palestinians who either took or received that property.”

## Is the Jewish Agency going to be banned in Russia?

The Jewish Agency, whose main purpose is to persuade Jews to emigrate

to Israel, is under investigation by legal authorities in Russia and the Israeli government fears that it may be banned from operating there.

No reason has been made public for the investigation but it is suspected in Israel that in reality Israel’s stance on the conflict in Ukraine is at the root of it. From the outset, Israel maintained a generally neutral stance and the only military equipment that it has supplied to Ukraine has been personal protective gear. There is little doubt that Israel has maintained this stance because it fears that, if it sympathetic towards Ukraine, Russia would no longer allow it to bomb what it claims to be Iranian targets in Syria, which it has been doing regularly for the past 10 years.

This neutral stance was established and maintained under Prime Minister Naftali Bennett. But, the 8-party coalition he led collapsed in early July and he resigned. In accordance with the agreement under which the coalition was formed, he handed over to Foreign Minister Yair Lapid. He is now acting as a caretaker Prime Minister (as well as Foreign Minister) until a new government is established after the elections, which are scheduled to be held on 1 November.

It is generally believed that Lapid wants to abandon Israel’s neutral stance and criticise Russia’s action in Ukraine. Recently, Russian foreign ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova complained that Israel’s leadership had taken a biased, anti-Russian stance over Ukraine:

“Unfortunately, in recent months we have heard, at the level of statements, completely unconstructive and, most importantly, biased rhetoric from Tel Aviv. It has been completely incomprehensible and strange to us.”, she said. [4]

Russia insists that the status of Jewish Agency is simply a legal matter. But what’s the betting that the legal matter will be quietly resolved if Lapid can be persuaded to take a more “constructive” and less “biased” stance towards Russia?

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- [3] Why we need to speak about the Absentee Property Law, Anna Roiser, Times of Israel, 5 July 2020
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### Palestine Links

- EU sides with Israel against its own member states (Ali Abunimah, Electronic Intifada, 19 July 2022)
- US Presbyterians call for end to Israeli apartheid (Nora Barrows-Friedman, Electronic Intifada, 18 July 2022)
- Saudi Foreign Minister: Peace with Israel ‘strategic option’ but not before 2-state solution (Jacob Magid, Times of Israel, 16 July 2022)
- Contradicting Biden, Saudis deny opening of airspace is step toward ties with Israel (Jacob Magid, Times of Israel, 16 July 2022)
- Saudi Arabia opens airspace to all carriers, in first fruits of budding Israel deal (Jacob Magid, Times of Israel, 15 July 2022)
- The trip Biden should have taken, but didn’t (Rina Rosenberg (Jabareen), +972, 14 July 2022)
- The bloody legacy of ‘shared values’ (B’Tselem Director Hagai El-Ad, +972, 13 July 2022)
- Joint Statement by the Foreign Ministries of Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden on the designation of Palestinian civil society organisations as terrorist organisations (12 July 2022)
- Classified document reveals IDF ‘firing zones’ built to give land to settlers (Yuval Abraham, +972, 11 July 2022)

### IRISH BULLETIN, VOLUME 5

This penultimate volume has just been published and covers the period from 1st June – 19th October 1921 which included — the final phase of the War; the negotiation of a Truce when it became clear to the British Government that it would not win the War militarily, and was definitely losing the war for the "hearts and minds" of opinion at home and abroad; the meeting of the Second Dáil, which was the first full meeting of the elected Deputies — made possible by the Truce; the setting up of the bogus Government of Northern Ireland; the negotiations about negotiations between President De Valera and Prime Minister Lloyd George; and the sending of a delegation to London to see whether the unelected British Government in Ireland was willing to make a Treaty with the elected Irish Government.

The *Irish Bulletin* played a central role in bringing the British Government to the negotiating table, with its carefully accurate, and therefore indisputable, reporting to the world of the means by which Britain tried to carry on governing Ireland against the will of three-quarters of the electorate.

ISBN 978 1 872078 34 2

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## Number 1

# The Brian Murphy osb Archive

## A review to mark the publication of Volume 1 of *The Irish Bulletin* (2012)

### INTRODUCTION

This publication contains, not only the first volume of the *Irish Bulletin* (11 November 1919-1 May 1920), but also the earlier publication of a *Weekly Summary*—which began on 12th July 1919 with events from the previous week. The book is a very important primary source for the history of the period, Ireland c.1919-1921, and is made all the more valuable by having an index; not one, but three, of Person, Place and Miscellaneous.

In the past the Aubane Historical Society have contributed towards making source material available by re-publishing such books as those by Major C.J.C. Street, *The Administration of Ireland, 1920* (Athol/Belfast, 2001); Lionel Curtis, *Ireland, 1921* (Athol, 2002); and General F.P. Crozier, *The Men I Killed* (Athol, 2002). The present publication of the *Irish Bulletin*, with a valuable introduction by Brendan Clifford, is a continuation of that fine tradition and is to be welcomed.

Attitudes towards the *Irish Bulletin*, it may be suggested, indicate the contrasting ways of looking at the events of the period. Two men with important roles in the British administration in Ireland, at that time, had no doubt that the *Bulletin* was to be condemned: for example, Sir Hamar Greenwood, Chief Secretary at Dublin Castle, referred to it, on 25th November 1920, as "the murder gang's publication", "a hideous document of falsehood", which "ought not to be the foundation for the literature of any member of this House"; ("a hideous document"); and Captain H.B.C. Pollard, the Press Officer at the Police Authority, described it as "a malignant and lying sheet" (David Hogan, *Four Glorious Years*, Irish Press/Dublin, 1953, p.107; H.B.C. Pollard, *The Secret Societies of Ireland*, Allan/London, 1922, p.186; Brian P. Murphy, *The Origins and Organisation of British Propaganda in Ireland 1920*, Aubane, 2006, p.47)

Historians of our own time differ on the value of the *Bulletin*: Roy Foster dismissed it as "brilliant at scaling up any military activity into an 'notorious'

looting or sacking" (Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p.499). Arthur Mitchell, on the other hand, while frankly recounting its weaknesses, relied on it extensively to detail the positive work of *Dáil Éireann*, and D.G. Boyce, in his seminal study of the press and propaganda, *Englishmen and Irish Troubles*, recognised its importance (Arthur Mitchell, *Revolutionary Government in Ireland, Dáil Éireann 1919-1921*, Gill and MacMillan/Dublin, 1995, pp 103-105; D.G. Boyce, *Englishmen and Irish Troubles. British Public Opinion and the Making of Irish Policy 1918-1922*, Cape/London, 1972, pp 85-88). Recent writers on propaganda and the Irish Press, such as Ian Kenneally and Maurice Walsh, have also analysed its contents and acknowledged its worth. (Maurice Walsh, *The News from Ireland. Foreign Correspondents and the Irish Revolution*, Tauris, London/New York, first published 2008/also 2011; Ian Kenneally, *The Paper Wall. Newspapers and Propaganda in Ireland 1919-1921*, Collins/Dublin, 2008)

Foster, it should be noted, by rejecting the *Irish Bulletin* and other related source material, introduced allegations of sectarianism into the historical debate some years before Peter Hart, writing, in 1988, that "the emotions focused by cultural revivalism around the turn of the century were fundamentally sectarian and even racist": a sweeping judgement that completely ignored the opinion of Douglas Hyde, the Protestant President of the Gaelic League, made in January 1913, that he had never known "any member to be shaken or biased one iota by sectarian considerations" (R.F. Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600-1972*, Penguin Press/London, 1988, p.453; Brian Murphy, *The Canon of Irish Cultural History: Some Questions concerning Roy Foster's Modern Ireland*, in Ciaran Brady (ed.) *Interpreting Irish History*, Irish Academic Press/Dublin, 1994, pp 223-225).

In a similar fashion, Peter Hart has ignored the *Irish Bulletin* (it appears only as a footnote) and cognate sources with similar consequences to that of Roy Foster

—a view of Irish life in which sectarianism plays a major part (Peter Hart, *The IRA and its Enemies. Violence and Community in Cork, 1916-1923*, Clarendon Press/Oxford, 1998, p.67 for fn 154). The evidence of the *Irish Bulletin*, and the voices of all those associated with it, tell a different story and that is one reason why the publication of this book is so important.

### ORIGINS: THE SINN FÉIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLICITY, MARCH 1918

The *Irish Bulletin* and the *Weekly Summary* were founded as part of the work of the Dáil Éireann Department of Publicity/Propaganda, which was created on 2nd April 1919 with Laurence Ginnell as its first head (DE Minutes, 2 April 1919, p.36). In turn, this Dáil Éireann Department of Propaganda had its origins in the Sinn Féin Publicity Department, which had been created in March 1918, with Robert Brennan as head and Frank Gallagher as his assistant. Their task was to promote the aims and ideals of the new republican Sinn Féin party which had been formed in October 1917. The work of this Department, and the context in which it worked, provide valuable insights not only into the personal characters of Brennan and Gallagher but also into the character of British rule in Ireland with its emphasis on the DORA [Defence of the Realm Act] and a Press Censor.

Robert Brennan (born Wexford 1881) and Frank Gallagher (born Cork 1893) were appointed to roles in the Sinn Féin publicity department in early March 1918. Both men were experienced journalists: Brennan was appointed Head of the Sinn Féin Publicity Department at a salary of £3 a week and was given an office at 6 Harcourt Street; Gallagher soon joined him. (Robert Brennan, *Eamon de Valera: A Memoir*, UCD Press, 2002, p.117)

Gallagher informed his fiancée, Cecilia Saunders, on 10th March 1918, that:

"it has always been a clear desire of your most humble and adoring to draft circulars, handbills and pamphlets for Sinn Féin of that indisputably logical kind for which the policy of complete independence gives much opportunities" (*Gallagher to Cecilia Saunders*, 10 March 1918, Gallagher Papers, 10050/38, Trinity College MS).

Somewhat earlier, on 31st January 1918, Gallagher had told Cecilia Saunders that, while participating in the South Armagh By-Election campaign, he had met Desmond FitzGerald who was in charge of the campaign. Gallagher described him as "an exceedingly nice young man", who

"talks with a particularly almost an appealing English accent but his credentials to Nationalism are most excellent". Gallagher then mentioned that FitzGerald had taken part in the Easter Rising; that he wrote 'exceedingly good poetry; and that they had become good friends (*Gallagher to Saunders*, 31 Jan. 1918, *Gallagher Papers*, 10050/18, Trinity College MS). Further contact was made between them during the other by-elections of 1918.

From early 1918, therefore, there was contact between the three men who were to play central roles in the founding and running of the *Irish Bulletin* in 1919.

Their work was complemented by other journals, for example, *AntÓglach*, the official journal of the Irish Volunteers, which was first published on 15th August 1918. It was edited by Piaras Beaslai and printed by Joe Stanley, the printer who had played such an important role in printing material at the time of the Easter Rising (see Tom Reilly, *Joe Stanley. Printer to the Rising*, Brandon/Dingle, 2005, pp 129-131).

The British administration in Ireland, as represented by Dublin Castle, responded to the work of Brennan, Gallagher and other Sinn Féiners by enforcing the *Defence of the Realm Act*. The imposition of this Act coloured the character of English rule in Ireland from 1914 to 1921.

The Press Censor, Lord Decies, who had been appointed in June 1916, issued a press directive on 29th March 1918 which illustrated the environment in which Brennan and Gallagher operated. It stated that,

"in the event of your being asked to publish memorial, anniversary, or other notices in your advertisement columns, which refer to the Rebellion of Easter 1916, you are requested to submit them to this Office before insertions" (James Carty, *Bibliography of Irish History 1912-1921*, NLI/Dublin, p. xxii).

In other words the memories and ideals of 1916 were to be strictly controlled. Press censorship formed only part of the implementation of DORA: at the same time, Laurence Ginnell (in late March) and Michael Collins (on 2nd April) were arrested and imprisoned. Files from the Crime Department, Special Branch, of the RIC contained detailed information of the movements of both men and accurate descriptions of them. Action was then taken against them in conjunction with the Competent Military Authority.

Despite these restrictions Brennan and Gallagher went about their work, as did those working on other nationalist journals, and the success of their efforts

was recognised by Decies himself. In his *Press Censorship Report* for the month of March 1918, he reported that there had been a marked increase in Sinn Féin propaganda and stated that—

"the general impression conveyed by the months output is that Sinn Féin has marshalled the various phases of its propaganda and is representing a more coherent case to the public. The leading text is that England holds Ireland by force, divorced from moral right" (Press Censorship Reports, March 1918, CO 904/166/2, NA Kew).

This observation by Decies on the theme of Sinn Féin propaganda sums up perfectly the aims of Brennan and Gallagher. Indeed, it might well serve as the motto for the future *Irish Bulletin* which, reflecting the Proclamations of Dáil Éireann, constantly proclaimed the message that "*England holds Ireland by force, divorced from moral right*".

The application of DORA, severe as it was, increased immeasurably after a series of events on 9th April 1918: firstly, the German offensive began on the Western Front; secondly, the report on the Irish Convention (adjourned on 5 April) was presented to the House of Commons, marking an end of an agreed solution to Irish problems; and, thirdly, a *Military Service Bill*, applying Conscription to Ireland, was introduced and implemented on 16th April. For a short time all Irish parties were united and the role of Brennan and Gallagher took on another dimension.

On 18th April 1918, representatives of the Irish Party, the Labour Party, and of Sinn Féin met in the Mansion House, Dublin, and affirmed "*Ireland's separate and distinct nationhood*", and declared that "*the passing of the Conscription Bill by the British House of Commons must be regarded as a declaration of war on the Irish nation*".

The Roman Catholic hierarchy also issued a statement supporting this protest. (Arthur Mitchell and Pdraig O Snodaigh, eds., *Irish Political Documents 1916-1949*, Irish Academic Press/Dublin, 1985, pp 41-43).

Following the deportation of de Valera on 18th May, Robert Brennan completed an *Address to the President of the United States* from the Mansion House Conference. Published in pamphlet form, the *Address* serves as a reminder that the Sinn Féin Publicity Department retained, and renewed, the ties that linked their cause with the support of Irish-Americans. (Brennan, *Ibid.* p.117; *No Conscription. Ireland's Case Re-stated*, Dublin, 1918).

The response of the British Government made it clear that War had been declared on the Irish nation. Lord French, on 5th May 1918, informed Lloyd George that he accepted the position of Lord Lieutenant in order "*to set up a quasi-military government in Ireland with a soldier Lord Lieutenant*". Several studies by Eunan O'Halpin have detailed the character of this Government. (Richard Holmes, *The Little Field Marshal. A Life of Lord French*, London, 1984, p.338, citing French to Lloyd George, 5 May 1918, French Papers; Eunan O'Halpin, '*British Intelligence in Ireland, 1914-1921*', in Christopher Andrews and David Dilks, eds., *The Missing Dimension: Governments and Intelligence Communities in the Twentieth Century*, London, 1984, p.66; see also Eunan O'Halpin, '*Historical Revision XX: H.E. Duke and the Irish administration 1916-1918*', *Irish Historical Studies*, Sept. 1981).

French, as Commander-in-Chief of Home Forces, had been responsible for the appointment of General Maxwell to the Irish Command and he had fully supported the policy of execution after the Easter Rising. Soon after his arrival in Ireland, on 17th May, he invoked DORA to arrest and to deport without trial over one hundred Sinn Féiners on the understanding that they were participating in a German Plot. Privately he gave it as his opinion that, if the Irish people realised the true character of de Valera, Marcievicz, and Count Plunkett, they "*would cast them out like the swine they are*" (Holmes, *ibid.* p.339, citing French to Lord Esher, 20 May 1918, French Papers).

The Mansion House Statement (18 April 1918), which declared that the British Government had "*made a declaration of war on the Irish nation*", and that the British response to send Lord French to set up "*a quasi-military government*" in Ireland (5 May 1918) may well be claimed as the real start of the war for Irish independence. Failure to give due prominence to these events distorts our understanding of Ireland at that time.

On the one hand, a benign view is portrayed of English rule emanating from Dublin Castle; on the other hand, a limited, even disparaging, view is given of the emerging Irish nationalism. Peter Hart, in a rather bizarre fashion, attempted to make the Wren Boys relevant to the emerging political ideology of a new republican Sinn Féin, and even attached some significance to a claim that young people "*had locked the old people into their homes*", in order that they might not be able to vote in the

1918 Election. To attach any significance to this unverified incident, at a time when Lord French had deported without trial hundreds of leading Sinn Féiners, including c. 35 Election Candidates, is incredible; it certainly does not make for a sound historical narrative (Peter Hart, *The IRA and its Enemies*, Clarendon Press/Oxford, 1998, pp 178-181 and pp 166,167; Michael Laffan, *The Resurrection of Ireland. The Sinn Féin Party 1916-1923*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp 143-146).

In similar fashion to Hart, John Horne, in his edited study of Ireland and the First World War, does not cite the *Mansion House Declaration* or make mention of the military role of Lord French (John Horne, ed., *Our War, Ireland and the Great War*, Royal Irish Academy/Dublin, 2008 nb essay ).

Likewise, the manner in which Peter Hart and David Fitzpatrick have edited the *Official British Record of the Rebellion* does not make for a balanced historical narrative (Peter Hart and David Fitzpatrick, eds., *British Intelligence in Ireland 1920-1921. The Final Reports*, Cork University Press/Cork, 2002). This document has been central to Peter Hart's thesis that the IRA were motivated by sectarian considerations. He cited the document to the effect that, "*in the south the Protestants and those who supported the Government rarely gave much information because, except by chance, they had not got it to give*": and he then argued that, therefore, the Protestants were attacked "for reasons of religion" (Hart, *IRA*, pp 305,306).

However, this argument was only made possible by omitting the next two sentences of the *Official Record*; and this Peter Hart did. I pointed out this omission in my review of the book in 1998, writing that the very next sentence of the *Record* read that—"*an exception to this rule was in the Bandon area where there were many Protestant farmers who gave information*" (*The Month*, Sept./Oct. 1998, pp 381-383).

Hart's argument by omission simply did not stand up in the light of the full report. There is, incidentally and significantly, no meaningful explanation for the omission of these two sentences in his edited report of 2002.

Similarly, again using an argument by omission, the joint edition of the *Official Record of the Rebellion* by Peter Hart and David Fitzpatrick concealed the attitude of British forces towards the Irish. From the editorial note it was made clear that some parts of the text had been omitted—sections on censorship and topography, for example. However, without any notification, there was another very significant omission: the

section on, '*The People*' (see Peter Hart and David Fitzpatrick, eds., *Irish Narratives*, Cork University Press/Cork, 2002, p.16). The section stated,

"Judged by English standards, the Irish are a difficult and unsatisfactory people. Their civilisation is different and in many ways lower than that of the English... many were of a degenerate type and their methods of waging war were in most cases barbarous, influenced by hatred and devoid of courage" (*Official Record of the Rebellion in Ireland, Imperial War Museum*, pp 31,32; see Brian P. Murphy, '*The Wind that Shakes the Barley*', in Ruan O'Donnell, ed., *The Impact of the 1916 Rising*, Irish Academic Press/Dublin, 2008).

By removing these comments, and others like them, from their edited version of the *Record*, Hart and Fitzpatrick have protected the image of the British troops who were active in Ireland. While Fitzpatrick has recently attempted to defend Hart's scholarship, writing that—

"any slip in Hart's footnotes is construed by some bloggers and letter-writers as deliberate falsification in pursuit of a pre-conceived revisionist agenda",

it seems reasonable to suggest that the approach of Peter Hart (and, indeed, of Fitzpatrick himself) towards the *Record of the Rebellion* raises issues far more serious than the occasional inaccurate footnote (David Fitzpatrick, *Terror in Ireland 1916-1923*, Lilliput/Dublin, 2012, p.5). It is in this context that the early work of Brennan and Gallagher is important: it shows clearly, not only that a state of war existed in 1918, but also that the Irish nationalists who participated in it were dedicated and motivated by ideals—not degenerate, not uncivilised, and no mere Wren Boys.

Brennan and Gallagher renewed their efforts on behalf of Sinn Féin, despite the pressures of the Lord French regime: firstly, by sustaining the anti-Conscription campaign; and, secondly, by producing literature for the General Election in December. However, before the year ended, Brennan became a victim of Martial Law: he was arrested c.11 November 1918 and deported immediately to Gloucester.

The Sinn Féin General Election Manifesto suffered a similar fate to Brennan at the hands of the Press Censor. However, it was then defiantly published in truncated form, as passed by the Censor, and it made a significant impact. As Frank Gallagher observed, the neat black rows of dots employed by the censor to blot out the full text (David Hogan—ie, Frank Gallagher, *Four Glorious Years*, Dublin, 1953, p.48)

The success of Sinn Féin at the General Election; the creation and proclamations of Dáil Éireann (January 1919); and the

meeting of the Peace Conference in Paris (January 1919) all combined to create a new situation in Ireland, although the military character of British rule, with its emphasis on Martial Law, remained the same. It was in this context that the Dáil Éireann Department of Publicity was formed.

#### ORIGINS: THE DÁIL ÉIREANN DEPT. OF PUBLICITY, APRIL 1919

When the Dáil Éireann Department of Publicity began its work on 2nd April 1919, with Laurence Ginnell as its first Director, the power of the Press Censor and the rule of DORA still dominated Irish life. Lord Decies and his seventeen staff, based in Grafton Street, still retained their positions, although Decies was replaced by Major Bryan Cooper at the end of April. (*Press Censorship Report*, CO 904/167, NA Kew for letters of Lord French to Decies re. resignation; Press Censorship Records, 1917-1919, Blue Cards, 47, NAI for details of staff).

Writing of his return to Ireland after the War, Cooper recalled that—

"personally I know that I have never experienced so much kindness and civility from my neighbours as in the eighteen months that followed my return from the army. To what it may be attributed I do not know, but if the spirit of Sinn Féin was not working in the direction of increased friendliness between Irishmen of different religions and political views, at least it was doing nothing to make ancient differences more bitter" (Lennox Robinson, *Bryan Cooper*, Constable/London, 1931, p.116, citing Cooper's unpublished book on Ireland under Sinn Féin).

Coming from an Irishman of Ascendancy background who had been elected a Unionist MP in 1910, this assessment of living with Sinn Féin is significant.

The Dáil Department of Propaganda began work immediately, with Frank Gallagher informing his fiancée, Cecilia Saunders, of his personal role in the work on 5th April, telling her that "*all this week and some of the last I have been directing propaganda. I get £4 a week for it... it is a dreadfully busy job*" (Gallagher to Saunders, 5 April 1919, FG Papers 10050/68, Trinity College MS).

At the same time, Robert Brennan, as Director of Sinn Féin publicity, with an office at 6 Harcourt Street, was in regular contact with Gallagher. These two men were soon joined by Erskine Childers. He came to Ireland in March 1919 to visit his cousin, the TD Robert Barton, who had been imprisoned under the terms of DORA for an election speech. Childers then attended two sessions of Dail Éireann on 10th and 11th April; met de Valera and Griffith; and then met Robert Brennan.

It is significant that, as early as April 1919, this connection with Childers had been made, and attempts were made to influence English opinion. Brennan gave Childers information on British military activities in Ireland which he could then place in English newspapers. This information, Brennan noted, had "all been carefully listed and indexed by Frank Gallagher" (Robert Brennan, *Allegiance*, Browne & Nolan/Dublin, 1950, p.240).

By this time Childers had committed himself to the Irish Republic as proclaimed by Dáil Éireann. Writing on 28th January 1919 in *The Nation*, he had declared that to deny an Irish Republic "appears to make the Fourteen Points a scrap of paper", and added that the only way to save the Peace Conference was—

"a spontaneous declaration by Great Britain that she was prepared to recognise the free self-determination of Ireland and to remove her army of occupation and her despotic Castle government" (*The Nation*, 28 Jan. 1919; Brian P. Murphy, *Erskine Childers: the evolution of an enemy of Empire*, in Eoin Flannery and Angus Mitchell, eds., *Enemies of Empire. New perspectives on imperialism, literature and historiography*, Four Courts Press/Dublin, 2007).

These observations of Childers accurately convey the broad lines of confrontation between Dáil Éireann and the British Government in the first half of the year, 1919: on the one hand, Dáil Éireann, although not fully functional until all of its members had been released from prison in April 1919, attempted to publicise the ideals of an Irish Republic at the Peace Conference; and, on the other hand, the British Government (and it should be noted it was still a British War Cabinet) prevented the Irish case from being presented at Paris, while it still enforced the DORA in Ireland.

The first phase of the Dáil publicity campaign, in co-operation with Childers, was fought out in the context of the Peace Conference; the second phase was fought out in the context of the British Government's opposition to the work of Dáil Éireann. Dáil Éireann had been allowed to meet in public in April, and on the 9th May, but was then forced to meet in private under a constant threat of arrest. Laurence Ginnell himself was arrested under the powers of the *Defence of the Realm Act*.

On 17th June 1919, Desmond Fitzgerald became *Substitute Director of Propaganda* owing, as the minutes of Dáil Éireann put it, to Ginnell's "absence through enemy action" (Dáil Éireann Minutes, 17 June 1919, p.115; plus grant of £250 per annum to Mrs Ginnell).

It was in this context that the Dáil Éireann

Department of Publicity began to present its view of British rule in Ireland to the world.

#### THE WEEKLY SUMMARY

The *Weekly Summary* began publishing its survey of events in Ireland on 12th July 1919 under the heading: "*the following are acts of aggression committed in Ireland by the Military and Police of the usurping English Government*". The title, itself, accurately summed up Dáil Éireann's view of the English Government. Under this heading, daily lists of arrests, suppressed newspapers, banned meetings of Sinn Féin, the Gaelic League and other national associations were given. Usually the daily list simply recorded the events of the day, but occasionally extra detail was added. For example, on 13th August 1919, it was recorded that the General Hackett Pain, who had suppressed a language festival in Ballysheal, County Down, had been Chief of Sir Edward Carson's "*revolutionary forces*".

There was a significant change to the level of conflict between Dáil Éireann and the Dublin Castle authorities when, on 21st August 1919, Dáil Éireann, as "*the Government of the Irish Republic*", announced that it was to launch a *National Loan* in Ireland and America. The announcement was carried in most of the national and provincial papers and was also promoted by a special film of the event.

Dublin Castle—in the persons of Lord French, Lord Lieutenant; Ian Macpherson, Chief Secretary; and Sir Frederick Shaw, Commander-in-Chief—responded firmly. On 10th September it declared Dáil Éireann to be a "*dangerous association*", and the Loan to be "*sedition*". It then proclaimed Sinn Féin and the Gaelic League in some areas of the country, and many newspapers were suppressed for carrying advertisements of the Loan.

The *Weekly Summary* chronicled these daily lists of suppressions and, on 13th September, noted that its own offices, at 6 Harcourt Street, had been raided and the police had removed "all the propaganda they could find" (WS, 13 Sept.1919, p.37 of IB, Aubane Historical Society edition). The office of Michael Collins and the Dail Loan was also in 6 Harcourt Street and was raided as well. Michael Collins escaped and the office was moved to 76 Harcourt Street. From that date the conflict between Dáil Éireann and Dublin Castle took on a new intensity but, despite all the challenges, the *Weekly Summary* managed to continue publication.

On 30th September 1919 a special edition of the *Weekly Summary* was published which gave, 'A *Summary of Outrages committed by the British Government in Ireland during the period from 1 May 1916 to 30 September*

1919'. This five-page summary (pp 51-55 of *ibid*) made interesting reading: not only were the number of murders given but also other items, such as deportations, court martials and the suppression of newspapers (23 so far in 1919), were given.

The British response, also made on 30th September 1919, at first glance, was conciliatory: the office of *Press Censor* was abolished. Erskine Childers, however, who was in Dublin at the time, gave a different opinion on this action. He pointed out that "*soldiers had taken over the duties of the civilian censor whose powers were deemed to be inadequate*". Childers added that an editor now—

"first becomes aware that he has offended the authorities by the arrival at his door of a lorry bristling with bayonets. An expert in the sabotage of machinery is included in this cortege and the owner can only save his business by signing an undertaking never to publish anything which is an offence."

He concluded that "servility to the Castle regime or personal ruin are the only alternatives before him" (Childers, *Law and Order in Ireland*, Studies, Dec.1919, pp 602,603).

This analysis by Childers of British policy towards the press received support from a most unlikely source—the former Press Censor, Bryan Cooper, whose post had been terminated in August. He wrote to *The Times* on 27th September 1919, critical of the suppression of newspapers for carrying advertisements of the National Loan and argued that many of the provincial newspapers were owned by men whose sons had fought in the last war. He concluded that—

"at a time when it is hoped that the Government have realised the urgency of the Irish question, and propose to bring forward a scheme for its settlement, it would surely be wise to abandon a procedure which only tends to inflame and exasperate moderate opinion in Ireland" (Robinson, Cooper, p.124).

Another impartial source, Sir Horace Plunkett's journal, the *Irish Statesman*, agreed with Cooper. It praised him as "a man of courage, of fair play, and of reasonable mind", but concluded that—

"Lord French and his satellites are proof against any argument. They breathe happily the atmosphere of coercion, and the proclamation of ideas and opinions is dearer to them even than the proclamation of arms" (Robinson, Cooper, p.124).

The removal of an official press censor gave increased primacy to the military and it was in this context that the *Irish Bulletin* began publication.

**Brian P. Murphy osb**

## Sean O’Faolain and Canon Formation.

Part 5.

### *The Men who funded ‘The Bell’.*

As I have written in previous articles in the *‘Irish Political Review’*, the funding of *The Bell* was one aspect of the magazine that O’Faolain himself assiduously avoided. But anyone with a serious need to understand the times that were in it would surely look for this most important information. And so I went to the source that has been cited as the most “intensive” analysis of the magazine in question—the book, *‘The Bell Magazine and the Representation of Irish Identity’* by Kelly Matthews (Four Courts Press Ltd, Dublin, 2012).

Though there is a page and a half ‘Foreword’ by Anthony Cronin, it is of course not disinterested as he was involved as Associate Editor of *The Bell* in the early fifties when Peadar O’Donnell was Editor.

In that Foreword, Cronin makes a claim that I find very interesting, and that is that he was not privy to the finances of the magazine which were “a mystery” to which only “O’Donnell had the key”!

The problem though is that Kelly Matthews is based in Framingham State University, Massachusetts, and seems to be an American even though she has got around in Irish academia, from Trinity College Dublin to University of Ulster, Coleraine, Northern Ireland.

But, in a give-away, she stated that she got her “BA cum laude” in English and American Literature and Language from Harvard University in 1992, and that her thesis examiner was none other than Professor Seamus Heaney. Half way through her analysis she does seem to see the need to explain who was funding *‘The Bell’*, but goes on to give a completely distorted view, writing that in 1942:

"the editorial board signed over their shares in the magazine to the businessman Eamonn Martin who was a friend of Peadar O’Donnell, in exchange for £360 cash which was needed to buy advance paper supplies."

Matthews sources this quotation as a letter from—“*Sean O’Faolain to Frank O’Connor 19th September 1942, Gotlieb Archival Research Center*”.

She doesn’t indicate the whereabouts of this Center but presumably it is in some university in the USA.

But of course the first question is where did the paper come from? At a time of war, starting a magazine in 1940 Dublin would seem like a mad escapade—but only if one was unsure of its paper supply and quite obviously O’Faolain wasn’t!

In the UK, paper rationing came under the *No.48 Paper Control Order, 4th September 1942* and was controlled by the Ministry of Production. But, from September 1939, British newspapers were limited at first to 60% of their pre-War consumption of newsprint. However, by 1945, newspapers were limited to 25% of their pre-war consumption.

Wrapping paper for most goods was prohibited.

The paper shortage often made it more difficult than usual for authors to get their work published. In 1944, George Orwell wrote:

"In Mr. Stanley Unwin’s recent pamphlet ‘Publishing in Peace and War’, some interesting facts are given about the quantities of paper allotted by the Government for various purposes. Here are the present figures:

Newspapers: 250,000 tons  
H.M. Stationery Office: 100,000 tons  
Periodicals: (nearly) 50,000 tons  
Books: 22,000 tons.

"A particularly interesting detail is that out of the 100,000 tons allotted to the Stationery Office, the War Office gets no less than 25,000 tons, or more than the whole of the book trade put together... At the same time paper for books is so short that even the most hackneyed “classic” is liable to be out of print, many schools are short of textbooks, new writers get no chance to start and even established writers have to expect a gap of a year or two years between finishing a book and seeing it published."

George Orwell, ‘As I Please’, *Tribune*, 20 October 1944.

Yet Sean O’Faolain got the paper for *‘The Bell’* from the UK, and the magazine was sold in Ireland—which was of course neutral during the course of the Second World War. From the start, it seems that O’Faolain held it to be his creed that censorship was to be opposed and the Government of Eamon de Valera, Fianna Fáil, was to be criticised at every chance—and indeed also the Catholic Church.

Thus, he was intent on burnishing his liberal credentials at every turn but, in a very perceptive comment, Clair Wills wrote in her 2007 book, *‘That Neutral Island: A Cultural History of Ireland During the Second World War’*, that O’Faolain’s eye was always on the audience that he craved and that was the English one.

In *‘Vive Moi’*, his revised autobiography, issued after the death of his wife Eileen, Sean was able to write about his lovers and it is striking to think that two of them were English spies—the novelist Elizabeth Bowen and the journalist Honor Tracy, whom he knowingly called his two “*Matty O’Hara’s*”.

When O’Faolain writes about the man who published *‘The Bell’*, he just refers to him as “J.J.”, and nowhere does he allow the name of the publisher to be mentioned. About this very generous and brilliant businessman he is extremely cagey but, after much research, I eventually came upon a nugget here and there, and was then able to piece together the story of this very enterprising gentleman.

J.J. (John Joseph) O’Leary, 1890-1978 came to Dublin to be a civil servant but left to pursue business interests of which there would be many. His publishing/printing house was Cahill’s and here he printed a lot of official Reports including the Dáil Reports, bus timetables, end of term scholastic exams, the *English Digest* which he imitated, according to O’Faolain, with his own *Irish Digest* and again according to O’Faolain, “*he achieved a monopoly of the market for Bibles in every African language*”. But in between all these publications, JJ also printed *‘The Bell’*.

Sometimes the snobbishness of O’Faolain is so nauseating that one wants to ignore it, but it is too revealing to do that. For example, he admits he got the incredible sum of £1,000 pounds per year from JJ after the War when he left *‘The Bell’* as Editor. This was a huge amount at the time and himself said an accountant

in Cork might aspire to earn £600 p.a. and that one could buy a house for a family for that amount outright.

But here is O'Faolain explaining that JJ had one fault and that was an occasional lapse into "*parsimony*". He goes on to explain that he couldn't understand this until a—

"wealthy neighbour of mine in Killiney who, unlike JJ and unlike so many modern Irish businessmen—as distinct from pedigreed Anglo-Irishmen—had *inherited* both his wealth and business, revealed the simple key to J.J.'s lifeway when he suggested that '*our friend*' had probably been originally floated or assisted into commerce by some astute bank-manager with an eye for a customer worth backing. 'Have you' my wealthy neighbour asked with an inverted smile, 'noticed' the very modest sort of car our friend drives? His banker would approve. No bank likes to see its loan money being splashed about on luxury living. J.J. is shrewd. He is a realist. He keeps his head down. Occasionally a bit too far down."

This is just pure *raméis* of the most unpleasant kind. Here is the real low-down on this businessman who was one of the most successful in Ireland. (And how this must have galled both O'Faolain and his "*wealthy neighbour in Killiney*"!):

"JJ O'Leary was one of three who proposed the setting up of Aer Lingus in 1936. The others were Sean O h-Uaghaigh and Colonel Charles Russell who was the driving force behind the project, he had been chief of the" (Air) "Corps from 1922-'26. Technical assistance was provided from Colonel Delamere then serving in the Air Corps... Other companies he" (JJ) "was a director of included Dundalk Textiles Ltd., the Irish Press, Parkgate Printing Works, the Industrial Credit Company 1944, at one stage he was a director of 50 companies. And Aer Rianta Ltd. from 1943.

When younger he was very interested in the theatre and was great friends with Barry Fitzgerald (who always stayed with him when in Dublin) and John Ford. He was a keen yachtsman being Commodore of the National Yacht Club from 1955-'60; his yacht was the 'Fara' a 30 metre boat. He donated the Muglin's Cup which is still awarded. He was also a patron of the Abbey Theatre. He was married but was separated for many years. He lived at Monkstown, Co. Dublin. He had a long-term relationship with Dr. Thekla Beere, the first woman Secretary of a Government Department, a Governor of '*The Irish Times*', a founder of *An Oige*, and chaired the United Nations *Commission on the Status of Women* in Ireland which resulted in the Beere Report and the elimination of the marriage bar for

women. She was also the senior civil servant on Séan Lemass's historic visit to Belfast in 1965."

JJ also has links with the present as it was his nephew Michael who "*skipped the Irish Admiral's Cup*" in the 1980s. Also the golfer John O'Leary was another nephew and some say that Michael O'Leary of Ryanair is another relative. So, Sean O'Faolain, who was keeping their "*head down*", according to your self and your obviously bitter neighbour?

And then, in keeping with O'Faolain's constant habit of biting the hand that fed him, he got into a row with this very gracious and giving man and initiated a

parting of the ways by handing J.J. his notice over a trifle ( and made sure that so did Honor Tracy), hoping to leave his employer in the lurch.

But instead, according to O'Faolain, J.J. closed the business—but I would take that last bit of news with great scepticism. The question is when did Cahill's close when they had so much business ongoing? I hope that maybe one of the *Irish Political Review's* readers might be able to let us know.

**Julianne Herlihy ©**

**In the next issue — the other man who kept *The Bell* going!**

## Ukraine: *The Path of Destruction*

On 6th July President Putin made a significant speech in the Kremlin's St Catherine Hall. Putin was meeting with the leaders of the State Duma and the heads of party factions of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. Here are the important sections of the Russian President's speech:

"The so-called collective West led by the United States has been extremely aggressive towards Russia for decades. Our proposals to create a system of equal security in Europe have been rejected. Initiatives for cooperation on the issue of missile defence were rejected. Warnings about the unacceptability of NATO expansion, especially at the expense of the former republics of the Soviet Union, were ignored. Even the idea of Russia's possible integration into this North Atlantic alliance, and good relations with NATO, apparently, seemed absurd to its members..."

"We are being told that we started the war in Donbass, in Ukraine. No, the war was unleashed by the collective West, which organised and supported the unconstitutional armed coup in Ukraine in 2014, and then encouraged and justified genocide against the people of Donbass. The collective West is the direct instigator and the culprit of what is happening today.

"If the West wanted to provoke a conflict in order to move on to a new stage in the fight against Russia and a new stage in containing our country, we can say that it has succeeded to a certain extent. A war was unleashed, and the sanctions were imposed. Under normal circumstances, it would probably be difficult

to accomplish this.

"But here is what I would like you to make clear. They should have realised that they would lose from the very beginning of our special military operation, because this operation also means the beginning of a radical breakdown of the US-style world order. This is the beginning of the transition from liberal-globalist American egocentrism to a truly multipolar world..."

"Everyone should understand that this process cannot be stopped. The course of history is inexorable, and the collective West's attempts to impose its new world order on the rest of the world are doomed..."

"To reiterate, even in the countries that are still satellites of the United States, there is a growing understanding that their ruling elites' blind obedience to their overlord, as a rule, does not necessarily coincide with their national interests, and most often simply and even radically contradicts them. Eventually, everyone will have to face this growing sentiment in society..."

"Today we hear that they want to defeat us on the battlefield. Well, what can I say? Let them try. We have already heard a lot about the West wanting to fight us "to the last Ukrainian." This is a tragedy for the Ukrainian people, but that seems to be where it is going. But everyone should know that, by and large, we have not started anything in earnest yet.

At the same time, we are not rejecting peace talks, but those who are rejecting them should know that the longer it goes on, the harder it will be for them to negotiate with us."

While this is a good statement of the Russian position, which the West ignored for years in favour of marching its forces up to the borders of Russia, the sentence that stands out is the one that states “*everyone should know that, by and large, we have not started anything in earnest yet*”.

There has been much derision from the West at the Russian insistence that it is conducting a “*Special Military Operation*” in Ukraine — as opposed to waging a war. However, it has become clear in the course of that military intervention why Moscow has made that distinction.

What we see in Ukraine is a limited Russian military intervention by an expeditionary force of around 200,000, made up largely of interior security forces. In other words, the bulk of Russia’s army, the other four-fifths, is being held in reserve for either a future full-scale war in Ukraine or one with NATO.

Whether the limited Special Military Operation becomes something more depends largely on what the West does in support of Kiev. However, it seems that the major effect of the delivery of the Himars and other longer range US missile systems to Kiev has been to provoke an extension of the geographical area of the Special Military Operation.

The indications are that Putin will offer Kiev an opportunity to escape the conflict in the near future. This will probably be the last chance for a negotiated settlement, but it will be a settlement reflecting the military balance and on Russian terms.

Russia is likely to make an offer to the Ukrainians when the Donbas region has been largely secured by Russian forces. That is probably going to be soon. There are suggestions that the outline of the offer has already been communicated by diplomatic means, through third parties.

It will involve the Ukrainians accepting the loss of Lugansk and Donetsk and pulling any remaining forces out of these provinces. Referendums/plebiscites will be conducted on the question of future status within these territories with the distinct possibility that these parts of the Ukrainian state will be absorbed into the Russian state. All other areas occupied by Russian forces are also likely to be retained.

There will be an insistence on a declaration of neutrality inserted into the Ukrainian Constitution as well as a bar on fascist elements becoming part of the Kiev administration.

These Russian demands will be a bitter

bill to swallow for the Zelensky Government. It is extremely likely that they will not be prepared to swallow it and Washington will urge them to fight on. The US Embassy in Kiev has instructed all Americans to leave the country on their own volition, using privately available ground transportation, as soon as possible. This suggests that the battle lines are expected to move in only one direction in the foreseeable future, or that escalation is planned.

The million strong Ukrainian army — announced to replace the original Army, which has been three-quarters destroyed — is yet to materialise and reports are circulating that young men are resisting the draft in increasing numbers as news filters through about the appalling losses that are lately being suffered at the Fronts.

The Ukrainian counter-offensive in the south, which was widely advertised, has not taken place, as yet. In fact, throughout the War, the Ukrainians have not recaptured any territory which the Russians have not given up voluntarily in order to transfer troops elsewhere to fight battles of greater strategic importance.

The price Kiev will pay for a refusal to accept these demands will probably be a Russian advance to the Dneiper which cuts Ukraine in two.

There is likely to be a Russian offensive to the West of Odessa, along the line to Transnistria, cutting it off from Ukraine and securing the whole of the Black Sea coast for Russia. Ukraine would become a rump state, reduced to its Western nationalist core.

The Ukrainian state built by the Soviets would be dismantled and give way to a Ukrainian nation state that reflects the desire to be part of Europe and the West. What Samuel Huntington suggested for Ukraine in his *Clash of Civilisations* will come to pass.

President Biden and other Western leaders have promised to support Kiev “*for as long as it takes*” for Ukraine to “*win*”. Already the United States alone has committed \$53 billion to support Ukraine’s war effort. Kiev has demanded that it must be supplied with \$5 billion per month indefinitely to continue fighting (along with an estimated \$750 billion as a first instalment toward reconstruction costs after the war).

However, continued Western support for the war will bring about a continued Russian advance across Ukraine to end it, particularly to neutralise the long-range weapons that have been supplied to Kiev.

With this, the West will have to drastically escalate the war if it wants to win it. It may have to be prepared to fight a World War and risk nuclear exchange to do so. Is the Biden administration willing to do this?

On a visit to Britain, to review the training of Ukrainian forces there, Volodymyr Havrylov, Kiev’s Deputy Defence Minister said that “*Ukraine is preparing to destroy the Russian navy’s Black Sea fleet with western weapons and take back Crimea*” (The Times 19 July).

The British Foreign Secretary has backed this objective, and she may be the British Prime Minister soon.

It seems that some people are willing to sacrifice the whole of humanity for the Donbas and Ukraine! While that may seem ridiculous, it should be pointed out that World War II, which resulted in the deaths of 50 millions, was fought over the Danzig Corridor.

All the indications are that Washington will escalate the conflict, having staked so much on it already. It will need to do this, at least incrementally, if it is to keep the Ukrainians in the field, with the continued will to fight and die.

Only that can stave off the big dilemma that will confront Washington, if and when the Ukrainian lines begin to break, when self-preservation prevails over self-sacrifice.

The present writer has emphasized one fundamental thing in several articles: The Government in Kiev was badly mistaken in lending its people and territory to Washington for a geopolitical war on Russia. It was always likely that such a war would be fought for Western geopolitical interests and concluded as such, and not for the benefit of Ukraine or the Ukrainians.

The Ukrainians were likely to be the collateral damage in such a war, whose primary purpose was to depose Putin and to weaken Russia, at the expense of Ukrainian lives and territory.

Credit, of course, should be given to the Ukrainians. They are the best army that the US could have mustered anywhere in the world against the Russians. They have done their duty, directed by Washington’s command and control, to the letter. The famous line, “*Ours not to reason why, ours just to do and die*”, comes to mind. The Ukrainians have sacrificed themselves with extraordinary willingness in the “*battle for democracy*” when others

would have quickly disengaged after being confronted with the awful reality of what they had embarked upon.

Nobody can ever deny that these Ukrainians made the supreme sacrifice for those unwilling to fight themselves, but who provided the maximum moral, military and economic support to keep them fighting until they could fight no more or were no more.

Let us salute them, speak of their deeds in awe, and pray to God more peoples will never have to emulate them.

Prof. John Mearsheimer, who has warned for years of the impending tragedy that the US was bringing on the Ukraine recently summed it up in the following way:

"Simply put, the ongoing conflict in Ukraine is a colossal catastrophe, which... will force people all over the world to look for its causes. Those who believe in facts and logic will quickly discover that the United States and its allies are primarily responsible for this... The decision taken in April 2008 on the accession of Ukraine and Georgia to NATO was destined to lead to a conflict with Russia. The Bush administration was the main architect of this fateful choice, but the Obama, Trump and Biden administrations intensified and aggravated this policy at every turn, and America's allies obediently followed Washington. Despite the fact that Russian leaders made it abundantly clear that Ukraine's accession to NATO would mean crossing Russia's "most contrasting of red lines", the United States refused to come to terms with Russia's deep security concerns and instead moved tirelessly to turn Ukraine into a western bastion on the border with Russia.

The tragic truth is that if the West had not sought to expand NATO into Ukraine, it is unlikely that a war would have raged in Ukraine today, and Crimea would most likely still be part of Ukraine. In fact, Washington has played a central role in leading Ukraine down the path of destruction. History will severely condemn the United States and its allies for their strikingly stupid policy towards Ukraine."

So far, the US strategy has been a military, economic and political failure in relation to Ukraine. The Russians have taken more than a fifth of the country, the sanctions have rebounded on the West and only a small portion of humanity has been bullied into supporting Washington, with open defiance from some significant allies like India and Saudi Arabia. Of course, if the US strategy was aimed at subduing any independent will Europe had in the world and wrecking the economies of that competitor it has been a great success!

If those who advise US administrations these days had read the history of Ukraine they would know why they were "*leading Ukraine down the path of destruction*".

One such history, *The Ukraine, A History* (1940), by W.E.D. Allen, is illuminating. Bill Allen, after a political career as MP for West Belfast and in Oswald Mosley's party in Britain, took a keen interest in Russia and the Caucasus as well as the Ottomans. His 400 page history of Ukraine was written at the moment when the nationality question was being solved by Stalin and Hitler by cutting Poland down to size.

Allen describes how the Bolsheviks put the Ukrainian State together after Ukrainian nationalism failed to take root in the peasantry, leading to anarchical fighting, mass killing and chaos in the Ukraine during 1918-19. He notes how the Bolsheviks then attempted to Ukrainianise Ukraine to build a Ukrainian State, but afterwards had to repress Ukrainian nationalism when it threatened to destabilise the State.

So, Allen believed that when Stalin (in conjunction with Hitler) managed to expand the Ukrainian State to its linguistic boundaries in 1939, he had solved the national question in Ukraine:

"The first result of Adolf Hitler's understanding with Stalin was the fall of the Polish Republic, and the occupation of the Polish districts of White Russia and Galicia by the Red Army. The Soviet occupation of Galicia was a severe blow to the Ukrainian nationalist movement. Too late did the leaders of U.N.D.O. and U.N.U. come to appreciate the relative tolerance of the Polish system of government. At the same time both the Polish and Ukrainian questions have been potentially simplified. A revived Polish state will be a national state in federal relation to its neighbours rather than an outmoded 'state of nationalities'. The fate of the Ukrainians becomes altogether a part of the obscure destiny of the nationalities at present under the rule of the Communist Government in Moscow. And the destiny of all these peoples must be a Russian destiny in the sense that the fluvial network of the Great Eurasian Plain is one geographical and economic whole out of which it is impracticable and would be unreal to attempt to carve separate and politically independent national units" (p.387)

When Ukraine was detached from the crumbling Soviet Union in the early 1990s and it attempted to carve out a separate and politically independent national unit, it had to establish functional relations with its neighbour, the Russian Federation. That is what independent states are required to do in the world through statesmanship.

The years from 1991-2013 saw Kiev managing to maintain the territory it had been bequeathed by the Soviets — including Crimea which had only come into its possession a generation previously, when Khrushchev attached it to Ukraine to increase Russian numbers in the Ukrainian state.

During this period it was, however, touch and go whether the Donbas and Crimea would secede from Kiev's control. Only Kiev's drawing back from measures that would have fully alienated these areas, and the lack of a functional Russia to join, during Yeltsin's disastrous administration, kept Ukraine together.

When Putin resurrected Russia, the landscape had changed. And it was at this very moment — proving Ukraine was essentially an anti-Russian instrument for the West — that the EU and Washington felt they should attempt to curtail the Russian resurgence by destabilising Ukraine and making it a problem for Putin.

A careful balance between West and East, between the Ukrainian nationalist West and the more Russian-orientated East, was essential to holding onto the territory the Ukrainian State had been provided with by the Soviets. However, during 2013-14 the EU and US came bearing gifts, to prise Ukraine away from the Russian sphere, and the balance necessary to hold the state together was fatally upset.

The elected Government in Kiev was overthrown in the Maidan *coup*, and the Eastern parts of Ukraine, including Crimea — which overwhelmingly supported the government it had helped to elect — began to secede, assisted by a resurgent Russia under Putin.

This was how the West began "*leading Ukraine down the path of destruction*", eight years before the Russian Special Military Operation.

There was still time to rescue the situation after 2014, if a new security arrangement had been negotiated by the West with Russia, or if *Minsk II* had been implemented. France and Germany brokered the deal known as *Minsk II*, but Kiev used the process merely as a holding operation. It made the agreement in bad faith, as a holding operation while NATO began to arm and train its developing forces. The aim was to mount an irredentist war on the 'lost' territories which had been granted devolution.

President Poroshenko, Zelensky's predecessor admitted on 17th June 2022:

“The Minsk Agreements did not mean anything to us, and we had no intention to carry them out... our goal was to remove the threat we faced... and win time in order to restore economic growth and rebuild the armed forces. We achieved this goal. Mission accomplished for the Minsk Agreements.”

Then the Ukrainian post-Coup Government rejected a deal that would have ensured territorial integrity (minus Crimea), with autonomy for Donbas. Kiev, with Washington’s blessing and support, played a game of *double or quits* with its territory, which it determined to incorporate through military force, with the Western assistance. And it is still playing that game, with its losses mounting and its chips diminishing.

Now Zelensky has fired (but then suspended after pushback?) his chief spy chief as well as the State Prosecutor on the charge of tolerating widespread “*treason and collaboration*” with the Russians within State Security. The 35,000 strong SBU is apparently riddled with informers and collaborators and a major purge is underway. This indicates an internal crisis of some kind (perhaps brought about

by the alleged sale of a US Himars system to the Russians which Washington is understandably furious about).

Previously, the chief Opposition *For Life* party was banned by those “*waging democracy’s battle*” from Kiev.

The Zelensky regime is reducing itself more and more to an exclusively Ukrainian nationalist constituency, in attempting to cohere the Ukrainian nation under the impact of war. It is running up against the historic problem of Ukrainian nationalism that all the will (and power) in the Western world can not overcome, but only exacerbate.

The Russian military intervention has undoubtedly assisted Ukrainian nation-building but Kiev is ensuring through its anti-accommodationist policy that the Ukrainian nation which survives will live within a much reduced territory as a consequence.

And the final extent of that territory will most probably be determined by the length of time Kiev is willing to resist the Russians. Unfortunately for the Ukrainians the evidence suggests that the end product will bear a inverse relationship to the sacrifice made.

Pat Walsh

Provisional Government made an election Pact with anti-Treaty Sinn Fein with a view to forming a Coalition Government, and that Britain rejected both of these measures, and demanded that the Provisional Government take action against a group of Republican leaders who had occupied the Four Courts or else the British Army would do so.

### The Facts

The Treaty had been signed under a British threat of war, and so was the ‘Civil War’.

The Crown was only an issue in Irish national politics because the British Empire made it so.

The Civil War did have a single cause: British Government policy.

Between the Treaty and the bombardment of the Four Courts there were “*passionate and sincere debates*”. These debates did not prevent war, neither did they cause it. They were irrelevant to the War. And the War, once it started, did divide the country in two.

There were many who stood aside from it, or tried to, but the course of events was determined by those who participated in it, as was the course of events subsequent to it.

“*It cannot be understood by reference to the actions of a handful of individuals!*”

It was a handful of individuals in Whitehall who gave the ultimatum to Collins. And it was Collins (who appears to have had no equal in the Provisional Government) who decided to pre-empt a British attempt at reconquest by making war on the Four Courts Republicans who had so recently been his allies in his futile act of war against Northern Ireland.

Democracy has not made the activity of “*elites*” redundant. Liberal democracy— the only kind that is now considered democratic— is largely an affair of elites. Democracy as egalitarian activity of the general populace only ever existed in pioneer populations in America who were filling out territories cleared of natives by the genocide. Many traces of it still survive there. But, on the whole, actual democracy is not *government of the people, for the people, by the people*, but government of the people by elite institutions designed to achieve their consent.

This was made very clear when Donald Trump broke the unspoken elite consensus and brought the “*deplorables*” out to vote.

## Michael Martin On The 'Civil War'

The Fianna Fail leader made a speech at a Civil War Conference at Cork University on June 15th. The following is the gist of it:

“More than any other event marked during the past decade of commemorations, our public discourse is very clear about what it sees as the core narrative of events and themes of the civil war. Within this, it has effectively been reduced to a handful of elite decisions and has been presented as having a fixed impact on politics.

“Unlike popular engagement with the history of the tumultuous decades before 1922, there has been little or no change in the public understanding of the civil war. We are the poorer for this.

“During the War of Independence, people who had come from many different traditions had ultimately formed a highly united campaign for independence. After the Treaty there were many different emotions and perspectives which motivated people. Passionate and sincere debates continued over a wide spectrum of views and actions. At no point in the following year and a half could it be said that the country was divided neatly into two separate groups.

“There were near constant efforts to reconcile different opponents—and in contrast there were also many efforts to further radicalise actions.

“It did not have a single cause or a pre-determined progress. Its protagonists were not all defined by a fixed will and rigidity. It cannot be understood by reference to the actions of a handful of individuals...”

The narrative of events which Micheal Martin rejects was that the great majority of the people were united in the campaign for independence, that Britain broke this unity by offering partial independence along with the threat of all-out Imperial reconquest if the offer was not accepted, that a bare majority in the Dail accepted the offer for fear of the threat, that that majority set up a Provisional Government on British authority for the implementation of the Treaty, that the Provisional Government, finding strong opposition in the country to the Treaty requirement of taking an Oath to the Crown, tried to formulate a Free State Constitution that was Republican in spirit without rejecting the Treaty, that the

The populace, of course, has a part to play in the democratic system of government. That part is to give its consent to decisions effectively made by minorities. It is enabled to do this by expressing its preference, by voting at elections, for one rather than another of a small number of parties which offer to govern the state on its behalf.

What we call “*democracy*” is government of the state by a party chosen by the populace to act for it.

Political parties are minority institutions. The membership of all of them put together is a small fraction of the electorate. But the small party organisation which wins a majority of Parliamentary seats, in an election in which all adults have a vote, governs the entire electorate for a period of years.

That system of representative government by a small, tightly organised, minority which acts for the whole, and makes laws which all are obliged to obey—either by the moral force of custom or the material force of police—is the form of democracy that was made effective in comparatively recent times, in the United States at first and later by Britain.

Rousseau, who is usually seen as one of the prophets of democracy, denied that representative government is democratic at all. But Rousseau was Swiss, and Switzerland is a country of Cantons and Half-Cantons and Communes in which “*government of the people, by the people, for the people*”, actually existed, and in which powers of government were gradually relinquished upwards from the sovereign base to a central authority. However, the duty of universal military service, with citizen soldiers keeping their weapons at home, indicates that a substantial democratic tradition still survives in this small state.

In the British system, by contrast, all authority is devolved downwards from the central State. When Rosa Luxemburg investigated Local Government in England, she concluded that it did not exist. All that existed was various arrangements of State authority. She was accustomed to Germany, where national government was established in 1871 by a coming together of many small sovereign kingdoms which continued to exercise considerable local authority within the national state.

Rousseau’s dismissal of representative government as a form of democracy was

itself dismissed as elected representative Governments came to dominate the world. But surely the concern about Populism which is now widely expressed puts it back in question.

Representative government puts the populace in second place. But, if the handling of the populace by the consensus of elites become so grossly dismissive that the populace feels affronted—as it was by Hillary Clinton’s ‘*deplorables*’ remarks—representative government has a problem.

A well-conducted system of representative government by elites with the consent of the governed disables the masses.

They can have no complaint about their condition because the Government was elected by them, and each of them was free to form a Party and contest elections if he was dissatisfied with the *status quo*.

It is also a system of *irresponsibility*! When Tony Blair was resigning from active politics, he passed on his insights in a number of radio interviews. One of them was that a political Leader must be able to dissociate himself from the consequences of his actions and *move on*—as he did after destroying the functional Baath State in Iraq and stirring religious conflict in the populace (which still continues). His pretext for War was shown to be groundless by the time of the subsequent Election, and had been rejected in huge popular demonstrations—nevertheless Blair won it. The electorate was concerned about other things than the purely destructive war which its democratically-elected representatives had fought.

The Prime Minister was not accountable for what he did. Neither was the democratic electorate that elected him.

Hilary Benn, a member of Blair’s Government, explained that Britain had given Iraq its freedom by destroying Saddam’s regime, and that it was entirely up to the people of Iraq what they did with their freedom. What they did with their freedom was called *Terrorism*, and war was declared on that too. But the Anglo-American *War on Terror* was in effect only a contribution to the Terrorist anarchy which the Anglo-American destruction of the Iraqi State had caused.

Lloyd George threatened *immediate and terrible war* on nationalist Ireland if the delegates of the elected Dail—which he did not recognise—did not immediately sign the ‘Treaty’ which he gave them

without consulting their Government. That ‘Treaty’ committed them to forming a British-authorized Government under the Crown in opposition to the elected Dail Government. The Irish delegates did not even challenge the British ultimatum to the extent of communicating it to their Government and seeking permission to sign it.

The effect of their surrender to the ultimatum was to split the Irish Government, split the Dail, and split the Irish Volunteer army whose action in defence of the elected republican Government had obliged Britain to negotiate.

It might be that the decision of the delegates to submit to the British ultimatum was sensible, but judging it to have been sensible does not alter the factual detail of it, or the consequences.

The decision of the delegates to submit to the British Government, in opposition to their instructions from the Government that appointed them, subverted the elected Irish Government and alienated the Army which had sworn allegiance to it.

Fifty-one per cent of the Dail met under Crown authority as the *Parliament of Southern Ireland*, under a British Act of Parliament which the Dail had rejected a few months earlier, and appointed a Provisional Government which Britain financed and armed.

The Dail was not the Parliamentary basis of the Provisional Government. Effective authority, in the sense of power, was transferred from the Dail Government to the Provisional Government.

The Irish Army owed no allegiance to the Provisional Government. Its allegiance was to the Dail Government, and it was left without allegiance when the Dail acknowledged that it had transferred effective power to the Provisional Government.

The Provisional Government, while building itself up as a power base with British assistance, tried to sow confusion around what had happened and to re-make itself back into republican mode. It said Britain had given it *freedom to achieve freedom*. But Britain had never said any such thing. The British view was that any country subject to itself was free by virtue of that fact, and that demanding a greater measure of ‘freedom’ would be mere vanity. It kept a close eye on its Provisional Government in Ireland, and brought it to

heel when it seemed to be getting out of hand, forcing it to make war on Republicans. That was the ‘Civil War’.

It has been advertised that the leaders of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael will, this year, do jointly whatever it is that is done annually at *Beal na Blath*. Collins, who gave the order to start the ‘Civil War’, was killed there while Commander in Chief of the Army of the Provisional Government. When his convoy was ambushed, he gave the order to stop and fight instead of driving through.

Taoiseach Martin writes about ‘state formation’ in 1922. A State was certainly destroyed in 1922. Collins destroyed it. If a State was also being formed, in place of the State that was being destroyed, he was central to the doing of it. He was the Man of Destiny, destroyer and creator.

There is little doubt that that was his idea of himself. But at *Beal na Blath* he let himself down. He stopped his convoy in order to exchange a few meaningless shots with a weak company of ambushers—the only shots he ever fired, it is said. And it was rumoured from the start that the shot that killed him was fired from within his convoy. He had come to be seen as a nuisance by most of the members of the Government he had formed—always looking for a way to escape from the corner into which he had boxed himself by taking it upon himself to sign the Treaty, and then to shell the Four Courts. They just wanted to get on with doing the business they had signed up for.

There is certainly a way of undoing the Civil War: agreeing that it was a war fought for a British purpose between two Irish parties who had no difference with one another over the kind of state they wanted.

The kind of state they wanted was the kind of state they had constructed between 1919 and 1921.

It was not the case that some of those who had taken part in constructing the Republican State came to feel that there was something inadequate in a state without a Crown, and that they went into rebellion against the Republic for the purpose of putting a Crown on it!

No demand for a Crown had arisen within the elite that took command of affairs in January 1919. If a Crown had been available it would probably have been acceptable. What was not acceptable was

the *British* Crown, and the British Crown was the only Crown that survived British victory in the Great War. Britain destroyed rival Crowns and established republics in place of them. But it would not let go of Ireland unless Ireland rejected the republicanism which it had chosen and aligned itself with the British Crown.

Michael Martin published a book called *Freedom To Choose*. It is a suggestive title. But what it suggests was not the case. The ‘Treaty’ did not give Ireland ‘freedom to choose’, and in that freedom it did not fight a civil war over whether it was to have a republic or a monarchy.

And the text of the book does not say that it did! The title is a kind of ejaculation—a fragment of a sentence expressive of a sentiment. But it is possible for a book to be best known by its cover. And Martin’s book has a carefully-chosen cover. And, while it has some interesting things in it, they have nothing to do with the title.

The signing of the Treaty, a major event, is barely mentioned: “*The signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty on 6 December 1921 provoked an immediate cabinet crisis*” (p51).

The Treaty was signed by delegates appointed by the Cabinet, acting under Cabinet instructions. Why then should the signing of a document by them provoke a crisis in the Cabinet?

Because their instructions were that they should not sign any British document without Cabinet approval. But they signed without consulting the Cabinet because the British Government threatened to launch an *immediate and terrible war* on nationalist Ireland if they delayed.

The British Prime Minister, who never recognised them as representatives of an Irish Government, held them personally responsible for the war he would launch if they did not sign his document at once, and they signed. Their actions split the Government, the Dail, and the country.

Six months later an Election was held under the terms of the Treaty, as part of the process to establish a new governing system in place of the Dail Government. Griffith, President of the Dail, wanted it to be held strictly as a ratification of the Treaty, but Collins, as Chairman of the Provisional Government, made an agreement with the leader of the opponents of the Treaty that they should contest it as a Dail Election and fight it as a joint programme with the object of forming a Treaty/Anti-Treaty Coalition in the new Dail.

Griffith, who was helpless without Collins, was obliged to call the Election on the terms agreed by Collins and De Valera.

Whitehall condemned the Election Pact, declaring it to be undemocratic, even though it was similar to the British Unionist-Liberal election pact of 1918. It was also declared to be illegal because it was a breach of the Treaty. Collins and Griffith were summoned to Whitehall and browbeaten. Collins made an equivocal statement upon his return on the day before the Election, but the Pact was not revoked. Coalition Government remained on the agenda for the Third Dail, with representatives of the Labour Party and the Farmers’ Party as an Opposition.

But the Third Dail never met. The Pact was broken after the Election, when Whitehall hustled the country into the ‘Civil War’. The War was launched by Collins, as Chairman of the Provisional Government, under pressure of a threat that, if he did not make war on the Republicans, the British Army would.

This turn of events is barely mentioned in Martin’s book:

“By the end of June 1922, however, electoral politics seemed of little consequence, as Ireland became embroiled in a bitter civil war. Many of the anti-Treaty IRA forces had taken matters into their own hands by taking over various barracks and buildings in the country, most notably the Four Courts in Dublin. The decision by the Provisional Government to retake the Four Courts on 28 June 1922 is generally regarded as the beginning of the Civil War... Many brutal atrocities were committed on both sides...” (p75).

The fact that both the signing of the Treaty and the shelling of the Four Courts had the purpose of warding off a British re-conquest is not mentioned.

Nor is the fact that the Irish Army, commissioned as the Army of the Republic, was left as a loose end when the Provisional Government, acting on the authority of the Crown, took over from the Dail Government.

The effective instrument of the independence movement which obliged Britain to negotiate was not voting but shooting.

The British Government gave actual recognition to the existence of the IRA by negotiating a Truce with it. In doing so, it did not recognise it as the Army of the Dail Government. It never recognised the Dail Government. It certainly did not make a Treaty with the Dail Government.

Its purpose in the Treaty was to set up another Government in place of the Dail Government and make an agreement with it.

The Treatyites—by signing up on their own behalf, and persuading a small majority of Dail members to meet as the Parliament of Southern Ireland, and receive power from Britain as the Provisional Government, and set up a new Army supplied by Britain—took the game into their own hands. But, in doing so, they left the Irish Army as a loose end. That was not a wise thing to do with an Army—especially an Army that had been the effective instrument of the movement.

The Army Executive did no more than recognise that it was an Army whose civil authority had deserted it and left it independent. And it did that three or four months before the ‘Civil War’.

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So much for Michael Martin’s thoughtful book, written in the days of John A. Murphy and Eoghan Harris. Now we come to his speech—written under pressure of the rise of the modern Sinn Fein, and possibly the collapse of his own party.

“There is every reason to believe that the war itself could have been avoided, and I believe that the tragedy of the first six months of 1922 was that the key figures in Dublin were never allowed to find a shared route forward. Constant interference and inflexibility from London was central to the fact that nothing came of these efforts. The implied and open threats made to the Provisional Government directly escalated division—and reinforced the views of those who questioned the good faith in London.

“The insistence that an electoral pact would abridge the Treaty had no legitimate basis—and the constant effort to force confrontation did great damage.

“It is very striking that the only offer of assistance made by the departing power to a new government facing enormous hurdles related to weapons and ammunition.

“If it is true that Irish divisions arose from an outsized focus on the impact of the crown and empire on Irish self-determination, then it must also be understood that it was London’s inflexible insistence on its interpretation of these provisions which gave them their importance.

“How different could things have been if Collins’s draft Constitution had been supported rather than vetoed in London...”

A couple of hundred words, uttered with

great daring in the middle of a speech of a few thousand, with a denunciation of Putin thrown in as a counterweight, brings the leader of Fianna Fail to the fringes of the ground on which the Fianna Fail party made itself. And these words are more the cry of pain of a disillusioned Anglophile than anything else.

And how does British “good faith” come into question? Britain, as always, acted out of State interest, which means Imperial interest. It had always said that Irish independence was not negotiable. It did not recognise the Dail Government in 1919, and did not negotiate a Treaty with it in 1921. What it did was to persuade the Dual Monarchist founder of Sinn Fein [Arthur Griffith] and the Head Centre of the Irish Republican Brotherhood [Michael Collins] to draw a number of TDs from the Dail to meet as MPs of the *Parliament of Southern Ireland* and appoint a Government under the Crown. It then saw to it that its new Crown Government in Ireland held to the terms of its appointment. If Lord Birkenhead had said something different to Collins over a pint that was not its concern.

De Valera did not deceive himself or anybody else about the British State. At the meeting of the 2nd Dail in August 1921, he accepted nomination as President only on the understanding he would be head of government with wide powers of discretion, and that the Dail was in earnest about itself, and that it would abide by decisions it made even at the risk of war.

He prepared the ground for a confrontation with Britain on the issue of the Crown. He had devised a way of recognising the Crown as the symbolic head of an association of states called the Commonwealth, but not of the Irish State. He had persuaded Brugha and Stack in the Government to accept the Crown in this form. If Britain preferred to declare war rather than accept it, so be it.

If Britain accepted it, the Government had authority over the Army both in constitutional form and by means of Army representation.

There might still have been dissent in the Army on the issue but it would have been different in kind and degree from the state of affairs brought about by Collins and Griffith when, without preparation of any kind, they usurped the authority of the Government by signing the Treaty as free agents—Plenipotentiaries—and took matters into their own hands, and allowed

themselves to be directed towards ‘Civil War’ by the British authority to which they had pledged themselves.

Michael Martin has a long way to go yet before he becomes a Fianna Failer.

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Meanwhile, what is the point of comments like this: “After 1923 no party contesting an Irish election while advocating armed conflict won more than 4% of the vote”? When was there ever an election held on the question of whether the party that won it should launch a war? Not even in Britain, the greatest warmonger of the past half-millennium, has such a thing been done. Parties are elected to govern, and making war comes within the remit of government.

Sinn Fein/IRA fought a war against the State in the North, adopted a realisable aim for the War half way through it and carried it to success, and then won Elections. It had no electoral mandate for war, not even the indirect governmental one. It was born in the course of an insurrection and scarcely existed when it declared war in the Summer of 1970. The fact that it made war effectively is its justification for doing it. Wars do not arise out of nothing. It was only after the war got going in earnest that people started voting for it.

The anti-War party, which insisted on being “constitutional” within the constitutional absurdity of Northern Ireland, did not know how to act in the peace that followed the war.—which was profoundly different from the peace that preceded it—and it has withered.

The essentially Treatyite leader of Fianna Fail—whose complaint is that Britain did not keep faith with the Treaty—denies that what happened in the North was a war, and he still treats Sinn Fein as a criminal gang—a Mafia at best. But he feels obliged to say this:

“The ongoing conflict in Northern Ireland was a central concern during 1922, particularly for Collins. The overt and aggressive use of the security agenda for sectarian ends was both understood and condemned. Once again the adherent bad faith of London showed itself in the complete failure to insist on protecting the minority as well as the creation and funding of a new sectarian policing group.

“The nature of the 1920 partition and its subsequent strengthening is that it created two administrations based on a sectarian headcount, it sundered historic connections within the island and it undermined the ability to build a more diverse and

prosperous state. The administrations were designed in a way to make the issue of partition almost unsolvable and to promote a steady drift apart. Those early years are critical and we should do more to understand them.”

De Valera, when accepting nomination to the Presidency at the meeting of the second Dail suggested that a settlement with Britain which left Ireland independent might include an opt-out clause for Northern Counties, or even a Provincial opt-out. Collins, in signing the Treaty, committed himself to Six County Partition, and even to recognising the Northern Ireland system—but then he made war on Northern Ireland, with assistance from the Four Courts IRA.

If “*the 1920 partition*” had just been partition, the ground of “*sectarian conflict*” in the Six Counties would have been small. But the Act took the form of setting up a Six County Government on a par with a 26 County Government with a view to uniting the two. The Ulster Unionists made it clear that they did not want a Six County Government, in which they would have to conduct “*sectarian government*”. They just wanted British Government. But Britain insisted that there could only be Partition in the form of setting up a Northern Ireland system, which would be funded as part of the British state but excluded from British politics, and would be linked with the 26 County Government by a *Council of Ireland*. And then it added the *Border Commission*, which Griffith declared would whittle away Northern Ireland. On top of that, Collins launched his invasion of the North in May 1922 and brought out the Six County IRA.

The two sides in the North were at war with one another in 1922. The Treatyites used their influence to pit the Northern nationalist government community against the new Government. It was an easy thing to do. And it undertook to fund separate education in nationalist areas, and to subsidise local Councils which refused to play a part in the Six County system. And then they made war.

It was not De Valera who fostered that disorder.

And as to the “*historic connections*” sundered by the 1920 Act, those connections, insofar as they had ever existed since the 16th century, were Ascendancy connections. The colonial aristocracy put in command of Ireland in 1691 governed the island by means of the Anglican Irish

Parliament. There was a movement within the Ascendancy in the 1780s and 1790s to broaden the base of the Parliament by gradually introducing Catholic and Presbyterian representatives (led by Grattan, Tone etc.). The Parliament, however, decided that it would be a breach of the Constitution to admit Papists. After it provoked rebellion in 1798, it was abolished by the Act of Union.

The separate development of the Presbyterian colony and the native population began within a decade of the abolition of the Ascendancy Parliament. The first major point of rupture happened in 1831 when the Belfast radicals who had

supported O’Connell on Catholic Emancipation parted company with him over his demand for Repeal of the Union, and were roundly abused by him.

Martin’s comments on Belfast in 1922 are all Collinsite.

If he wants to become an actual Fianna Failer he should go back a bit farther—to De Valera’s telling of the facts of life to the 2nd Dail.

Sinn Fein in the South might have moved in on that ground and made it its own, but it has chosen a different course—the leap into existential freedom.

**Brendan Clifford**

## Blackshirts, Hitler Shirts, Blue Shirts And The Enigma Of Fine Gael

In October 1939 Britain’s First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill spoke on the wireless –

“ I cannot forecast for you the action of Russia. It is a riddle, inside a mystery, wrapped in an enigma.”

The old scoundrel had a way with words, some of which he stole from others without acknowledgement, a trick of the artists praised by Oscar Wilde. And, like Wilde he had no scruples about lying, nor dispensing with Queensbury Rules.

I’m pretty perplexed about what Fine Gael did in the past and flummoxed about what it’s doing and planning now.

Over forty years ago I read Maurice Manning’s book on the Blueshirts, and having read it, concluded that I had known more about them before I opened the book than I had when I’d finished. Maurice sat in Seanad Eireann and Dail Eireann, was Chancellor of the National University and oversaw planning for the Decade of Centenaries, and these are only some of glittering prizes he picked up in a busy career.

Many of the founder members of Cumann na nGaedheal, and Blueshirts/ Fine Gael were still hale and hearty when he wrote his book, but their story remained a riddle and a mystery to me after reading it.

I have often quoted from *Great Irish*

*Speeches*, but the contribution of John A Costello on the *Wearing of Uniform (Restriction) Bill* in Dail Eireann on 28th February 1934 is particularly notable.

Fianna Fail had introduced the Bill, following the passing of similar Bills in European democracies to maintain public order, when opposing parties wearing uniforms were threatening civil war.

Costello said, inter alia –

“The Minister (for Justice) gave extracts from various laws on the continent, but he carefully refrained from drawing attention to the fact that the Blackshirts were victorious in Italy and the Hitler Shirts were victorious in Germany, as, assuredly, in spite of this bill and in spite of the Public Safety Act, the Blueshirts will be victorious in the Irish Free State.”

De Valera’s Bill passed the Dail, but the Free State Senate, with Unionists and Redmondites supporting Fine Gael, prevented it becoming law. No similar Bill was introduced later. When IRA men, in the 1970s marched in uniform in Dublin, without attacking anyone, at least one pig-ignorant Fine Gael spokesman publicly asked why there was no law against political uniform.

John A Costello was a brilliant lawyer but his speech is one which reflects no credit on him. On the same day Sean Lemass answered him analysing the various stages of fascism which had

brought dictators to power in Europe, finally brandishing that day's *Evening Herald* and its headline, *Critical Day for Austria. Nazi Ultimatum to the Government Expires.*"

Now that was an analytical, constructive, responsible speech at a critical time in Irish and European history deserving a place in any anthology of Irish speeches.

But I only became aware of it by reading "*Lemass in the de Valera Era*" by Manus O'Riordan in the December 2018 *Irish Political Review*.

Mr Costello's "*Hitler Shirts*", better known as the Brownshirts, didn't last much longer than his Great Speech.

On the long *Night of the Long Knives*, NIGHT OF THE LONG KNIVES, 30th June -2nd July, 1934, Himmler, along with Goering's Police, and Hitler himself surprised the "*Hitler Shirts*" in their Nightshirts and murdered them.

Ernst Rohm, Hitler's earliest disciple, didn't understand why his leader had turned against him. In an unusual show of humanity Hitler offered him the chance of shooting himself, but Rohm told Hitler to pull the trigger. Instead an SS man did the job. Hitler got up in the Reichstag claiming there had been a plot against him and he, Hitler was the judge.

Anyhow I've been looking at another entry in the collection of *Great Irish Speeches*. It was given at Cork City Hall on 21st May 1972 at the Fine Gael Ard Fheis by the Party Leader, Liam Cosgrave. It ended with the following comradesly passage –

"The party now faces what might be the most critical stage in its history. Some members of the party have given their time to building it up when they might have been better occupied to their own advantage. They have made it possible for members to come into the organization and squeak and bleat about something which they knew themselves they could not achieve.

"I don't know whether some of you do any hunting or not, but some of these commentators and critics are now like mongrel foxes, they are gone to ground and I'll dig them out, and the pack will chop them when they get them."

**Donal Kennedy**

## Six County Sectarianism Never Takes A Holiday

In the 1980s I went with my then wife to her Australian homeland for a few months. We went to the Eastern suburbs of Sydney, where she was born, and stayed in *Double Bay* (*Double Bay, Double Pay*, as the anti-Semites call it), not far from *Lew's Road* (called *Jew's Grove* by the same people).

I was surprised to hear how much abuse the people of this Jewish middle-class suburb suffered. Australians are generally a friendly people and this anti-Semitism was seen by many as Australian ready-made rough humour without malice. To be thirsty was to be as dry as a *Pommie's towel*, or a fellow drunk would drink it out of *Ghandi's loin cloth*. I was told the Jews deserved a joke like anyone else.

We then flew down to Tasmania where my wife had friends. Flying over Melbourne in Southern Australia, I was to later learn that my niece had arrived from the Shankill Road, Belfast to one of the small towns, below me, near Melbourne. She had brought her two young children, and left her husband because he wanted to stay in Belfast. She was scared the war situation in Northern Ireland would never end.

Near the farm we were staying at was a re-created Prison Camp along 19th Century lines. It had been deliberately made into a hell-hole to house mainly Irish political prisoners. These had not been recognised as such, but were mixed with the other prisoners—some quite vicious—while others, also deemed criminals, were sentenced by the courts of England for sometimes trivial offences. It was the English way of settling the still mainly aboriginal Australia.

There were punishment cells, in addition to the usual cells. These were the same size as a phone box, so that the prisoner couldn't lie down. When the door was closed it was pitch-black inside, very hot, and without air. A prisoner might spend a few hours in these, or it could be all day or all night. Some were found dead at the end of their punishment, while others were struck insane.

We were invited to try them out. A few minutes was enough.

Nearby was the prison camp church, which instead of pews, had individual boxes built in such a way that the prisoner couldn't see a fellow prisoner but had a view of the preacher. After each prisoner left the box, it was examined for scratched messages. The camp officials knew who had occupied the box and, if a scratched message was found, then it was the phone-box-type cell for them.

A woman's voice with a Belfast accent rang over the camp announcing the different exhibits (not my niece!).

By the time I had caught up with my niece, years later, through emailing, she had divorced her Belfast husband, had married an Australian, and had two additional children, making four. She had studied banking and was now a financial adviser for a major bank. She certainly was her own woman.

When visiting Belfast, she stopped off in London, where I met her. When she went back to Australia, we emailed one another. I discussed the war situation. Then we moved on to Facebook to continue the conversation. That led to exchanging experiences as a Catholic and a Protestant. She was the daughter of one of my sisters who had converted to Protestantism.

I didn't realise the Australian town my niece was living in had quite a few Northern Protestants who formed a Diaspora. Suddenly, I was being called a *taig*, a *fenian*, a *mickey*—as someone who was infested—a favourite word of the anti-Catholic pogroms, painted on the windows of the driven-out Catholic family).

My niece managed to block some of the sectarian trolls, and Facebook was informed about some of the others. This changed any relationship I had with my niece. She more or less blamed me for bringing up the subject of Catholic and Protestant, and went on to say Catholics were not the only ones to suffer. She herself was in a school bus going through a Catholic area when it was stoned, sometimes soldiers had to escort her and others to school.

She thought Catholics were complaining too much: in particular she thought that the stories about a Catholic school, whose young pupils were being harassed by Prot-

estant adult vigilante, were exaggerated. The IRA had driven her out of the country, broken up her Belfast marriage, and now I was at it. End of communications.

Here was a woman who had gone from being a shop-assistant in Belfast to the world of finance, and was now writing the occasional piece for the Finance Column of a leading Melbourne newspaper: yet she couldn't discuss the differences of national identity without falling back into sectarianism.

Mary Lou, of Sinn Fein, is visiting Australia at the moment. It's not hard to see the advantage she going to have in being articulate, over the NI Protestant Diaspora in Australia who just don't seem able to express what their national identity meant to them. This advantage isn't something to celebrate for we all would feel more secure with a clear Northern Protestant expression of heritage, and ability to express a view on events there.

**Wilson John Haire** (23.7.2022)

## German Gas-line Blues

I saw a report on 29th July of the barrage of hostile shouting at the German vice-chancellor (who is a Green member of the ruling coalition), at a public meeting in Bavaria. There appears to be growing social unrest based on an awareness of the prospects facing Germany as a result of its sanctions policies.

This will eventually manifest in a political as well as economic dissent from the route the EU has chosen—a route that its present leaders have ensured will result in a test of strength between the idea of the EU versus the reality of national interests. The seminal point of that test will arrive when the decision comes for Germany to actually, rather than theoretically, redirect its available energy capacity to other EU states under the energy sharing arrangement which the Commission is promoting.

The behaviour of the EU visionaries and their apparatchiks reveals that they see the Ukrainian crisis as an opportunity for forging a federal identity for the EU. They possibly adopted this viewpoint in 2014, which would explain their agreement to be “fucked” by the US at that time. The realisation that the US was determined to use Ukraine to de-stabilise Russia presented them with a gift horse that they just couldn't resist.

This awareness, combined with an understanding that Europe, which includes many Eastern European states whose body politic remains saturated with anti-Russian sentiment, led to the inevitable conclusion that the EU was incapable of standing up to the US.

Seeing the writing on the wall as an opportunity for forging a common Euro-

pean identity in the fight with the common Russian enemy, the EU visionaries grasped it with both hands. Then, when the sanctions began to show signs of backfiring, like all visionaries, rather than change course, they raised the stakes in the belief that a shared European adversity would produce the same shared European identity that was their goal.

This politically ignorant position was reinforced in the meantime by the arrival of a German governing coalition which included the Greens ideologues. The Greens, pursuing their own agenda, which at least had the attraction of an appeal to promote social responsibility—albeit of a kind that itself came from a supra-national perspective—provided the EU visionaries with a political position that could claim a wider relevance than the simple aim for a Federal Europe.

As far as I can see, what we are now witnessing is a kind of coalition between the EU visionaries and the Green ideologues which is determined, each component for its own reasons, to prevent a resolution of the Ukrainian crisis for as long as possible. This makes the Coalition very useful to the US/UK as the most effective political obstacle to any emerging national sentiment among the EU states—a sentiment that will inevitably grow as the repercussions of the sanctions policies begin to bite in earnest in the various member-states.

In that sense the EU, the Greens, NATO, and the US/UK have gambled everything on the outcome of the Ukrainian crisis. This is a very dangerous position and it seems to me that the only hope for the

planet will be the capacity of national sentiment to assert itself in Europe in ways that effectively break that coalition of the visionaries, the ideologues and the believers in manifest destiny.

### IMPLICATIONS

Furthermore, there are also significant implications for Ireland, should a damaged EU emerge from America's proxy war on Russia. These implications are not lost on Britain, even though it appears that little thought is currently being devoted to them in Ireland.

The loss of the EU as the mainstay of Ireland's capacity to see beyond the large island that physically and economically stands between Ireland and Europe will inevitably create a re-focus that will generate the conditions for a renaissance of the revisionist agenda.

Britain's attitude to the Protocol means that we are likely to see a re-emergence of a land border in Ireland as a necessary boundary between the EU and the UK. That border will remain relevant and necessary for as long as both entities remain on their present footing. The question is, which of these entities is likely to suffer most and lose their footing as a result of the continuation of America's war on Russia?

In all likelihood, any retreat into a European arrangement that is based on narrower national interests will weaken the EU entity as a counter-ballast to British influence on Ireland. Britain, on the other hand, is likely to emerge as a less damaged entity.

The effects of all this on Ireland is obviously not the main object of Britain's policy on Ukraine, but I'm sure it's something that Whitehall is aware of and planning for.

Ireland's slavish compliance with a US/UK policy that is designed to lead to a significant damage to the EU is short-sighted and the hostile official Irish reaction to Sabrina Higgins' recent letter on the Ukrainian conflict is indicative of the extent to which Irish politics has been denuded of any sense of where Irish national interests actually lie.

**Eamon Dyas**

**Jack Lane** comments:

But it all goes back to WWI and ‘*the crime against Europe*’—that was the start of Europe's demise. Ireland could tell that story to Europe.

## Irish Bulletin

### Volume 5

This penultimate volume has just been published and covers the period from 1st June to 19th October 1921.

This included—

- the final phase of the War;
- the negotiation of a Truce when it became clear to the British Government that it would not win the War militarily, and was definitely losing the war for the "hearts and minds" of opinion at home and abroad;
- the meeting of the Second Dáil, which was the first full meeting of the elected Deputies—made possible by the Truce;
- the setting up of the bogus Government of Northern Ireland;
- the negotiations about negotiations between President De Valera and Prime Minister Lloyd George;
- and the sending of a delegation to London to see whether the unelected British Government in Ireland was willing to make a Treaty with the elected Irish Government.

The *Irish Bulletin* played a central role in bringing the British Government to the negotiating table, with its carefully accurate, and therefore indisputable, reporting to the world of the means by which Britain tried to carry on governing Ireland against the will of three-quarters of the electorate.

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## What Were The Royal Irish Constabulary?

John Dolan is "ashamed and angry" (The Echo, July 9, 2022) because the Royal Irish Constabulary were not commemorated in our Decade of Centenaries, and were commemorated instead by Britain in London's St. Paul's Cathedral in April last.

It is understandable that Britain should commemorate its own soldiers of every nationality including Irish. And it is entirely appropriate that, regardless of their nationality, we should NOT commemorate soldiers of an army that made war against us.

Because that is what RIC members were. This fact is confirmed by the highest British authority. There may be some people who believed or were led to believe that the RIC were just policemen doing a policeman's job. But they were not. They were never just policemen. And it was another weasel word to call them policemen.

The British Government itself made this perfectly clear during the war. In early 1919 it was proposed by some MPs in Westminster that the RIC be allowed to join the Police Union of the UK and the Chief Secretary, McPherson, refused point blank and explained that: "It was decided by the Government that the Royal Irish Constabulary could not be permitted to join the National Union of Police and Prison Officers, in as much as the Royal Irish Constabulary is a semi-military force directly under the control of the Crown, and subject in many respects to the same conditions of employment as the army and navy forces." (March 6, 1919, Hansard, Volume 113, Series 5, column 626.)

So John can rest easy, and need not be the least bit ashamed!

**Pat Maloney**

Editor, "Labour Comment,"  
Roman Street, CORK

*Evening Echo, Cork, 26.7.200*

## Ukraine: A Prepared War?

Up to recently I was sceptical about the risks of war in Ukraine, believing that international leaders would not be so stupid and reckless. Now I have changed my mind, the risks of war in Ukraine have greatly increased. NATO led by the US and UK are transporting large quantities of weapons and munitions to Ukraine and also providing training to Ukrainian army and paramilitary forces. We in Ireland have been actively cooperating with these dangerous activities.

Again today US troops and probably weapons and munitions are being transported through Shannon airport to Ukraine and to Bardufoss air base in Northern Norway.

US air force C40C number 02-0203 refuelled at Shannon yesterday on its way to Kiev in Ukraine and is now on its way back to the USA having landed at Shannon about 11.15am this morning.

Sun Country aircraft number N820SY also refuelled at Shannon this morning coming from Marine Corps station in Cherry Point N Carolina and is on its way to Bardufoss air base in Norway

Omni Air call sign OY517 is on its way to Shannon right now due about 3pm this afternoon, most likely on contract to US military, onward destination not yet established. This is Omni air number N378AX coming from Norfolk Naval Station via Bangor Maine.

Omni Air N225AX seems to have been at Shannon since yesterday and took off again this morning about 8am heading also for Bardufoss air base in Norway.

So far its been a busy day at Shannon supporting the US war machine. Probably more to come later today.

Also due at Shannon later this evening is Omni Air N468AX coming from Biggs air base in El Paso via Baltimore Washington.

That makes at least 5 aircraft associated with the US military being refuelled at Shannon airport today.

**Colonel Edward Horgan**

[Facebook post: 18th January, 2022: before hostilities began. He attaches photos of the aircraft he mentions taking off at Shannon. ed.]

Does  
It  
Up

Stack  
?

## Cork Transport Plan

The Transport and Environment Minister, Eamonn Ryan, Green Party, has not been having an easy time of it recently what with trying to ban peat-cutting and culling milking cows, and trying to reduce carbon footprints of everybody (except Government Ministers and our Taoiseach Micheál Martín, Fianna Fáil who seems to be flying all over from one country to another for no discernable reasons). And, during the month of July, Ryan's Department of Transport produced its amended *BusConnects Plan* for Cork City. When the Plan was first launched by Minister Ryan in April, he said there will be difficulties in getting community support and he said it will involve "*hard decisions*" and "*political will*" to get the Plan "*over the line*". (As if playing rugby?).

Minister Ryan was right—the communities affected by the Plan are not pleased at the proposals to carve bus lanes out, regardless of cycle lanes, motor car traffic and parking spaces and driving the buses through people's gardens in some areas where deemed necessary. (So much for the green thinking of bio-diversity!) Compulsory Purchase Orders are to be used to carry the BusConnects Plan into action. Regardless it seems, of what people want. Information meetings are being organised in various hotel venues around the city of Cork. In these meetings, individual people who get up to comment are treated politely. They are told by the BusConnects people present "*we will note your comments*" but no one really expects to have any effect on the Plan—it is being pushed through and any real objections are given short shrift—stony faces and icy "*next please*", as if distancing themselves from a pariah or a nasty smell.

The BusConnects Plan is estimated to cost 600,000,000 Euro. This is an awful lot of money out of taxpayers' pockets and what for? To replace buses with Buses! There is never any mention in these Transport Plans about walking. When I was younger everybody walked. Even the very elderly walked, and people who travelled to work used bikes if they didn't walk.

The BusConnects Plan leaves no room for

walkers or cyclists. It states that, in certain places, cycle routes will be diverted to "alternative routes". So the Buses will be king of the road: "*RoadMasters*", as one brand of buses was called some years ago.

A BusConnects Plan—similar to the Cork city plan is proposed for Dublin, even though the geographical layout of Dublin is relatively flat and most of its streets and roads are wide. Cork is hilly, and the streets and roads in Cork city are winding and narrower.

There is another way for Cork city. Cork is fortunate in having several ridges of hills on either side of the city centre. The city centre is an island surrounded by water. The island is small—less than ten minutes walk from side to side. So there is no need for buses to enter on the island at all.

The east-west hills are a huge transport resource waiting to be tapped for Light Rail. Tunnelling along inside the hills is the environmentally correct way to Cork's transport problems. The rocks are regarded as relatively soft—old Red Sandstone on the north side and Limestone on the south side of the city. The mainline railway has since 1854 entered Cork city through a long tunnel. Other countries such as France, Switzerland, the Canary Islands, Spain, and Madeira use extensive tunnelling to connect up communities.

In the Faroe Islands, the Danish Government has connected several of the islands through tunnels. Tunnelling is a recognised construction technique, using modern tunnelling machines.

Around Cork city the tunnels will lie well above sea level and so will not be subject to flooding.

When a proposed tunnel is made for Light Rail from near Ballincollig at Inniscarra, it will go along inside the northern ridge under Mount Desert, under Sunday's Well, under Shandon, under the hills all the way to Glanmire: from where one branch would go to Sallybrook and the other to Little Island.

The Southern tunnel would go from near Ballincollig or Ovens, towards Curraheen, under Wilton, under Magazine Road, and on underground to Mahon Shopping Centre and to Mahon Point. A branch from Greenmount could go underground towards Douglas, Grange, Passage West and Carrigaline.

Because these underground Light Rail lines would be almost level, the trains would not consume too much electricity and the adits (access passages) would be level from the stations to the streets outside. Elevators may not be needed at most stations. Bridges will be needed over the Shournagh River, the Blackpool Glen and over the Glashaboy River in Glanmire.

Buses, trucks and vans over 3.5 tonnes would not be permitted onto the City Centre Island nor on Barrack Street, Shandon Street, nor Blarney Street—which are heritage areas into which only cars and light vans would be permitted.

A small traffic roundabout would be constructed at the end of the Western Road next to O'Neill Crowley Bridge, and from there the City Council could provide a free shuttle service, seating eight people, along the Western Road via St. Patrick Street to Parnell Square and via South Mall and Western Road to the Western Roundabout, .

Bus stops for the routes to the North Lee area would be on the North Quays and those for the South Lee area would be on the South Quays. Buses and coaches would not be allowed onto the City Centre Island Heritage Area.

Traffic lights and much other 'street furniture' could be removed from the City Centre where they are at present causing a lot of disruption and vandalism.

The 600,000,000 Euros proposed to be spent on the BusConnects Plan would go a long way on the Light Rail system proposed above: and our gardens would not be uprooted and our streets would not be clogged up with buses.

(Reference the French city of St. Malo for a city centre without buses or traffic lights and the USA city of Washington DC for its rail system.)

Bus Eireann and Dublin Bus have taken over the main streets of almost every city and town in Ireland in which they operate their businesses. They were given a free hand up to now to ruin our urban areas. It does not stack up and transport does not have to be done their way. It is time for fresh and new ideas.

As the old saying goes "*You can't get a quart into a pint pot*". And that is what BusConnects is trying to do. It will not work. Lateral thinking is needed in City Hall and in the Dublin-centered Ministry of Transport.

There is a National political issue involved in this plan for Cork. It is very inappropriate that companies in the transport business, which Bus Eireann and Dublin Bus are, should be allowed to make their own plans for the environments of Local Authority areas, subject only to An Bórd Pleanála in Dublin. Each and every local Authority has its own Town Planning Department and each should have control over their own towns and countryside roads and environments. This is what Democracy is all about.

**Michael Stack ©**

## NEUTRALITY continued

and launching personal attacks on the leader of the strikers, James Larkin. The *Irish Independent* described the 1916 Easter Rising as "insane and criminal" and famously called for the shooting of its leaders.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Rush to Arms!

Three polls on Irish Neutrality since the Russian invasion of Ukraine have disappointed the dogs of war in Government and the Defence Forces who want to abolish Irish neutrality and spend billions, literally, on armaments.

But despite these polls showing an unequivocal rejection of demands to abandon neutrality, the Government has pressed ahead with policy positions and action to do just that! (*The Phoenix*, fortnightly magazine, 29.7.2022).

[Readers are invited  
to send in their Trade Union news]

# Organised Labour!

## Public Service Pay

The Government has accepted an invitation to fresh talks with Public Service unions just hours after they announced a coordinated campaign of industrial action ballots. (*Irish Independent*-27.7.2022)

Unions have also received an invitation from the Workplace Relations Commission but are seeking clarity on whether the Government side is "flexible in its position in order to do a deal".

The invitation was issued just hours after union leaders announced a coordinated campaign on public service pay that will include ballots from next month.

"As Minister Michael McGrath has said from the outset, the aim of the Government is to reach agreement on terms that are fair to public servants and to taxpayers generally. Achieving this will require goodwill and a degree of flexibility on both sides."

Siptu Deputy General Secretary, John King, said the Public Services Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions is "positively disposed" towards going back to talks.

He said it is "seeking clarity if the employer side are accepting the invitation, on the basis that it is consistent with the minister's statement yesterday that it is flexible in its position in order to do a deal".

It is understood that the WRC has offered the parties dates on August 10 or 12 to re-enter talks.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions Public Services Committee agreed to mount a coordinated campaign on public service pay.

Unions on the committee represent over 90% of the country's 340,000 public servants.

Chairperson of the Public Services Committee, Kevin Callinan, said unions were united in their resolution to achieve a credible public service pay offer for last year and this year.

He said unions are ready to reengage after talks broke down at the Workplace Relations Commission on a review of the current pay deal last month, once the commission "is able to indicate that there are significant new proposals to discuss".

"Inflation has risen from 5.6% to over 9% in the four months since we triggered the review clause of the current public service pay deal, Building Momentum," he said.

The committee has said it is no longer prepared to discuss an extension of the Building Momentum agreement to cover pay in 2023, until improved terms for 2021-2022 are agreed.

Mr Callinan said the government offered an additional increase of 2.5% for the 2021-2022 period of the current agreement.

He said unions felt this was "clearly inadequate when inflation now seems likely

to be over 10% in that period."

During talks, the government also offered 2.5% for next year. Together with pay rises already agreed for this year, this would represent total pay increases of 7% for this year and next at an additional cost of €1.2bn. (*Irish Independent*-27.7.2022)

## IRISH FOREIGN AFFAIRS,

### SUMMER 2022

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# Irish Neutrality 1914

## Statement of Irish Neutrality League

**Sinn Fein publication,  
3 October, 1914**

... In the Irish Neutrality League various sections have joined hands, and it may be accepted as a cold fact that henceforth any employer in Ireland who attempts to bring pressure on his workmen to join the British army will have an opportunity of showing his own ability as a first-rate fighting man.

Ireland has got to look after herself—got to see that none of her people are bullied into doing what they do not want to do, got to see that no press-ganging under cover of the *Militia Ballot Act* is attempted with impunity. If Ireland remains neutral and Germany wins the war, Ireland will not suffer. Neutrals do not suffer. If England wins, then England is going to treat this country—even though 500,000 Irish dupes died for her—exactly as she pleases. Once Germany goes, England has nothing to fear in Europe except Russia, and so far as the sea is concerned Russia is negligible.

The League was formed on Monday night in the Dublin Trades Hall, when Mr. James Connolly was appointed President, Mr. J.T. O’Kelly, T.C., Secretary; Mr. Thomas Farren, Treasurer, and Messrs. William O’Brien (President of the Trades Council), Arthur Griffith, J. Scollin (A.O.H., American Alliance), Sheehy-Skeffington, J. Milroy, and Countess Markievicz chosen as committee.

As it was in the beginning  
is now  
and ever shall be . . .

The *Irish Independent* comments on the Irish Neutrality League (30.9.1914)

"YET Another League—The three tailors of Tooley Street have been outdone by a nonsensical body styling itself the ‘Irish Neutrality League’. The objects of this new League, as described by its founders, seem to be to direct the whole future policy and conduct of the Irish nation, and more especially to hinder and obstruct as far as possible the recruitment of Irishmen for the army. [British Army]

How any body having such objects in view can call itself a Neutrality League is one of the things which no fellow can understand. It reminds one of the so-called Peace Commission during the labour trouble in Dublin twelve months ago. Composed mainly, if not entirely of partisans, it took on itself the role of peacemaker, but succeeded in being ridiculous. Its influence was absolutely nil; it produced nothing but resolutions; and soon died of inanition. A similar fate, in the ordinary course of nature, awaits the Irish Neutrality League."

(*Irish Independent* 30.9.1914).

Estimates of how many Irish men fought in the First World War vary, but it is now generally accepted that around 200,000 or more soldiers from the island of Ireland served over the course of the war.

An archive launched by the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2014 lists the 49,000 soldiers from the island of Ireland who died during the First World War or as a result of wounds sustained during battle.

\*\*\*\*\*

### The Three Tailors of Tooley Street:

three characters said by Prime Minister George Canning to have held a meeting there for redress of grievances, and to have addressed a petition to the House of Commons beginning "*We, the people of England*".

Definition taken from  
*The Nuttall Encyclopaedia,*

edited by the Reverend James Wood (1907)

\*\*\*\*\*

The *Irish Independent* was formed in 1905 as the direct successor to *The Irish Daily Independent* and *Daily Nation*, an 1890s' pro-Parnellite newspaper. It was launched by William Martin Murphy, an Irish nationalist businessman, staunch anti-Parnellite and fellow townsman of Parnell's most venomous opponent, Timothy Michael Healy from Bantry.

During the 1913 Lockout of workers, in which Murphy was the leading figure among the employers, the *Irish Independent* vigorously sided with its owner's interests, publishing news reports and opinion pieces hostile to the strikers, expressing confidence in the Unions' defeat,

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