

IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

February 2022

Vol.37 No.2 ISSN 0790-7672

and **Northern Star** incorporating **Workers' Weekly** Vol.36 No.2 ISSN 954-5891

The Dublin Castle Event

A Centenary event was held in Dublin Castle on 16th January. The event being celebrated was reported by RTE as being the setting up of "*the first Irish Government*". The Dail Parties, except for AONTU, participated in the celebration. The President too was present at it, though he must have known very well that the event being celebrated was a fraud. But it seems that he said next to nothing at it.

If it was the case that the first Irish Government was set up at Dublin Castle in mid-January 1922, how could it be that the current President of the state did not lead the centenary celebration of its birth? His reticence at the event is explicable only on the assumption that he would not say what he knew was not the case, but felt that he had to compromise to some extent with the revisionist fashion that grips the party-political and media Establishment at present.

It is not always the case of *dixi et salvati animum meum*. Depending on circumstances, it can be that refusing to speak is what saves the soul!

But another almost silence that was noticeable had a very different quality—the silence of Sinn Féin. The thing that actually happened at Dublin Castle in mid-January 1922 was the setting up of an anti-Sinn Féin Government, on British authority, with the purpose of destroying the Sinn Féin Government and system that had been established three years earlier on the basis of an overwhelming electoral mandate.

The Government set up in January 1922, and which took possession of Dublin Castle in a ceremonial handover, was the Provisional Government of the Parliament of Southern Ireland. It was financed and armed by Britain, which had refused to have any relationship with the elected Dail Government except a destructive one.

There was a token British military withdrawal in January 1922. But, six months later, there was still a British Army in Dublin, and Whitehall gave it orders to begin a

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The Wisdom of Haughey

It's a great pity Haughey never got round to describing his views on the art of politics or left some memoir about it. Doing was clearly more important than theorizing for him and rightly so—but it's a pity nonetheless. This was highlighted in the reports about his views on the EU and the European Parliament in particular in the newly released state papers.

"Taoiseach Charles Haughey was adamantly opposed to giving the European Parliament any additional powers 30 years ago. In a June 1991 meeting between Haughey and Major during an EU summit in Luxembourg, the prime minister asked for his views on extending power to the parliament.

"Give them nothing", Haughey said. "During the [Irish] presidency [in 1990], the biggest impediment to getting things through was the European Parliament." Major said he agreed very much but then asked how the council would meet the parliament's demands for more power. "Give them something limited", Haughey advised. "For example, we could agree to the proposed new method for the

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Propagandist Broadcasters, the Story of 'Coolacrease' and the 'Glasnevin Wall'

In October 2007, six years before the Decade of Centenaries began, a television documentary about an incident in the War of Independence, occurring at Coolacrease, County Offaly, stirred up a storm of controversy. Looking back, it is possible to see that the public debate at that time foreshadowed many of the debates

and controversies that have marked the centenaries since 2013.

The Coolacrease controversy instanced the power of television being used to distort historical events in line with a political agenda. The makers of the documentary fully intended to discredit Republicanism by insinuating that sectarianism and eth-

nic cleansing were behind a specific IRA action in the War of Independence. The programme was advertised heavily and provocatively on RTÉ and screened twice by that station; it was recommended and defended by big name RTE personalities Ryan Tubridy and Joe Duffy.

When numerous complaints against it were lodged with the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, these were rejected. A representative institution of the Irish broadcasting profession was thus com-

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

The Roots Of Modern War

James Connolly
(back page)

Organised Labour

Dunnes Stores; Work-Related Deaths; Fewer Hours For Public Servants;
At The Top! Rations!

the Irish Republican Brotherhood honeycomb of which he was the Head. (He had discussed the British offer with the IRB Supreme Council on 3rd December but had declined to state an opinion at the meeting of the Government.)

He and Griffith got a small majority in favour of the 'Treaty' in a Dail vote. It seems unlikely that the Dail would have voted for the Treaty but for Collins's own conviction—conveyed through the IRB—that, once he got a Government and Army from the Treaty, he would soon break free from Treaty restrictions and get rid of 'Northern Ireland', the entity established under the 1920 *Government of Ireland Act*.

The Dail voted in favour of the 'Treaty'—but that was not what got Collins his uniformed Army. The 'Treaty' was not between the British Government and the Dail Government. The British Government refused to have any dealings with the Dail Government, or to receive the credentials of its delegates when they went to London to negotiate. It treated the delegates as individuals with influence in Ireland which might be used to give effect to the 1920 British Act which the Dail had rejected.

The 'Treaty', insofar as it had any resemblance to a Treaty, was an Agreement between the British Government and a Government under British authority which Collins and Griffith undertook to establish.

reconquest of the country if the Provisional Government which it set up in January—and provided with a mercenary Army—did not make war on the Republican Army which had defended the Dail Government and obliged Britain to negotiate.

Britain was determined that the IRA should not be the Army of the Irish state. When the Black and Tan terror campaign failed to intimidate the electorate which had empowered Sinn Fein, the British Government decided that it would be expedient to allow a degree of Irish statehood to be established. But it must be statehood under ultimate British authority. And it persuaded a group within the Sinn Fein leadership to set up a system of government under the 1920 *Government of Ireland Act*, seducing it with lavish promises which it had no intention of keeping, and which no Government under the British system of rapidly alternating party-political sovereignty would be able to keep.

Griffith and Collins set up the Provisional Government. And Collins was provided with an Army. Why?

Collins did not ask why. It appears that, during the negotiations, he was greatly impressed by Lord Birkenhead. On the night of 5th/6th December 1921, Collins had a private discussion with Lloyd George. He then told the other delegates that he intended signing the deal being offered by Lloyd George, even though he was under instruction from the Dail Government not to sign anything without its approval.

One of the delegates, Robert Barton, held out for taking the British offer back to the Dail Government for decision—as per the Irish Cabinet's instruction. He was told that, if he did not sign at once, the British would launch immediate and terrible war in Ireland and that he would be entirely responsible for it. So he signed.

By their actions on December 5th/6th, Collins and Griffith usurped Government authority and took the game into their own hands. Collins seems to have been confident that he could dominate the consequences in Ireland by means of

Griffith and Collins took their followers from the Dail to another place, where they met as the *Parliament of Southern Ireland* under the Viceroy and were appointed the Provisional Government of that Parliament and were given the Crown Seals of Office and an Army.

They then went back to the Dail, where they sat along with the Anti-Treatyites for the next few months, doing their best to pretend that they had been empowered by the Dail and to forget about the existence of the Parliament of Southern Ireland.

The British Government, of course, saw what they were doing, and knew what their purpose was, and allowed it to continue for a while, but ensured that the pretence would not become the reality.

So Collins got a uniformed Army, and he dressed up, and he never asked what Britain's purpose was in giving him an Army.

Britain had refused seven years earlier to allow the Volunteers raised for it by

Redmond to be organised as a distinct national body with the Imperial Army. Keeping native Ireland unarmed had been one of its major preoccupations since 1690. But now it gives an Army to the legendary gunman who was the Head Centre of the Fenian Conspiracy—and he imagines he can use it for making war on Northern Ireland!

On 28th June 1922 he found out why he had been given an Army. And he was made to understand that, if he did not use it for the purpose for which he had been given it, the British Army (which had left in January!) would do the business itself.

*

When Collins joined Griffith on 6th December in usurping the authority of their Government, ignoring its instructions, and making an Agreement with Britain on their own behalf, as if they were free-ranging Plenipotentiaries he reckoned he could carry it through in Ireland by means of his connections, his abilities, and his personality.

He did carry it through in the Dail by means of promises of what he would do with the power the British were giving him. But the British Army stopped him when he tried to make good those promises by means of war in the North.

Griffith looked to him, as “*the man who won the war*”, to make their enterprise successful in the arena of physical force. But it was in that arena that he failed right at the start. He failed to carry the IRA with him. He even failed to carry the IRB with him. And he ended up making war on the IRA with British armaments and British political support.

The launching of the War against the IRA was an act of the Provisional Government. The Dail had nothing to do with it. It was in abeyance, between elections, at the time. An election was held on 16th June 1922. It was not a Free State General Election, though it was held only in the 26 Counties. It took the form of a series of By-Elections in the 26 Counties to the ongoing Second Dail. It was contested by a Treatyite/Anti-Treatyite Coalition whose express purpose was to maintain the existing balance in the Dail and establish a Government in which both Treatyites and Anti-Treatyites would hold Ministries. This arrangement was authorised by a vote of the Dail.

The British Government declared the arrangement undemocratic and a breach of the Treaty. But the Dail was not a party to the Treaty—Britain had made sure of that.

The British Ideology

Britain is a country that evolved as an imperialist entity - it was the womb from which it emerged. But the life that throbbed through its imperialist existence began to wane after the First World War and continued to weaken into the Second World War and into the 50s.

Thatcher saw this waning of its world influence and sought to retain it through shifting its economy to one that, through the reform of its financial institutions, could hold onto a semblance of its old influence.

But Britain has never made the cultural change that reflected its changed circumstances - something that was acknowledged by her Falklands adventure—and it continues to live in the cultural fantasy that it is in fact the same Britain that previously ruled the waves.

This is what makes it such a dangerous operator in the world. Its fantasy is no longer constrained by a reality that previously could impose some sort of responsible constraint on its actions. The result of this toxic mixture is that the first impulse of its political leaders is to rush to prove itself on the world stage whenever it thinks the circumstances are favourable.

Britain can never be a normal country which can overcome the cultural inheritance of its Imperial past because it was originally formed through a culture that was intrinsic to its Imperial development and that culture continues to be the medium by which the majority of British people define themselves. It cannot be taken away from them through a normal political evolution. It can only cease to exist when Britain ceases to exist.

Eamon Dyas

Griffith and Collins were summoned to Whitehall and chastised. Collins's wings were clipped. But the Dail was not recalled for the purpose of revoking the Election Pact which it had authorised.

After the election of 16th June the Dail did not meet until September. By then the 'Civil War' launched by the Provisional Government was going strong, Griffith and Collins were dead, as were Cathal Brugha and Harry Boland, and De Valera was on the run. Dublin was held securely by the Treatyites. It would have been madness for Anti-Treatyites to attend.

But, since the June Election had not been a Free State General Election, and did not elect MPs to the Parliament of Southern Ireland, and the meeting in September was not called by the Viceroy as an assembly of the Parliament of Southern Ireland, and since Northern seats were not vacated in the by-elections in June, and the Northern Deputies therefore still held their Second Dail seats, the Dail that assembled in September did not know what it was. And William Cosgrave and Kevin O'Higgins—busy men with a war to conduct—could not answer simple questions about what meeting it was. They had power in it, and they brushed aside pettifogging questions

about constitution and law. (Isn't there a classical maxim: *In the presence of war the laws are silent?*)

This is the state of affairs that the action of Collins and Griffith, as Plenipotentiaries, at half past two on the morning of 6th December 1921, led to in the course of eight months.

They acted together, but they did not have the same end in mind. Griffith's Sinn Fein had a vision of Ireland becoming a partner with Britain in a Dual Monarchy which guided an Empire and, as a Mother Country, establishing colonies of its own within the Empire. It was a groundless vision. His model was Austria-Hungary, but Britain is not Austria and Ireland is not Hungary!

The idea of the British sharing their monarch with the Irish is absurd. They would not do that even with their colony in Ireland, established after the Williamite conquest—and rightly so.

And the Irish in any case are not a colonising people. In that regard they are a migratory people. They are not themselves a colony, they are only natives; and they are not colonisers. They lack the craze

for domination which has characterised English life for many centuries.

They went to England in vast numbers to work for the English and enjoy themselves in their spare time.

The English came to Ireland, in much smaller numbers, to rule it, and to make the Irish either become obedient to English ways or be phased out of existence. And the English maintained a pseudo-independent colonial state in Ireland for a generation at the end of the 18th century—and that mode of government by the Anglo-Irish provoked rebellions all over the country, leading their Mother Country, which had implanted them, to take their State away from them. The abolition of the English colonial State in Ireland in 1800 was the condition that made possible the national political development of the native population in the 19th century.

That national development elected a reconstructed Sinn Féin party—Republican not Monarchist—to establish an independent Government in Ireland—with or without British approval—in accordance with the principle of national self-determination. That principle was the condition on which the USA entered the War on Germany, launched by Britain in 1914, and save it from defeat by Germany in 1918. Britain did not reject the principle while it was dependent on American military force, but refused to implement it after Germany was defeated.

Sinn Féin established independent Government in January 1918, as it was electorally mandated to do. Britain did not recognise it, and, as the master of Europe after the defeat of Germany, it ensured that the Versailles Conference did not recognise it either. The Irish Government of 1919-21 was only “*self-recognised*”. The Empire, from which it was detaching itself, did not recognise it, therefore it had no lawful existence.

So “*self-determination*” meant Imperial determination. And that is the view adopted in recent times by academics in Ireland under Oxbridge tutelage. And, by the event in Dublin Castle, that view has now been made the official view of the State.

The main Address at the event was delivered by the leader of Fianna Fáil, Micheál Martin—a party which was founded on a rejection of the view which he now espouses.

The founder of Fianna Fáil was President of the “*self-recognised*” Irish Government of 1919-21. He explained that, in the post-War world dominated by

Britain, no other state dared to recognise it. But that Irish Government had actual existence and had a right to it.

When Griffith and Collins made an agreement with Britain without consulting their Government, and gained a small majority in the Dáil for the establishment of their counter-Government provided for by the ‘Treaty’, De Valera withdrew from the Dáil in acknowledgement of the obvious fact of usurpation of authority. But, since the Treatyites did not displace the Dáil with the Parliament of Southern Ireland (through which they had been given power by Britain), but continued to meet in the Dáil, De Valera returned to the Dáil and acted as the Opposition leader in it.

In May 1922 he made the Election Pact with Collins, which the Dáil authorised. When Collins, after a visit to London, launched a war on the Anti-Treaty Party as head of the Provisional Government—under a British ultimatum—De Valera sided with the resistance. And it was out of the resistance to the Treaty War launched by Collins that the Fianna Fáil Party was constructed.

It will be interesting to see how the current leader of Fianna Fáil celebrates the centenary of the events which followed from the establishment of an Irish Government by the Viceroy in Dublin Castle in January 1922.

Edith Cavell

In 2015 BBC Radio 4 broadcast a programme, *Secrets And Spies*, in which Dame Stella Rimington, ex-Director of MI5 told the story of Edith Cavell. The programme can be accessed now by anyone with a computer. The gist of her story is that, according to the accepted rules of war, the Germans had Cavell ‘*Bang to Rights*’ when they shot her.

This is no reflection on her courage and patriotism. War is a nasty business.

Within months the British were claiming that the execution was worth two army corps to them as generous, chivalrous youth in scores of thousands flocked to their colours.

To this day influential Irishmen of a caste with more bullocks than brains, worship leaders, who in 1914 hustled hundreds of thousands of their chivalrous countrymen into the same bloody folly.

Donal Kennedy

Wisdom of Haughey

continued

appointment of the commission” (Irish Times 28.12.21).

He was profoundly right. That Parliament is a sham. It is the ultimate in politics of a body with power without responsibility – what Kipling described as “*the privilege of the harlot throughout the ages*”.

The report goes on:

“Major asked Haughey for his views on co-decision between the parliament and commission. “I am totally against it. It would bring the Community to a halt”, Haughey said.

Major said: “Yes I agree. That is excellent.” Mr. Haughey said his MEPs had taken him out to lunch in a good restaurant in Strasbourg. “I told them, ‘I am not giving you one extra power’. Of course we can dress it up a bit.” He said French president François Mitterrand had no respect for the European Parliament”... (ibid)

The example he gave of the Parliament’s behaviour during Ireland’s Presidency of the Council were small fry indeed compared to what it has been doing since.

It has been the driving force behind the conflict between the EU and Member States such as Poland and Hungary in trying to enforce its own interpretation of the ‘*rule of law*’, as if that interpretation *was* the law—two completely different things—but the EP in its arrogance claims that they are one and the same.

It has established to its own satisfaction that the German Soviet Pact of 1939 was the cause of WWII—thereby re-writing the history of the 20th century and distorting what WWII was about. This is the basis of the deteriorating relations with Russia and the Russian Government is quite entitled to object to it. Putin has proposed that the Allied states that fought the war—Russia, the UK, the US and France—respond collectively to this allegation of what caused WWII. He is awaiting a response.

Being given more powers—co-determination - for purely ideological reasons, i.e., to have more ‘democracy’, is reckless. Democracy and demagoguery have more than an etymological connection. The former degenerates into the latter when there is no responsibility of acting on the speechifying.

That is what has happened to the European Parliament, and that has always happened in history.

Jack Lane

Propagandist Broadcasters, the Story of 'Coolacrease' and the 'Glasnevin Wall'

continued

plicit in defending a documentary later shown to be unsound from beginning to end, as is described below.

Looked at from another perspective, the Coolacrease programme had the appearance of a disrespectful incursion into the life of a rural community by a team of urban professionals. Perhaps we should be generous and posit that all participants in the debate did so in good faith, but making a documentary about Republican militarists victimising a defenceless Protestant family in rural Offaly as part of a land grab, does suggest an element of the urban prejudice that has been a feature of media commentary in Ireland since the 1970s.

THE FACTS

What actually happened was that, in June 1921, an IRA unit preparing to mount a roadblock was fired on by members of the Pearson family. Three of the Republicans were injured and one, Mick Heaney, died some years later from his wound. IRA headquarters arranged for an investigation into the incident, which heard evidence that the identity of the attackers was known, that they had a connection to the Ulster Volunteers and were otherwise known to be hostile to the Republican Army, and that they had passed information to the British that had resulted in Republican combatants being arrested. On the basis of that evidence, a decision was made to execute those involved and destroy the Pearson residence.

The IRA, which at that time was the army of a democratically elected Government, the Government of Dáil Éireann, treated the attack by the Pearsons as a military event in the course of a war. Sectarian or 'land grab' motivations were absent from the decision to execute them. Nor has any evidence ever been produced showing that sectarian or land grabbing motivations were present in any Republican activities in Offaly, or indeed throughout the country during the War of Independence.

This article will recount the Coolacrease controversy and draw from a book published by the Aubane Historical Society the following year, "*Coolacrease—The true story of the Pearson executions—an incident in the Irish War of Independence*"

by Paddy Heaney, Pat Muldowney, Philip O'Connor and others (hereafter referred to as '*Coolacrease*'). It will also describe the role played by Ryan Tubridy and Joe Duffy at the time and show how both broadcasters have continued during the Decade of Centenaries to use their positions to peddle anti-Republican propaganda in a manner that makes a mockery of the obligation on broadcasters to be impartial.

STRANGE INTERVIEWS

'Coolacrease' answered and exposed all the false claims made in the documentary, but, before providing details of that, some background is needed. In a chapter headed, "*Exposing Propaganda*", Pat Muldowney describes how the publication of articles by Eoghan Harris in the *Sunday Independent* (9th and 16th October 2005) first drew his attention to the Pearson executions. When a reply to Harris from Paddy Heaney, a local historian in Offaly, appeared in that paper, Pat got in touch with him. From that point on, the opposition to the sectarian land grab theory consisted mainly of an alliance between supporters of the Aubane Historical Society like Pat and local historians in Offaly.

Pat published two documents in *Church & State* magazine in 2006: an account of the Coolacrease story by Paddy Heaney and his own assessment of a book by Alan Stanley. Stanley's book, "*I Met Murder on the Way*" (2005) had been an important source for Harris's articles. Pat uploaded the documents to the independent website, *Indymedia*, where the topic was keenly debated from February to November 2006. This is important because it shows that robust criticism of the sectarian land grab theory was in the public domain a year before the documentary was screened.

Hearing from Paddy Heaney in the early Summer of 2007 that a documentary was being made, Pat phoned the Director, Niamh Sammon, and was coolly received. Through persistence and public pressure on his part, he was eventually invited to be interviewed for the programme at Kinnitty Castle on 26th July 2007. The interview did not go well. Pat describes how Ms Sammon frequently interrupted to leave the room and, on her return, usually repeated the same question: "*What is your evidence that the Pearsons were*

spies or informers?" ('Coolacrease', p. 225). Sensing a trap, he tried to redirect the discussion to the question of the roadblock. An interview that was supposed to last half an hour, dragged on for two hours with frequent interruptions. Needless to say, Pat's answers were not included in the finished broadcast. He sums up the experience as follows:

"The interview confirmed what I suspected, that the programme had prejudged the issue of whether the Pearsons were innocent or guilty, murdered or executed; and whether in fact there had been a sectarian atrocity in pursuance of a land-grab, in the context of an ethnic cleansing drive against Protestants. The programme appeared to be in the business of making a piece of propaganda whose purpose was to change the viewers' conception of the Irish War of Independence" ('Coolacrease', p. 226).

Paddy Heaney also objected to the way his interview was handled. His official complaint to the Broadcasting Complaints Commission was that "the programme had knowingly and deliberately selected his words in a way which conveyed the direct opposite of what he was saying" (ibid, p. 229). The defence of the Director was that a Release Form that Paddy had signed gave her the legal right to edit his interview in any way she chose.

GETTING TO THE TRUTH

In the first chapter of '*Coolacrease*', entitled, *The True Story of the Events at Coolacrease*, Paddy Heaney and Pat Muldowney demolish the idea that what occurred was an IRA action aimed at the removal of Protestants from the area and a land grab by Catholics. They show that the Pearsons effectively knocked out the local IRA unit by providing information to the British, causing a number of volunteers to be arrested. This was in addition to their attack on the roadblock party. The family also took in William Stanley, Alan's father, under the alias of Jimmy Bradley, a member of a loyalist paramilitary group based in the Luggacurran area of County Laois, something the Offaly IRA was aware of. On this point Heaney and Muldowney state:

"In his report to IRA Headquarters about the decision to execute the Pearsons, the Offaly commander Thomas Burke said that the Pearsons "had been active in promoting the Ulster Volunteers movement in their district in which there are a number of 'Planters'. William Stanley was one of these Luggacurran Planters. Burke's wording suggests that he had information that William Stanley may not have been the only one." (p. 26)

The term '*Luggacurran Planter*' needs explanation. In the 1880s a landlord in what was then Queen's County (now Laois), Lord Lansdowne, evicted 300 Catholics from his estate and replaced them with Protestants from the local area, and from Ulster and Scotland. If any activity in the Midlands during those decades deserves to be described as *ethnic cleansing* it was the Luggacurran Plantation.

Heaney and Muldowney also show that, under the Land Reform two decades later, the Pearsons received overly generous payment for their farm from the Land Commission, and that the process of allocating the farm to local people was heavily influenced by the parish priest, Fr. Houlahan, a fervent Redmondite. In accordance with a British Government promise to reward recruits to the British army in the Great War, and due to Fr. Houlahan's influence, locals who had enlisted in the British Army were preferred in the allocations.

In a later chapter headed, *Land Grab?*, Philip O'Connor examines relevant records from the Land Registry Office, the Land Valuation office, the Land Commission and the London-based compensation body, the Irish Grants Committee. He was only allowed access to Land Commission files because Paddy Heaney, having inherited a parcel of the Pearson farm, appointed him as his representative. On the question of whether Niamh Sammon, or any of the academics supporting the land grab theory had examined the Land Commission files, the archivist of the Land Commission stated in a letter to Pat Muldowney:

"I can find no record that RTE has had access to the former Irish Land Commission documents stored in the Records Branch of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food relating to the townland of Coolacrease (Pearson Farm)" (Coolacrease, p. 64).

Philip shows that the high price paid by the Land Commission to the Pearsons for their farm in 1923 (£4,817) caused the sixteen new owners (the land was sub-divided into parcels) to carry a heavy burden in annuity payments. Whereas the annual annuity paid by the Benwells, the previous owners to the Pearsons, had been 7 shillings per acre, this jumped to an average of 15 shillings per acre after the 1923 sale.

Of the 23 men who had been members of the Cadamstown IRA in 1919-23, three (none of whom had been leaders) received land at Coolacrease in accordance with a Land Commission policy of being inclusive of all sections of the community.

Much of the land distributed to these Republicans was poor as well as having the high annuity charge.

Jimmy Delahunty, the postman in Cadamstown, was one of the three IRA members to receive a parcel of the land when he was released from internment by the Free State in 1924. The case made on his behalf to the Land Commission mentioned that he grazed a cow on the "long acre" (the roadside). When an ex-serviceman, Jack Feherly, returned the 29 acres that had been allocated to him to the Land Commission because of the high annuity charge, Jimmy Delahunty was allocated 18 acres of it, much of it deemed poor. The word locally was that he got the parcel because his mother and aunt cleaned the chapel in Cadamstown for Fr Hourahan. Some land grab!

Based on his research, Philip O'Connor adjudges that, "*Despite their involvement and traumatic experiences in the 1919-21 war the Pearsons did well out of the period*" (p. 142). The family received a total of £3,840 compensation from the County Court in Offaly for the loss of life, property lost in the burning of the house and the loss of the Coolacrease House itself. William Pearson received at auction what was judged by a valuer appointed by the Irish Grants Committee as a "*fair price*" for the stock and machinery of the farm. And, despite reservations expressed about his claim, that Committee ultimately awarded him £7,440.

Given that the family bought the farm in 1911 for £2,000 with the aid of a £900 bank loan and sold it to the Land Commission for £4,817, it can be seen that their overall financial gains were significant.

The main source behind the extravagant claims regarding an IRA plan to drive a Protestant family from their land was the application by William Pearson to the Irish Grants Committee in 1927, an application in which it served his interest to hype up what had happened. Philip shows his application to have been such a demonstrable tissue of lies that even the Committee balked at it. The case made in the programme was built on sand.

BIG NAME RTÉ INTERVENTIONS

A flurry of favourable media coverage accompanied the advance publicity for the documentary, which was first screened on 27th October 2007 under the title, "*Hidden History: The Killings at Coolacrease*". However, critical voices were heard in outlets like *Village* magazine, *Indymedia*, the *Phoenix*, and even, after three feature

articles praising the documentary, in the *Irish Times*. That public opinion was divided detracted from the punch that the *Coolacrease* programme was designed to pack. In his *Sunday Independent* column Eoghan Harris fulminated against "*a highly organized brigade of green-ink bloggers*", explicitly mentioning the Aubane Historical Society (p. 228).

During this phase of the controversy, interventions from Ryan Tubridy and Joe Duffy, both big name broadcasters with RTÉ, were important. Even though the term '*ethnic cleansing*' was not used in the documentary, Eoghan Harris headed his column a few days before the screening, "*Speak it in a Whisper: Irish Ethnic Cleansing*". Tubridy interviewed Niamh Sammon for his morning radio show on the day before the programme went out. In the course of sympathetic questioning, he asked Ms Sammon: "*That's known nowadays as ethnic cleansing isn't it, I mean, it's the language of the time?*" She replied: "...*At a local level these things were happening... This obviously was more than an agrarian outrage*". Tubridy thus endorsed propagandist distortion emanating from Eoghan Harris that was deemed too extreme to be included in the documentary.

Joe Duffy's role was more proactive. He devoted two *Liveline* phone-in programmes to the Coolacrease events, on the 5th and 6th of November. In both radio programmes it was abundantly obvious that the host was strongly invested in defending the documentary. In the '*Coolacrease*' book, the exchanges that took place over the two days are reviewed by Nick Folley. The participants included Paddy Heaney, giving an Offaly perspective, Pat Muldowney and Jack Lane from the Aubane Historical Society, and on the other side, Eoghan Harris, Niall Ginty and Brendan McCafferty, abetted by Duffy.

Nick Folley states that Joe Duffy seemed uninformed about the origins of the Irish State, for instance when he asserted that, during the War of Independence, the only courts were British courts. When Jack Lane corrected him saying, "*Yeah, well there was also an Irish court system as well*" (p. 241), Duffy replied, "*There was, there was, there was a Court Martial*". Nick continued:

"So, no civil republican courts then, only IRA courts martial. More seriously he [Duffy] seems unaware of the existence of an Irish Government at the time, or at least doesn't recognise the validity of the First Dáil. Mr Lane explained that the IRA were the "legitimate army of the Irish Government" but Mr Duffy

rejects this view and refined it to the IRA being the—

“... legitimate army of the party that got the majority of votes ...”

In case anyone was in any doubt—as the party with the majority of votes normally forms the government in any democracy—Mr. Duffy further added:

“... But there wasn’t a constituted government as such [in 1921]”

Mr. Lane immediately pointed out that there was in fact an Irish Government in existence at the time” (*Coolacrease*, chapter 10, *RTÉ and the Holy Grail of Revisionism*, p. 241).

The conduct of the debate over the two programmes raises the question whether members of the public can expect a fair hearing when Joe Duffy is so partisan on the side of the revisionist interpretation of Irish history.

In “*Academic Evasions*”, another chapter of *Coolacrease*, Brendan Clifford identifies the point at issue between Joe Duffy and Jack Lane—whether events in Ireland in 1921 should be viewed from a democratic or a British Imperial viewpoint—as the central issue of the Coolacrease controversy. Duffy, following the received judgement of revisionist historians, treated as a joke the suggestion that the General Election of 1918 conferred legitimate political authority on the parties that won it. He was propagating a position antagonistic to democracy and to the Irish national tradition.

The following paragraph from later in the “*Academic Evasions*” chapter addresses the role played by Tubridy and Duffy.

“Revisionism presents itself as being essentially democratic in outlook, and as being greatly concerned with accuracy as to historical fact. It began by forgetting the historical fact of the 1918 Election. It seemed for a while as if it had succeeded in inducing general amnesia on that point—and it has been outstandingly successful with professional communicators on RTÉ—people like Joe Duffy and Ryan Tubridy. But a real world still exists out there. The chatter of Duffy and Tubridy passes an idle hour, but the fact remains that an Election intervened between the Rising and the War of Independence and gave the War of Independence a character entirely different from that of the Rising” (p. 203).

END OF THE CONTROVERSY

The Broadcasting Complaints Commission ruled against all of the complaints made against it regarding Niamh Sammon’s documentary. This may have given

solace to the individuals who supported her standpoint, but the episode did not enhance the Commission’s standing or that of the broadcasting profession as a whole. The title of an insightful chapter of *Coolacrease* by John Martin, “*Defending their Own: the Broadcasting Complaints Commission*”, aptly summarises the case made by the Commission, and probably how the rulings will be viewed.

A review of the documentary by Brian Hanley, a historian not known to be a supporter of the Aubane Historical Society, was more even-handed. Nevertheless, much in the review—a statement that there was an element of sectarian conflict in the War of Independence, an endorsement of Michael Hopkinson’s *The Irish War of Independence*, and a judgement that both sides of the Coolacrease controversy pursued present-day agendas—was challenged by members of the Aubane Historical Society and the contributors to *Irish Political Review*. However, its first paragraph is nonetheless worth reproducing as an independent judgement on the controversy.

“November’s Hidden History documentary on the killing of the Pearson brothers, Richard and Abraham, at Coolacrease, Co. Offaly, in June 1921 struck a raw nerve. The subsequent comment in the press, radio and on the web generated more heat than light and highlighted the extent to which comment about the War of Independence period is still driven by present-day ideological concerns. The fact that the Pearsons were Protestant ‘strong farmers’ and members of the evangelical Cooneyite sect added extra weight to charges that the killings were carried out for sectarian and/or land-grabbing motives, and this was inferred throughout the documentary. The evidence, however, suggests that the Pearsons were killed because they had previously fired on IRA volunteers (seriously wounding one) who were cutting down trees on Pearson land for the purpose of mounting a roadblock. Should we be surprised that the IRA responded to an attack on its volunteers by punishing those responsible (as it did elsewhere)? Nor do the medical records support the programme’s contention that there was sexual mutilation involved (i.e. that the Pearsons were deliberately shot in the genitals and the buttocks) but rather that this was a botched execution carried out by inexperienced volunteers. The orders to shoot the Pearsons came directly from IRA headquarters; while local animosities may have existed, the decision was not made locally” (*History Ireland*, Jan/Feb 2008).

RYAN TUBRIDY AND THE ‘CRUMPLED ENVELOPE’

Interviewing the singer, Imelda May, on the *Late Late Show* some years ago, Ryan

Tubridy asked her how she felt when she received some honour from Queen Elizabeth at Buckingham Palace. It’s a question frequently asked on British television of individuals who find themselves on the honours list and, given that the monarchy has patriotic significance for a large proportion of the British public, it is an appropriate question in that jurisdiction.

In asking that question Tubridy exhibited a sense of inferiority in relation to British culture, as though the culture that he had been raised in had ceased to exist. It was as though the chat show host wished Ireland to return to being a satellite of Britain, and that by his broadcasting style he could somehow hasten the realisation of that desire.

On his radio show (1st November 2021), he interviewed the RTÉ correspondent in Cork, Flor McCarthy, about a book she had written called, “*The Presidents’ Letters*”. Most of the interview was taken up with a letter which wasn’t a letter at all. It was a crumpled envelope on which former President Mary McAleese had scribbled a phonetic version of the Gaelic words, “*A Uachtarán agus a chairde*” (President and friends). This she gave to British diplomat Francis Campbell who passed it to Queen Elizabeth, who read it out at the beginning of a speech she made during her visit to Ireland in 2011.

At the time of the visit, media hype about the few words of Irish spoken by the Queen was excessive; members of the public could have been forgiven for thinking that Mrs. Windsor had suddenly become an Irish speaker. In his interview with Flor McCarthy in 2021, Tubridy tried to revive that hype, treating the crumpled envelope as one of the great icons of our time. On the following Friday’s *Late Late Show*, he went further by having McAleese on as his guest so that the envelope could get more of the reverence he thought it deserved. On that occasion, however, he used the McAleese interview to make a more explicitly political intervention.

He introduced the interview stating that, in the controversy over President Higgins’ refusal to attend the Armagh Commemoration of the founding of Northern Ireland, the majority of public opinion, by supporting the President, had been out of step with the advanced thinking of the “*commentariat*”. McAleese responded to a question from him about the controversy by saying it would be inappropriate for her to comment on the actions of her successor. She then proceeded to make it abundantly clear that, had she still been in Office, she would have gone to Armagh.

In all of this Tubridy showed himself to be a broadcaster with an axe to grind. Under cover of his broadcasting persona, and through the questions he directed at McAleese, he made a political criticism of President Higgins. Similar to the role he played in the Coolacrease row, he was using his privileged position as a popular broadcaster to shepherd Irish public opinion in the direction of a fawning attitude towards the British monarch and a critical view of the President's stance regarding the Armagh Commemoration.

JOE DUFFY AND THE GLASNEVIN WALL

The Glasnevin Wall is a memorial project of the Dublin Cemeteries Trust that was launched in 2016 with Government backing. It consists of a monumental structure on which the names of all who died in the Rising are inscribed in gold lettering. On this Wall the names of those who died while actively supporting the Rising are not grouped separately but are intermingled with the names of British soldiers and civilians who also died. The plan was that, as the decade unfolded, all the dead of the War of Independence and the Civil War would be added—including the fatalities on the Imperial side: the Auxiliary and Black and Tan elements of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC).

The project was modelled on the Ring of Remembrance at Ablain-Saint-Nazaire in France, a monument holding the names of 580,000 soldiers from all sides killed in the First World War. It did not seem to occur to the designers of the Glasnevin project that the Irish Rising, an event in which members of the Volunteers and Irish Citizen Army chose to participate for political reasons—an event that ultimately inspired the creation of the Irish State—was fundamentally different in principle to the war between rival Imperial armies in 1914-18.

A parallel to the Glasnevin structure would be if the monument on the Continent contained the names of fallen members of the Resistance intermingled with those of their Nazi enemies! No such monument exists.

Joe Duffy has identified publicly with the concept behind the Glasnevin Wall. Ronan McGreavy described what happened to that structure in an Irish Times article, as follows:

“The wall was first damaged in April 2017 when paint was thrown over it. The paint was removed by cemetery staff, but gold inlay in the lettering came away, too. A new security camera was installed, but it failed to prevent a more serious attack in February of last year. Then, vandals used

a sledgehammer to remove the names of some British soldiers killed in the Rising. In doing so, they also damaged the names of some Irish Volunteers. A tarpaulin was erected a short time later” (IT, 24 April 2021).

What is to be done with the structure remains unclear. There has been talk of creating a “virtual” wall, with the names inscribed in a database, and also of abandoning the plan to add more than 4,000 names from the 1919-23 period. In April 2021 Joe Duffy made a public statement describing the Wall as a “national resource” and urging the Dublin Cemeteries Trust to come out and “renew their commitment” to the Wall. Ronan McGreavy quotes him saying, “No one will tolerate the wall being abandoned. I thought it was a magnificent act of remembrance because it was so simple” (ibid).

McGreavy also quoted former Justice Minister Charlie Flanagan (Fine Gael) who was forced, due to a public outcry, to cancel a State commemoration for the RIC in January 2021. Flanagan said he would not blame the Trust if they paused or abandoned the project given his own

experiences. “Repeated and pious words about there being no hierarchy of victims ring hollow”, he said (ibid).

In pressing the Dublin Cemeteries Trust to continue with its ill-conceived project in Glasnevin, Joe Duffy is taking a more extreme position than the Minister who wanted to memorialise the RIC!

It would be unrealistic to expect prominent broadcasters in any country to refrain from propagating to some degree the prevailing narratives of their own States. But in Ireland the issue is problematic. For reasons originating in the Arms Crisis of 1970, the State has set itself the objective of negating the rationale for its own existence. The Irish governing elite has pitted itself against history without understanding the scale and extreme difficulty of such an undertaking. In consequence, mainstream broadcasters like Ryan Tubridy and Joe Duffy are obliged to champion causes like the Coolacrease documentary, the British monarchy, and the Glasnevin Wall—causes that, in an Irish context, are self-evidently ridiculous.

Dave Alvey

“Paper never refused ink”

A tale of two ‘Treaty’ documents

When researching the so-called ‘Treaty’ there was something that struck me as odd—the existence of two different documents purporting to be what was signed on 6th December 1921. Each appears promiscuously in many publications and articles by media commentators as the same ‘Anglo Irish Treaty’. How come?

One is headed “PROPOSED ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT” with the word “Proposed” crossed through and bearing the signatures of the witnesses who signed it at 2.15 am that morning in Downing St. This document is held by the Irish National Archives in Dublin (Reference: 2002/5/1).

This is clearly, in itself, a valid document from any legal point of view but in no sense a Treaty and does not claim to be one. The word “Treaty” appears nowhere in the document as it had not appeared in any draft discussed hitherto between the two negotiating teams. Instead, it referred to itself as an ‘instrument.’ As the many drafts were discussed line by line for weeks

by the two teams and their top lawyers its omission was hardly an accident. It simply was not a Treaty but exactly what it says on the tin, “(Proposed) Articles of Agreement”. In other words it was at best, work in progress towards a Treaty as with all previous drafts. That was how Birkenhead justified it in the House of Lords on 23 July 1923.

It is the original and unique document signed ‘on the spot’ that morning by members of the two negotiating teams.

How come then that there is another document that purports to be the same “Treaty” and held in the British Archives but which was created later and differs in several respects from this document—but crucially headed a Treaty?

This other document is called a “Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland”. In this version there are three extra British signatures, who were not witnesses on the original, and one Irish signatory, Eamon Duggan, is literally a cut and paste job gummied on to the document. Also the paragraphs of the original document are

re-formatted, badly and hastily typed with many typos, 10 in the first page, and is about the shabbiest document ever produced by any government and supposed to be a Treaty! The two columns of signatories at the end are now on opposite sides of the page to the earlier document. So it is clearly a different document and with these anomalies that make it not a valid legal document at all – never mind a Treaty! (Reference: TNA/ DO 118/51)

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

Duggan and Duffy did not happen to be at the actual signing in Downing St. for the early morning signing on 6th December 1921. Dermot O'Hegarty brought the signed document to Hans Place and Duggan and Duffy signed it there. Then it was sent post haste to Dublin with Duggan accompanied by Desmond Fitzgerald. That is why it ended up in the Irish Archives.

An Irish Republican Brotherhood veteran, Dan McCarthy, takes up the story.

"The true facts of the matter are that immediately the Treaty was signed, Eamon Duggan and Desmond Fitzgerald left for Ireland by the morning Mail taking the copy of the Treaty with them. Later in the day Mr. Jones, Lloyd George's Private Secretary, called at Hans Place and asked for another signed copy of the Treaty. Whether that copy was to be used as the British Copy of the Treaty or as a second British Copy for the purposes of photographic record, I cannot say. Griffith was just going to sign the copy per pro Duggan when I remembered that I had a copy of his signature in the house which was a copy of a Special Programme of Celebrations which was held in the Albert Hall. I mentioned this fact to Arthur Griffith and suggested to him the pasting of the signature on the copy and both he and Mr. Jones agreed. There was obviously no intention to deceive anybody. The fact that Mr. Duggan's signature was pasted down on a copy of the Treaty could not interfere with its validity."

(Witness Statement 0722 Daniel McCarthy BMH)

McCarthy seems oblivious to the fact that there was no signed copy of a Treaty. There was a signed copy of *Articles of Agreement* and Jones was looking for a new document to be signed that could claim to be a Treaty by having the word added to a new document.

In other words, a 'Treaty' document was to be created after the signing of the 'Treaty'!

Requesting a new list of extra British signatures was a ruse to get a new document signed again by all and adding the

names of new members of the Cabinet — who were not witnesses to the original signing — also served the political purpose of the Government in showing to the public and Parliament that all the crucial Cabinet members were united on this agreement.

The three extra signatures, Laming Worthington-Evans, Secretary of State for War, Hamar Greenwood, Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Gordon Hewart, Attorney General were later sent to Dublin and now appear with the Irish archival version of the original Articles of Agreement as an extra, detached torn sheet, unnumbered, differently coloured and with different staple markings to the genuine version — clearly a separate document that should not be part of the Irish copy of the original Articles of Agreement. It is seriously misleading to have recreated both documents as one in the Irish Archives. It simply does not belong there, it is an extraneous document, flouting its provenance, and that is simply a sacrilege in archival terms. The Irish Archives should rectify this — very easily done — and preserve this uniquely important, original document as it was and as it should remain.

Were the Irish delegates made aware of the implications of this new document? It appears not. McCarthy certainly saw no difference and it seems that to him any agreement could be called a Treaty as it did to Desmond Fitzgerald as we will see later. How many others felt like that? After the gruelling hours earlier that morning they were not likely to have been in a mood for any revisiting of the discussion and debates and the request for extra signatories may have seemed innocuous. They may have overlooked the new heading if they were even made aware of it at all which seems very unlikely indeed as it would surely, at least, have 'raised eyebrows' being clearly an addition to what they had already signed. Barton would certainly have protested (see below) and he is by far the most honest and graphic source on that infamous scene at 2.15 am on 6th December 1921.

Arthur Griffith in a note to de Valera on the earlier, final negotiations that morning described the state of mind they were in: "*things were so strenuous and exhausting that the sequence of conversation is not in many cases clear in my mind today.*" That may indicate the exhausted state of mind they may also have been in later that day after the long intense negotiations. In any case, the British got the Irish signatures to a new document that had the word 'Treaty' in the heading and that was crucial for them.

But did the Irish realise this? In the first private session of the Dáil debate Michael Collins said:

"...the final document, which the Delegation of Plenipotentiaries did not sign as a treaty, but did sign on the understanding that each signatory would recommend it to the Dáil for acceptance." (Dáil Éireann, Private session, 14 December 1921.)

It appears therefore that Collins, at least, was unaware that he had actually signed a 'Treaty' originally and it's unclear if he realised the implications of the second one he had signed.

The issue of the second 'Treaty' became a public interest topic briefly in 1944 when Rev. William P. Hackett, gave a lecture on the subject of "*Literary Forgeries and Hoaxes*" at the Melbourne Public Library and made an issue of the Duggan 'cut and paste' signature which raised the legality of the 'Treaty' itself and the resulting interest provided more information on the provenance of both documents.

The *Irish Times* felt obliged, naturally, to defend the 'Treaty' and interviewed a number of people in the course of which it described Robert Barton, a signatory, as: "*at the time of the Treaty a representative of the Provisional Government*", which is farcical as there was no such Government then in existence and not a single person had ever voted for such a government.

Barton is quoted as saying that:

"It is inaccurate to state that this was a Treaty. The document signed at 2 a.m. in No. 10 Downing Street, on the morning of December 6th, 1921, bore the caption: 'Articles of Agreement', nothing more." (Irish Times, 11/10/1944)

As a signatory he should surely know!

Desmond Fitzgerald was interviewed:

"I brought the Irish copy of the Treaty back to Dublin, and Duggan was with me, but I can't recall whether or not he made any mention of the pasting-on of his signature. It is quite possible that Duggan was not present to sign, for there was a lot of coming and going right up to the time when the documents were signed" (ibid.)

Naturally Duggan would be unaware of the pasting on of his name at this point as it was done at Hans Place after he had left for Dublin.

Mr. Fitzgerald went on to say that both documents for signature were styled: "*Articles of Agreement*", and that, the moment they were signed, they constituted a Treaty.

"“The following day the word, ‘Treaty’, was added to the British copy”, he said, but by that time I was on the way to Dublin with the Irish copy, which, of course, could not have the word added. But it was, and is, definitely a Treaty. In my opinion the absence of Duggan’s signature on one or both copies would not for one moment invalidate it”(ibid: Emphasis added).

Although Fitzgerald seems to have got his days mixed up this again shows clearly that a second document with the addition of a “Treaty” heading was prepared after the original signing early that morning of 6th December and he seems somewhat surprised but pleased. He seems to have an attitude like Dan McCarthy that any agreement could be called a Treaty.

And to help muddy the waters the *Irish Times* published another list of signatories in their report that day which is different again to the two existing lists. A glance will show that this *Irish Times* version—the self proclaimed journal of record—is a concoction, a crude attempt to merge the signatories of the two documents, with the new long British list of signatories now on the right hand side and Duggan’s pasted on signature thereby disappears on the left.

So we have three different such lists in archives.

But the legal skulduggery had a real purpose—as always. This second document, the British version, was the one widely publicised in the British press on the morning of 7th December and afterwards as a Treaty agreed by the Irish Government. If such was then rejected by the Dáil, it would be a propaganda *coup* against the Irish Government and its authority, which would discredit it in international opinion by painting the Irish as not able to be trusted to confirm a Treaty they had agreed.

There was nothing to be gained by the Dáil accepting just some ‘*articles of agreement for a treaty*’ which would mean work in progress for a Treaty and therefore self evidently not a Treaty.

Una Stack, widow of Austin says of the Articles of Agreement:

“The word ‘Treaty’ never occurred in it from beginning to end and, of course it was not a Treaty in form or otherwise. But after Duggan’s departure from London, it struck someone that the word Treaty would be useful for propaganda purposes and they saw the British about it. This is how the matter is repaired. The

original document is headed “Articles of Agreement”. Now a fly leaf was put in, like the title page of a book, containing something like this: “In the matter of a Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland. Articles of Agreement”. And, on the strength of this and of the fact that in the British House of Commons it was referred to as Articles of Agreement for a “Treaty”, the attempt has been and is still being persisted in to call the abortion a Treaty.” (Witness Statement 418).

I think the ‘someone’ was undoubtedly Lloyd George’s indefatigable, all-purpose gofer and fixer *extraordinaire*, an original ‘mover and shaker’, Tom Jones, who would certainly have appreciated the significance of adding ‘Treaty’.

I am sure he also had the talent, *inter alia*, for making people believe and initiate what he wanted them to believe and initiate. He had been responsible for the clever, infamous document that Lloyd George used to break Griffith in the negotiations.

In other words he was very effective at getting things done surreptitiously and creating this ‘Treaty’ document was another perfect example of his art.

Both sides all went along with this newly minted “Treaty” document and immediately ‘sang from the same hymn sheet.’

And when Griffith introduced the debate in the Dáil on 14th December, this second document was what was used as the basis for the debate. Another job well done by Tom Jones, another *coup*—of which his namesake might sing ‘*It’s not unusual!*’

(Jones went on to serve more Prime Ministers as a confidant and accompanied Lloyd George to meet Hitler in 1936.)

Of course the document could not be approved by Dáil Éireann as paragraph 18 made very clear. Ratification was a weasel word introduced by Griffith to hide this awkward fact. Anybody and everybody could debate it and ratify it but only the non-existent ‘House of Commons of Southern Ireland’ could approve it. The Dáil did not exist as far as this document was concerned and had no rights according to it.

The document was legally implementing the *Government of Ireland Act of 1920*, the third Home Rule Bill, a British Act of Parliament—not an Irish one—and abolishing the Dáil in the process.

And, despite introducing the debate

with a document proclaiming a Treaty, Griffith had to admit later in the debate, under pressure from TDs to consult Lloyd George as to what exactly it was they were debating, reported that—

“.... he stated it was not a Treaty, and I got the official title: ‘Articles of Agreement between Ireland and Great Britain’.” (10/1/1922)

By such duplicity and skulduggery was the ‘Treaty’ debated and ‘ratified’.

This second document in the British National Archives has an unusual condition for viewing it:

“This record can only be seen under supervision at The National Archives”.

This used to be the condition for viewing archival pornography so perhaps this “Treaty” document really qualifies as a piece of political pornography. The British archivists may have inadvertently ‘hit the nail on the head.’

Jack Lane

with invaluable help from

Dr. Philip O’Connor

The video link for the Treaty talk on 6/12/21 is:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/8oWwZMr7dwYYi_5X7tSp3wFIWIAE2_8nZeaCS38YyqqSPiVKQQ5YNc70tDN2StI.ullQLWircZiNiQX

Passcode: b5^yk0!O

Sinn Féin and Westminster

I would like to reassure Tony McDermott (Letters, November 11th) that Sinn Féin voters in Northern Ireland are fully aware of the party’s policy of abstentionism and the reasons behind it.

Given the way the Conservative party has treated unionist politicians, there is no reason to think that it would have listened to Sinn Féin.

The party does not need to attend Westminster to make its voice heard.

**Edna McMinn,
Belfast
Irish Times
8.11.2021**

Bowen and Deane

In Séamus Heaney's fourth collection of poems, *'North'*, he wrote a quite brilliant poem, *'Whatever You Say Say Nothing'*, with loaded meaning on every word, e.g.

“Expertly civil-tongued with civil neighbours
On the high wires of first wireless reports,
Sucking the fake taste, the stony flavours
Of those sanctioned, old, elaborate retorts:

‘Oh, it’s disgraceful, surely, I agree.’
‘Where’s it going to end?’ ‘It’s getting worse.’
‘They’re murderers.’ ‘Internment, understandably ...’
The ‘voice of sanity’ is getting hoarse.

.... .. The famous
Northern reticence, the tight tag of place
And times: yes, yes. Of the ‘wee six’ I sing
Where to be saved you only must save face
And whatever you say, you say nothing.”

But of course the title of that poem only really became embedded in our consciousness because of the superb pamphlet by that other northern man, Desmond Fennell, who had written in April 1991, an excoriating study of Heaney with the title, *'Whatever You Say, Say Nothing, Why Seamus Heaney is No.1'*. There was outrage, vocal protest and denunciation of Fennell (and sneaky delight in some quarters at his stance), and the pamphlet had to be republished in August 1991 – owing to its success.

But the poem that I was more focused on was the one dedicated to Seamus Deane from *'Singing School'* and called *'The Ministry of Fear'*.

"Well, as Kavanagh said, we have lived
In important places. The lonely scrap
Of St. Columb's College, where I billeted
For six years, overlooked your Bogside
I gazed into new worlds:
the inflamed throat
Of Brandywell, its floodlit dogtrack,
The throttle of the hare. ...

... .. Then Belfast, and then Berkeley.
... .. Have our accents
Changed? ‘Catholics, in general,
don't speak
As well as students from the
Protestant schools.’
Remember that stuff? Inferiority
Complexes, stuff that dreams
were made on.

‘What’s your name, Heaney?
‘Heaney, Father.’
‘Fair Enough’.”

I remember a conversation with Brendan Clifford and he was reminiscing about the Second World War and what their tea was made of. Out in the country, when scarcity became the norm, the people drank tea that was made from local leaves and herbs. He used a phrase that I fell in love with “*ersatz tea*”. Now, in my opinion, that was an adjective that could make any tea taste really fanciful! But now, we have ‘*ersatz*’ everything. Not only have we an ‘*ersatz*’ government, but also ‘*ersatz*’ History Commemorations: and all this pretence is being heaped on the people in the middle of a pandemic that could itself end up being ‘*ersatz*’.

And our ‘*part-time*’ Taoiseach, Micheál Martin TD, Fianna Fáil—he has to ‘*time-share*’ it with the leader of Fine Gael, Leo Varadkar TD)—has now said we are one of the oldest democracies in the world!

Well, what he probably meant to say was that we were one of the world’s oldest ‘*ersatz*’ democracies. But then he is no daw and ‘*whatever you say, say nothing*’ has its attractions for him and his co-*amigos* in government, of which there are three parties—Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Green Party! Though really the latter’s leader has so many Ministries that it is like a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta.

And now the latest pronouncement is that all these senior Ministers (obviously

including our Taoiseach and our Tánaiste) will get armed Guard protection 24/7 and will therefore be driven in new Mercedes. Yes, indeed: the old *mercs and perks* are back with a vengeance at about two hundred thousand euros per year, per Minister!

It is quite obvious that the governing politicians don’t trust their own governed people. This is, because, according to media sources *close to the government*, in another jurisdiction with a circa 60 million people, two politicians were killed because of grievances—unlike anything we have in Ireland with a population of nearly 4 million. And our State broadcaster, RTE (Radio Telefís Éireann), merely *reports* these astonishing events as if they were quite normal.

Think of the money wasted and, much more important, think of the *Gardai* resources that are being decimated at a time when the *Gardai* have never before been more needed to police the community. And none other than our Taoiseach has admitted to that fact. The recent murder of a young woman out running in broad daylight in a well-used towpath besides the Grand Canal, in Tullamore, Co. Offaly has rightly caused ructions, forcing the Garda Commissioner, Drew Harris, to commit to a new enforcement of *Guardai* policing.

But where is the money going to come from to fund these new *Guardai* recruits?

In fact, I find the politicisation of this murder particularly nauseating. And I am amazed at the *Dianaisation* of the public response. There, around the country, is this new *secularity*: with plastic-encased flowers and candles lying up against railings of schools, laneways, and even Leinster House *et al.*

Women hug and cry, and activists rail against *gender based violence!* Politicians, especially women, now agree that a new age has to dawn and a new dispensation has to be drawn up. Men basically are to be outlawed from being men. Or, at the very least, acting like men!

Nevertheless, the three leaders of Irish society, President Michael D. Higgins, Taoiseach Micheál Martin, and Tánaiste Leo Varadkar, will be present at the Funeral Mass, 18th January 2022, of the slain woman.

Wouldn’t you think that the optics alone might have caused them pause? Why not send the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee, and make a Government statement through her attendance? But, of course, what politician would deny himself a role

in what amounts to a State funeral?

The cameras in the end are more powerful than any intent or idea. And that is why, in the end, nothing will change in existing norms – *these politicians are actors not agents of change*. They are nothing like de Valera, Lemass, Haughey or even Bertie Ahern. They are the *useful eejits* of another State. Just ask that very useful question, ‘*Qui Bono?*’

As to Heaney’s ‘*Whatever you say, say nothing*’—he himself *tried to engender change* in some areas. I remember that, two years after his death, there was a cover photo in the Jesuit magazine, ‘*Studies, An Irish Quarterly Review*’, Spring 2015’, of Seamus Heaney wearing the Jewish skull-cap with his friend Richard Ryan at the cemetery of Prague’s 13th century Old New Synagogue, where they attended with Mrs. Zita Adamová of the Israeli Embassy on the 9th October 2010.

The Irish poet Laureate posing thus-wise with one of Ireland’s most successful diplomats/ambassadors and one of Israel’s ambassadors brought back to the mind

of Ryan, as he wrote in *Studies*, part of Heaney’s address in Sweden:

"In his Stockholm speech Seamus recalled Osip Mandelstam as a source of courage and perseverance: ‘Feeling puny in my predicaments as I read about the tragic logic of Osip Mandelstam’s fate in the nineteen-thirties, feeling challenged but steadfast ...’ I think two lines of the Russian poet, who perished in a labour transit camp in Siberia in 1938, can say something for us, for now:

Now I’m dead in the grave with my
lips moving
And every schoolboy repeating my
words by heart."

And the ‘*say nothing*’ of Heaney in Sweden in 1995, and our Taoiseach in Dublin on the 16th January 2022, may be about the utterly courageous Russian troops liberating Auschwitz on the 27th January 1945.

Julianne Herlihy.
©

The series on Elizabeth Bowen

In December, I went in Philip O’Connor’s footsteps to check all this by viewing the microfilm in Dublin. My inspection of the poems on Reel 738 confirms the NYPL statement. Each poem photographed had its own thin interleaving folder with a typed label that opened, ‘*Margaret McKim Maloney Collection Sir Roger Casement Papers*’, and later gave its title.

Maloney added similar details in typed notes on non-poem documents in the reels. (His wife was Margaret McKim. They lived in Park Avenue, New York.)

Maloney’s perpendicular, handwritten, side notes were to explain and clarify the individual poems and provide provenance. The NYPL indicates their side nature made finding any particular poem within the large boxes much easier. The notes usually confirmed that the poems were in Casement’s hand, if not typed. Most consisted of one line, some two or three, and in one case four. In around half a dozen instances, other bits of information were added, examples include:

- "In the Streets of Catania: mss poem by Casement in his hand. Also typescript of poem with pencil note by Mrs Padraic Colum re the first publication of this poem in the *Irish Review*—which her husband edited then. Casement was very angry about this misprint." [The word ‘leavings’ had appeared instead of ‘leaves’].

- "“Nelson”: mss poem by Casement—with 3 lines of a tentative verse, and list of travelling requisites in Casement’s hand, on the back of the poem."

- "“The Sun of June”: by Casement in his handwriting—with marginal note by Joe McGarrity “copied out 30. 1915”."

- "Teneriffe—mss poem by Roger Casement. Good Friday. April 13. 1906. The version written in ink and in pencil is in Casement’s hand."

- "The Nameless One—Lines written in very great dejection at Genoa, Nov. 15. 1900: by Roger Casement in Casement’s handwriting." [This, as we know, repeats part of Casement’s handwritten text on the back of the poem, without indicating its origin. That side of the sheet was never on the microfilm.]

One other NYPL revelation is that a royal coat of arms watermark is visible on the back or verso of ‘*The Nameless One*’, as on several other poetry leaves.

It is hardly likely that a skilled state forger in 1957 would use Government stationery. Casement, unsurprisingly, did, often on anything that came to hand, including hotel letterheads.

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

Casement's Letter And The Dublin Microfilm

A Reply To Paul Hyde

Paul Hyde, in his *Irish Political Review* article of August 2021 on Roger Casement’s reputedly homosexual poem, ‘*Naming the Nameless One*’, made serious and concerning allegations about forged documents at two Archives, the *National Library of Ireland* (NLI) in Dublin and the *New York Public Library* (NYPL). These involved interference with reels of microfilm of extensive Casement documentation, known as the *Maloney Irish Historical Papers* (IHP), which were sent by the NYPL to the NLI in 1946.

Dr. W.J. Maloney was the author in 1936 of *The Forged Casement Diaries*. Some 25 Casement poems were on the first reel.

Hyde’s case is that a manufactured poem (‘*The Nameless One*’) was switched for another of the same title on the Dublin microfilm, and then physically on paper in New York. This, he said, is proved by fake NYPL side-notes accompanying each of the microfilm poems. His

conclusion was, “*In 1957 the microfilm was manipulated to include the forged side-notes and the forged version*” of the poem in question.

The NYPL has however explained to me that the—

“side-notes that Hyde references are actually images of the folders in which the Maloney collection was once housed. These folders contain details identifying their contents, both typed and handwritten.”

The NYPL staff member added,

“I’ve seen the microfilm images for three of these folders, and my curatorial colleagues and I agree that the script of the handwritten portion matches the hand of William J. Maloney... These folders are no longer used within the arrangement of the poems; the collection was re-processed in 2008, so perhaps this is when the poems were re-housed in their current folder. As you anticipated, these earlier folders have not been retained, as they are not collection originals.”

The watermark and the convincing patina of a fifty-year-old document with its discoloured splotches and particular folds similar to other poems are signs of authenticity.

Together this confirms the folder covers in the microfilm with the side notes are the 1940s originals and were not faked in the 1950s. They are not deceptive notes authenticating a microfilm forgery.

Paul Hyde also declared, "*The NLI operation was much more complex and required preparation, subterfuge and several visits. That is what intelligence services are for.*" However to forge the microfilm would have required some effort, and more skill, with the microfilm having to be cut up and respliced, replacing the two-page Ottoman poem and adding the manufactured single-page forgery, or by remaking the film entirely. And all this without anyone in the NLI noticing.

The Ottoman poem in the NLI in one version is actually titled by Casement, '*Abdul the Damned*' and in the second simply '*The Nameless One*'.

The absence from the microfilm of the *verso* with Casement's revealing explanation for writing the poem is also particularly odd if the Intelligence service was intent on faking and replacing a document. It illustrates either spectacular incompetence or is effective proof there was no such operation.

Indeed why bother with the NYPL microfilms at all when the fake handwritten poem could just have been slipped into an NLI folder?

In Lucy McDiarmid's 2005 book, '*The Irish Art of Controversy*', she wrote that "*The Nameless One*" poem "*bears some similarity to James Clarence Mangan's famous poem, also called 'The Nameless One' (1849), and details echoes and links. She is right in that but I have lately realised that the title had another resonance for Casement. The Latin formula for homosexuality, much used in the 19th century, was *Peccatum illud horribile, inter Christianos non nominandum* – that horrible crime not to be named among Christians i.e. *the nameless one*.*"

As I speculated in October's *Irish Political Review*, it was indeed Richard Hayes, Director of the National Library of Ireland, who arranged for a microfilm of the Maloney IHP relating to Casement to go to Dublin in 1946. The NYPL has confirmed to me they have a letter dated 7th March 1946 from Robert Hill, their Keeper of Manuscripts, to William

Maloney enclosing a letter from Hayes in which he wrote, "*Glad to have microfilms of Casement*".

To deal with several other related points, Jack Lane, also in October 2021, wrote that I mixed up Casement's "*ardent nationalism*" with separatism, and that he only "*became a separatist on the outbreak of war*". Jack explained that,

"The dominant form of nationalism in 1904 was Redmondism, which was allied to Liberal Imperialism and specifically to the Liberal Party in parliament. The aim of Home Rulers was to confirm Ireland as a better member of the British Empire. They could be ardent nationalists in this."

However Stephen Gwynn MP, writing in 1906, to Redmond himself, stated —

"I think you and the party ought to know that Casement...is an Irishman and a very strong nationalist. His sympathies are with Sinn Féin people" (NLI 15192/9).

Casement's separatism was long hinged to opposition to England's behaviour in and over Ireland (plus his dislike of the Ulster Scots), and not just the looming First World War. That outlook was visible in his teenage years and early poetry. His more political view hardened up after he wrote the 1904 Congo report for the Foreign Office.

His pro-British imperialism had indeed ebbed away, although he did not switch to ardent, pro-German Imperialism until around 1910. Meantime, he was an Irish separatist and continued to be.

The evidence is extensive both in his private and public writings, and in his friendship with Bulmer Hobson and Denis McCullough who had revived the IRB [Irish Republican Brotherhood] in Belfast. One early political example is his argument that Ireland should have its own representatives at the 1908 Olympic Games.

Perhaps the strongest proof of militant separatism is his involvement in 1905 with the Dungannon Club pamphlet, *Irishmen and the English Army*, an anti-recruiting publication prosecuted for sedition.

The substantial donations he made to separatists, and Sinn Féin itself, are clinching evidence. In a 1907 list of "*Payments to Irish Causes*" (NLI 15138/2), he detailed nearly twenty cheques made out to both political and cultural Irish groups. They included £9.0.0 for Sinn Féin and their "*N. Leitrim Election Fund*", £10.0.0 to "*Republic*", and some £10.0.0 for *Bulmer Hobson and the Dungannon Clubs*. The total of £87.14.0 in modern terms would be close to £10,000. Casement was short of being a member of the Irish Republican Brother-

hood but effectively its political *consigliere*.

Paul Hyde, in his February 2021 *Irish Political Review* article, wrote of Basil Thomson's various stories about the arrival of the diaries in Scotland Yard on 25th April 1916, and the transcript of Casement's interrogation on that date with its dialogue about his trunks from 50 Ebury Street being examined.

He asserted, "*Casement's written statement of 14th June 1916 concerning his luggage at Ebury Street*" [that] "*he did not know that the property stored at both addresses had already been taken into custody*" demonstrates the interrogation dialogue, as recorded, never took place. He then concluded, "*The official version of provenance is thus demonstrated as false*".

But that deduction is manifestly erroneous if one reads Casement's 14th June letter thoroughly. It consists of twelve typed pages entitled, "*A private note for my solicitor*" (NLI 10764/3A/5). Casement there confirmed to George Gavan Duffy that he was well aware his property from both addresses was in police hands. He wrote,

"There were also two trunks of clothing and books at my old lodgings 50 Ebury Street, S.W. These too have been seized and burst open by Scotland Yard."

Casement obviously remembered the April dialogue when he used the phrase "*burst open*" which is so similar to his "*break them open*" remark in the interrogation transcript. Significantly, he also mentions *diaries*:

"They have no right to retain any papers or documents of mine – diaries, books or anything not used at the Trial against me."

The note, with its mention of the Scotland Yard seizure and its '*burst open*' phrasing, proves Casement knew that the Ebury Street trunks had been taken before 14th June. The transcript of the interrogation is therefore accurate and is not "*a fiction*".

The proof of the diaries only being obtained on 25th April 1916, the last day of Casement's interrogation, is in the frequent confirming details in the Kew archives. This was just three weeks before the first typescript of particular diary extracts about his "*sexual habits with male persons*" was circulated by Scotland Yard (TNA DPP 1/46), an archive record Paul accepts — indeed one he brought to my attention. The short time span makes the forging of around a thousand complex, daily, diary entries, handwritten or typed, well-nigh impossible.

Tellingly, the archives reveal not a shred of evidence of forging. The absence of any archival evidence is, in this case, good evidence.

Jeffrey Dudgeon

An Unhistorical View of Casement!

Jeff Dudgeon writes:

"To deal with several other related points, Jack Lane, also in October 2021, wrote that I mixed up Casement's "ardent nationalism" with separatism, and that I suggested that he only "became a separatist on the outbreak of war"."

Jack explained that,

"The dominant form of nationalism in 1904 was Redmondism, which was allied to Liberal Imperialism and specifically to the Liberal Party in parliament. The aim of Home Rulers was to confirm Ireland as a better member of the British Empire. They could be ardent nationalists in this."

However Stephen Gwynn MP, writing in 1906, to Redmond himself, stated,

"I think you and the party ought to know that Casement... is an Irishman and a very strong nationalist. His sympathies are with Sinn Féin people" (NLI 15192/9). Casement's separatism was long hinged to opposition to England's behaviour in and over Ireland (plus his dislike of the Ulster Scots), and not just the "looming First World War".

Here Jeff illustrates his lack of an elementary knowledge of Irish history. He assumes Sinn Féin was a separatist organisation in 1906. It was not. It was a Dual Monarchist organisation up to 1917. It was strongly nationalist and monarchist! Perhaps Jeff has a difficulty getting his head around this as it does not fit his simple-minded view of Irish history.

If Mr. Gwynn was a reliable authority on Sinn Féin, he might have pointed out that basic fact about Sinn Féin in those years. Or Jeff could very easily have consulted the founder, Arthur Griffith, who would have been a more reliable source and who believed that separatism was then an impractical objective. Jeff does not seem able, or wish, to distinguish between the different strands of nationalism and how they related to each other. For example, Sinn Féin had nothing whatever to do with the 1916 Rising, but Jeff would no doubt prefer to rely on the British Propaganda portrayal of it as a Sinn Féin action.

He tries to build up a case for Casement as a lifelong separatist on the flimsiest of evidence that could prove practically any cultural or political nationalist activist or commentator of the time as a separatist.

As I pointed out the Redmondite Home Rulers were ardent nationalists who died - and killed - in their tens of thousands for their nationalist ideals in WWI in the British Army. Some were blood curdling nationalists in word and deed but that did not make them separatists.

And despite his best efforts to portray Casement as a lifelong separatist he has to concede that Casement was "Short of being a member of the IRB but effectively its political consigliere." His house of cards falls down. And when he can't 'pin' membership of the only separatist organisation of the time on him he paints him as something more damning - a mafia style advisor, i.e., a criminal.

A very undoubted aspect of Casement was that he put his heart and soul into what he believed in at any particular time and he also had the physical and moral courage to change his mind and his actions when he deemed it necessary as he did in 1914.

In his industrious effort to make Casement a lifelong separatist Jeff conveniently ignores the outstanding fact that he accepted a Knighthood as late as 1911 and stayed with the Foreign Office until 1913. Was this hypocrisy, duplicity on his part

and were King George V, his advisers, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and the Foreign Office all idiots?

But Jeff keeps ignoring a more important question relevant to his own views about Casement that I have asked him to clarify a few times in these pages arising from his claim that "*Casement's sexual nature undoubtedly contributed to his political outlook*" (*Irish Political Review* September 2021); claiming that "*Casement's politics being enabled by his sexual nature*" (October 2021); and writing that "*There are numerous examples of gay men and lesbians being prominent in 20th century progressive movements (and espionage), and disproportionately so*" (ibid)m

Casement went from being a staunch longtime British Imperialist activist to becoming an active supporter of Irish separatism as a means of practically supporting Germany in WWI. These are indisputable facts. They are the crucial facts of his life - why he lived and why he died.

Jeff has been asked to explain what role exactly did his alleged 'sexual nature' play in all this which he insists on claiming it did - how and why? It is Jeff's life purpose, and duty, to be able to answer this. But he has not done so as I believe he cannot and, dear editor, I will not waste any more of your time or mine on the subject.

Jack Lane

Examining Evidence

I will respond to some of Mr. Dudgeon's points in sequence (1 to 6) as they refer to the poems on the NLI [National Library of Ireland] microfilm. I am of course aware that NLI director Hayes requested the microfilms from NYPL in 1946. I am also aware that NYL staff say that the handwritten side notes resemble Dr. Maloney's handwriting; this does not confirm that Maloney wrote the notes.

1. The 1957 manipulation involved interference with a single microfilm reel in NLI and only in the short section containing the poems; 'extensive Casement documentation' is therefore misleading. It required only switching an identical spool for the original which was then removed for manipulation and later replaced in NLI. This could easily be done without anyone noticing.

2. There is considerable confusion about the side notes on the NLI microfilm. The confusion comes from Mr. Dudgeon's report of comments by NYPL [New York Public Library] staff. These comments, if reported correctly, are themselves contradictory. We read that the "*side-notes ... are actually images of the folders in which the Maloney collection was once housed...*" and that "*these earlier folders have not been retained, as they are not collection originals*".

It is difficult to make sense of this but it seems to mean that the folders were not prepared by Maloney when he donated the poem manuscripts in 1940. If so, then the folders were later prepared by NYPL staff and, regardless of who wrote the 'authenticating' side notes, the folders were at some time destroyed as having no value.

The folders allegedly containing the side notes purporting to authenticate the poems were eliminated—is this credible? No, it is not credible because it is unthinkable that the ‘*authenticating*’ notes were destroyed. It follows that the folders at no time contained the side notes. It also follows that the NLI microfilm images showing side notes did not come from NYPL in 1946. What came from NYPL in 1946 were microfilm images of the folders without any side notes.

Mr. Dudgeon says the “*side notes were to explain and clarify the individual poems and provide provenance*”. However, the unsigned notes do not explain or clarify nor do they provide provenance. There is no interpretation and nothing to indicate who gave the manuscripts to Maloney or when. The notes simply state the handwriting is Casement’s.

Mr. Dudgeon asks “*why bother with the NYPL microfilms ... the fake handwritten poem could just have been slipped into an NLI folder?*” These questions are best addressed to those ‘in the know’: McDermott and Montgomery Hyde. Unlike Mr. Dudgeon, I decline to mind-read and speculate.

Mr. Dudgeon refers to an official watermark on the manuscript and says: “*It is hardly likely that a skilled state forger ... would use government stationery*”. Why not? The watermark does indeed act as a sign of authenticity—which is exactly why a forger would opt to use government stationery; Casement was a civil servant.

3. Concerning the ‘Latin formula’, we have more mind-reading by Mr. Dudgeon—he cannot possibly know that the Latin formula was known to Casement and had a “*resonance*” for him.

4. Contrary to what Mr. Dudgeon says, none of Thomson’s “*various stories*” relate the arrival of diaries on 25th April. Thomson’s stories relate earlier dates, as I made clear in *Secret Provenance, Irish in Political Review*, February 2021.

Since Mr. Dudgeon’s integrity has been guaranteed by the British Crown—that unique universal font of all truth, virtue and sanctity—in the form of an MBE, this ‘error’ cannot be attributed to dishonesty and must be due to carelessness.

5. The case for the falsity of the interrogation typescript does not rest on the document of 14th June. Readers are

referred to pages 139-144 of *Anatomy Of A Lie* for a detailed treatment. Mr. Dudgeon is reminded that several of his co-believers in authenticity have no faith in the interrogation typescript and maintain that the trunks were seized months before 25th April, 1916.

6. The “*confirming details*” at Kew are all police documents and are therefore suspect, since the police were at the heart of the defamatory campaign.

We do not expect to find evidence of forgery in the UK archives because we do not expect the UK Government to conserve evidence of its own criminal activity. We do expect to find reliable impartial evidence of authenticity—but neither Mr. Dudgeon nor Inglis, Sawyer nor Reid have been able to find any.

Debate Concluded:

Unless new evidence emerges, discussion about the forgery of Casement Diaries is concluded. Ed.

It is logical that Mr. Dudgeon wishes at all costs to protect the claim that the trunks were delivered on 25th April. But the following facts controvert that suggestion:

1. The 25 April claim was kept secret until 1959.
2. Many other experts, including police chief Thomson believed the claim is false.
3. There is no evidence of the diaries being shown to independent witnesses before Casement was killed.
4. McDermott concealed his role in providing the typescript text of *The Nameless One*.
5. It is not known how McDermott obtained the text and why it differs from the manuscript in NYPL.

Paul Hyde

The Melancholia Of Class, A Manifesto For The Working Class (Revisited).

Repeater Books. £10.99

Class Politics

Labour Affairs, the December 2021/January 2022 issue, published a review of a work by the US academic and poet, Cynthia Cruz, *The Melancholia of Class*, and to give it its full title: *A Manifesto for the Working Class*. That review first appeared in the *Morning Star*, the only daily leftist paper in the UK.

That review basically examines the life of those working-class people in the US and the UK who become singers, novelists and who attain prominent positions in other artistic fields. This fame has allowed them to move out of their working-class environment.

Cynthia Cruz claims that such mobility has caused grave damage and is causing a sense that they can no longer fit into their old habitats, nor can they be acceptable to the working-class they have left behind, and very rarely can they join the middle-class, if they should want to. But mostly they don’t want to, according to the author, and therefore, they reject the media’s plans for them to be a package that proclaims a rags-to-riches syndrome. In that event they become ghosts, of whom many self-destruct. She gives the example of Amy Winehouse, the working-class Jewish girl, a talented singer/composer, as such a person who refused that package and had a hostile media on her tail for the rest of her short life, dying at the age of 27.

Amy had anorexia/bulimia problems from the age of 15. Cruz accepts her family’s verdict that she died from those ravages, to her body, from that ailment, when in fact it was a bottle of vodka, in her small body that killed her, in her 10 million pound home in Camden Square, London. Cruz has her living in a tiny apartment. She also says that Winehouse flaunted her working-class roots by tattooing her now waif-like diminishing body, when all the time I thought that over-tattooing was a sign of self-harming. Cruz hasn’t seemed to notice that middle-class girls are now wearing the odd tattoo. She also says Winehouse was clean, that is, she had stopped taking drugs. But alcohol is a substance, an anti-depressant, much in line with those other drugs that are also substances. A lot of talented people have addictive personalities, and when the good life comes along with plenty of money, invitations to parties with free booze and drugs (if required), then it’s indulgence time with a vengeance, and not so much that ghost longing for its roots.

The author goes on to list the ghosts, the talented working-class artists, mainly in the US, who have died from the effects of substances. Of the UK, David Bowie, the rock musician/songwriter, didn’t die from substance, but did change his *persona*

to become different people during his career, which she sees as a ghost trying to replace its working-class background with something else. Or is this just show-business, I felt, on reading this analysis of a talented artist who lived slightly more than his biblical three-score-and-ten years? Most of the US artists, she mentions, with a working-class background, end up dead from various substances and suicide. Except for the working-class rock musician, Bruce Springsteen? Andy Warhol, and his working-class background, is mentioned. She does make an astute observation when she says that he sees the US in terms of tins of Campbells Soup and brillo pads.

Of course, there is a certain alienation when a working-class person gets his 15 minutes of fame. And in many cases that person alienates his/herself by deciding to move on to maybe better accommodation or marrying into middle-class circles. She describes the US backgrounds of many of these alienated people as pretty grim. One or two are from small coal-mining towns where their fathers and grandfathers have died from black-lung, as the result of breathing in coal-dust. Yet she claims they miss their previous environment so much that they can self-destruct.

The early Soviet Union, in dealing with classes, described the artist as belonging to the intermediate class, a temporary measure, in its plans for total working-class power. China today, on the other hand, boasts about enlarging its middle-class.

The author says that the US, and the UK, are living under neoliberal values by claiming that there is no class in their societies. That much is true. She rightly says this is wrong and that the working-class has been banished from sight, the beginning of a process that began during the Thatcher/Reagan era, when the wages of manual workers ceased to grow to such an extent that in the US today, since that period in the 1970s, a full-time worker just isn't getting enough to live on, and usually has a second job in the evenings, and even a third one.

The US worker is also beset by not having a proper health-service, which has caused a lot of prolonged ill-health. In reading her description of that class in the US, you get the feeling that the US is a series of rust-belts, starting with the downing of Detroit, the once famous mo-town of heavy industry that threw up the mo-town music scene.

That is the one town that saw the middle-class desert in droves, when this

happened, with the music industry moving to California.

She sees in other towns and cities shiny new expensive Shopping Malls, insurance buildings and pharmaceutical outlets, along with high-rise expensive accommodation for the middle-class—but very little for the working-class. Except for the pharmacy outlets who will supply the prescription drugs to dull the pain of it all?

It would have been interesting to know something about their social welfare system and social housing. Everyone can't be living in trailer-parks as white trash. She mentions the destruction of Trade Unions, but doesn't mention the active Trade Unions and what they do. Certainly there appears to be a bleak scene for many, but are the bulk of the non-whites in jobs such as drivers, shop-assistants, nannies, and construction workers? I can't see anything wrong with having these work-occupations.

Is the white worker some privileged section of US society? how was such a leap made from trailer-trash to elitist workers? What are these elite jobs? This reminds me of the middle-class, well-meaning social workers, telling the working class children that manual work wasn't for them, that they had to abandon the idea of factory-working, apprenticeships and all the other jobs (needed to keep a country running) and instead think of academia.

Has Cynthia Cruz, an academic, become middle-class herself, when she writes of dead-end, boring working-class jobs? She only has to look around her to see that everything substantial from the sewers to the high-rise buildings, to the cutlery we use, to the plates we eat off, to the buses, the trains, the cars we use, the clothes we wear, the food that we eat, the radio we listen to, the television we watch, all, have been made by the hands of the working-class.

Anything can become boring and seemingly dead-end. That happens in academia, in writing, in the making of films, in repetitive acting, ballet, the musician in orchestras playing classical music, the constant gigs of the pop-music groups, and so on in the artistic field.

Britain was one country that was to realise it had a working-class after all, and that was when the *Winter of Discontent* turned things decidedly awkward for everyday living. The low-paid, doing vital jobs, went on strike from 1978-1979, during the era of the Callaghan's Labour Government. The UK saw scenes of the dead stored in warehouses, when the grave-

diggers came out on strike. They saw the sewers overflow and rubbish as high as walls in Central London at one location, when the bin-men struck. These were the most visible signs of the Strike as it became an alliance of public sector and private sector workers. It so scared those in charge of the country that even today we have warnings in the media about it, and constant condemnation of those workers, who took part in it.

In the original review of the book, in the *Morning Star*, there was no mention of how heavily the author relies on quoting Freud. That might not look good in a communist newspaper? The Soviet Union abhorred psychoanalysis. The main ideas of Freud are from ancient Greek mythology. He turned them into a tool to pry into the mind of 20th Century Man.

I'm not dismissing Freud entirely, because there is some common-sense thinking that does show man can never be that modern, no matter what century it happens to be. But her Freudism is too constant and makes me uneasy that this is just another American on the magic carpet of the eternal couch.

Freud dealt mainly with the anxiety of sections of the Viennese middle-class. It was only they who could afford the fees. It has been proven, that given time, this anxiety can disperse, on its own, with the growth of the person.

Cynthia Cruz here has somehow turned Freud inside out to have him answering social questions and applying his supposed answers to the *angst* of working-class talented people who become ghosts on leaving their class, and not finding another class to climb into, due to obstinacy or rejection.

An early Cuban socialist government suggested that artists would benefit from doing some manual work at regular times. The practice would ensure that the working-class artist would not be so alienated from his class, and the middle-class person would learn about that aspect of life and forge a bond with the mass of the people. But something seems to have gone amiss, and Cuba's finest ballet dance is now dancing with the Royal Ballet in London. But he's free to come and go to his native land, unlike Nureyev, the Soviet ballet dancer who sought refuge in the West for its bigger prizes.

In the end he bought numerous houses around the world, visited each in turn, and was said by one of his various housekeepers to be a lonely figure, sitting on a wall

and gazing out to sea. He died from a combination of alcohol and Aids at an early age. The Soviet ballet company he deserted said he was good dancer but without star qualities and that the West artificially promoted him as a political weapon. Did this prey on his mind?

Generally, the author finds working-class life a drag, but they mustn't join the middle-class, if talent can take them there, for that would be a betrayal of their roots. But she doesn't give an alternative.

She just thinks the working-class is doomed.

She quotes from Irving Welsh's novel, *Trainspotting*, when Mark Renton, the heroin addict, explains why he must continue to lead his life the way he wants to:

"Choose life; Choose mortgage payments; Choose washing machines; Choose cars,

Choose sitting on a couch watching mind-numbing and spirit-crushing game shows, stuffing fuckin' junk food intae yir mooth; Choose rotting away; Choose life. Well, ah

Choose no tae choose life."

Conveniently, she is so much into the working-class doom when she doesn't quote the remarkable recovery of Renton.

As an individual, Mark Renton survives the wilds of his youth and goes on to live a conventional life in Amsterdam with his wife. He reconciles with his father and is seen playing the record: *Lust For Life*.

The alienated working-class artist doesn't represent the working-class. It is not melancholic and it does not always alienate its talent.

When the flat I live in was being refurbished, a group of heating fitters arrived to install new radiators and the pipes required. I have quite a large library of books, which they were interested in, plus pictures of the old Belfast shipyard. They looked as if they were in their early twenties, skilled English workers. One came from the Euston end of Mornington Crescent, and lived on a small council estate where the socialist Unity Theatre once stood. It was gone before he was born but his grandfather knew all about it.

I mentioned that the actor Michael Gambon came from his area and had been an actor at Unity Theatre. I told him I acted in a play with him and had been at parties in his flat back in the 1960s. This Michael Gambon, had been spotted as exceptionally talented and became an

actor at the National Theatre, appeared on TV a lot, and at other London theatres. He was now Sir Michael Gambon, which was irrelevant to me but impressed the people I was talking to. The young heating fitter took out his phone and showed me a photo. It was Michael Gambon. I was very surprised at this.

I met Gambon when he was the big success and he wasn't in the least alienated by his rise to fame. He had himself done an apprenticeship as a fitter, and after his success he had a workshop in the grounds of his home, where he worked making objects out of metal and fixed various types of engines, for he missed working with his hands.

This actor, born in Dublin, and brought to London as a child, still retained his old *persona*. As a boy he had played outside Unity, and as he said: Then as a teenager, I was inside it playing.

This book is essentially a dooming of the working-class. I thought it strange when she wrote that her Mexican father was *only* a car-salesman and that she was

too ashamed to pass on this information to her fellow middle-class students when she was at college. And what is wrong in selling cars, when selling and making money is part of the American dream?

The labelling of the chapters of this book must say it all.

Chapter One: The Gap Between Worlds.
Chapter Two: Death Shuttle into the World
Chapter Three: The Melancholia of Class
Chapter Four: Between Two Deaths.
Chapter Five: Between Two Deaths II:
The Libidinal Working-Class Body.
Chapter Six: The Undead
Chapter Seven: The Haunting
Chapter Eight: The Death Drive.

Cynthia Cruz, the author, does have a book in there somewhere. She does have some good markers like her understanding of neoliberalism within the US and the UK, but unfortunately, in her rejection of working-class life, she is doing exactly what neoliberalism is doing.

Wilson John Haire

8.1.2022

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The Irish Constitution: Unpublished Letter to *Times Literary Supplement*

Fintan O'Toole, author of *We Don't Know Ourselves*, is not as impressionable as John Banville, his novelist reviewer (TLS, 17 December).

However, both suffer from too much religion obscuring their view of Ireland. The priests of southern Ireland are too close to their imagination, the British too far away. It would never occur to Banville (or indeed O'Toole) to blame Britain for the Great Famine in the 1840s, in which one million perished, though, had there been an independent Irish government then, there would be no such hesitation. They both harp on about the mass emigration the Famine initiated, but do not trace it to its imperial roots.

Banville's review of O'Toole's "personal history" asserts "the greatest skill the Irish had was to know how not to know... Ignorance ensured our peace of mind". Once stated, how can the Irish author of these thoughts know this?

He demonstrates it and in so doing illustrates the paucity of understanding that passes for historical knowledge in a certain type of middle-class Irish intellectual.

In paragraph three, describing the pre-eminent position of Dublin Archbishop John Charles McQuaid, Banville notes that the Roman Catholic Church's "special position" in the 1937 Irish Free State Constitution was "dropped by a referendum vote in 1972, less than a year after McQuaid had resigned". Banville observed that McQuaid advised then President of the Executive Council, Eamon de Valera, on the draft Constitution. Article 44 recognised the Roman Catholic Church's "special position" as "the guardian of the Faith professed by the great majority of the citizens".

Banville implies that McQuaid had something to do with the insertion of Article 44.

In fact, McQuaid broke with de Valera for a number of years over that section of the Constitution. He and later Episcopal colleagues would have been delighted had it been abolished at any stage. The special position clause recognised merely a demographic fact. It had zero legal significance. McQuaid required, insisted on, a statement that his branch of Christendom represented the 'one true' church.

continued page 18

McQuaid was equally put out by the rest of Article 44, with explicit recognition of what he regarded as heretical formations, the Church of Ireland (Anglican), Presbyterian and Methodist churches, plus Quakers and Jews (this in the 1930s). The name given to McQuaid's church in the Constitution was at the suggestion of Archbishop Gregg of the Church of Ireland. De Valera asked to meet Gregg and discussed with him difficulty in naming each denomination. Anglicans regarded themselves also as Catholic and some did not like the term 'Protestant'. Gregg offered a neat and obvious solution; name the churches as they officially entitled themselves. Thus, all religious denominations, apart from the 'Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Church', had the word 'Ireland' in their title in the 1937 Constitution of Ireland. McQuaid and his colleagues were appalled at being on a par with other Christian denominations and at not even being 'Irish' in Ireland, in its Constitution, in return for a sop. They were snookered. Protestant churches were pleased.

Undoubtedly, the Roman Catholic Church played a prominent role in the 26 County Free State and then Republic of Ireland. Alongside other churches, it inherited a post-independence task of socially controlling the population through the provision of health, education, welfare and detention services, increasingly funded and regulated by the state.

Most of those who required controlling were poor, so most were Catholic. Southern Irish Protestants, who freely practised discrimination in the large businesses they ran, enjoyed a relatively agreeable and prosperous existence. They could potentially afford more per capita to service their miscreants. But treatment was the same. Protestant unmarried mothers were banished to special institutions as well. Their offspring were also discarded in unsuitable adoptions, to Northern Ireland, to Britain and to the USA. They suffered, emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Sexism and Misogyny is not exclusive to Catholicism.

Religiously based regulation increasingly got up the nose of those regulated, who revolted. Some became self-obsessed. Ex-Catholic intellectuals became adept at shovelling every instance of Roman Catholic sexual and other dysfunction into reviews and commentaries. Banville, in a pretence of not being "exclusively Irish", compares Catholic abuse of one kind or another in Southern Ireland to "Germany in the Second World War, ... Turkey and the Armenians, ... Bosnia, Rwanda, and many

other places where atrocities occurred and were routinely ignored or denied". In that case, to bring comparisons closer to home, the abusive activities of Jimmy Saville and Cyril Smyth MP should be compared with Nazi treatment of Jews, Slavs, homosexuals, gypsies and communists.

Peter Righton, a career paedophile, was for many years regarded as Britain's leading expert in child safety. He conspired with others in the Paedophile Information Exchange to make child abuse legal. The NCCL in the 1970s, after it stopped taking British repression in Northern Ireland seriously, seriously considered paedophile campaign claims. Much like those attaching to John Chalmers McQuoid, there are credible, if unproven, allegations that former British Prime Minister Edward Heath sexually abused children. In the medical profession, the late Anthony Storr conspired alongside the General Medical Council to save the career of paedophile child psychiatrist Maurice Fraser, first

convicted in 1972, who finally left the Medical Register in 1995. Storr's learned 1960s witterings on the relative harmlessness of child sexual abuse were later cited by Roman Catholic Church authorities, in mitigation of the activity of clergy.

Up to the 1970s, the British solution to too many orphans and 'street urchins' was to encourage Protestant and Roman Catholic organisations (including Barnardo's and the Christian Brothers) to banish children in large batches, many without parental consent, to Australia, Canada, South Africa and Rhodesia. Is that, using Banville as our guide, comparable to herding Jews into the Warsaw Ghetto? However bad (and it was) the treatment of defenceless children in Ireland and Britain, such comparison is incontinent.

As John Banville observed, ignorance is bliss.

Dr. Niall Meehan
24.12.21

An Eye On Russia

The Chief of Staff of the Irish Army has been reprimanded by the Minister for Foreign Affairs for engaging in conversation with the representative of the enemy of Ireland on the eve of battle.

For a couple of generations Ireland had no Foreign Affairs Ministry! Nothing was foreign to it. All that was not itself was external to it, but not foreign. Foreignness is a dangerous concept, because the only External power that could be seen spontaneously as foreign from an undistorted Irish vantage point was Britain. And that would never do!

Britain made us. A hundred years ago it brushed aside our naïve attempt to be ourselves, and it gave us a Government with the task of re-making us in its image. But, beneath all the mercenary *bonhomie*, it was suspected that the natural flow of feeling still knew that England was the one and only dangerous foreign foe. What damage did any other foreigner ever inflict on us over the last thousand years?

England—the most powerful destructive force in the world until comparatively recently—is our only foreigner, as Russia is the Ukraine's. But no rival World Power ever supported us against England as the United States now supports the Ukraine and urges it on. And Simon Coveney hopes

to bring Ireland into the sphere of Foreign Affairs by re-orienting feeling from England to Russia on globalist grounds—at a moment when globalism is reaching the end of its tether.

Globalism could only become an accomplished fact under universal United States hegemony. The United States has been implicitly committed to universal hegemony since very early in its existence, and President Obama made that commitment explicit. The effective meaning of *Manifest Destiny* was world dominance. Expanding westwards brings you around back on yourself from the other side—through a "*vast vicus of recirculation*" (*Finnegan's Wake*).

John L. Sullivan appears in a book about 100 Great Irishmen which was published recently. But it is an Irish-American book, and Irish-Americans are Americans. And Sullivan was a thoroughly American Irishman. His doctrine, or vision, was published in the 1840s, and America has behaved in accordance with it ever since. It followed the sun to the West Coast, then across the Pacific to Japan, then to China—which it seemed to have in its grasp but lost suddenly in 1947.

Britain's bungling of its irresponsible second World War brought the USA to

Central Europe, moving eastwards, as it was blocked by China in its westward movement. But *Manifest Destiny* remained its only long-term policy. It could not rest while any part of the world was foreign to it.

It is now intent on completing the circuit by a pincers movement from both the West and the East.

China has reconstituted itself as a functional state, ending the process of disintegration set in motion by England's war against it to open it up as a market for opium. Russia has reconstituted itself out of the chaos resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union. Both must be broken down for the process of *Manifest Destiny* to be completed.

Independence from the United States is possible only to states which develop the power to destroy the United States. Those are the terms set by the United States.

It is the only Power that has used nuclear weapons. It used them (in a war that it would certainly have won by conventional means) against a couple of undefended cities which did not stand in the way of its advance. The lesson has been learned by Russia and China. Both have built a power of destruction close to that of the USA.

If the USA cannot find a way of breaking them up by "*pro-democracy campaigns*" and by discovering nationalisms to stir up within them, then what is on the agenda is *Armageddon*, a realisation of the Christian vision of the course of the world, or is it the Jewish vision?

The alternative is that the United States should discard John L. Sullivan's doctrine—re-stated by President Obama with the words, "*the United States is the only indispensable nation*"—and voluntarily accept that other nations might consider themselves indispensable too, and be equally entitled to provide for their continuing existence, and that there should be a return to spheres of influence as the normal state of affairs—in place of universal uniformity. But the Trump experience does not suggest that the USA is capable of seeing itself in perspective.

The Ukraine affair is a local incident within that global contest.

NATO ceased to be a defensive body when the Soviet system disintegrated and the Warsaw Pact broke up. It and the Warsaw Pact were defensive forces against each other in the division of the world brought about by Britain's second World War. When the Warsaw Pact broke up, NATO not only remained in being, but extended its sphere of activities. It became an expansive force intent on eating into the Russian state.

Ukraine does not constitute an obviously distinct national territory in the history of the region. It failed to constitute itself as a state against Russia in 1918-19, or in 1941-2 when the form of its nationalism blended easily with Nazism.

The Ukraine was maintained as a nominally independent state within the Soviet Union, and Russia agreed that Ireland should be admitted to the United Nations if US/UK agreed that the Ukraine should. Russia decided what the extent of the Ukraine should be, and what kind of government it should have, as Britain did with Ireland.

When the Soviet Union was breaking up the Ukraine did not assert its independence by any act of rebellion. The Kremlin did not behave towards it as Whitehall did towards Ireland. Instead Russia promoted Ukraine's economic well-being. And it included within the Ukraine a large Russian minority, as well as the region of the Crimea, which was overwhelming Russian in character and connection.

After the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Ukraine went through a number of spectacular 'colour' revolutions before apparently settling down to a stable mode of existence. The elected Government in 2014, whose election was not disputed by the US or by the EU, negotiated trade deals with the EU and with Russia. The EU had apparently been expecting to have an exclusive trade deal with the Ukraine. The Ukrainian deal with both the EU and Russia made perfect economic sense, given that its industrial region would find better markets in Russia than the EU.

The EU in those days had begun to imagine itself as a potential Super-Power. It reacted strongly against its failure to bring the Ukraine within its sphere of influence, and set about subverting the Government in Kiev, which balanced itself between West and East.

Ireland had the Presidency of the European Parliament in 2014, in the form of Pat Cox. Cox became a very busy participant in the subversive movement in Maidan Square, which overturned the Government by an anti-Russian *coup d'état*. The *coup* was fiercely nationalist in ideological content. It was only natural that militant Ukrainian nationalism, suddenly given its head by the EU, should take up where it had left off in 1944, and have a fascist flavour with the implication of ethnic cleansing. Russia was not merely an enemy state across the border, but was a Fifth Column within, which constituted the main population of the industrial workforce in the East.

This was the occasion of Putin's first

"*act of aggression*". He took it to be his business to help the Russian population in the Ukraine to save itself from Ukrainian fascism. He agreed to a Crimean secession from the Ukraine back to Russia, and helped the Russian population in Eastern Ukraine to arm itself defensively.

Some elements in the EU, seeing where Pat Cox's militancy was leading, tried to row back and preserve a degree of moderation in the form of the regime in Kiev. But Washington gave the word, "*Fuck the EU*", and the Kiev *coup* went on in its most aggressive form. And the US belatedly discovered that Russia had bought the Ukrainian election.

When the dust settled, the Crimea was gone from the Ukraine and the Eastern Ukraine had armed itself against Kiev and it remains autonomously at war with it, while making no suggestion of transferring itself to Russia.

Kiev now makes an irredentist sovereignty claim over the Crimea, as the Irish Republic did over Northern Ireland, but without the credibility given to the Irish claim by the fact that the Irish population in the North was a third to begin with and grew to almost half. We know of no popular movement within the Crimea supportive of Kiev's irredentist claim.

Does Simon Coveney support Ukrainian irredentism? If he does, he's a fool. If he doesn't, what is he jabbering on about?

If Ukraine irredentism was a merely Ukrainian affair, it would be of little consequence. But it is supported by the United States and, while the EU has receded from its pretension of Super-Power status, it still describes the decision of the Crimean population to transfer itself to the Russian state as an act of Russian aggression.

The USA has made it clear that it regards the Russian state as an obstacle to its progress that must be dealt with. The way to deal with it is through the Ukraine, which is continuously at war with its Russian population.

The matter might be settled by a recognition that the transfer of Crimea to Russia in the circumstances of 2014 was an act of national self-determination warranted by what Pat Cox was doing on behalf of the European Parliament in the Ukraine, and by an insistence that Kiev must concede substantial minority rights to the Russian population in the Donbas region. That would be a rational settlement. But rationality and *Manifest Destiny* do not live easily together.

When the German philosopher, Nietzsche, was being denounced by British war propagandists for his book, *The Will To Power*,

for having poisoned the German mind, an American commentator said that, as far as he could see, all that Nietzsche had done was describe American Capitalism.

But we need an even broader perspective to see how things are at present. James Hutton, a star of the Scottish Enlightenment, who discovered the history of rocks, translated a book from the French Enlightenment in the reign of Napoleon the Third. Written by Bouvet, it is formally about Turkey but actually about Russia, and how the European states had come to depend on Turkey to preserve them from Russia.

The European nations, which had raised themselves out of the childhood of the race by Enlightenment were what mattered in the world. But—

“The nations are justly apprehensive of clashing with one another in that dizzy and irresistible movement which for some years past has been drawing them towards the obscure regions of a new era for humanity. The view of the internal agitation with which they are continually menaced disquiets the different Governments as if the destroying angel had appeared in the air. Hence precautions of all kinds to secure their existence; hence their enormous armaments, though no one actually thinks of employing them against their neighbour; and hence that perpetual nervous agitation of each nation itself as if the end of the world were at hand” (*Turkey*, 1853, p119).

Because they are all equal, and each considers itself to be invaluable, they cannot allow any one of them to unite them under its leadership against the danger posed by backward regions, and they have been unable to form a rational unity without a leader. And so it could be that by some accident they would find themselves in the arms of Russia, and find an objective unity there, having failed to establish subjective unity amongst themselves.

A Russian intervention might succeed accidentally because of the essential disunity of the advanced nations. It would have nothing to contribute to advancement, as a Man of Power sometimes had. But it would be more lasting than Man of Power interventions because of what Russia was. If Russia got Constantinople:

“The chain would be riveted on the neck of Europe... And assuredly it would not be one of those purely accidental ascendancies due to the apparition of some extraordinary genius, such as that of Charlemagne, or France under Napoleon I; for that is a supremacy that rarely survives its author, and often finishes before his death. This would be an irresistible supremacy, having behind it, as a *point d'appui* Russia in all her immensity — that is, a country of a peculiar character, and secured from invasion by the nature of the ground and the severity

of the climate, with a population robust, sober, passive, and indefinitely increasing, and by frontiers on which Charles XII and Napoleon, by similar catastrophes, seemed to realise the inscription that Dante beheld on the gate of the infernal regions: Leave all hope without, ye who enter here” (p115).

The accident envisaged by Bouvet, caused by the disunity of the advanced nations and their arming against each other, which might transfer Europe into the arms of Russia, happened sixty years later when Britain offered Constantinople to Russia for the taking in exchange for Russia undertaking to crush Germany with its backward hordes when Britain gave the word.

If Britain's 1914 World War—which it never thought of fighting as anything but a fundamental total war—had gone to plan, Russian despotism, semi-feudal in social content, would not only have got Constantinople, but would have become dominant in Central Europe. The British Liberal Party, which had made the arrangement for the War, and had launched it, was slightly concerned at extending the despotism of the Tsar into central Europe, but accepted it as a cost of destroying Germany and expanding its own Empire.

What actually happened was that the German resistance outmanoeuvred the Russian armies and broke them up, and the Tsarist despotism fell. A socialist state was constructed out of its ruins. That too was described as a form of Asiatic despotism.

The USA in 1918 saved Britain from defeat in its war of destruction on Germany (so it was described by James Connolly and Roger Casement) by defeating Germany. Then it withdrew from European affairs, leaving Britain free to humiliate and plunder defeated Germany along with France, but refusing to disable it completely as France wanted because that would have established France in supremacy in Europe.

The Versailles arrangement was an incitement to disorder in Europe. The disorder was overcome by the rise of Fascist movements. Liberal democracy gave way easily to the Fascist form of government. Britain collaborated actively with German Fascism for six years before suddenly and capriciously deciding to make war on it, in alliance with France. It depended on France to do the fighting. In the course of the first battle France was occupied. With its Army in ruins, and being unable to maintain regular warfare, it made terms with Germany. Britain withdrew its Army, condemned France for making a separate peace, made war on it, and protected by its powerful Navy, it refused to withdraw its declaration of war, though it did no serious fighting. It kept the war going with pin-pricks in the hope that something would

turn up. What turned up was the German war on Russia, launched for the purpose of depriving Britain of its last hope of an ally and persuading it to make a settlement.

The Asiatic despotism did what the Liberal democracies had comprehensively failed to do. It defended itself effectively and destroyed the enemy, marching into central Europe in the process of doing so.

In the 1920s and 1930s the advanced nations of Europe had become Fascist through their own efforts. It was said explicitly by Churchill that Fascism was the means by which European civilisation defended itself from Russian Communism. But, from 1941 to 1945, the story became that Fascism was a force destructive of all civilisation, as was demonstrated by the unity of Communism and Capitalism against it.

In 1945 Russia became an Asiatic despotism again, and Churchill said it had always been the main enemy, and Fascism only an accidental enemy caused by Foreign Office bungling.

Russia did not in 1945 vacate the regions of Central Europe which it had to conquer in order to free itself from the European attempt to destroy it—because that is what was done in 1941.

The USA took Western Europe in hand in 1945 and made it a viable dependency of itself in the Cold War against the Power that had broken Fascist Europe. When the Cold War ended in the disintegration of the Soviet system, the socialist order of the Russian State broke down. An anarchic form of capitalism took its place. State property was broken up and taken into possession by capitalist ‘oligarchs’ who had never conducted a business. The social welfare structure disappeared. Life expectancy plummeted. Political parties popped up like mushrooms, and disappeared like mushrooms.

There was no continuity in political life. Oligarchic capitalism operated outside the law, in conjunction with American companies. It seemed that Russia was America's to do what it pleased with. When the Parliament made a feeble attempt to assert itself, President Yeltsin bombed it. That was the era of liberal democracy in Russia.

What Putin has done is restore a national state in Russia and impose a degree of law on the functioning of Capitalism. But that makes him an Asiatic despot with evil designs on the world, because the obnoxious thing about Russia is not whether it is feudal, socialist, or capitalist, or whether it is atheist at a time when it should be Christian or is Christian when it should be post-Christian, but that it exists and blocks the way.

Irish Times writer, Pat Leahy, says that Putin is in search of a lost Empire (Jan 29):

“There was a time when the border of the Russian sphere of influence was on the Elbe. The river is no longer a border but Vladimir Putin’s mission is to turn back the clock to the days when the Kremlin’s write ran through most of eastern Europe”.

He does not mention how Russia came to be on the Elbe, beating back a European Fascist invasion, and breaking the power of the Fascism which no external power had imposed on Europe. Fascism was the means that Europe found of coping with itself in the aftermath of Britain first World War, when the structure of its pre-War stability was deliberately smashed by Britain.

Fascist Europe then made war on Communist Russia, and against all the calculable odds found itself freed from its Fascist order by Russian defensive military action, experiencing its liberation as conquest. (Insofar as there was active resistance to the Fascist order from within, it was Communist in the main, with a slight aristocratic element: and the only substantial social body that held itself apart in a kind of coherent passive resistance was the Catholic Church, which went on to give European democracy a semblance of life after 1945).

Leahy seems to find Ireland guilty because it did not participate in the fiasco of Britain’s 2nd World War (which brought Russia to the Elbe), and then for not having been part of NATO (to confront Russia on the Elbe).

And Ireland is described as “*Cakeist*”, which seems to mean that it has been living parasitically by taking refuge behind the barrier of NATO but refusing to join it. Who has it been shielded against?

The mutual defensive/aggressive relationship between East and West, in the form of the military confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, with which the Second World War ended, ceased a third of a century ago when the Warsaw Pact broke up.

NATO then became an expansionist force without an enemy, except for the resistance that was offered against its expansion. And Ireland facilitated expansionist NATO—aka the USA—without joining it.

Ireland also became parasitic by successfully entering the financial capitalist side of things. But that’s what Progress and Civilisation are all about, isn’t it? De Valera’s ideal of modest self-sufficiency is not something that can be tolerated in this relentlessly progressive era. The choice now lies between being predator and being prey.

Russia was prey during its period of bourgeois democracy without a bourgeoisie. Gorbachev’s last notable action was to tour

the world with a begging bowl, and Yeltsin just let things rip. Putin’s offence is that he restored Russian statehood, and intervened in the Ukraine when Pat Cox stirred up an anti-Russian pogrom in it on behalf of the EU Parliament.

Leahy says that “*the states of the EU are probably the most civilised political organisations in the history of humanity*”. They are members of “*an Empire by invitation*”. But they are under siege and must assert “*a more muscular presence on the European stage*”.

Who is threatening them? To begin with, they made an arrangement for self-sufficiency in the world. Then they were overcome by delusions of grandeur, imagining themselves as a Super Power operating globally in the medium of the international division of labour. In that game one is either master or one is vulnerable. The EU is now certainly tending towards the latter. But it can do nothing about it because its members are

all too civilised to allow any one of them to be leader—the situation described by Bouvet in the mid-19th century.

Ireland would have done a service to Europe by taking a stand after the Second World War on the ground on which it had stood during the War, and told Europe home truths about itself. But, instead of doing that, Ireland made itself the most guiltily civilised of all the guilty civilised.

Brendan Clifford

PS: The US Secretary of State has asserted it as a general principle that independent states can make any military alliances they please, regardless of how their neighbours might feel about it. Let us recall what happened when Cuba made a military alliance with Russia, and Washington threatened Armageddon. [Has the Monroe Doctrine, which asserted US hegemony over the entire Continent, been repealed?

What is Happening in Kazakhstan?

There have been myriad accounts of what’s going on in Kazakhstan from various analysts. What is most noticeable is the way in which observers have attempted to shoe-horn the course of events in that country into parameters that reflect the various authors’ existing disposition or political orientation. The Chinese have a description of such phenomena as “*frogs in a well*”. The frog can only see the reality of the well and see everything in the context of the well. But, outside the well, the frog is lost because life is not the same as in their well.

As a result, much of the analysis has been wishful thinking rather than realistic.

I have read that the events in Kazakhstan constitute a Western attempt to get at Russia through terrorists and agents. I have read they are a Russian attempt, engineered by Moscow’s Intelligence agencies to overthrow a regime less leaning towards Moscow in recent years. I have read that it is the typical Russian response to a freedom demand from people from the former states of the USSR (like Baku, January 1990). Some see the crisis as purely economic mismanagement, by an out-of-touch elite. Others see it as basically clan conflict transposed to new elites that operate through the remaining Soviet style mechanisms persisting in these societies.

THE ECONOMIC TRIGGER

Craig Murray, former UK Ambassador, and historian of the region, has presented the most realistic assessment of the events, in the present writer’s opinion:

“The narrative on the right is that Putin is looking to annex Kazakhstan, or at least the majority ethnic Russian areas in the north. This is utter nonsense. The narrative on the left is that the CIA is attempting to instigate another colour revolution and put a puppet regime into Nur-Sultan (as the capital is called). This also is utter nonsense... The fuel price rises triggered protest, and once a population that had seen no outlet for its frustration viewed the chance to protest, then popular frustration erupted into popular dissent. However with no popular opposition leaders to direct it, this quickly became an incoherent boiling up of rage, resulting in destruction and looting... So where do the CIA come in? They don’t. They were trying to groom a banned opposition leader (whose name I recall as Kozlov, but that may be wrong) but then discovered he was not willing to be their puppet, and the scheme was abandoned under Trump. The CIA were as taken aback by events as everybody else, and they don’t have any significant resources on the ground, or a Juan Gaido to jet in...”

So, knowing what the events in Kazakhstan are not, how can we interpret them? In the present writer’s opinion they

came about as the result of an economic blunder that brought discontent onto the streets, presenting an opportunity for a sidelined clan/faction in the political succession to utilise the disorder in an attempted *putsch* which was put down by Moscow's swift intervention.

The doubling of the price of liquified gas after the announcement of a transition to "market pricing" and withdrawal of subsidies was the direct cause of the upheaval. Kazakhstan is a highly motorised society, with most car owners using cheap liquified gas to power their vehicles. The initial upheaval provoked by the price hike occurred in Western Kazakhstan, far away from Alma-Ata, though it spread to other regions.

Over the last decade there have been several outbreaks of disorder in Kazakhstan (2011, 2016 and 2019). These were mostly caused by the uneven distribution of income from its minerals, including oil and gas revenue. There is a general feeling that the Kazakh clan elite and foreign corporations are plundering the country's assets. Certainly, during the 1990s, President Nazarbayev did enormous deals with US oil companies and substantial amounts of money were deposited in Swiss bank accounts for safe-keeping. Nazarbayev and family members tightly control the State Oil Company and perhaps up to one-fifth of the country's wealth is believed to have ended up in these Swiss banks.

It is certainly the case that the Governing classes in oil-producing societies have distinct problems in managing their states. There is often a great deal of popular discontent in these societies over only just bearable standards of living, extravagant elite wealth, and lack of opportunities such as are available in the West for educated people, etc. Rises in energy costs, which are often capped by Government in order to offset the difficulty faced by ordinary people meeting the other costs in life associated with imported goods, can be crucial events.

It is all well and good urging democracy as a solution to these predicaments. But, as recent examples have demonstrated, the importation of democracy into such societies more than often leads to chaos and their collapse—with even worse forces emerging to clean up the mess created.

Democratic governments, which are more often than not not very democratic at all, are often fatal to these states. What they need in the interim is wise authoritarians to gradually develop the economies, spread wealth, and broaden opportunity to

talent. This is not easy in places where corruption and all sorts of shenanigans exist that drain money away from any form of legitimate enterprise. It is within this type of situation that exterior forces can fish for their own interests. And therein lies the danger.

RUSSIA AND THE KAZAKHS

By 1870 Central Asia had been incorporated into the Tsarist Empire after the Kazakh clans had invited Russian protection from "the Great Misery" of an invasion from Jungar/Kalmuk tribes, whom the Tsarists had pushed out of the Volga region in the early 18th Century.

Tsarist annexation was formalised between 1822 and 1848 and a colonial administration established. After the creation of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan underwent great economic development and industrialisation, using its rich mineral wealth and energy resources. During the period of the Second Five Year Plan, the output of oil doubled, that of coal increased fivefold and lead production increased twelvefold. The roadless interior was developed with new highways and railway lines.

There had been the beginnings of a Kazakh national movement in the *Alash Orda* party founded in the wake of the Russian Revolution, which demanded territorial autonomy from the Provisional Government. The Great War and Bolshevik propaganda about "self-determination" was the fuel for many emerging national movements at this time. Subsequent Soviet nation building faced a great challenge in Central Asia, with the presence of over-lapping identities within peoples. Nationalism is a simplifying process at heart and making nations out of complex peoples with broader horizons is not easy.

The Soviet Union was the prime nation builder of Kazakhstan. In Central Asia the mostly nomadic Kazakhs, Turkmen and Kyrgyz and the more sedentary Uzbeks and Tajiks saw themselves largely in village, clan, Turkic or Islamic rather than in national form. The Kazakhs, were organised into four tribal confederations known as the Great Horde, Middle Horde, Little Horde and Big Horde. Formerly engaged almost entirely in nomadic cattle-breeding, over 95 per cent of the peasant households were settled and brought together in collective farms by Stalin. With astonishing progress, within 4 years the quantity of cattle was doubled and Kazakhstan became one of the most important livestock producing regions of the USSR.

An army of Soviet ethnographers, supported by the new, but small, national intelligentsia, were sent to the region to delineate national boundaries. Delineation of the region was made by a decree of the Central Committee of the CPSU in February 1924. Kazakhstan's present-day border with Russia was established in 1936. Ethnic conflict between Kazakhs and Russian colonists from the Tsarist period was a feature of the 1920s.

The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic occupied a vast territory, roughly the size of Western Europe and six times larger than Ukraine. Its population was about 7 million in the 1930s. The Soviets encouraged the development of Kazakh national culture, introducing compulsory education and building 17 universities. Through this programme, along with the economic progress, the everyday life of the people of Kazakhstan was transformed.

Khrushchev's *Virgin Lands* policy had a profound impact on the demography and agriculture of Kazakhstan. The un-farmed steppe was the object for colonisation with nearly 2 million settlers from Russia and Ukraine being brought in to develop the land in the 1950s. Initially there was ethnic violence but when the policy bore economic fruit relations gradually improved. However, a demographic change had been initiated that reduced the Kazakh share of the population. By 1989, Kazakhs constituted around 40 per cent of the population of Kazakhstan. At the same time the Soviet nationalities policy involved a deliberate revival and development of Kazakh national culture, as it did in the other republics.

In 1986 the last General Secretary, Gorbachev, blundered by removing Din Muhammad Kunayev, the 26 year long-serving Kazakh First Secretary, and replacing him with a Russian, as part of his reform programme. Kunayev had been the first Muslim appointed to the Politburo as a full member, by Brezhnev. He had achieved spectacular progress for Kazakhstan from 1970-85 and was the main developer of the cosmopolitan city of Alma-Ata.

Gorbachev's blunder unleashed both nationalist and clan driven rivalry that produced riots and disorder in which dozens, if not hundreds, died in Alma-Ata. Russian and Ukrainian volunteer militias were drafted into Kazakhstan by Gorbachev to put down the demonstrations. This was a portend of things to come elsewhere in the USSR as a result of Gorbachev's policies.

Moscow blamed Kazakh nationalism for the trouble when it was the First Sec-

retary's policies that were encouraging the releasing of popular forces.

When Gorbachev got the Politburo to agree to him becoming President of the USSR in March 1990, Nursultan Nazarbayev, the head of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, who had strongly supported Gorbachev, suddenly announced himself as President of Kazakhstan. Gorbachev reacted with astonishment: *"I thought we had agreed that there would only be one President in the country!"* Nazarbayev replied: *"People in Kazakhstan also say: can't we have a president too?"*

Gorbachev tamely agreed. He had, in effect, recognised the right of the republics' potentates to change the republic's constitutions in the same way as the Kremlin had done.

Kazakhstan was the last republic to leave the USSR. It voted by over 90 per cent to preserve the Soviet Union in Gorbachev's March 1991 referendum.

THE SUCCESSION CRISIS

Gorbachev, when he dismissed Din Muhammad Kunayev, had been egged on by rival clans in Kazakhstan, including by Nursultan Nazarbayev, who was to later avail of his removal to dominate Kazakhstan for 3 decades.

The energy price revolt seems to have detonated a succession crisis that was lying dormant in Kazakhstan. Nursultan Nazarbayev, who became First Secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan in 1989, and who led the country after Gorbachev helped liquidate the USSR, decided to retire after 30 years in charge of his country. He had moved the capital from the cosmopolitan city of Alma-Ata to the remote "Virgin Lands" city of Tselinograd/Astana on the southern Siberian steppe. It was remodelled in extravagant style with Dubai style buildings and reinvented as Nur-Sultan.

Unlike the populations of the other Central Asia states, Kazakhstan is still just under 25 per cent Russian. The Russian population is concentrated largely in the northern part of the country which borders Russia (as well as in the former capital, Alma-Ata). The Russian population of the north concerned Nazarbayev because, from the 1990s, influential voices in Russia made persistent calls for the annexation of the northern third of Kazakhstan, insisting that it was always historically a part of Russia. The Crimean experience would have been surely in the mind of the Kazakh leadership during the recent crisis.

Nazarbayev consulted with Putin in late

2018 about his succession, with both men agreeing on Kossam-Jomart Tokayev, who had long-standing ties to the Kremlin.

It was widely expected that one of Nazarbayev's children would be groomed to succeed him but a scandal in May 2007 in which his son-in-law, Rakhat Aliyev, who was Ambassador to Vienna, became accused of kidnapping and extortion, leading to his divorce from Nazarbayev's daughter, disrupted the dynasty.

As has been noted, the current political crisis in Kazakhstan was triggered by moves to deregulate the LPG market and end subsidy, which led to sharp price increases. This price hike shock brought people onto the streets. After seeing the popular discontent the Government quickly backed down and reinstated price controls without corresponding producer subsidies, which would have led gas stations to sell at a loss. However, the result was fuel shortages that just made protests even worse. The protests, with with no popular opposition leaders to direct it, quickly became a mob, resulting in much destruction and looting.

Gorbachev had bungled his first economic reforms of the Soviet system in 1987-88 but he kept going on bungling to disaster. He had complete faith in reform and his mission to change not only the Soviet Union but the world for the better. He succeeded in nothing he attempted. Tokayev bungled the gas marketisation but he then did an abrupt turn, dismissing the government and stabilising the system.

The initial protests over gas morphed into much more serious civil disturbances that had some element of planning and organisation behind them. The actions in Alma-Ata were certainly not spontaneous reactions by a crowd of protestors but more resembled the organised actions of trained groups of armed 'rebels' or putschists.

It seems that the insurrection in Alma-Ata was organised, at arm's length, by nephews of Nursultan Nazarbayev in alliance with the former leadership of the KNB, the National Security Committee. The main organiser of the Alma-Ata putsch was, reputedly, Kairat Satybaldy, a nephew of Nazarbayev. Kairat is a billionaire and oligarch, characteristic of the freeing of the markets of the former Soviet republics and their plundering by well-placed individuals. He was formerly Deputy Head of the NSC and a Salafist, who tried very hard to ensure that the entire operational staff of the NSC became adherents of this tendency in Islam. He actively encouraged Islamists, funding groups with his vast fortune and

worked with influential criminal elements to further his objectives. Satybaldy had remained closely connected to it along with his brother, General Samat Abish, who was first Deputy Head of the organisation.

Another nephew, Samat Abish, another Salafi, actively participated in the Islamisation of the NSC. Both nephews built a lot of mosques and spent much time in the UAE and Saudi Arabia. They ran fairly large businesses there and the monarchies of the Emirates and Saudi Arabia strongly encouraged the religious activity of Nazarbayev's nephews. The nephews also controlled various armed and militant groups in the south, in the Alma-Ata which participated in the January events.

It is clear that it was Samat Abish and the head of the KNB Karim Masimov, who prevented Tokayev's order to protect Alma-Ata from militants, which led to the success of the plotters and the destruction of government buildings. Karim Massimov, who had been devoted to Nursultan Nazarbayev, and being the head of the NSC had served the incumbent President Tokayev, at a critical moment, simply stepped aside and did not take effective measures to restore order. Massimov's inactivity led to the situation in which the protests in Alma-Ata escalated into chaos, accompanied by destruction. As a result, Masimov, was removed by Tokayev from his post on January 6, and on January 7, he was arrested on charges of treason.

Nazarbayev's nephews seem to have been behind the plot against Tokayev, but not in alliance with the former leader, but against him, and his promotion of Tokayev as his appointed successor. Nazarbayev himself remained in the capital, Nur-Sultan, and publicly supported Tokayev calling on people to rally behind their leader.

On January 5th, Tokayev turned to the CSTO for assistance because he could no longer depend on the loyalty of his security apparatus. The Law enforcement agencies had stepped aside from their duties in anticipation of a command from Elbasy Nazarbayev, which they then never received. It is interesting that not a single person from the Nazarbayev clan came out openly for the protesters or declared themselves the leader of the uprising. Instead the plotters chose to provoke the crowd, raised the Salafis, whipped up the anger of the youth, but did not dare to lead the various activities themselves.

The mass protests against price increases therefore seems to have provided the opportunity for sidelined elements in the Nazarbayev clan to attempt to overturn the Tokayev succession organised by the head of the clan.

President Tokayev countered this by inviting in the CSTO troops, showing the security apparatus that he enjoyed strong international support. He was both firm and ruthless, ordering his law enforcement agencies to shoot to kill if necessary. It is likely that Tokayev will use the occasion to encourage disgruntled elite elements into exile, dismantle the cult of personality around Nazarbayev and clean house, showing he is a strong autocratic political leader with powerful friends.

WESTERN HIDDEN HAND?

The insurrectionary efforts of the disgruntled were concentrated in the area where most Western NGOs are situated, in Alma-Ata. There may also have been an attempt to avail of the tension that has been whipped up around Ukraine in recent weeks. Perhaps there was the hope that Western assistance would be forthcoming in some form, given the opportunity to cause a whole lot of trouble for the Kremlin at an important moment of confrontation between Biden and Putin.

It is undoubtedly the case that the events in Kazakhstan are much more accurately described as an insurrection than those weird events of a year ago on Capitol Hill in Washington which were much more US Reality TV.

In 2019 the US Pentagon financed think tank RAND published an extensive plan for action against Russia: *Extending Russia: Competing From Advantageous Ground*. The 350 page report recommended certain steps to be taken by the US to “contain Russia”. Its summary stated:

“Recognizing that some level of competition with Russia is inevitable, this report seeks to define areas where the United States can do so to its advantage. We examine a range of nonviolent measures that could exploit Russia’s actual vulnerabilities and anxieties as a way of stressing Russia’s military and economy and the regime’s political standing at home and abroad. The steps we examine would not have either defense or deterrence as their prime purpose, although they might contribute to both. Rather, these steps are conceived of as elements in a campaign designed to unbalance the adversary, leading Russia to compete in domains or regions where the United States has a competitive advantage, and causing Russia to overextend itself militarily or economically or causing the regime to lose domestic and/or international prestige and influence.”

The RAND report listed economic, geopolitical, ideological and military measures the US should take to weaken Russia. In Chapter 4 it listed the following measures:

“Measure 1: Provide lethal aid to Ukraine; Measure 2: Increase support to Syrian rebels; Measure 3: Promote regime change in Belarus; Measure 4: Exploit tensions in the South Caucasus; Measure 5: Reduce Russian influence in Central Asia.”

Since the report came out, the first four of the ‘geopolitical measures’ listed in Chapter 4 of the report have been implemented. But all have proved relative failures so far aside from their destructive effects.

US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, warned Kazakhstan that “*Once Russians are in your house, it is sometimes very difficult to get them to leave*”.

In the last 30 years, while Russia has been in retreat, it is the US which enters houses with little intention of ever leaving.

THE RUSSIAN RESPONSE

Kazakhstan is vitally important to Russia: It is bigger than Western Europe; it has a sizeable Russian community of nearly one quarter of its population; it is immensely rich in hydrocarbons (3 per cent of world’s oil reserves); the country is also an important link in the strategic *Belt and Road Initiative* between China and Europe.

There is no doubt that the Russians, seeing a potential threat to the security and stability of Kazakhstan, responded to the situation both swiftly and effectively. The Kazakh authorities called for assistance and President Putin obliged without delay. The Kremlin’s attitude would have been that this was a potentially dangerous situation developing along Russia’s “*soft underbelly*” in a geopolitically important area, in which the West would surely fish, and was most likely already fishing.

It was imperative that Moscow acted, and act it did.

Inroads were made by the US in Kazakhstan during the 1990s, when Russia was in virtual meltdown under Yeltsin and economic ruin brought about by the uncontrolled freeing of the market. Nazarbayev had decided to balance Kazakhstan’s international relations in this period, as other ex-Soviet leaders also did, in response to the decline in Russia. US energy corporations and many Western NGOs became entrenched in the country. Former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair offered his services as advisor to the Kazakhstan Government and Prince Andrew became a British trade ambassador.

President Putin, after replacing Yeltsin in 2000, began to reassert Russia’s authority in Central Asia, after developments in Afghanistan and Chechnya suggested that a potential Islamist threat needed to be

headed off before it spread to Central Asia.

The growth of Islamic militancy in Iraq and Syria encouraged the strengthening of Russian power in the region. The promotion and sponsorship of Islamism as a mechanism for State destruction by the West has bound the Central Asian elites closer to Moscow for their own protection. There is a common interest in stability and Russian power is the best insurance policy available in the circumstances. Syria demonstrated that with great clarity. The Russian FSB and SVR services became well entrenched in the Central Asian state structures and became a vital part of their security apparatus.

It should be noted that Russia and Central Asia, including Kazakhstan, are very economically inter-dependent, especially in the energy sphere. The basis of Kazakhstan’s economy and wealth, its hydro-carbons, and particularly its gas, is transported through Russia via the central Asia pipeline, constructed in the Soviet era and owned by Gazprom.

When Kazakhstan became independent it attempted to avoid the Russian route but the alternative routes for its pipelines, across the Caspian to Baku/Ceyhan or through Iran or Afghanistan, proved unviable. The US seems to have blocked off the Iranian alternative. Without the Russian pipeline and market, the Central Asian economies would be decimated. And their only realistic alternative to Russia would be China. The West offers them little, therefore, aside from trouble.

Undoubtedly in Kazakhstan Moscow has acted swiftly in stopping popular unrest over energy price rises triggering a serious internal clan conflict among the elite that created fertile ground for the promoters of colour revolutions.

CHINA AND RUSSIA IN KAZAKHSTAN According to Craig Murray:

“So what happens next? I expect the regime will survive, but then neither I, nor any observer I know of, predicted this would happen in the first place. The unrest will be blamed, entirely untruthfully, on Islamic terrorists and western support. The real consequence may be in the globally important pipeline politics of the region, where there may be a long term shift away from China and towards Russia. There will be frustration in Beijing as much as in Washington. Tokayev is now indebted to Putin in a way he never has been before. I can guarantee that emergency meetings at the highest level are taking place between the Kremlin and Gazprom right now to determine what they want to leverage from the situation. Putin, as Napoleon might have observed, is an extremely lucky general.”

There is a secondary rivalry taking place in Kazakhstan between Russia and China. China bought shares in Kazakhstan's oil fields as early as 1997 and concluded a deal with the Kazakh Government to build an expensive 1,250 mile pipeline from the Caspian Sea through the Kazakh steppe to Urumqi, in Xinjiang province. The China National Petroleum Corporation bought a 60 percent stake in one of Kazakhstan's biggest gas companies, and signed an agreement for the oil and gas pipeline network that ran across through Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan.

In September 2013 Xi Jinping, and Nazarbayev opened a 700-mile pipeline route to take oil and natural gas from the shores of the Caspian Sea to Eastern China's via Turkmenistan. This joint venture now transports more than 20 percent of China's gas requirements.

China has invested US\$30 billion in Kazakhstan. Further projects backed by China, worth US\$25 billion, will be completed over the next few years. China is Kazakhstan's largest trading partner, importing not just oil and gas but copper, uranium, iron ore, and grain products. Over the decades, China has made large investments in oil and gas companies throughout the region, buying majority stakes and gaining effective management control.

China, Kazakhstan and its neighbours, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan are huge oil and gas producers with some of the world's biggest gas reserves and critical sources of minerals. Kazakhstan is the world's largest uranium exporter. It's the land bridge that links China's Xinjiang province to the Caspian Sea, and onward to Russia, the Baltic, and Europe through the Eurasia-China rail freight network. Kazakhstan is, therefore, a vital cog in the Belt-and-Road Initiative. These investments are crucial to driving China's economic engine, and China therefore sees stability in Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries to be of paramount importance.

In June 2020, The *Astana Times*, an organ of the Kazakhstan Government, extolled the "global significance" of the Belt and Road Initiative, praised the "deep thought" of the Chinese leadership, and expressed gratitude to China for "choosing our capital" to announce its initiatives, promising Kazakhstan's unswerving commitment to "reviving the Great Silk Road through the adoption of the role of a trade and infrastructure hub for the entire Eurasian continent by Central Asia."

That cannot have gone unnoticed in

the Kremlin along with similar pro-China statements from Kazakh politicians.

The one aspect of the Kazakh issue that was a little puzzling was the triggering of the CSTO alliance, which was always thought of as only being appropriate in the case of external attack. The coordination and joint action by the CSTO are unprecedented, as it is the first time that they have acted together in carrying out their joint mandate. During the Karabakh War Armenia attempted to trigger this mandate to draw Russia into the conflict but it was rebuffed by Putin on the basis that Karabakh and surrounding territories occupied by Armenia were part of Azerbaijan under international law and thus the conflict was not any business of the CSTO. It was an internal matter for Azerbaijan and part of a dispute between it and Armenia alone.

However, such considerations did not stop Russia in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, or Crimea etc. where it had previously intervened unilaterally in its own strategic interest. However, in Kazakhstan, Russia seems now to be taking a leaf out of the US/UK/NATO playbook in using CSTO as a fig-leaf for military action. The CSTO permits Russia to intervene directly in the region with the consent of its Governments.

The Governments of the states that make up the CSTO forces (Belarus, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) may have need of Russian protection themselves in future and would have been mindful of this when called into action. Putin has marshalled them effectively in a common purpose in Kazakhstan, showing them clearly who is the master. Kazakhstan remains dependent upon Russia for security and stability, much like its neighbours in Central Asia.

The work of the CSTO forces was limited to guarding various facilities, as well as patrolling the streets of some cities of Kazakhstan. The CSTO units did not participate in any repressive actions against protesters or armed groups.

The fact that the withdrawal of the CSTO forces – mission accomplished – was announced just over a week after their arrival suggests that this was a political expedient rather than a military necessity. The large number of Russian forces presently based in Kazakhstan were more than capable of looking after internal security.

China has welcomed the CSTO mission, and declared it to be in the interests of security and stability and for the good of all. However, Major-General Alnur

Musayev, formerly of KGB and Chairman of the National Security Committee of Kazakhstan, suggested in an interview that China (along with Turkey) exerted diplomatic pressure to secure the early departure of the CSTO forces. Musayev argued that Tokayev, had successfully called for the help of the CSTO forces, in order to maintain power at the height of the internal political crisis in Kazakhstan, and then he used Chinese and Turkish representations to get out of the embrace and re-establish a balance between the geopolitical players in the region.

The West will undoubtedly employ the events in Kazakhstan as propaganda against Russia as the backdrop to the upcoming meetings and in their bid to pull Ukraine into the US/UK/EU sphere of influence. But it seems that, at the time of writing, the West has been thwarted in the new Great Game in Central Asia, against Russia.

Pat Walsh

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James Carty's Histories of Ireland

For about 40 years school history textbooks by James Carty BA, of the National Library of Ireland were common in the schools. I understand that he had contributed to *The Irish Bulletin* between 1919 and 1921. He died in 1959 aged, I believe, 59.

While giving accounts of actions in Ireland, he also devoted space to the Wild Geese—including those whose graves are by Sulva and Sud El Bar.

He quoted General Liman Von Sanders' tribute to the Irishmen who opposed him at Gallipoli.

Sinn Fein's *United Irishman* in the 1950s wrote about them also, without condemnation. And, in the *Irish Press*, Brendan Behan celebrated the families, and the survivors and their families: his Dublin neighbours.

The lie that they were shunned at home and airbrushed out of history has been spread by RTE, the Department of Foreign Affairs, as well as by a President of the *Military History Society* (in the pages of *The Irish Times*).

I have written numerous pieces refuting the lie. Ones sent to *The Irish Times* were spiked.

As it happens, from 1957 to 1959 I was in Rockwell and, in the Study, sat next to Denis Carty, son of the historian.

At Mass, seven mornings a week and at evening devotions, I knelt beside a future Vice President of the *Military History Society*.

Late in September 1957, with scores of others we swore by the Mass, to serve Ireland faithfully, in the Second Line Reserve of *Oglaigh na hEireann*.

The future Vice President of the Military History Society, retired from the Forces as Chief of Staff with the rank of Lieutenant General.

I took the trouble, when I retired fifteen years ago to visit the British Library and to confirm that my recollection of Carty's *History* was not mistaken.

My father could quote Edmund Burke, Wolfe Tone and many others at length, as well as Virgil, Horace and others. He used quote Von Liman's tribute to the Dublin Fusiliers.

To counter the lies spread by the "Revisionists", we should recall James Carty's pieces on the *Wild Geese*, including the Dubs at Gallipoli.

Donal Kennedy

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Tesla and Roads

Some good news: Elon Musk's *Tesla* has postponed its launch of an autonomous truck on the market. So far, Tesla's autonomous motor cars have been involved in the killing of at least twelve people. So it is a relief that autonomous trucks are not yet being rolled out on our roads.

How is it that public regulators gave approval for Tesla cars to be on public roads? Why hasn't anybody been prosecuted up to now for faulty design of the cars involved in loss of life? It just does not stack up!

Why don't people use their common sense? It does not make sense that a robot car can instinctively see that a pedestrian is just about to stop off the footpath out onto the roadway. The robot does not know what the human pedestrian is thinking but a human car driver will identify the pedestrian's body movements and will have a shrewd idea of what the pedestrian will do next and will take avoiding action accordingly.

Some years ago, at night-time, a Volvo car was being driven down a long straight road in Ireland. The Volvo was followed on the road by a truck. It was a stormy night and suddenly a large sheet of plastic from a nearby building site was blown across the road in front of the Volvo. The two human drivers of the Volvo and the truck could see that the plastic would not hit the Volvo. But the Volvo's computer observed the plastic as a dangerous object and the computer slammed on the Volvo's brakes and stopped the car so suddenly that the truck-driver could not react and the truck hit the rear-end of the car.

The Volvo driver denied that he applied the brakes. The sheet of plastic was gone. The problem was solved when investigators examined a dash-cam which the truck happened to have, and that showed the sheet of plastic passing in front of the Volvo and the brake lights lighting up. The fault of the incident lay with the owner of the sheet of plastic and with the manufacturers of the Volvo car!

There is no way that two robot drivers could have handled that incident any better than the two human drivers.

Several makes of cars can now sense the road markings and can tell when the car is leaving a traffic lane and crossing white lines. Tesla used the white lines as part of its navigation input. But Tesla loses this input if the car drives on a section of roadway which is newly tarmacaded and on which new white lines are not painted. This situation leaves the Tesla guessing which way to go.

Would you travel in a car where some of the Operating System consists of guessing, following a mathematical theory called *Fuzzy Logic*?

Obviously the answer to that question is a firm no.

But many people prefer not to examine these things. Look at the crash of the *Boeing MAX*, which crashed into the Indian Ocean because a sensor was faulty and the pilots could not keep the nose of the plane up. Several hundreds of people died.

So why, a few months later, did several hundreds of people and the pilots board a similar Boeing MAX in Ethiopia, and tragically lose their lives because the problem had not been fixed?

Now they say the problem has been fixed and maybe it has been fixed but common sense tells me not to think of flying in one of these planes until they have proved their relative reliability by flying many thousands of miles. Many people would not agree with me, many people cannot wait to clamber aboard every new plane just because it is new. And it is not because these people belong to that half of the population who are, by definition, of lower than average intelligence. Not at all! It seems that people of every level of intelligence want to experience something new just because it is new. It has nothing to do with intelligence levels. It is a dangerous human trait which could do with a lot of high-level study and research.

An intelligent man I know, who is a qualified medical doctor and a radiologist wanted to be the first person to have a Tesla electric car. He bought one from the Dublin dealer. He travelled by train from Cork to Dublin together with his chosen companion who is a lecturer in diesel engines. They collected the Tesla and by forty kilometres out of Dublin's very slow traffic, they needed a charge of electricity. They had been given a map showing the location of charging stations.

The first one they got to was not operating. At the next one, they had to drink a lot of coffee while the car was charging. After that, they travelled about sixty kilometres and then more charging and more coffee. Three charging stops and litres of coffee and they got home to Cork. Not much has been heard since of the Tesla—all bragging rights dead in the water!

The latest Tesla cars are improved in range and specification, and if Elon Musk stuck to production of electric cars, everything may be OK but he wants to drive the share price up and up, while he himself is selling shares and the company is issuing more shares to a section of the public who want to be in on the latest technology, whether it works or not, and so Elon Musk is venturing into the very dangerous area of autonomous cars, trucks and space rockets. There are too many variables on our roads for autonomous technology to be safe.

In my opinion. Elon Musk will not be able to compete in the long run with powerful and well-funded manufacturers such as Hyundai, Volkswagen, Toyota, BMW, Opel etc. This year 2022, Opel intends to have eleven electrified models including Opel's entire light commercial vehicle range. We will see Elon Musk continuing to sell his own shares so as to secure his own wealth. Guess who will be left holding the baby when it starts wetting its nappy?

Michael Stack ©.

Russia and Ukraine

In reference your editorial "Russian and the Ukraine: sabre rattling resumes" (November 16th). The return of the Russian 41st army units to the Ukraine frontier, following their exercises back in April, was predicted by several defence analysts.

The editorial stated that it was difficult to see what Russia could gain from an invasion. In my own analysis on this subject, "*Ukraine on the Edge*" posted on Medium.com by the Irish Defence Forces Officers' Club, I pointed out that Ukraine's cutting off of the water supply, from the Dnieper river to Crimea, is a major issue.

Apart from supporting separatists in the Donbas region, military action by Russia to secure water for the two million people of Crimea cannot be ruled out.

Dorcha Lee (Colonel, retd),
Navan, Co Meath.

LABOUR continued

It is understood Mr Mulvey has recommended some exceptions, including for hospital consultants, who are currently engaged in contract negotiations, and for academics.

It is also expected to set a minimum working week for public servants of 35 hours a week.

There is also some concern in government about the effect of the changes on the health service, *"which would need to be carefully considered before being implemented"*, according to one source.

The report is unlikely to be considered by the Government for some weeks.

Noting that temporary pay cuts for more senior public servants had already been restored, Kevin Callinan, General Secretary of the Trade Union, *Fórsa*, said such a move on working hours would remove —

"a longstanding and debilitating drain on morale and productivity".

"The acceptance of the recommendation by government would also significantly enhance the prospect for continued stability in public service delivery and quality, not least by removing a huge obstacle to the successful negotiation of a public service agreement to replace Building Momentum when it expires later this year," he said.

The Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation also welcomed the move, saying it would help with the retention of nurses and midwives.

(Irish Times, 11.1.2022)

Sources said gardaí and teachers would see minimal impact from the recommendations, and that gardaí were in their own talks.

At The Top!

TDs are set for a pay rise within months that will push their wages to more than €100,000 a year.

The increase that is also due to higher earners in the public service will be paid by July 1 and means their basic salary of €98,113 will jump to €100,191. (Irish Independent-13.1.2022)

Awards of extra years to boost public servants' pensions are a *"uniquely Irish pension benefit"* that is *"difficult to justify"*, according to a review by Government officials.

A new analysis of the 'added years' schemes describes them as a *"costly"* benefit.

The report also finds a lack of transparency regarding the ongoing cost of the schemes, with only local authorities collecting the data.

It reveals that there are 28 civil and public service schemes, and *"the incentive was originally offered to attract recruits to jobs"*

(Irish Independent, 6.12.2021)

Rations!

Napoleon famously declared an army marches on its stomach so he would not be impressed that Irish military chefs must battle to prepare three meals per day for just €4.20 per person.

That is roughly €2 per day less than is given to feed an inmate in the country's prisons.

Furthermore, the Government has stipulated that €6.30 per day be given for rations to those serving with the Naval Service on the life-saving Mediterranean Sea migrant rescue missions.

The United Nations maintains the daily ration for such vital military operations should be €10.50.

(Irish Examiner, 12.1.2022)

One of the more interesting features of the Irish economic performance over the past two years has been the remarkable buoyancy of tax revenues.

The data for 2021 released by the Department of Finance last week make for positive reading.

The exchequer deficit came in at €7.3bn, which is €5bn lower than the previous year, despite the significant levels of Covid restrictions.

Total tax revenues were €11.2bn ahead of 2020 and a new record level of €68.4bn was collected in total.

The three main categories of taxation — income tax, Vat, and corporation tax — which account for 84% of all tax revenues performed very strongly.

The income tax take accounted for 39% of total revenues and came in almost €4bn higher than 2020.

This buoyancy occurred despite the fact that hundreds of thousands of workers were in receipt of the pandemic unemployment payment for much of the year.

This goes to show that those workers least affected by Covid restrictions tend to be in relatively highly paid sectors and, given the extremely progressive nature of the Irish income tax system, they continued to pay the bulk of income tax.

Vat accounted for over 22.5% of total tax revenues and was €3bn higher than 2020, reflecting stronger consumer spending, while the increase in new car registrations made a significant contribution to the Vat performance.

New car registrations deliver a lot of money to the exchequer.

Corporation Tax receipts hit a record high of €15.3bn and accounted for almost 22.5% of total tax collected.

This reflects the ongoing very strong performance of a small number of multinationals, as well as Corporation Tax changes in recent years.

(Jim Power, Irish Examiner
10.1.2022)

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ORGANISED LABOUR

Dunnes Stores

Nearly 10,000 workers in Dunnes Stores have received a 10% increase in their pay today [24.12.2021] after the company conceded a claim from members of Mandate Trade Union.

Mandate lodged the claim with the company in March, 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic.

The company originally awarded the 10% pay increase as a temporary measure but, following a "relentless" campaign led by Mandate members in Dunnes, it has now been consolidated into pay, meaning it is reckonable for pension and annual leave purposes.

The temporary staff discount of 20% has also been extended by the Dunnes workers indefinitely, according to reports.

Dunnes' worker from Dundalk and member of Mandate's Dunnes National Committee, *Cathy McLoughlin*, said the 10% increase will make a big difference.

"I know lots of my colleagues are struggling to pay bills after rent and house price increases, along with fuel increases.

Ms McLoughlin urged all Dunnes workers to join the campaign for further improvements to pay and benefits in Dunnes Stores.

"This pay increase wasn't just handed to us from nowhere. We had to fight for it, and we've gotten our just reward. Imagine what we could do if we have even more members and activists in Dunnes. I'm urging all my colleagues to join Mandate Trade Union today," she added.

Mandate's Assistant General secretary, Jonathan Hogan, said it was a success for their members.

"This is a remarkable victory for our activists and members in Dunnes who have pushed this campaign for more than 18 months," he said.

"It is only the beginning and it's an opportunity for all Dunnes workers who want improved conditions of employment. For years Dunnes has refused to engage in collective bargaining with their Union resulting in workers having no option but to campaign for basic changes to their terms and conditions of employment. These improvements will only be possible if the workers mobilise collectively around these issues."

"Earlier this year the Dunnes workers launched a petition signed by more than 2,500 of their colleagues calling on the company to make their 10% Covid Premium and 20% staff discount permanent," he said.

"Then they held a protest outside Head Office to raise awareness of the campaign. Following this, customers launched their own petition signed by more than 7,500 in support of the workers. Now all of their activities have come to fruition and we couldn't be prouder of them.

"The message is clear," Mr Hogan added, "join your union and become active in it and you can win life changing pay and benefit improvements."

(Irish Independent, 24.12.2021)

Work-Related Deaths

The number of work-related fatalities fell to a historic low in 2021, a year that saw a significant decline in economic activity due to Covid-19.

Annual statistics from the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), which is responsible for investigating workplace deaths, said 38 people died in such settings during the year compared with 54 in 2020 – a 30% drop.

The number represented the lowest figure recorded since the HSA was established more than 30 years ago.

Farming continues to be one of the most dangerous sectors in which to work, but a 50% decline on the 2020 level of fatalities is encouraging and a sign that the safety message is getting through."

The construction sector saw a 38 per cent decline in work-related deaths, with 10 workers dying in 2021 following a spike in fatalities in 2020.

While the farming and construction sectors saw significant declines in fatalities, some sectors experienced an increase.

The transportation and storage sector recorded an increase from two deaths in 2020 to six in 2021, while the forestry and logging sector saw two deaths following none in the previous year.

(Irish Times, 31.12.2021)

Fewer Hours for Public Servants

The Government is likely to accept a recommendation from an independent body to shorten the working week of many public servants.

Under the recommendations, additional hours for some public servants — accepted in lieu of pay cuts during the economic crash — under the *Haddington Road Agreement* — will be discontinued.

However, the cost of the concession will be significantly less than the €600 million-plus the Department of Public Expenditure had warned about last year. Instead, the Government estimates that accepting the recommendations will cost about €180 million this year and €360 million in a full year.

The 2013 deal increased the working week to 37 hours for those who had been working 35 hours or less up to that point. Those working more than 35 hours faced an increase of up to 39 hours.

Although pay cuts introduced in the austerity era were temporary, and have since been reversed, it had been the general position of governments that parallel work practice reforms would remain in place, including additional unpaid working hours.

However, on Monday it emerged that the *Independent Body Examining Additional Working Hours*, chaired by Kieran Mulvey, had sent recommendations to restore working hours for civil and public servants to Minister for Public Expenditure Michael McGrath. The process was part of the most recent public sector pay agreement, the *Building Momentum* deal.

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**LABOUR**

Comment

ISSN 0790-1712

VOLUME 40 No. 2

CORK

ISSN 0790-1712

James Connolly *The Roots Of Modern War* (1898)

The Cabinets who rule the destinies of nations from the various capitals of Europe are but the tools of the moneyed interest. Their quarrels are not dictated by sentiments of national pride or honour, but by the avarice and lust of power on the part of the class to which they belong.

The people who fight under their banners in the various armies or navies do indeed imagine they are fighting the battles of their own country, but in what country has it ever happened that the people have profited by foreign conquest?

The influence which impels towards war today is the influence of capitalism. Every war now is a capitalist move for new markets, and it is a move capitalism must make or perish. The mad scramble for wealth which this century has witnessed has resulted in lifting almost every European country into the circle of competition for trade. New machinery, new inventions, new discoveries in the scientific world have all been laid under contribution as aids to industry, until the wealth producing powers of society at large have far outstripped the demand for goods, and now those very powers we have conjured up from the bosom of nature threaten to turn and rend us.

Every new labour-saving machine at one and the same time, by reducing the number of workers needed, reduces the demand for goods which the worker cannot buy, while increasing the power of producing goods, and thus permanently increases the number of unemployed, and shortens the period of industrial prosperity.

Competition between capitalists drives them to seek for newer and more efficient wealth-producing machines, but as the home market is now no longer able to dispose of their produce they are driven to foreign markets.

So it is in China today. The great industrial nations of the world, driven on by their respective moneyed classes, themselves driven on by their own machinery, now front each other in the far East, and, with swords in hand, threaten to set the armed millions of Europe in terrible and bloody conflict, in order to decide which shall have the right to force upon John Chinaman the goods which his European brother produces.

Laveleye* says somewhere that capitalism came into the world covered with blood and tears and dirt. We might add

that if this war cloud now gathering in the East does burst, it will be the last capitalist war, so the death of that baneful institution will be like its birth, bloody, muddy and ignominious.

* *Émile Louis Victor de Laveleye* (1822–1892) was a Belgian political economist. Laveleye was born in Bruges and educated at the Collège Stanislas in Paris, even today one of the largest and most prestigious private Catholic schools in France. Laveleye studied at the Catholic University of Louvain and later at the University of Ghent, where he was influenced by the work of François Huet (1814–1869).

Huet, a professor of philosophy at Ghent, is known for his attempt to reconcile Christianity with socialism.

LETTER to Irish Examiner:

“A little Communism could go a long way—Vittorio Bufacchi’s comment piece would point towards less personal freedoms and more state authority over aspects of our lives, ie, stricter enforcement of Covid measures, and higher taxes which would lead to mean less control over our earned income. As regards housing, less protection of property rights for the common good.

Maybe we have too much democracy, and a little bit of communism mixed with it may not be a bad thing.—Tony Long, Bishopstown, Cork.

(Irish Examiner-19.11.2021)

Irish Political Review is published by the IPR Group: write to—

1 Sutton Villas, Lower Dargle Road
Bray, Co. Wicklow or

33 Athol Street, Belfast BT12 4GX or
2 Newington Green Mansions, London N16 9BT
or *Labour Comment*, TEL: 021-4676029
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Street, Cork City

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