

IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

September 2022

Vol.37 No.9 ISSN 0790-7672

and *Northern Star* incorporating *Workers' Weekly* Vol.36 No.9 ISSN 954-5891

Misreporting the Tavistock Scandal

The decision to decommission a clinic specialising in gender re-alignment, the Tavistock Centre in London, made by the British National Health Service in late July, has exposed a fault-line in the Irish media, centred on the *Irish Times* and RTÉ. Since the news broke on July 28th, neither outlet has covered the story in accordance with normal journalistic standards. These failings would not occur without an element of political cover. In due course questions arising from Tavistock will need to be raised at the highest level of the Irish political system.

Apart from its media and political ramifications, the medical malpractice at the heart of the story has an Irish dimension in that 238 youths from the Republic have been referred to Tavistock through the Health Service Executive (HSE) since 2011. This is a lower proportion of the population than the corresponding figure in the UK, but it is still significant.

In the light of the revelations and the decommissioning of the clinic, it would be interesting to hear justifications from the Health Services Executive for its support for Tavistock. In any case this matter will now almost certainly end up in the Irish law courts. A medical negligence case against Tavistock currently in preparation in Britain reportedly has a large number of families already joined to it (*Tavistock gender clinic 'to be sued by 1,000 families', The Times, 11 August 2022*).

The Tavistock scandal was briefly described in an Editorial, "*Irish Media: Culture War*", in the August *Irish Political Review* in the context of an accumulation of biases and problems in the Irish media (excessive cohesion or agreement on basic issues across the different outlets, pro-NATO propaganda, the demonisation of Sinn Féin, excessive influence of the LGBT lobby etc), together with a notable absence of awareness

continued on page 2

Michael Collins

Michael Collins was one of five delegates appointed by the Irish Government in 1921 to negotiate with the British Government with the object of forming a Treaty between the two Governments. The delegation was under instruction to carry the negotiation as far as it could, but not to sign off on any deal without specific authorisation from the Government that appointed them.

Under Collins's influence they acted contrary to their instructions and signed off on what is called 'the Treaty', not even informing their Government that they intended doing so.

On 5th December 1921 the British Government gave them an ultimatum: they must immediately sign the deal it proposed or else it would launch an "*immediate and terrible war in Ireland*". Knowing that they were acting contrary to their instructions they signed. By doing so they took government authority on themselves. The

continued on page 29

Washington's War

The war being fought in Ukraine is Washington's War.

While there is a Russian military operation within the territory of Ukraine, there is a Washington war against Russia being fought both within and outside the country. While the conflict in Ukraine is between the US and Russian Federation, Ukrainians, both nationalist and Russian-oriented,

do most of the fighting and dying on the ground. Certainly, well over three-quarters of the casualties suffered in the conflict from 2014 have been Ukrainian of one sort or another, in the war that Washington has been the driving force behind.

The Ukrainian Civil War, sparked off by the Washington-inspired Maidan *coup* in 2014, has been enhanced by US use of it as a geopolitical instrument against Russia, drawing Russia militarily and politically into the territory of the former Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

History is about cause and consequence. The Western political class and its media appendage has it that the Russian '*invasion*' of late February 2022 started the war. Anyone but the most simple-minded would know that the war was going on in Donbas for 8 years before the launch of the Russian *Special Military Operation* in late February 2022. It was being fought by the Government in Kiev to bring under its control territory that had seceded from the Ukrainian state as a result of the 2014 Maidan *coup*.

continued on page 15

CONTENTS

	Page
Misreporting The Tavistock Scandal. Editorial	1
Michael Collins. Editorial	1
Washington's War. Pat Walsh	
Readers' Letters: The Russian Military. Bill McCamley	3
The Ukrainian War. Editorial	6
War . . . And Peace! Donal Kennedy	7
The Morrison Report. Israel Makes War On Gaza — Again!	8
Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (<i>Sean O'Faolain And Canon Formation</i> , Part 6: The Men Who Funded 'The Bell')	11
The Brian Murphy osb Archive. No. 2: <i>The Irish Bulletin</i> (Part 2)	19
The Fragile Dominance Of Democracy. Brendan Clifford	23
2022 Casement Wreath Laying At Dún Laoghaire. Dave Alvey	27
Is Salman Rushdie Just Being Naughty But Nice? Wilson John Haire	28
Biteback: Ukraine And Russia. Sabina Higgins Letter	30
Unpublished Letter to 'Irish Times', Eoghan Ó Murchú	32
Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Sick Days; Crossley Tenders)	31

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

So It Was A War ?

James Connolly

(back page)

Organised Labour:
September 2022

within the media of these defects. But the specific question of the treatment of “transgender distress” in young people at the Tavistock Centre and how the subject is being reported on in Ireland, requires separate treatment.

In seeking to explain what has gone on in the Irish media and by way of providing necessary context, it is necessary to refer back to the Arms Trial of 1970. In the fall-out from that event, the Irish Establishment shifted away from the Republican ideology which had been its anchor up to that point. The forging of a new identity for the Irish State took many years and has never really succeeded, but one of its outcomes was a new orientation within the media. The leading organs of the new dispensation have been RTÉ and the *Irish Times*. A valid question now is: under the old pre-Arms Trial order, would the national broadcasting station and a leading newspaper have been so easily captured by a US-based revolutionary ideology that advocates for the politicisation of medical treatment for young people?

IRISH TIMES RESPONSE

A key paragraph in an *Irish Times* report by Mark Hilliard when news of the decommissioning of Tavistock was announced, reads:

“Efforts continue to identify alternative gender identity clinics abroad, while the HSE has also been developing its own domestic service” (IT, 28 July).

Much of Hilliard’s report is concerned with providing the bare facts, but the implication of the above paragraph is that the paramount issue is the provision of a needed service; if Tavistock can no longer provide it, then the HSE must source it elsewhere. That the service provided by Tavistock caused harm to young people and arises from bad science and ideological intimidation is neatly side-stepped.

Another *Irish Times* journalist, Colm Keena, covered the issue in two articles in March. In the first he provided a well-researched account of the controversy surrounding Tavistock and, using the Freedom of Information legislation, gave details on how the Irish authorities were

discussing what, if any, changes needed to be made to their policies in the light of the controversy. We quote the following long extract from Keena’s article to show what a piece of informative journalism on this subject looks like. In the early part of the article the details of a case taken by two women in September 2021 in the London High Court against the Tavistock Centre are given. The two women won their case.

“Tavistock has been the subject of sustained controversy over recent times, with a former governor of the clinic, Dr David Bell, saying in January that colleagues had approached him in 2018 with concerns that “very disturbed children” were being inappropriately “pushed through” to transition gender.

In a November 26th, 2020, email to Dr Philip Crowley, national director of the HSE’s Quality Improvement Division, Paul Oslizlok, a consultant at Crumlin, said “confidence in the unit in Tavistock has been somewhat undermined by recent negative publicity”.

In a briefing paper to the HSE submitted in October 2020, Children’s Health Ireland (CHI), which runs Crumlin hospital, said there was “less than 20 active patients” attending its gender endocrinology service and that the waiting list for children and adolescents with gender identity issues was “significant”.

The case against Tavistock was taken by two women who did not argue that treatment with puberty blockers was never appropriate, but did argue that it was not possible for those under 18 to give informed legal consent.

One of the women, Quincy (Keira) Bell (24), was a natal female who transitioned to a male. She began taking puberty blockers at the age of 15, and subsequently underwent surgery. She now self-describes as female.

The second claimant, who was not identified, was the mother of a 15-year-old girl with autism who was concerned that her daughter might be referred to Tavistock and be prescribed puberty blockers.

The court did not rule on whether administering children and adolescents with puberty blockers was beneficial or otherwise, but rather whether such patients were in a position to give informed consent.

“The approach of the defendant [Tavistock] appears to have been to work on the assumption that if they give enough information and discuss it sufficiently often with the children, they will be able to achieve Gillick competency [the legal test for consent],” said the judges. “We do not think that this assumption is correct.”

The court ruled that for patients who had not reached their 16th birthday, court approval would be required before the treatment could be administered.

Referrals to Tavistock in the UK had

gone from 97 children and young people in 2009, to 2,519 by 2018, the court was told. The gender split, which had been 50/50 in 2011, was 76 per cent natal female by 2019.

The court was told there was evidence that the number of young people with gender dysphoria who had autistic spectrum disorder was higher than was the case for the population generally.

In the October 2020 briefing paper prepared for the HSE, CHI said “gender identity issues may exist in isolation or as a manifestation of a more complex underlying psychological or psychiatric illness”. It noted that the endocrinologist at Crumlin who had a special interest in transgender services had resigned in September 2020 and that a “significant reason” for the resignation was the failure to establish a multidisciplinary team and agree a model of care. “The decision to embark on a medical transition journey for young people without comprehensive specialist multidisciplinary psychosocial team assessment and support can lead to catastrophic outcomes,” the report noted” (IT, 10 March).

Keena’s second article on this subject, published a week later, has a very different slant. Summarising the contents of the *Interim Report of the Cass Review* (a Review initiated after the court case and headed by Dr. Hilary Cass, a consultant in paediatrics) into Tavistock, it had a main heading of, ‘*Adversarial’ adult trans debate is hindering teenagers, report finds*’ following by a sub-heading which reads: *Controversy is making it harder to develop care model for teens with gender dysphoria*. These headings distort the message of the Interim Report. What it says, a message repeated in the text of Keena’s article, is that “*professionals have adopted different clinical approaches depending on their views on the cause of gender dysphoria in children and young people*”. That message is very different to the message of the headings: and the headings fit neatly with arguments made by Una Mulally and Jennifer O’Connell that the debate/controversy over transgender issues should not be imported from the UK or the US—effectively that it should be closed down. What happened between the two articles?

After Mark Hilliard’s article, four further articles on Tavistock were published by the *Irish Times* during the first half of August. Two articles, by Jack Power and Vivienne Clarke respectively, both saying much the same thing, were published on 9th August in response to a news item carried on that morning’s edition of *Morning Ireland* (see RTÉ Response below for more on that). The main news point was that

The Russian Military

It is useful to note Philip Short’s observations (*Putin His Life And Times*) on the state of the Russian Army in recent times. Putin had been disgusted at the state of the army during the Chechnya War and was determined to transition it into a fully professional army. The Generals were appalled and resisted. By 2008, instead of a claimed professional army of 200,000, there were actually no more than 50,000—most of whom were no better than drafted.

The root problem was the general staff with its doctrine on mass mobilisation. From the selfish standpoint of the officer corps, there were benefits: the army had more colonels than lieutenants, meaning one officer for every 2 ordinary ranks. It is estimated that 350 million US dollars changed hands in bribes every year.

Despite resistance from entrenched interests, many reforms went through. The army was reduced by 300,000, and the defence budget was increased by 20 percent each year. Despite all this, the 2008 war in Georgia showed there was a long way to go. (Russia could have lost, the army was lucky.)

Putin knew what was required—structural change and the dismissal of a large number of officers—but was worried about doing it. The necessary reforms only occurred after Anatoly Serdyukov, a businessman, took the reins as Minister of Defence (2007-2012). However, even by 2012 the army numbers remained high: they stabilised at 450,000 regular troops and 250,000 conscripts. Not quite the professional army envisaged by Putin.

In the circumstances blunders were inevitable against an Ukrainian Army trained to NATO standards with war experience in the Donbass.

I believe the Russian army is in the process of becoming a formidable force due to the half reforms of 2012 and the present crucible of bloody conflict. Wars serve to make or break armies.

Bill McCamley

Perhaps America will come to regret giving the Russians this small war to get its act together! Ed.

the HSE was continuing to refer young people to Tavistock, despite the decision to decommission it. The focus of both articles was on the welfare of Irish trans young people in the context of the HSE decision and the London clinic’s impending closure. In neither article was there any hint that, in the circumstances, the HSE decision was most strange.

The next article had the title, “*Exploring issues behind the desire to transition is not transphobia, it’s common sense*” (13 August) and was by Breda O’Brien, a lone defender of Catholic values on the team of opinion writers at the paper. By simply summarising the findings of the *Cass Review*, O’Brien demonstrated that the approach used at the Tavistock Clinic was unethical and harmful. Her conclusion was “*it is astonishing that the HSE is so sanguine about continuing to use the Tavistock service*”. If the Column was to be faulted, it might be for not delving into the role of transgender ideology in

causing normal medical standards to be bypassed.

As a columnist known for her Catholic viewpoint, it is unlikely that O’Brien’s articles are widely read by the liberal readership of the IT and, when they are read, it is unlikely they are taken seriously. A possible way that her Column on Tavistock might have received attention was by being referenced in the paper’s Letters Page. Notably and surprisingly no letters were published on the topic. Breda O’Brien’s Column had the function of giving the paper’s coverage the appearance of balance.

The last of the four articles was made necessary by what was an inconvenient development from the IT’s viewpoint. Four senior consultants, two psychiatrists and two endocrinologists, all involved in the treatment of young people experiencing gender dysphoria, signed a letter requesting a meeting with the Minister for Health. They wanted to know why the

HSE was continuing to use the Tavistock Clinic in the light of the severe criticism of that institution contained in the Cass Review. The article, which was written by the paper's Health Editor, Paul Cullen, quoted from the letter and repeated the defects identified in the Review: pressure on clinicians to adopt an "*unquestioning affirmative approach*", and use of puberty blockers when "*significant knowledge gaps*" existed as to their long-term effects. Consistent with his paper's previous reporting, however, Cullen was sympathetic to the Tavistock's gender service as can be seen in the following paragraph:

"Puberty blockers can help delay potentially unwanted physical changes if a teenager is transgender. Tavistock advises that gender-affirming hormones, such as oestrogen or testosterone, can be prescribed to a trans teenager from the age of 16" (14 August).

The assumption behind that paragraph is in line with the contention of transgender ideology that a person's gender, regardless of their age, is whatever they identify as. Having referred to an "*unquestioning affirmative approach*" as a defect identified in the Cass Review, Paul Cullen is himself taking such an approach!

As was described in last month's *Irish Political Review* (*Irish Media: Culture War*), articles by Una Mulally and Jennifer O'Connell published by the IT in July made the case against public debate of the transgender issue on the grounds that it would be "*importing phoney discourses*". One such discourse was almost certainly the debate in Britain about the services provided at Tavistock. As the Cass Review shows there is nothing phoney about that discourse.

In the way it has covered the Tavistock story, the IT has been defensive of transgender ideology along the lines set out by Mulally and O'Connell. (We should point out that that the problematic area of transgender ideology is the application of irreversible treatments prior to adulthood. Mature individuals who decide they wish to transition to the opposite gender in full knowledge of what they are undertaking constitutes a completely separate issue.) *Irish Times* readers have yet to be informed of the fundamental nature of the malpractice that is now being brought to an end in Britain. Since the news broke that the Tavistock is to be closed, the paper has failed to report the significant implications of the story.

THE RTÉ RESPONSE

The IT's misreporting of the Tavistock story has been subtle. The same cannot

be said of that of RTÉ. Twelve days after the story broke (9 August), it was covered on *Morning Ireland*. A reporter, Aisling Kenny, gave a full report; and then Dr Siobhán Ní Bhriain, the relevant manager at the HSE, was interviewed by Rachel English. While too much emphasis was given to the lack of services for trans teenagers, the basic facts were presented and the concerns of a Dublin psychiatrist, Dr. Paul Horan, about the standard of care at Tavistock were reported. A problem only emerged when it came to the interview with Dr. Ní Bhriain which was described as follows in an item on the RTÉ news website:

"National Clinical Director for Integrated Care within the HSE Dr Siobhán Ní Bhriain said: "The service has not been deemed not safe, because if it was deemed completely unsafe it would have closed immediately, that's the first thing." The second thing is the Tavistock will keep open for another year or so until the regional units are developed in the UK and increased numbers of people with the skills to deliver care to these children. "So, we will continue to refer while Tavistock is still open, we will monitor extremely closely and we have for quite a number of years been exploring other options..."

The obvious question, *why is the HSE continuing to use Tavistock following the revelations of the Cass Review*, was not asked. It is most unlikely that the omission was caused by an oversight on the part of the journalists. The key question was not asked because RTÉ, like the IT, is sympathetic to transgender ideology as a matter of policy. Fortunately, neither RTÉ nor the IT, nor indeed the HSE, were allowed get away with this distortion. Two days after the broadcast, as referred to above, four senior doctors working in the field sent a letter to the Minister for Health requesting a meeting and demanding an explanation why the arrangement with Tavistock was not being discontinued.

Further evidence of RTÉ's inability to fairly cover the story came on the *Brendan O'Connor Show* on RTÉ Radio 1 over two Sundays (those of 7th and 14th August), when Dearbhail McDonald was standing in for O'Connor. The format of the show on Sundays is that the first hour is devoted to a panel discussion of the news stories of the day. On both Sundays McDonald began by summarising the stories in the Sunday papers and on each occasion she referred to stories about Tavistock. The panel discussion is sometimes dismissed as an outlet for the chattering classes but, at times, especially when the late broad-

caster, Marian Finucane, ran it, it can be insightful; things get blurted out in the discussions that would not be said on serious news programmes. Arguably, the newspaper panel discussion provided an apposite forum for discussing a hot topic like Tavistock. In the event, pusillanimity ruled and the topic was ignored. The cop-out makes sense when RTÉ's bias on the transgender subject is borne in mind.

But a more blatant example of straight-forward propaganda was to be found in the programme following the Brendan O'Connor Show on August 14th. The *This Week* programme is devoted to serious news and receives considerable advance promotion. Instead of covering Tavistock, which was a topic in a number of newspapers at the time, an item was broadcast on a trans woman affected by a decision of the English Rugby Football Union (RFU). The sports body had decided to prevent transgender women from playing contact rugby and its action was quickly followed by a similar decision by the corresponding body in Ireland, the IRFU. The transgender woman, Alix Fitzgerald, was quoted as follows on the RTÉ news website:

"In an interview with *This Week* on RTÉ Radio One, she said: "I left Ireland quite a long time ago, before it became the country it is now.

"When Ireland changed—and it has changed hugely in my lifetime—I was finally able to connect with the place I am from and say: 'I am Irish, and I belong here'. When the IRFU did that, it damaged my sense of belonging. I feel wounded"..." (14 August).

The RFU decision meant that Fitzgerald can no longer play for East London *Vixens RFC*, which she has played for since 2018. She is one of the seven individuals affected by the decision in England. As the interview proceeded, it transpired that she was 54 years of age. This story was much less important than the Tavistock controversy and provided Fitzgerald with the opportunity to make a political point, rather than investigating the question of whether transgender women enjoy an unfair advantage in women's sport.

A final question that should be asked of senior management at RTÉ is: why hasn't the Tavistock story been covered by *RTÉ Investigates*? Given that the high numbers of young people presenting with gender dysphoria, relative to the historical pattern, is a deep concern for many parents and, given that malpractice has been identified in the way the issue has been handled by Tavistock, the case for an investigation must be very strong.

As with the IT, the misreporting by RTÉ of Tavistock shows a powerful media organisation exploiting its position of privilege to “control the narrative”.

THE OVER-OPTIMISM OF THE LGBT LOBBY

The Irish LGBT lobby lost the run of itself following its victory in the Same Sex Marriage Referendum of May 2015 and again following the Repeal of the Eight Amendment in May 2018. The activists of those campaigns, a term that embraces a large tranche of people working in the media and the political parties, believed a watershed had been reached in which the country had been freed from the burden of its oppressive, Statist, Catholic, ethno-nationalist past. Even if that was understood as wishful exaggeration, the idea caught on that if you repeat something often enough, it will eventually become true. Unfortunately for the LGBT cause, that’s not the way society works.

Two events from recent history suggest that the LGBT analysis of Ireland, from its own perspective, is wildly over-optimistic. The first was Sinn Féin’s experience in the combined European and Local Elections of May 2019, in which the party chased after the imagined LGBT *zeitgeist*, and experienced a significant drop in electoral support. From a previous total of 159, the party lost 78 Local Council seats, giving it a new total of 81, and it lost two of its three seats in the European Parliament. Assuming that the SF leadership has the capacity to hear what its electoral base is saying, a lesson will have been learned from that electoral drubbing that the party should dial down its LGBT rhetoric.

The second event was the controversy over Katherine Zappone’s appointment to the United Nations as Irish Special Envoy on Human Rights during the Summer of 2021. When Zappone was forced to resign from this new role, the spin was that the appointment had not been made in accordance with proper procedures and that her attendance at a social function in the Merrion Hotel had been problematic through being a breach of Covid guidelines. Actually, the idea that Ireland would be represented at the UN by a strongly ideological lesbian feminist, a US native who currently resides in New York, was a bridge too far for the Irish electorate. When news of the appointment came out, a clear message against it was conveyed up the chain of command through constituency channels.

The LGBT and feminist movements both originate in North America and both bear the puritanical mark of their place of origin. They have strong associations with the State of California, a *locale* where common sense is sometimes conspicuously absent. Their leading ideologues decry the inheritances of history and insist on a revolutionary break with the sexual norms of the past. But why? In Ireland and elsewhere the rights of women, gays, transsexuals and the other “identities” have been recognised; their inclusion in society is no longer impeded by discriminatory legislation.

Nor has the weight of history placed obstacles in the path of such reforms, quite the contrary, the concept of equality is prized in the seminal documents of the Irish Republican tradition; the social consensus in Ireland is that people should be treated decently regardless of their gender, orientation, ethnicity etc. In present circumstances, pertinent questions for RTÉ and the *Irish Times* might be: why are you encouraging the over-optimism of the LGBT lobby, and why are you championing revolutionary ideologies from across the Atlantic—ideologies that, for no good reason, exert a polarising influence on society?

‘TERF ISLAND’

The acronym TERF stands for *Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist*. Writing in September 2021 in a journal with a reputation for being America’s most influential journal of religion and public life, *First Things*, Mary Harrington explains how the animosity felt towards them by the “*Identitarian Left*” is such that ostracism, loss of employment and online harassment are all deemed appropriate punishments for TERFs.

In the course of reviewing two gender critical books by British authors—*Material Girls, Why Reality Matters for Feminism* by Kathleen Stock, and *Trans: When Ideology Meets Reality* by Helen Joyce—Harrington demonstrates how developments in the UK have so infuriated pro-trans activists in the US and Canada that they now refer to Britain as ‘*TERF Island*’. She identifies a UK-based parenting forum, *Mumsnet*, as the centre of a resistance movement against transgender ideology, and claims it draws support from both Left and Right. She states:

“Aided by women from Britain’s well-developed trade union tradition, who brought organisational skills to the table, grassroots opposition on Mumsnet

has coalesced into gender-critical activist bodies. Notable and high-profile groups formed in recent years include Sex Matters, Fair Play for Women, Woman’s Place, the LGB Alliance, and Transgender Trend. Today this coalition coordinates to lean on every available lever of power, including political lobbying, lawfare, and the creation of “best practice” legal and policy templates for organisations to use” (*The Gender Resistance, First Things*, 14 September 2021).

On the *Transgender Trend* website we have seen impressive work by a feminist philosopher from a Quaker background, Dr. Heather Brunskell-Evans. An article by her in the *Medical Law Review*, an authoritative journal published by Oxford University Press, has the title, “*The Medical-Legal Making of The Transgender Child*” in which she shows how law has been used to facilitate the practices that have caused the Tavistock Clinic to be decommissioned. A weak link she identifies is the most apolitical section of the Legal Establishment: the human rights lobby.

In another article she argues that the transchild is “*a figure shaped and reshaped by post-modern theory and trans politics*” (see *Judith Butler at the Court of Appeal*, Transgender Trend website), and she characterises Judith Butler, an American philosopher based at the University of Berkeley in California as the High Priestess of transgender ideology.

In this country at present transgender identity has become a social contagion. With the exception of a group of medics, the response has been to meekly transfer vulnerable young people to the care of a British institution compromised by an odious ideology. In that sense Ireland owes a debt to a movement in English civil society that has provided the force behind efforts to close down the Tavistock Clinic.

For many decades the *Irish Times* and RTÉ have waged an intellectual war on all aspects of Irish national culture. This they call thought leadership. But what is the destination toward which revisionist thought leadership is pushing us? Under the rainbow banner of the LGBT and feminist lobbies, a rich national heritage is to be jettisoned and in its stead we have already begun to sink to the status of a provincial backwater of California.

Sticking with our national heritage, while acknowledging its defects as well as its glories, is a better option.

The Ukrainian War

The Russian invasion of the Ukraine is a pre-emptive defence.

Apre-emptive defence is a defence against an attack which has not happened yet.

The best known pre-emptive defence in recent times is the Israeli war on Egypt in 1967. The Israeli Government said it saw signs that Egypt was preparing to attack it and, in order to defend itself more effectively, it attacked first.

It was then widely agreed amongst the democracies which said they loved peace that a war of defence launched against an attack which had not yet happened was legitimate, and was not an act of aggression.

Of course attack as a form of defence against a future attack depends on there being signs that the enemy seems to be preparing to attack.

Egypt was certainly an enemy of Israel in 1967. It had, like all Middle Eastern States, opposed the Imperial imposition of a Jewish nationalist colonising force on Palestine, and resisted the United Nations taking up the cause of Jewish nationalistic colonisation of Palestine, and the formation of the Jewish State.

This was after Britain sought to wash its hands of the project—which it had begun in 1917 with the purpose of turning the Jews against its German World War One enemy by offering them Palestine with its *Balfour Declaration*.

(The representatives of Nationalist Ireland were supporters of the British war effort in 1917, and were sitting at Westminster when the Balfour Declaration was issued. Although that Declaration flew in the face of the principles which the Home Rule Party stood for in Ireland, and which the British Government purported to stand for in world affairs, we have not noticed that the Home Rule Party uttered any protest against it.)

The Ukraine—a state created by Russia and made viable by it, which had independence conferred on it by Russia—showed signs of preparing to attack Russia earlier this year that were as definite as the signs that Egypt was preparing to attack Israel in 1967, and were made much more serious by the backing of the EU and the USA.

Ukrainian/Russian antagonism was instigated by the EU in 2014. The Ukrainian Government of that time made trade agreements with the EU, for agricultural goods, and with Russia, for industrial goods. That

was sound economic sense. Ukrainian industrial goods (produced in the eastern Ukraine) would not be competitive in the EU market, and Ukrainian agricultural goods were in demand in the EU.

The EU, however, was in expansionist mode. It wanted hegemony over the Ukraine with a view to incorporating it. It demanded an exclusive and comprehensive trade deal with the Ukraine, rejected the partial deal offered it by the Ukraine, and set in motion an anti-Russian propaganda within the Ukraine—which was hyped up by the European Parliament in which Pat Cox was particularly active.

An ultra-nationalist street campaign was worked up, with publicity and refreshments laid on from the start—apparently by the US Embassy. And Ukrainian nationalist slogans and symbols were in evidence. A *coup d'état* was launched. It was directed not only at the trade deal with Russia, but also at the large Russian population of the state.

The Ukrainian State was not formed by the Ukrainian nationalist organisation—the organisation of Petliura and Bandera had been active twice: in 1918 and 1941. On both occasions its efforts were directed against the large Jewish population, which was the main Jewish population in the world. Its action against Russian Communism was certainly due in part to the suspicion that Jews were in the thick of it.

Ukrainian nationalism acted with Nazism in the matter of exterminating Jews. The survival of a substantial part of the Jewish population was made possible by the Russian State, which removed them out of the way of the German/Ukrainian Nationalist assault.

The EU was slightly shocked with what it saw on the streets of Kiev in 2014 and tried to draw back, but Washington said *Fuck The EU*, and pushed on with what the EU had started.

The Russian population in the Eastern Ukraine defended itself, with help from Russia, and the post-*coup* Government in Kiev never succeeded in regaining control. Then Moscow organised a referendum on re-unification with Russia in Crimea, where the main Russian fleet was based, and it was carried by an immensely greater majority than the Irish Treaty was carried.

An attempt was made to settle affairs by negotiation. The *Minsk Agreement* provided for a degree of self-government under Ukrainian sovereignty for the Russian areas in the Eastern Ukraine which had defended themselves effectively against the anti-Russian assault.

Kiev signed the *Minsk Accords*, but later explained that it did so only in order to buy

time to prepare for a re-conquest.

Kiev was continuously at war with the Donbas region from 2014 to the present. It conducted this war by shelling until an invasion force could be launched.

Irish Governments asserted sovereignty over Northern Ireland until 1998, asserting that the Ulster Protestants were part of a general Irish nation with no right to opt out of it, but they took no serious action to enforce their sovereignty. But suppose an Irish Government had made a covert agreement with Germany in the 1930s, such as Ukrainian nationalism has done with the USA, would Britain have said that sovereign states have the right to engage in whatever military alliances they pleased?

NATO is a military alliance formed against Russia because Russia defeated Nazi Germany and its allies, and by doing so made itself the most powerful military force in the world. It was attacked by Fascist Europe and defended itself and therefore its power extended into Central Europe.

The United States, which had played a minimal part in that War, landing a force in Europe only after the German Army had been defeated in Russia, had profited outrageously from the War at little cost to itself. Its industrial capacity had multiplied during the War. It needed markets for its vast productive output. It took defeated Europe in hand—Europe that had been defeated by Russia—and remade it into a flourishing, capitalist democracy, and made a military alliance with it against Russia.

The transition from Fascism to Capitalist Democracy was easy. Fascism was the means by which capitalist Europe defended itself against its internal Communist forces in the 1920s and 1930s when liberal democracy failed.

Fascist Capitalism and liberal-democratic capitalism shared extensive common ground in the 1930s.

Fascism was hailed by Winston Churchill as the force that was saving European civilisation from Communism. And so, when the USA took in hand the Fascist Europe that had been defeated by Communist Russia, there was an easy transition back to liberal democratic forms.

After Communist Russia had defeated Fascist Europe it began to be described as an *Empire* by Western Europe—re-democratised under American hegemony—because it exerted hegemonic influence over the line of East European countries that had attacked it in alliance with Germany.

If it was an Empire, then it was the only one that ever dissolved itself. There was no Polish War of Liberation, no Hungarian

War of Liberation, and no Ukrainian War of Liberation!

Ukrainian nationalism did not participate in the Fascist War on Russia as a State. Under occupation, Hitler Germany did not allow it to take on a State form. So it just assisted the Germans with the extermination of the Jews. It was suppressed by Russia in 1944-5. The Ukrainian State was restored in 1945 as a Soviet Republic and was a founder member of the United Nations.

In 1991 the Soviet Union was dismantled. The territory of the Ukrainian State, as part of the Soviet system, had not been determined with Russian nationalist interest primarily in mind. And its borders were not altered in the Russian interest when the Union was being dissolved. That left the Ukrainian nation-state with a substantial Russian population in the east and in the Crimea, where the Russian fleet was based.

The dismantling of the Soviet Union was done under the leadership of Gorbachev, who apparently believed all that the West said about itself in its propaganda and took no heed of what it did. He was assured by the United States that, if he dismantled the Soviet Union, it would not push NATO up against Russia's borders by extending it over the buffer states to the west of it—but that, of course, is what the US set about doing.

The promises to Gorbachev were probably given sincerely, like the promises of the scorpion to the frog. But, as the scorpion explained to the dying frog, his promises could not hold good against his nature. It is in the US nature to remake the world and to crush every obstacle in its path.

The remaining obstacles are Russia and China—the Eurasian land mass.

The USA needs to destroy the Russian State. Its nature requires it, and it makes no secret of the fact. Last year it tried and failed to get at Russia through Belarus but was ward off by Russian influence in Belarus. So it is now making the attempt through the Ukraine.

All of the television news programmes tell us that Russia launched an unprovoked attack on the 24th of February. But we are also sometimes told that the War had really begun as an unprovoked Russian attack in 2014.

2014, however, is a dangerous year, not to be dwelt on.

Paraic O'Brien on Channel 4 tells us about "*Russian backed separatists in Eastern Ukraine*". That's like saying *Irish backed separatists in the Falls Road*.

The separatists in Eastern Ukraine are Russians who were attacked by the Ukrai-

nian nationalist forces who took over the Government of the Ukraine in the EU-backed *coup d'état* of 2014.

The Ukrainian State which became entirely independent as a result of the dismantling of the Soviet Union did not know what to do with itself for twenty-three years.

Economic factors required continued access to the Russian Market. The Soviets had built heavy industry in the Ukraine. Its markets were to the East, and after independence mutually beneficial trading relations continued. There was no way this industry could compete in the European single market. It would simply be wiped out.

Then the Ukrainian nationalist heritage from Symon Petlura and Stepan Bandera revived. It emerged from its safe haven in Canada in 2014 and offered itself to the United States for the campaign against Russia. The Ukraine is now a purposeful State, but its purpose has little to do with internal government.

Russia demanded a guarantee from it that it would not ally itself with NATO. It replied by asserting its sovereign right to bring NATO arms up to the Russian Border if it pleased. Russia countered with an invasion.

Russia will either survive the Ukraine War—and, by doing so, consolidate an Asian region of the world with which the USA can no longer play games—or President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen's confident assertion that its economy will be destroyed will be borne out and China will be the only obstacle to US world hegemony—and Taiwan will come on the agenda.

Ireland has now fastened its colour to the mast of the US drive for world hegemony, with only the President's wife dissenting in the public sphere. [See page xx. Ed.]

*

Kiev attacked the Russian population in the Ukraine, with the intent to de-Russianise the country one way or another. The West, in other situations, calls that kind of thing *genocide*.

The Russian population defended itself. The State forces were barricaded out in certain areas, but the State continuously lobbed missiles into those areas. The beleaguered population appealed for assistance to their nation state. Unlike in a somewhat comparable situation we could mention, the nation state responded to the appeal.

It is curious that in this year of commemorations, all that is seen from the Irish vantage point, right left, or centre, is a Russian bid for conquest of the Ukraine as a first step towards a conquest of Europe!

War . . . And Peace !

In 1918 the Irish electorate in its wisdom buried Redmondism and its mindless war-mongering.

The event, but not its date, had been predicted in June 1916 by General Sir John Maxwell who wrote that the 1916 Insurgents had achieved more in a week than Redmond's and Parnell's party had in 40 years; that it was impossible, as he wrote, to differentiate between a Nationalist and a Republican; and that at the next General Election, what he described as *Sinn Feiners* would wipe out Redmond's Party. At the time Sinn Fein was not a republican party, nor had it, as a body organised the insurrection.

Shortly after Maxwell had written his comments C.P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian* in his diary noted the despondent John Dillon saying to him that, if Sinn Fein found itself a capable leader, it would sweep himself and his party off the board. Dillon was part of the Triumvirate, with Redmond and Joe Devlin who led the Nationalist Party.

Sinn Fein found that leader, Eamon de Valera, who himself took Dillon's seat, and the rest is history—a history ignored, misread, or deliberately distorted by those paid to do so.

In 1937 an Irish electorate enacted a Constitution affirming their country's devotion to the ideal of peace and friendly co-operation amongst nations, founded on international justice and morality, and also affirming its adherence to the principle of the settlement of international disputes by international arbitration or judicial determination.

These principles were adhered to by de Valera throughout his public life. It seems to me also, that in accordance with our Constitution, Charles Haughey stuck with them during the Argy/Bargy in the South Atlantic in 1981.

But, like the "Resurrectionist" Burke and Hare, John Bruton dug up the war-mongering John Redmond so that Ireland should again shed her blood in aggressive Imperialist war. He seems to have support from serving and former commissioned officers in our Defence Forces. Soldiers have no business in directing national policy. That business is for Dail Eireann.

(Even soldiers implementing Government policy, such as Captain James Kelly in 1970, risk being Betrayed, Framed and Libeled by Government, Opposition and media.)

Donal Kennedy

Israel Makes War On Gaza – Again

Since September 2005, when Israel 'withdrew' from Gaza, less than 50 people have been killed in Israel by mortar and rocket fire out of Gaza by Palestinians. In the same period, almost 6,000 Palestinians have been killed as a result of Israeli military incursions into Gaza.

At 4pm on Friday, 5th August 2022

"Israel launches airstrikes to assassinate Tayseer al-Jabari, the head of Islamic Jihad's military wing in the northern Gaza Strip, and claims to kill 10 more militants from the organization.

"Over the course of the evening, the Israel Defense Forces proceed to attack Gaza City, Beit Hanoun and Khan Younis, as part of a new military operation code-named Breaking Dawn. A 5-year-old girl and a 23-year-old woman are among the civilian casualties from the bombing campaign." (Haaretz, 7 August 2022)

Operation Breaking Dawn is Israel's fifth major military operation against Gaza since September 2005, when it withdrew its Jewish settlers (8,000 of them) from the strip along with its ground forces.

Later that Friday at 11pm:

"Following al-Jabari's funeral, Islamic Jihad launches a score of rockets toward Israel, with border towns bearing the brunt of the barrage. Most rockets are intercepted by the Iron Dome missile defense system, and no injuries are reported. ...

"Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh blames Israel for the escalation and threatens that 'all options are open' but no rocket fire is attributed to the ruling party in the Strip."

48 hours later a ceasefire was established through the mediation of Egypt.

Operation Breaking Dawn caused the deaths of 49 Palestinians in Gaza, including 17 children [1]. In addition, according to Tor Wennesland, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, speaking to the Security Council on 8 August:

"The Ministry of Health in Gaza reported 360 Palestinians injured, including at least 151 children and 58 women. At least 10 houses were completely destroyed and 48 severely damaged and rendered uninhabitable. According to the Gaza authorities, over 600 housing units were damaged, displacing 84 families."

The rocket fire by Islamic Jihad into Israel in response caused no deaths in Israel and little or no damage.

ISRAEL THE AGGRESSOR

Clearly, Israel was the aggressor here and its armed aggression caused the deaths of 49 Palestinians. Israel struck first and Islamic Jihad responded with rocket fire into Israel. Without Israel's armed aggression, there would have been no response from Islamic Jihad.

You wouldn't have guessed that from the statement from UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss on 6 August, which said

"The UK stands by Israel and its right to defend itself. We condemn terrorist groups firing at civilians and violence that has resulted in casualties on both sides. We call for a swift end to the violence." [2]

No reference there to the fact that Israel struck first.

Likewise, President Biden's statement on 8th August said that "*over these recent days, Israel has defended its people from indiscriminate rocket attacks*" but failed to mention the fact that Israel had struck first.

IRELAND'S RESPONSE

The Security Council considered the matter on 8th August. You might have thought that Israel would be widely condemned there for an unjustified act of armed aggression that caused the deaths of 49 Palestinians, but you would be mistaken.

Ireland's contribution was typical. The Irish Ambassador, Cait Moran, reserved her condemnation for Islamic Jihad, saying:

"Ireland condemns the launching of rockets from Gaza. Attacks and the threat of attacks on Israeli citizens are unacceptable."

As for the Israeli aggression that provoked the launching of rockets from Gaza, Ms Moran said:

"The impact of Israeli strikes on civilians in the Gaza Strip is unacceptable... The impact on children, in an already difficult humanitarian situation, is especially worrisome."

Worrisome? The impact on children was a great deal more than "*worrisome*". It got 17 of them killed and injured another 150.

US SADDENED

Speaking for the US, Mrs. Linda Thomas-Greenfield said she was "*saddened by the reports of civilian casualties*". Most likely, these casualties were brought about by weapons made in the US and paid for by the US taxpayer. Under a deal between President Obama and Prime Minister Netanyahu in 2016, the US agreed to give Israel \$38 billion of military aid over 10 years, the vast bulk of it to be spent with American arms manufacturers.

On top of this guaranteed \$3.8 billion, Israel often receives additional military aid from the US. For example, in March this year, the US Congress approved a billion dollars for Israel to pay for the Iron Dome interceptor missiles that were expended during *Operation Guardian of the Walls*, last year's military assault on Gaza.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield also remarked that the US believes that "*Israelis and Palestinians equally deserve to live in safety and security*" and "*we are working assiduously to that end*". Perhaps, the US should begin the work by ceasing to supply Israel with the military equipment with which they regularly kill Palestinians.

ISRAEL'S FIVE MAJOR MILITARY OPERATIONS

The table overleaf lists the five major military operations conducted against Gaza since September 2005 and the number of Palestinians killed in Gaza in each operation.

Date	Name	Killed
Dec 2008	Cast Lead	1,391
Nov 2012	Pillar of Cloud	167
July 2014	Protective Edge	2,185
May 2021	Guardian of the Walls	233
Aug 2022	Breaking Dawn	49
		— — —
		4,025

These figures are from a database maintained by the excellent Israeli human rights organisation B’Tselem. This database [3] contains information about every individual killed during the conflict in Israel/Palestine since September 2000.

Just over 4,000 Palestinians were killed by Israel during these five operations, but this is by no means all the Palestinians killed by Israel in Gaza since September 2005. According to B’Tselem, that number is 5,986 up to the end of June 2022.

DEATHS IN ISAREL DUE TO ROCKET FIRE FROM GAZA

The ostensible reason for Israel’s major military assaults on Gaza—and for countless other minor intrusions—was, and is, to halt rocket and mortar fire out of Gaza into Israel by Hamas and other Palestinian groups and to stop people in Israel being killed or injured by them.

Over the years, Israel has given the impression that the number of people killed in Israel by this fire out of Gaza has been substantial—and therefore Israel feels compelled to take whatever action is necessary to suppress it, even if Palestinian civilians are killed in Gaza as a consequence.

In reality, the number of people killed and injured in Israel as a result of fire from Gaza has been very small—almost certainly less than 50—compared with the almost 6,000 Palestinians killed by Israel in Gaza since September 2005.

(See *How many people have died from Gaza rockets into Israel?* by Phan Nguyen, published by Mondoweiss [4]. The author names 44 individuals (30 civilian and 14 military) who were killed in the 13 years from 2001 to 29 August 2014. 6 of these were killed prior to September 2005. Thanks to the Iron Dome rocket interception system deaths and injuries have been small in recent years.)

Many of these deaths occurred during one of Israel’s major assaults on Gaza when rocket fire from Gaza was at its most intense, for example, all 8 of the deaths in 2014 occurred during *Operation Protective Edge* in July/August that year (during which 67 Israeli military personnel were also killed in Gaza).

JUNE 2008 CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

There was another far more effective method available to Israel for halting rocket

and mortar fire out of Gaza. That was for Israel to stick to the various ceasefire agreements that it entered into with Hamas.

That option has been available to Israel since June 2008, when it first concluded a ceasefire agreement with Hamas. Under that agreement, brokered by Egypt, in exchange for Hamas and other Palestinian groups stopping the firing of rockets and mortars out of Gaza, Israel undertook to lift its economic blockade of Gaza and cease military incursions into Gaza.

Hamas stuck rigidly to the agreement and fired no rockets or mortars into Israel from 19th June, when the ceasefire came into operation, until 4th November. Other Palestinian groups fired a small number, despite being restrained by Hamas. As a partner for peace with Israel, Hamas could not be faulted—it made a deal with Israel, stuck to it and tried to make other Palestinian groups do likewise.

These arrangements could have continued indefinitely. They didn’t because on 4th 2008 November (while the world was watching Barack Obama being elected US president), Israel made a military incursion into Gaza, its first since the ceasefire began, and killed 7 members of Hamas. Israel had now breached both of its obligations under the ceasefire agreement, having already failed to lift the economic blockade of Gaza completely as promised. In retaliation, Hamas resumed rocket fire out of Gaza into Israel.

A few weeks later, on 27th December, Israel launched *Operation Cast Lead* ostensibly to stop Hamas rocket attacks out of Gaza. Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni explained why a few days later:

“For eight years now, Israel has been under attack from the Gaza Strip and it

has become worse. Hamas, which is an extreme Islamic organization, a terrorist organization ... has been targeting Israel on a daily basis.” [5]

That was a lie, of course: for four and a half months Hamas had not targeted Israel at all, as Israeli Government spokesman Mark Regev confirmed on *More4 News* on 9th January 2009. When it was put to him that “*there were no Hamas rockets during the ceasefire before November the 4th, there were no Hamas rockets for 4 months*”, Regev replied: “*That’s correct*” [6].

During *Operation Cast Lead*, 1,391 Palestinians were killed by Israel. Four Israelis were killed by rocket and mortar fire out of Gaza. Had Israel stuck to the Ceasefire Agreement like Hamas, none of these people would have died.

NOVEMBER 2012 CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

In November 2012, Egypt brokered another agreement between Israel and Hamas [7], which brought to an end *Operation Pillar of Cloud*, Israel’s second major offensive against Gaza. The deal had the blessing of the US, since Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stood beside the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Mohamad Amr, when he announced it.

In it, Israel agreed to “*stop all hostilities on the Gaza Strip by land, sea and air including incursions and targeting of individuals*” and Hamas and other Palestinian groups agreed to “*stop all hostilities from the Gaza Strip against Israel, including rocket attacks, and attacks along the border*”. In addition, Israel promised the “*opening the crossings and facilitating the movement of people and transfer of goods, and refraining from restricting residents free movement*”, in other words, to lift its economic blockade of Gaza.

In accordance with this agreement, Hamas engaged in no military action against Israel for nearly 20 months from 21st November 2012 until 7th July 2014, in particular, it fired no rockets or mortars into Israel during this period. As happened during the 2008 ceasefire, there was some firing in Israel by other Palestinian groups, despite Hamas setting up a new police force to prevent them doing so [8].

By contrast, Israel made no attempt to abide by the agreement. It continued to make regular military incursions into Gaza—from 21st November 2012 until 30th June 2014 it killed 25 Palestinians in Gaza—and it took no steps whatsoever to lift its economic blockade. One could be forgiven for thinking that Israel was intent on provoking

rocket fire from Gaza rather than seeking a permanent end to it.

WHY DID ISRAEL ALWAYS CHOOSE THE INEFFECTIVE MILITARY OPTION?

So why did Israel always choose the ineffective military option rather than effective ceasefire arrangements to eliminate mortar and rocket fire from Gaza? Answer: because having permanent ceasefire arrangements with Hamas was tantamount to recognising Hamas as the legitimate ruler of Gaza—and Israel was absolutely opposed to that.

Tzipi Livni, then Israeli Foreign Minister, spelt this out in December 2008, shortly after Israel had torpedoed the 2008 ceasefire agreement. Speaking at Tel Aviv University, she said that an extended truce or long term calm with Hamas “*harms the Israel strategic goal, empowers Hamas, and gives the impression that Israel recognizes the movement*” [9].

She returned to this theme on 31st December 2008, a few days after *Operation Cast Lead* began, telling the world that attempts by Hamas to gain legitimacy must be resisted:

“But there is one thing that the world needs to understand: Hamas wants to gain legitimacy from the international community. Hamas wants to show that there is a place which is called the Gaza Strip, that this kind of an organization - an extremist Islamic organization that acts by terrorism and which is a designated terrorist organization - can rule. And to make it seem a legitimate regime.

“So they want the crossings to be opened, not only for the sake of the population, but because this symbolically is how they can show that the Gaza Strip has become a kind of a small state, which is controlled by them. This is something that nobody can afford, neither Israel, nor the pragmatic leadership, nor the legitimate Palestinian leadership or government, nor any part of the moderate the Arab world.”

So, making arrangements with Hamas about a longterm ceasefire or the permanent opening of border crossings, bolsters the legitimacy the Hamas as the ruler of Gaza—and Israel is opposed to that, even though ceasefire arrangements did bring peace and quiet to people in Israel—and saved Israeli lives.

But saving Israeli lives wasn't Israel's primary objective.

THE AGREEMENT ON MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

In November 2005, shortly after it withdrew its settlers and ground troops from Gaza, Israel signed an agreement which laid down arrangements that were designed to maintain and develop the economic life of Gaza in the new circumstances. Called the *Agreement on Movement and Access*, it was drawn up by former head of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn.

The Agreement provided for, amongst other things:

- continuous operation of crossings between Israel and Gaza for the import and export of goods and the transit of people
- a crossing between Gaza and Egypt at Rafah for the export of goods and the transit of people
- the building of a seaport in Gaza
- re-opening of the airport in Gaza
- bus and truck convoys between the West Bank and Gaza
- reduction of obstacles to movement within the West Bank

At the launch, Condoleezza Rice said:

“This agreement is intended to give the Palestinian people freedom to move, to trade, to live ordinary lives. The agreement covers six topics.”

She continued:

“First, for the first time since 1967, Palestinians will gain control over entry and exit from their territory. This will be through an international crossing at Rafah, whose target opening date is November 25th.

“Second, Israel and the Palestinians will upgrade and expand other crossings for people and cargo between Israel, Gaza and the West Bank. This is especially important now because Israel has committed itself to allow the urgent export of this season's agricultural produce from Gaza.

“Third, Palestinians will be able to move between Gaza and the West Bank; specifically, bus convoys are to begin about a month from now and truck convoys are to start a month after that.

“Fourth, the parties will reduce obstacles to movement within the West Bank. It has been agreed that by the end of the year the United States and Israel will complete work to lift these obstacles and develop a plan to reduce them.

“Fifth, construction of a Palestinian seaport can begin. The Rafah model will provide a basis for planned operations.

“Sixth, the parties agree on the importance of the airport. Israel recognizes that the Palestinian Authority will want to resume construction on the airport.”

In November 2005, the US/EU deemed these arrangements necessary to maintain

and develop the economic life of Gaza and promised that they would be delivered to the people of Gaza. A decade and a half later, almost nothing has been delivered.

On the contrary, for most of that time, Israel has subjected Gaza to a brutal economic blockade and unceasing military intervention, which has brought untold misery to the people of Gaza.

David Morrison
26 August 2022

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Further Reading

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Sean O'Faolain and Canon Formation

Part 6.

The Men who funded 'The Bell'

In the August edition of *'Irish Political Review'*, I dealt with one of the backers of *The Bell*, J.J. O'Leary (1890-1978), who came to own the top printing house in Ireland — namely Cahill & Co., 1866 to the present day. O'Leary had given O'Faolain space in his office to print *'The Bell'* and after the war had hired the hard-pressed writer for the sum of £1,000 p.a. — an astronomical sum then — when he had given up the editorship of the magazine. But, as usual with O'Faolain, when he wanted to move on to a "writing career", he engineered a falling out with his oh-so-generous employer: and he took Honor Tracy — his then lover — with him, declaring in his autobiography *'Vive Moi'* that:

"Within a week JJ surrendered, closed the office and abandoned his great dreams..."

All of this is completely untrue but, if that wasn't bad enough, O'Faolain goes on to use 'pub' gossip to try and further damage the reputation of a man who was nothing but kind to him. Truly, O'Faolain never met a hand that fed him without in the end biting it off!

And, in talking about his frankly nauseating love-making with Ms. Tracy, he quoted her thus:

"... 'If I had known you were as good as this I would have had the trousers off you long ago.' I was shocked at this coarse flattery. Dammit, I had been brought up on Keats and Yeats and Arnold and Tennyson."

Tracy then announced to a surprised O'Faolain that she was off —

"to Japan to report back on the success of post-war America's *noble ambition to bring civilisation to the Far East*. She must have been able through her connections at the Ministry of Information, especially through Arthur Waley, to persuade a good English publisher to finance her, for go she did, and in due course duly produced a highly entertaining report called *'Kakemono'* published by Methuen." [Emphasis added.]

Here one can sense O'Faolain's jealousy because Tracy's "report" was a

travel book, *'Kakemono: A Sketchbook of Postwar Japan'*, one of several; and her novels were also well received at the time. A brilliant linguist, speaking French, she spoke German, Russian, Italian and some Japanese. She worked as a correspondent for *'The Observer'*, *'The Sunday Times'* and the BBC. Tracy worked during the War in the Ministry of Information under Arthur Waley (1889-1966), a popular orientalist and sinologist who was to be festooned with awards by the English State, beginning with a —

"CBE in 1952, the Queen's gold medal for Poetry in 1953 and he was invested as a Companion of Honour in 1956."

"Waley was of Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry. He changed his surname from Schloss in 1914, when, like many others in England with German surnames, he sought to avoid the anti-German prejudice common in Britain during the First World War."

O'Faolain accepts that, while Honor Tracy was Foreign Correspondent for *'The Sunday Times'*, "writing from various corners of Europe", he "was delivering a brief round of lectures for the British Council around Italy" — where he again met up with Tracy.

Here the love affair came to an end: there was a row over the Catholic faith, with the Irish writer putting into Tracy's mouth the words "black beetles of priests" shadowing people's lives with "their

power". This was after him telling her a story about his "poor pietistic mother" and her praying for Indulgences which her son affected to scorn.

O'Faolain says nothing about the fact that Honor Tracy herself converted to Catholicism, but later on the Cork writer told Graham Greene that, while in Italy he converted to "the empire of religion" that is Italian Catholicism, leaving behind the dull form current at home in Ireland.

It seems that the notion of the *universal church* was completely absent from O'Faolain's thinking! But then, this is the same man who would go on to contend that "Mathew Arnold's superb poem 'Dover Beach' was one of the greatest love-poems in all English literature".

All in all, there is a strong misogynistic streak in O'Faolain, who dismissed the "fat body of Honor Tracy", and the "barrenness of Elizabeth Bowen", not to mind his consistently appalling and cruel attitude to his loyal wife, Eileen.

But, of course, this is the 'father' who disowned his son, Steven — who, according to O'Faolain himself, couldn't be taught "to be a gentleman". But O'Faolain maintained a "strange" attachment to his "brilliant daughter Julia", who became a successful writer.

Towards the end of his life, he was asked about his family and he insisted that he had only one child and that was Julia.

When his biographer, Maurice Harmon, in his book *'Sean O'Faolain: A Life'* (published in 1994 by Constable, London), wrote about the writer's brutal assault on his own mother thus: "Once in exasperation, Sean threw her down the stairs and broke her leg", there was no rejection of the story by any family members or friends. And Harmon also acknowledged that the story about Sean being in bed in London with Elizabeth Bowen when her husband Alan Cameron phoned to say that England was at war with Germany was quite untrue as O'Faolain was actually in Ireland at the time, *sitting "on a wall below Croagh Patrick"*.

*

In the book, *'The Bell Magazine and the Representation of Irish Identity'*, written by American academic Kelly Matthews, there is a very good analysis of the War's effect on various economic activities but most especially the lack of paper. Once Norway was invaded by Germany in early 1940, there was a diminishment of wood pulp to Britain by 80%, and "Irish paper supplies were similarly curtailed". It was O'Faolain who acknowledged that:

"We were lucky to get any paper from Britain so hardpressed that its own publications soon dwindled every year in number, size and quality."

Here though, in an aside, I would mention that Elizabeth Bowen's *'Bowen's Court'* and *'Seven Winters'* was published, as well as her British Council pamphlet on *'English Novelists'* — all in 1942 so it was obvious there was serious purpose behind this re-making of the novelist for and Irish audience.

Kelly goes on to correctly note that "*Seán Lemass was the Minister for Industry and Commerce*", where he also covered the Ministry of Supplies, and sternly warned people not to "*discard any waste paper*": which he placed under an Oireachtas *Emergency Powers (Waste Paper) Order 1942*. There were two other Orders regarding "Waste paper" in 1941 and 1944, so there could be no doubt that Ireland was suffering from a paper shortage.

So *'The Bell'* and O'Faolain needed men who could help them out financially. Matthews names the businessman, Eamonn Martin. But Maurice Harmon names the far more influential figure of Joseph McGrath (1888-1966).

The latter started out as an accountant with Craig Gardiner & Co., where he worked alongside a part-time fellow-clerk named Michael Collins. McGrath was soon inducted into the *Irish Republican Brotherhood* (IRB), took part in the 1916 Rising, after which he was jailed in Wormwood Scrubs and Brixton prisons in England.

In 1918, he was elected as Sinn Féin TD for the Dublin, St. James constituency, later sitting in the First Dáil. He was active in the Irish Republican Army and successfully organised many bank robberies during the Irish War of Independence, with some accounts suggesting that he retained a small percentage of the proceeds for himself and his fellow soldiers.

He did more time in jail and, in October 1921, Joseph McGrath travelled to London as one of Michael Collins's personal staff for the Treaty negotiations.

In the Provisional Government, he was made Minister for Labour, and in the Irish Civil War he took the pro-Treaty side, becoming Director of Intelligence. It is stated that he vehemently begged Collins not to travel to West Cork, writing him a letter in "*red ink*".

McGrath was then put in charge of the police Intelligence service of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in the new Irish Free State. But there were widespread allegations of the torture and killing of a number of republican prisoners during the Civil War. The Department was disbanded after the War, the official reason given being that such an organisation was unnecessary for policing in peace time.

McGrath went on to hold the position of Minister for Labour, followed by time spent in the Industry and Commerce portfolio. He was extremely ruthless in pursuit of his objectives, including putting in strike-breakers to oppose a strike by Trade Unionists in the Post Office.

He supported the Government's decision to execute four high-profile IRA prisoners: Liam Mellows, Dick Barrett, Rory O'Connor and Joe McKelvey.

But, really, what gave bones to the savage streak attached to his reputation was the Noel Lemass affair. Captain Noel Lemass (1897-1923), older brother of Seán, fought in the GPO during the 1916 Rising, took an active part in the War of Independence, and joined the occupation of the Four Courts during the Civil War. He was imprisoned in the Curragh camp but managed to begin organising an escape tunnel with some chosen inmates — which was found out by the authorities and they was sent to the 'glasshouse' or military prison, where they were handcuffed for hours at a stretch to a rack on the wall, their feet barely touching the ground.

According to John Horgan, the biographer of Seán Lemass (or one of them), "*the prisoners could have been shot for trying to escape*", but de Valera had ordered a ceasefire, so instead the prisoners were transferred to Mountjoy Gaol.

Horgan also notes that the English had a notice out that Noel was one of the republicans who their forces were to shoot on sight.

And, according to Horgan, "this suggests, at the very least, a considered official view of his lethal potential."

Professor Stockley, of the department of English UCC also notes such a notice on him by the Crown forces!

Noel Lemass was an —

"engineer in the Great Southern Railway but while a covert Volunteer was not on active service. When he finished his apprenticeship, he went to Cork and did not return to Dublin to take an active part in the War of Independence until later, when he was also (when not in prison) in the employment of Dublin Corporation."

(All this is by John Horgan, a former *Irish Times* journalist, a former member of Seanad Éireann, Dáil Éireann, and the European Parliament.)

Horgan, in my opinion, tries to muddy the waters by saying that

"there are conflicting rumours about his part in the Civil War. His mother told a Dublin newspaper that he "refused to fight his own" after the Treaty split, but there were other reports that Collins was "suspicious of him."

And then, basically, Horgan states that "*his mother's defence was inspired by loyalty rather than any detailed knowledge of what he was up to*". Thus the victim of a coming atrocity is being 'set up' for a brutal dismissal in this scene-setting by Horgan, whose sympathies clearly lie with the "*suspicious Collins*".

What is beyond dispute is that, two months *after* the hostilities of the Civil War was over, "*in broad daylight*", Noel Lemass "was *abducted in Dublin by a number of men in plain clothes*", outside MacNeil's Hardware shop. Horgan says "*it is generally assumed, though never proved, that they were members of, or connected with, the Free State forces*". That assertion is the purest *raméis* and Horgan knows it.

He finally admits that one of the functions of the CID was to —

"investigate and interrogate suspected members of the irregulars. It gained a reputation for "ruthlessness, and, at times, for savagery. This was the organisation with which Joe McGrath, Lemass's former OC in Ballykinlar and now Minister for Industry and Commerce in the Free State government, had an established connection."

Well, actually John Horgan — Joseph McGrath had been appointed the head of CID, rather than that nebulous "*established connection*". According to John Horgan's biography of Seán Lemass: "*Noel Lemass was held in secret until the end of September or early October*", and he was then dumped three months later in the Dublin Mountains in a place known locally as 'Featherbed' or 'The Shoots'. His mutilated body was found on the 12th October and he had been shot at least three times and his left arm was fractured. His right foot was never found. Again quoting Horgan,

"Noel Lemass had possibly been tortured before his death, but an inquest ended inconclusively."

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To be continued

Washington's War

continued from page 1

Washington has declared, at one time or another, the entire Western Hemisphere, plus the Middle East and Persian Gulf, to be its sphere of influence. Russia claims a much smaller, more local, sphere of influence of quite limited proportions: one that includes countries directly adjacent or near its borders, which formed a common State with Russia until quite recently.

The US, while claiming most of the world as its sphere of vital interest, denies that Russia has any sphere of vital interest—even adjacent to its borders. Washington uses the anti-Russian tendency in those countries which formerly formed a common State with Russia to expand its own influence.

It did this reasonably successfully until it came to the Ukraine. Now the West has gone into hysterics in finding that it has limits to its world.

In Ukraine Washington came across a population and elected Government which did not want to be swept up in its irresistible forward movement. There was an eastern part of Ukraine which had strong cultural, social and linguistic links with Russia, and which was part of a Russian civilisational sphere. Therefore, Washington came across an actual Russian sphere of influence that had no desire to become an exclusive part of a US-projected sphere at the expense of its historic foundations, around which a delicate nationality and recent State had been cultivated and developed.

As a consequence, the national division within Ukraine produced a civil war in the country after Washington, in conjunction with nationalist elements from Western and Central Ukraine, decided to eradicate the Russian-oriented part of the state—which had traditionally provided Ukraine's political leadership. This brought about the first, and clearly reluctant, Russian intervention in 2014.

It is abundantly clear that the cause of this year's events lies in the Western attempts to destabilise and wrench Ukraine from the Russian sphere of influence, over a period of around a decade at least, as part of a movement of NATO up to the borders of Russia over a longer period of a quarter of a century.

And what is called the “*Russian invasion*” of February 2022 is, therefore, a

consequence, and not a cause, of events in which the West, for geopolitical reasons, overthrew a necessary heterogeneous balancing state leadership in Kiev to replace it with a simplifying reductionist nationalism, fatal to Ukraine's territorial integrity.

THE BLUNDERING OBAMA PRESIDENCY

When Obama won the US Presidency in late 2008 he inherited a situation that demanded resolute and firm action to stop the West's slide into confrontation with Russia over Ukraine. He did not provide the required statesmanship to do so.

Despite repeated warnings from the Kremlin that bringing NATO up to its borders would constitute a strategic threat of the first order, the momentum of NATO enlargement continued unrelentingly from the 1990s.

The most famous and explicit of these warnings was made by Vladimir Putin at the Munich Security Conference in February 2007, when the Russian President pointed to how Washington had marginalised the UN, used the OSCE [Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe] as an instrument of US policy, blocked the ratification of the *Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty*, re-militarised Europe through missile proliferation, and continually enlarged NATO towards Russia.

But Putin's warnings were to no avail. At the NATO summit at Bucharest in April 2008, Georgia and Ukraine were promised future membership, raising the stakes. Washington undoubtedly wanted NATO membership for Ukraine more than the Ukrainians did.

Ukraine's non-aligned status was enshrined in its Constitution but this was seen as something of little consequence by those who wanted to detach Ukraine from the Russian sphere, no matter what the internal consequences would be.

Putin, after Bucharest, moved to strengthen aid to the breakaway provinces of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, in Georgia. Saakashvili in Georgia later told the *Wall Street Journal* that he knew “*what Mr. Putin's vulnerabilities were, but the European Union and the US have been unwilling to endure even a minimum of pain to exploit them*” (25.5.2014).

An emboldened Georgia, with NATO promises behind them, blundered into a disastrous war with Russia after Georgia attacked Ossetia, killing Russian peacekeepers and scores of Ossetians. Russia's response should have served as a warning to all about what might happen in Ukraine if the US continued to push its agenda of expansion.

NATO justified its continued existence by positing a Russian security threat—which was illusory. It should have been clear by then—when its Soviet enemy was no more—that it was NATO militarism that was actually creating the ground for conflict; and that it was NATO which was creating and amplifying a threat to peace through its own continued expansion to the borders of Russia!

NATO, in effect, justified its continued existence on the premise that Russia might retaliate to the real threat NATO was posing by its militarisation of areas ever nearer to Russia. And all the while NATO was supposedly countering aggressive intent!

As Professor Richard Sakwa of the University of Kent has written:

“The Trotskyite roots of US neocon thinking are well-known, and for them the world revolution was not cancelled but only transformed: the fight now was not for revolutionary socialism but for capitalist democracy—to make the world safe for the US. This became a self-fulfilling prophecy: by treating Russia as the enemy, in the end it was in danger of becoming one. NATO found a new role, which was remarkably similar to the end it had been set up to perform in the first place—to ‘contain’ Russia...” (*Frontline Ukraine*, p.5).

President Obama, perceiving danger, promised a “*reset*” with Russia.

As a Senator, Obama had regarded the heavily-armed Ukraine as a danger to the world and had won \$48 million in federal funding to help Ukraine to destroy thousands of tons of its Soviet-era weaponry. In August 2005 Obama travelled to Donetsk and Kiev with Republican Senator Dick Lugar. The two met in Kiev with President Victor Yushchenko, making the case that an existing *Cooperative Threat Reduction Program* covering the destruction of nuclear weapons should be expanded to include artillery, small arms, anti-aircraft weapons, and conventional ammunition of all kinds.

Ukraine had become a major arms exporter, fuelling conflict in various regions of the world. The UN had identified 7 million small arms and light weapons, and 2 million tons of conventional ammunition, warehoused in more than 80 weapons depots spread across the country. “*We need to eliminate these stockpiles for the safety of the Ukrainian people and people around world, by keeping them out of conflicts around the world*” stated Senator Obama. A year later, President George W. Bush signed into law a proposal authored by Obama and Lugar.

This illustrates that there was an awareness in the United States that Ukraine posed a threat to world peace in one way or another and Obama entered the Presidency with this view.

However, on 15th July 2009, Obama was warned in an open letter by leading intellectuals and Russophobe politicians from Central and Eastern Europe against a policy of “*appeasement of Russia*”. They stressed the important US/Atlanticist influence which they represented in Europe: keeping the EU as a component of the US-created security system against peace tendencies among the Western Europeans.

That was a warning shot by the eastern-enlarged EU across Obama’s bows against any thought he might be entertaining of coming to an accommodation with Moscow. The new President was told that US influence in Europe would be diminished by such a peace policy if he chose to depart from the inherited US policy.

That letter and other developments connected the process of EU enlargement—which Russia had been comfortable with up to that point—to the Atlanticist military enlargement policy, which it rigorously opposed.

For Moscow, the EU had clearly abandoned the Gaullist narrative of European security—that had sought to make Europe allied to, but separate from, Washington—in favour of being a Russophobe instrument of Western military expansionism.

In 2008, the European Union launched its *Eastern Partnership Program*, which was tasked with strengthening EU relationships with all the former USSR’s European republics—including Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia—to prepare the way for EU Eastern expansion to the East.

But the EU, in preparing the partners for EPP association agreements, specifically excluded Russia, signalling that it was seeking to isolate Russia’s economy from its neighbours.

Russia’s fears that the European Union represented a Trojan Horse to the East were confirmed in 2013-14 in Kiev when the EU acted as the harbinger of NATO enlargement and Western military advance into Ukraine.

President Obama appointed Hilary Clinton as Secretary of State in his first administration (2009-13). Clinton seems to have been given a free hand by the President, who focused on a domestic

agenda and was mindful that the Democrats wished to make Clinton the first Woman President of the US after having the first Black President. Having trumped Clinton in the identity politics conflict of race vs. gender in the Democrat nomination, Obama was inclined to let the woman have her way, despite the fact that she had very different political intentions than the black man in the White House.

Clinton packed her State Department with Democrat *neocons*, who had a messianic view of the world. She was a Putin-hater who described the Russian President as being “*a man without a soul*”.

Clinton had a hawkish world-view and urged Obama to take stronger action in Afghanistan, Libya and Syria. When John Kerry took over as Obama’s Secretary of State in 2013 he made no attempt to create his own team. The State Department was still headed by Assistant Secretary of State, Victoria Nuland—who had made a seamless passage from Republican neocon Dick Cheney’s staff to Clinton’s and Kerry’s. Nuland’s husband is Robert Kagan, founder of the *New American Century* think-tank.

Kagan was one of the foremost advocates of *American Exceptionalism*, asserting that the US should override International Law when required, to make the world safe for Americans.

The US State Department is not what it was during the Cold War. It is an ideologically-driven body, heavily populated by careerist academics, and has an ever-diminishing sense of reality about the world. And it seeks to dominate the Pentagon and control the US Generals by wielding ideological control over them.

Besides the war-hawk neocons in the Obama administration, there were the liberal, humanitarian interventionists like John Kerry, Samantha Power, Catherine Ashton and Susan Rice. These people, often also academics of a leftist persuasion who had the best of intentions in the world, often found themselves promoting the worst of all outcomes for the people they wished to save. They provided the moral gloss over the neocon substance so that killing and destruction was done for the best possible motives.

Obama struggled to restrain the war-hawks and liberal interventionists after the Arab Spring, that began in 2010. The Arab Spring rejuvenated the neocons, who had been chastened by the experience of Iraq but now put it about that the Arab Spring was proof of the efficacy of their policy of smashing up the Muslim world so that the fragments would result in democracy!

The Arab Spring was a delayed reaction to the liberation of Iraq, according to the neocons, and they wanted more of the same—even if they had to act more subtly under Obama’s watch. The new policy brought the liberal interventionists, who had baulked at the vulgar military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, onboard for the good work of humanitarian *democracy-building* against *authoritarians*.

However, when the democracy established in Egypt under the Muslim Brotherhood turned out to be not to the liking of Washington, it aborted the Arab Spring there and supported a military *coup*!

The disasters in Syria, Libya, Georgia and Ukraine all flowed from the Obama administration’s half-baked and *confused Arab Spring* policy, which was neither one thing nor the other and which whetted the appetite of the Washington war-hawks but ultimately left them unsated.

Obama ceded day-to-day control of US foreign policy to his new Secretary of State, John Kerry, as he had done in his first term to Secretary of State Clinton (which had resulted in the Syrian debacle). But both President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry were often disengaged when it came to what their State Department was actually doing.

The US President’s most important role in Foreign Policy is to restrain those powerful elements in US society which are instinctively clamouring for an extension of US power across the world through war, if necessary.

President Obama was pulled in two directions by events that he made no attempt to shape himself: caution, and a recoiling from what had happened in Iraq, told him that spreading democracy where it was not suitable was a dangerous game that would not end well for either the US or those it inflicted its democratic revolutions upon.

But a strong element in his party were liberal democratic ideologues who only objected to the neocons on the basis that US wars should be fought for ‘good causes’, like democratic advancement, rather than for selfish national interest. This element had as their predecessors the English Liberals of 1914 who championed the Great War as a war for democracy and ended up destroying Europe in two successive World Wars.

THE WASHINGTON-INSPIRED COUP IN KIEV

For Washington liberal interventionists and neocons alike, the Ukrainian crisis of

2013 offered the opportunity to complete the unfinished business of the Orange Revolution of 2004, pushing aside Western European caution and consolidating US hegemony. Obama's Vice President, Joe Biden, and the influential neo-con Victoria Nuland, along with Jake Sullivan, were up to their necks in the overthrow of the elected Ukrainian Government in Kiev in 2014. Nuland was caught plotting the installation of a Washington-friendly Government weeks before the Maidan coup in Kiev in 2014.

In an intercepted phone call with the US Ambassador in Kiev, Geoffrey Pyatt, Nuland stressed that she would need the support of Joe Biden and Jake Sullivan to ensure the plan's success with Biden moving regime change along at the appropriate time (see Richard Sakwa, *Frontline Ukraine*, p.87).

Biden signed on to Nuland's plan, positioning himself as the key US official coordinating with the post-coup Ukrainian Government that seized power after Maidan and drove the elected Ukrainian President into exile. The Vice President visited Kiev on at least two occasions in 2014 and more afterwards. "*No one in the U.S. government has wielded more influence over Ukraine than Vice President Joe Biden*," concluded *Foreign Policy* in late 2016.

The Ukrainian citizens of the East, who had been content within the Ukrainian state bequeathed by the Soviets as long as their identity was protected, rejected the legitimacy of the coup government and began to voice support for independence from Kiev and the neo-Nazi elements who had helped the new administration to power.

They had seen a foreign-backed *putsch* overthrow a democratically elected government which they had overwhelmingly voted for. In fact, polls taken at the time, published in the Western-owned *Kiev Post*, show a slim majority of Ukrainians opposed to Maidan.

The response from the illegal coup regime was to label its own citizens which opposed it "*Russian proxies*" and "*terrorists*", and Kiev attacked the Eastern portions of the country, bombarding it indiscriminately with missiles and artillery ("*murdering its own people*" in Western parlance).

Kiev attacked its own citizens – something which the Obama administration had declared justified US involvement in Syria and Libya – but not Russian intervention to protect Russians across its border in Ukraine.

When Obama saw what happened at

Maidan and in Donbas he drew back and attempted to restrain the Washington war hawks fermenting escalation. He got cold feet over what was being attempted and put a block on weapons exports to those who had provoked a war in the east of Ukraine—that had brought Russian intervention in Crimea and more reluctantly into the Donbas.

Obama's view, which is contained in reports in the *New York Times*, was that these weapons would end up in the hands of neo-Nazi thugs and dangerously escalate the conflict. Apparently, every senior White House official opposed Obama's restraint.

The *Minsk II* accords of 2015 came out of Obama's restraining. After suffering military defeats from the forces of the peoples in Eastern Ukraine that had declared themselves independent of the coup Government, an agreement between Donbas and the coup Government was arrived at that became known as the *Minsk II Agreement*. The terms of the Agreement included a commitment to a ceasefire, along with a degree of autonomy for Donbas. That agreement staved off all-out war, reducing conflict to skirmishes, and provided some degree of stability, until the Biden administration came to power.

However, to get the war hawks and liberal interventionists to agree to a policy of conflict resolution, Obama had to agree to a massive round of sanctions against Russia, from March 2014—which seriously damaged US/Russia relations. These sanctions were aimed at heading off the dangerous Senate Bill S.2277 (*Russian Aggression Prevention Act 2014*)—which sought to authorise the US to grant Ukraine "*allied nation*" status, independent of NATO membership – meaning Washington would be empowered to send troops to Ukraine and to commit NATO to war with Russia.

As George Friedman commented, US sanctions were not believed to be able to change the Kremlin's policy, which resulted from US actions, they were in fact,

"designed to make it look like the United States is trying to change Russian policy and... aimed at those in Congress who have made this a major issue and at those parts of the State Department that want to orient US national security around the issue of human rights. Both can be told that something is being done—and both can pretend that something is being done—when in fact nothing can be done" (*Frontline Ukraine*, p.203).

So something more had to be done if Washington wished to advance its agenda.

By the time of Minsk II, Obama was entering the last two-years of his second and final term of his Presidency and the belief was that Hilary Clinton, who was more to the liking of the Warhawks, would unconstrain things when she became President in 2018. The Washington Warhawks bided their time while the far-right hardliners in Ukraine subverted Minsk through violent protests—which resulted in the deaths of people outside the parliament in Kiev. Ukrainian President Poroshenko acquiesced to the Minsk Agreement after Kiev's forces encountered determined resistance and mounting losses in the east, and the destruction the war was causing began to affect his support.

During this time, Vice President Biden was in frequent communication with President Poroshenko but Biden did nothing to encourage him to support a negotiated settlement (*Frontline Ukraine*, p.172).

Some more spirited Washington war hawks, including Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham, went to Kiev to actively sabotage the Minsk Accords in December 2016. They had condemned the Obama administration in April 2014 for its lack of meaningful action and stated that the US must lead the charge in Ukraine (*Frontline Ukraine*, p.190).

Senator Graham told the Ukrainians that 2017 would see a new offensive fully backed by Washington and the year of victory in the east.

At the same time the coup Government in Kiev humoured the lame-duck US President.

Ex-Ukrainian President Poroshenko, Zelensky's predecessor, admitted recently that: "*The Minsk Agreements did not mean anything to us, and we had no intention to carry them out... our goal was to remove the threat we faced... and win time in order to restore economic growth and rebuild the armed forces. We achieved this goal. Mission accomplished for the Minsk Agreements.*"

Obama was a liberal globalist, supportive of the "*pivot to Asia*" that would re-orientate the US away from pointless and expensive wars in the Middle East to confront the new challenge of China facing US political and economic hegemony. It seems that, at the outset of his presidency, he wanted to conduct a traditional pragmatic and realist US foreign policy that restrained the messianic impulses of US world leadership.

However, to achieve this he would have had to override substantial vested interests and powerful political opposition in Washington to conclude a functional

security agreement with Russia. Bringing Moscow into a process of meaningfully participating in decisions of the most important political and security questions in Europe that affected it was the only way of offsetting the antagonising of relations brought about by NATO enlargement.

As Russian President (2008-12), Medvedev had proposed a new European Security Treaty in June 2008, providing for the creation of a genuinely inclusive security system to ensure a new Iron Curtain did not appear on the continent. This would build on the economic linkages that were developing between Europe and Russia and which could lead to a wider Eurasian integration.

This occurred just before Obama was elected President. But Washington was dead against better political and economic relations between Europe and Russia that would lead to a working relationship developing. Europe had to be kept in antagonism to Russia to preserve US hegemony over Europe—a hegemony that was much harder to maintain if Europe became part of something much larger that the US could not dominate. In this policy America was fortunate to have the East European Russophobes as allies.

The US objective of maintaining an antagonism between Europe and Russia had been made clear when Gorbachev was collapsing the USSR and was proposing to James Baker that Russia join NATO to end the Cold War. Baker, diplomatically rejecting the offer, told Gorbachev that *“Pan-European security is a dream”*. President George H. Bush made it clear to the French President, Francois Mitterrand, at the same time, that it was NATO which would act as security for Europe and not any kind of European alliance (see *A Broken Promise, Foreign Affairs*, September 2014, p.95).

The US was determined to maintain its hold on Europe even after the Cold War was over and NATO’s *raison d’être* had vanished, and it needed to maintain antagonism and fear in Europe to do so.

President Obama’s administration had no strategic policy on foreign affairs. He merely refereed competing interests in Washington, curbing the most extremist military adventurism of the neocons, after the disaster in Iraq. But, when he failed to reverse the course of US policy in Europe, and allowed his officials to destabilise Ukraine, he seriously aggravated relations with Russia. It was the well-meaning Obama, more than any other President,

who put Ukraine on the path of destruction during his term of office.

THE TRUMP AND ZELENSKY INTERRUPTION (FAILED)

Two events conspired to obstruct the plans of the war hawks in Washington and the irredentist nationalists in Kiev: Firstly, the maverick candidate, Donald Trump unexpectedly won the Republican candidacy for the Presidency and then unexpectedly defeated Hilary Clinton in the November 2016 Presidential election. Secondly, an anti-corruption candidate with a peace programme for resolving the conflict in the east, Volodymyr Zelensky, was elected in a landslide victory over Poroshenko in the second round of the Ukrainian Presidential elections in April 2019.

The rogue President Trump was problematic for the Ukrainian hardliners because he had an antagonism to needless, unprofitable wars. He did not see the sense in wasting American money on dubious foreign adventures when it could be better spent on rejuvenating US manufacture at home.

Trump also had a problem with Kiev because Ukrainian’s largest energy producer, Burisma, had mysteriously handed Joe Biden’s incapable and drug-addicted son, Hunter Biden, a seat on the Board in April 2014 at a crucial point in the regime change.

Joe Biden was the chief driver of Ukraine’s energy independence from Russia. This seemed to cement a close relationship between the Biden family and Kiev for purposes that went beyond personal gain. It meant that a foreign policy in Kiev could be pursued by elements in the Washington Establishment beyond the reach of the democratically elected President.

In September 2019 a whistleblower in US Intelligence lodged a formal complaint against President Trump for withholding a significant military aid package of 400 million dollars to Ukraine because Kiev was refusing an inquiry into the murky relationship between Biden’s son and the Ukrainian State.

This formed the basis of Trump’s impeachment by the US House of Representatives. In his opening statement at Trump’s trial, Democratic impeachment manager Adam Schiff stated: *“The United States aids Ukraine and her people, so that we can fight Russia over there, and we don’t have to fight Russia here.”*

Trump was impeached by the House, but saved from removal from office by the Senate, where the Republican Senators

rallied against the Democrat impeachment of the popularly elected President. Trump, upon surviving, began a purge of untrustworthy Russia and Ukraine ‘experts’ from his staff. But he was forced by Congress to release the US military funds for Kiev he had held back.

The Washington war-hawks capitalised on the *“Russiagate”* frenzy instigated against Trump (which accused Putin of winning the Presidency for the rogue president) to achieve a turn-about in policy. Heavy bipartisan lobbying, coupled with Trump’s own incentive to disprove the allegations against him that he was beholden to the Kremlin, influenced the President to consent to the removal of the Obama blocks on weapon escalation and approve the sale of Javelin anti-tank missiles to Ukraine. Trump was neutered by the war lobby.

Upon his election, Zelensky boldly declared that he was *“not afraid to lose my own popularity, my ratings,”* and he was *“prepared to give up my own position—as long as peace arrives.”*

However, Ukraine’s powerful far-right and neo-Nazi militias made it clear to Zelensky that he would pay a far higher price if he persisted in his peace programme in the Donbas. *“No, he would lose his life”*, Right Sector co-founder Dmytro Anatoliyovych Yarosh, Commander of the Ukrainian Volunteer Army, said after Zelensky’s inaugural speech. *“He will hang on some tree on Khreshchatyk—if he betrays Ukraine and those people who died in the Revolution and the War”*.

When Zelensky went to the Donbas in October 2019 to promote elections for the separatist areas, he was confronted by members of the Azov Battalion rallying under the slogan, *“No to Capitulation”*. In a videoed exchange, Zelensky told an Azov member: *“I’m the president of this country. I’m 41 years old. I’m not a loser. I came to you and told you: remove the weapons.”* Armed mobs were sent to the President’s office in Kiev, where those who defended the President were attacked and killed on occasion. Yuri Hudymenko, leader of the far-right *Democratic Ax*, threatened Zelensky with another *coup* if Minsk was signed: *“If anybody from the Ukrainian government tries to sign such a document, a million people will take to the streets and that government will cease being the government.”*

Zelensky got the message. With Washington doing nothing to protect his back, and allying with the far-right groups in Ukraine, Zelensky shot down the *Minsk*

Agreement and brought on the Russian military intervention.

Professor Stephen Cohen told Aaron Maté in October 2019:

"...“Zelensky ran as a peace candidate... He won an enormous mandate to make peace. So, that means he has to negotiate with Vladimir Putin.” But there was a major obstacle. Ukrainian fascists “have said that they will remove and kill Zelensky if he continues along this line of negotiating with Putin... His life is being threatened literally by a quasi-fascist movement in Ukraine.” Peace could only come, Cohen stressed, on one condition. “[Zelensky] can’t go forward with full peace negotiations with Russia, with Putin, unless America has his back,” he said. “Maybe that won’t be enough, but unless the White House encourages this diplomacy, Zelensky has no chance of negotiating an end to the war. So the stakes are enormously high.”

...“There were moments in history, political history, when there’s an opportunity that is so good and wise and so often lost – the chance... So, the chance for Zelensky, the new president who had this very large victory, 70 plus percent to negotiate with Russia an end to that war, it’s got to be seized. And it requires the United States, basically, simply saying to Zelensky, ‘Go for it, we’ve got your back’...”

The Washington Establishment did not support Zelensky’s peace programme. It subverted it in alliance with hardliners and Nazis in Ukraine and turned the new President toward its objectives of using Ukraine to escalate its geopolitical war on Russia.

BIDEN’S PROMISE

"Speaking at the Munich Security Conference in early 2019, former Vice-President Joe Biden had a reassuring message for European politicians, diplomats, and military leaders worried about American disengagement: “We will be back!” Biden’s speech was met with applause and relief. Wait out the tenure of President Donald Trump... Patience is the name of the game” (*Foreign Affairs*, July 2019, p.109).

The defeat of Donald Trump and election of the liberal interventionist Joe Biden as President in November 2020 would have confirmed Zelensky’s new direction as the only possible way of remaining in power for the Ukrainian President.

By that time Zelensky had alienated a large part of Ukraine’s political class, having had former President Poroshenko arrested for treason and banned Opposition TV channels, sidelined oligarchs from politics, changed the Supreme Court against the Constitution and passed laws to curtail the Russian language. He was

increasingly unpopular and there was a growing feeling in the country that he was not up to the job of President.

There is a close parallel between Nikol Pashinyan, the former media man who became Armenian Prime Minister—who reversed his accommodationist position in the face of hardline opposition intimidation and dashed hopes by subverting his own peace process—and Zelensky’s experience in Ukraine. In Pashinyan’s case Azerbaijan lost patience and launched a military campaign against the Armenian occupation in Karabakh, after a peace process was run into the ground; and similarly Putin concluded likewise and as a consequence, he acted.

An early signal that Biden would continue the proxy war in Ukraine came with his appointment of Victoria Nuland as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. The *National Interest* commented on 15 January 2021 in an op-ed, “*Joe Biden’s Pick of Victoria Nuland Means Relations With Russia Could Get Worse*”:

“Reports of Nuland’s future appointment are sure to come as a source of elation to the government in Kiev. By the same token, they send perhaps the clearest message yet to Moscow that the prospects for meaningful US-Russian *rapprochement* under a Biden administration appear exceedingly slim”

Biden, Sullivan, Nuland, and Blinken had done nothing to support the Minsk Accords, while simultaneously provoking Russia, by crossing its red line against NATO expansion into Ukraine.

Jonathan Kirshner wrote in *Foreign Affairs* of March 2021, in the aftermath of the Trump Presidency:

“Now, NATO faces existential threats on both sides of the Atlantic. In Europe, authoritarian backsliding in Hungary, Poland and Turkey is endangering the notion of the alliance as a like-minded security community. A NATO that contains authoritarian members will rot from within. In the United States, meanwhile, growing skepticism of internationalism may mean that the country no longer has any interest in pursuing *milieu* goals... the implications of American abandonment would go far beyond the continent... There is no region of the world where revised assessments about the United States will be more consequential than Asia... If countries figure that the United States is out, or indifferent, then many will decide they have little choice but to bandwagon with China...” (p.25-6).

NATO was there to fight a land war against the Soviet Union in Europe. From the 1990s the Soviet Union did not have the will or capability of waging such a war. Even today, the revived

Russian Army would not have the will or the capability that Stalin and subsequent Soviet leaders had in the generation after World War Two.

It is clear from this that NATO required a great purpose to be reinvigorated from its torpor and increasing sense of redundancy. If it was not to die, it had to be shown to be useful in a world in which many believed it had outlived its purpose. But it is clear from this account that, while NATO is formally a defensive military organisation, it seems to be really a front for the US *universalising mission*.

In August 2021, Washington and Kiev signed the *US/Ukraine Strategic Defence Framework*, providing for collaboration:

“to advance the military capabilities and readiness of Ukraine to preserve the country’s territorial integrity, progress toward NATO interoperability, and promote regional security”

and called for a “*closer partnership of defense intelligence communities in support of military planning and defensive operations*”.

This was followed in November 2021 by the US-Ukrainian *Charter on Strategic Partnership*, which declared US support for “*Ukraine’s aspirations to join NATO*”. The Agreement emphasized “*Ukraine’s efforts to maximize its status as a NATO Enhanced Opportunities Partner*”, a position which represents a special status for a select number of NATO allies earmarked for increased NATO weapons shipments and integration.

In an enlightening recent interview, Zelensky disclosed that Washington seems to have employed the threat of Ukrainian membership of NATO as bait to draw Russia militarily into the country:

“I requested them [NATO] personally to say directly that we are going to accept you into NATO in a year or two or five, just say it directly and clearly, or just say no. And the response was very clear, you’re not going to be a NATO member, but publicly, the doors will remain open.”

Washington, by maintaining that the “*doors will remain open*” to Ukraine joining NATO, while having no actual intention of fulfilling the pledge, deliberately crossed a Russian red line that practically made Russian military intervention certain. Zelensky, by this time, seems to have decided to fully play Washington’s game of luring the Russians into his country by making provocative statements about reviving a nuclear capability on Ukrainian territory.

Back in power, President Biden and the Democrats reclaimed the *forward to war* policy and began to encourage Kiev to ignore the Minsk II Agreement and forcefully retake control of Donbas.

Russian Foreign Intelligence, which had heavily penetrated Ukrainian state security, learnt in early February 2022 that a large offensive was planned against Donbas in the forthcoming weeks. Massive bombardments of Russian-Ukrainian areas during mid-February backed up this Intelligence.

The exact date of the offensive was not known (late February, mid-March or late March). The only question was: was this offensive real or had Washington and Kiev produced an elaborate hoax to make it impossible for the Russians not to act to preempt it?

WILL WASHINGTON EVER END THE WAR?

The war in Ukraine is Washington's war because US administrations instigated the war as part of universalistic objectives much wider than the detaching of Ukraine from the Russian sphere of influence. Only Washington has the power to stop it (and presumably move on to instigate trouble elsewhere e.g. China/Taiwan).

But Washington is unlikely to either do the necessary to win the war nor will it allow Russia win at the conference table. What it will do is prolong the war indefinitely to prevent anything that looks like a Russian victory and it will intervene to keep it going when the Ukrainians finally buckle.

President Biden's statement of 30 April, *What America Will And Will Not Do In Ukraine*, published in the *New York Times*, seems to indicate a reduction in US war objectives (which are the West's war aims to all intents and purposes):

"America's goal is straightforward: We want to see a democratic, independent, sovereign and prosperous Ukraine with the means to deter and defend itself against further aggression... We do not seek a war between NATO and Russia. As much as I disagree with Mr. Putin, and find his actions an outrage, the United States will not try to bring about his ousting in Moscow... My principle throughout this crisis has been "Nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine." I will not pressure the Ukrainian government—in private or public—to make any territorial concessions. It would be wrong and contrary to well-settled principles to do so."

The initial objective of Washington was to collapse the Russian economy and have

Putin overthrown in a *coup* of some kind, before moving on China. Now the formal aim of overthrowing Putin or capturing Crimea (as Lloyd Austin and Liz Truss declared) seems to be off the agenda.

The territorial integrity of Ukraine is no longer a principle to be fought for by Washington. This is now dependent on Kiev's will and ability to fight for it.

The statement seems to give agency to the Ukrainians but it is quite deceptive.

What it means for the Ukrainians is that they will have to fight as hard as they can in order to continue receiving the Western aid necessary to sustain their effort and, if they ever shirk "*democracy's battle*", they will have to settle with Russia on the basis of the situation on the battlefield. That means a choice of "*fighting to the last Ukrainian*" or suing for peace with Moscow.

Russia has more limited objectives in Ukraine than the West has. Moscow will settle for a buffer in the east and south of Ukraine—if it is allowed to. But that would be a crushing defeat for both Ukraine and the West and it would justify Putin's original decision to launch the military campaign.

It would be a third defeat for the West against Russia after the proxy wars in Syria and Libya, but one with a much higher price in prestige and morale.

Moscow now knows that a long war of generational proportions is on the cards for it in Ukraine. It will presumably be preparing plans for assaults on Kharkov and Odessa in early 2023, following static lines over Winter.

The shelling of the Zaporozhe nuclear power plant (which supplies Donbas) by Kiev's forces and the missile/sabotage attacks on Crimea (which Kiev has denied) are obvious provocations meant to draw Russia into a war i.e. to turn the *Special Military Operation* into a full scale Russian war on Ukraine that could justify greater Western intervention.

Limitation, not escalation, is in the Russian interest. That strategy is borne out by the fact that there is not enough manpower in the 200,000 strong Russian expeditionary force to capture the main Ukrainian urban centres. Moscow is reluctant to mobilise the Russian population for war unless it proves absolutely necessary to do so.

All the indications are that the Kremlin is determined to avoid an escalation with the West if at all possible. Putin is a cautious and conservative statesman whose bold

move was the Special Military Operation. It is not in Russia's interest to occupy any Ukrainian territory that Russia does not need to occupy for its own security and for that of the Russian Ukrainians it now fights for.

Russia's preference is that any occupied territory it gains would be governed and defended by local elements developed over time for the specific purpose of operating a buffer. It may be believed in the Kremlin that there is no reason to suggest Ukrainians outside of the Galician West of the country would not be willing to undertake such a task when Kiev/Western failure becomes apparent.

It may be that the Washington realises Russia cannot be defeated in Ukraine without risking a World War. The probability is that Washington would have no problem in dropping Zelensky and reconstituting the Kiev regime to continue the war. It has been signalled in the *New York Times* through Thomas Friedman, who is close to Biden, that relations between Washington and Zelensky are strained.

That type of story is often an indication of preparation of the American public for a change in policy. There are rumours that some oligarchs, who Zelensky has made bitter enemies of, are readying themselves to move against the Ukrainian President if the signal is given.

Prof. John Mearsheimer has recently concluded in *Foreign Affairs*:

"The Biden administration should have worked with Russia to settle the Ukraine crisis before war broke out in February. It is too late now to strike a deal. Russia, Ukraine, and the West are stuck in a terrible situation with no obvious way out. One can only hope that leaders on both sides will manage the war in ways that avoid catastrophic escalation."

Prof. Geoffrey Roberts, when pressed about how the conflict will end during a recent roundtable discussion, suggested that only when it reaches the stage of a choice having to be made between the use of tactical nuclear weapons in Ukraine (or its European hinterland) or a conference, will there be a stop to the war. At that point there is some kind of victory for all. One hopes he is correct if it comes to that.

That is the sad and stark reality that faces Ukrainians, however it is dressed up in Western propaganda, which has always been designed to keep the truth from them, and from the Western public, for as long as possible.

Pat Walsh

Number 2

The Brian Murphy osb Archive

A review to mark the publication of
Volume 1 of *'The Irish Bulletin'* (2012), Part 2
(Continued from *Irish Political Review*, August 2022)

The Irish Bulletin

On the day that the *Irish Bulletin* began publication, 11th November 1919, the first anniversary of Armistice Day, there were armed clashes in central Dublin and four lorries containing police and soldiers raided the headquarters of Dáil Éireann at 76 Harcourt Street.

Erskine Childers witnessed the raid and recorded that —

"the morning upon which two minutes silence had been ordained to commemorate 'the divine blessing of peace', the police and military carried out an armed raid upon the Dáil's offices and arrested every male person upon the premises indiscriminately and without warrant".

He concluded that

"we must take a wide view of history to find a parallel for this. Germany has nothing like it to her credit" (Childers, *Law and Order in Ireland*, Dec. 1919, *Studies*, ibid. p.602).

This account by Childers was taken from an article in *Studies* of December 1919 and it is worthy of note that both *Studies* and the *Catholic Bulletin* provide important source material for the period.

In the face of these difficult circumstances, the *Irish Bulletin* was first published for five days per week and initially the print run was only fifty; very soon, however, it was in the hundreds; and by the Truce of July 1921 about 1,000 copies were distributed worldwide (*Documents of Irish Foreign Policy*, Vol. 1 1919-1922, document 102, August 1921; Kathleen McKenna Napoli, 'Irish Bulletin', *Capuchin Annual*, 1970; Keiko Inoue, *Propaganda II: Propaganda of Dáil Éireann, 1919-1921*, in Joost Augusteijn, ed., *The Irish Revolution*, Palgrave/Basingstoke, 2002).

Kathleen McKenna claimed to have typed and mimeographed all of the copies that were produced. There were some five other members of the staff and there was co-operation with the offices of Diarmuid O'Hegarty, Secretary to Dáil Éireann, and his staff who were based in O'Connell Street. The filing and indexing of information was very professional: McKenna, for

example, claimed that she was responsible for "the Macpherson file". That such a file existed confirms the earlier statements of Brennan and Gallagher and speaks volumes about the level of research and the detailed planning which characterised the work that went into the *Irish Bulletin*.

The work was carried out under the constant threat of arrest and, for that reason, the location was frequently moved: from Harcourt Street to 22 Upper Mount Street and then to 11 Molesworth Street where, for some time, it occupied offices in the same building as the Crown Solicitor (Hogan, *Four Glorious Years*, pp 118,119; Robert Brennan, *Allegiance*, Browne and Nolan/Dublin, 1950, pp 264,265).

The cost of running the Department for the first six months up to 31st May 1920 was c.£900 (£889..17..10 to be precise): £392 for salaries; £235 for printing and stationery; and £261 was dispensed by the Head of the Department (*Documents of Irish Foreign Policy*, Document 36, June 1920). These expenses were considerable and they provide a clear example of Dáil Éireann attempting to act as an effective Government.

Both FitzGerald and Childers established valuable contacts in London with representatives of the world's press and were assisted by Art O'Brien, the Dáil representative in London — although he did have some differences with FitzGerald (Mitchell, *Revolutionary Government*, pp 104,105). Their efforts were helped, in particular, by the Dáil Department of Foreign Affairs which, like the Department of Publicity, acted as if it was an institution of a working government.

The published documents of the Department provide invaluable source material for the period. There was a frank admission that the representatives of the foreign press living in London were dependent on English sources, emanating from Dublin Castle, for their news of Ireland. It was in order to combat this source of news that FitzGerald spent much time in London and got in touch with many representatives of the foreign press and persuaded them to

accept the *Irish Bulletin*. He found these men, in his own words, to be "friendly and interested".

In order to get immediate news to these sources he turned to Martin Fitzgerald of the *Freeman's Journal*, who allowed him a daily transmission of 300 words on that paper's private wire — a source of publicity that has largely gone unrecognised (DFA, Docsm 36 and 41).

The efforts of Fitzgerald and Childers were eminently successful. On 26th April 1920, the *Irish Bulletin* spelt out just how many press correspondents had visited Ireland in response to a claim in the *Morning Post* (23 April 1920) that

"the British public know little enough of what is really happening in Ireland, because no newspaper correspondent, unless he is a Sinn Féiner, is safe in that country."

Under a humorous heading, *Press Correspondents who Escaped Death in Ireland*, the *Bulletin* listed fifteen London newspapers which had sent representatives to Ireland, including a special correspondent of the *Morning Post*. It then named twelve correspondents of the foreign press who had recently visited Ireland and noted that, far from being murdered, they had publicly acknowledged the courtesy shown to them by Sinn Féin Headquarters (IB, 26 April 1920, pp 454,455 of book).

Another important strategy to spread the information contained in the *Irish Bulletin* was to provide copy to friendly Members of Parliament who, in turn, raised questions in the House of Commons. The information was then given prominence again by the *Bulletin*. For example, Anthony Wedgwood Benn, a friend of Childers, who had visited Ireland in November 1919, raised questions on arrests in Parliament on 9th December.

His questions and critical comments about the condition of Ireland were then given a second airing, on 22nd December, under the provocative heading, *Coercion Provokes Outrages*. By the time of the Truce (11 July 1921), several MPs were co-operating with the Dáil Propaganda Department in this manner of presenting facts about Ireland.

This process of using a striking headline as a preface to a succinct account of an important issue became an integral part of the *Irish Bulletin*'s policy. For example, on 26th November 1919, under the heading *Irish Soldiers and English Rule*, the *Irish Bulletin* reported that Ian Macpher-

son, the Chief Secretary, had stated that "*Irish soldiers have had a very difficult time since returning to civil life*". The *Bulletin* responded by stating that "*this statement applied to the vast majority of Irish soldiers is untrue*", and maintained that most of these ex-soldiers who had fought for "*the freedom of small nations returned to find their own country under the heel of a militarism undreamt by the Prussian*". To prove its point, the *Bulletin* recorded that it was for that reason that the *Irish Nationalist Veterans' Association*, the largest body of organised ex-soldier in Ireland, refused to participate in the Peace Day celebrations on 19th July "*because their country was in the grip of an alien Army of Occupation*" (*Irish Bulletin*, 26 Nov.1919, pp 101,102, citing *Irish Daily Press*, 17 July 1919).

Other examples were given and the theme was returned to regularly. For example, on 28th November 1919, one of the caption headings was *Ex-Soldiers against Macpherson Regime*, and details were given of the Irish Nationalist Veterans' Association resolution against the Government's repressive measures (IB, 28 Nov.1919, p.104).

This exposure of the military character of British rule and the lack of freedom of the press was a regular feature of the *Irish Bulletin*. For example, on 8th December 1919, under the heading *Archbishop of Dublin on English Rule*, it made its point in a telling fashion. Archbishop Walsh had made a donation of £105 to the *Dáil Loan* but, when no newspaper in Ireland would publish his donation, he wrote (on 10 November) to Cardinal O'Connell of New York and requested that the donation be passed on by him and made public. "The freedom of the Press", Archbishop Walsh wrote, "the right of public meeting, the right of personal liberty, even the right of trial by jury, no longer exist in this country, except in so far as they can exist subject to the absolutely uncontrolled discretion of some military ruler technically designated the "*competent military authority*". This authority, Walsh maintained, was the source of all Irish evils (IB, 8 Dec.1919, pp 121,122).

As if to prove Archbishop Walsh right, the *Freeman's Journal* was suppressed, on 15th December, under a directive from the Competent Military Authority and the DMP forcibly closed down the paper.

This pattern of a striking headline to illustrate a significant event continued to be a regular feature of the *Irish Bulletin*.

A new dimension, however, was added with the addition of in-depth articles on particular topics. One of the first of these was the coverage given to the Municipal Council Elections that were held on 16th January 1920. Using references from the *Manchester Guardian* (12 January), the *Bulletin* made the point that Dublin Castle had made it as difficult as possible for Sinn Féin to win the election. "*Dublin Castle suddenly discovered Proportional Representation*", the *Manchester Guardian* declared, "*as a means whereby a Sinn Féin majority would be prevented from becoming a Sinn Féin majority*" (IB, 19 Jan.1920).

The words of Arthur Griffith, taken from an interview with the *Irish Independent*, were then used by the *Bulletin* to add substance to this charge.

"Sinn Féin", Griffith stated, "had to face this election with its political organisation suppressed by the English Government, its election literature interdicted, its transit arrangements deliberately obstructed by the Motor Permit Order, its secretary, Alderman Kelly, seized and imprisoned without charge, and its Press stifled, and, in spite of all, it had swept the country" (IB, 20 Jan 1920 citing *Irish Indep.* 19 Jan.).

Sinn Féin had, indeed, swept the country and the *Bulletin* gave special significance to the victory in Derry—21 Sinn Féiners (Nationalists) to 19 Unionist—and, on 21st January, published Griffith's message to de Valera that "*Derry joins hands with Limerick in the unity of Ireland*".

There was an acute awareness that these election results presented a challenge to the special provisions for Ulster in the new Home Rule plans of Walter Long and Carson. The *Irish Bulletin*, using comments in the *Evening Telegraph*, made this clear on 23rd January, declaring that—

"the capture of Derry means much more than a victory in the domain of local politics. It is a symbol, the meaning of which can neither be ignored nor evaded by the inventors of a homogenous Ulster, the most notorious political fiction of our day."

In conclusion the *Bulletin* pointed out the same result had manifested itself all over what it termed "*the new state of Carsonia*", with Lurgan, Dungannon, Carrickfergus, Larne, Limavaddy, Cookstown and Lisburn all rejecting Carson nominees. (IB, 23 Jan.1919: from *Evening Telegraph*, 21 Jan.1919).

This awareness accurately reflected the policy on Ulster and Home Rule that was

being developed by influential Unionists at that very time. Walter Long reported on his visit to Ireland in January 1920 that—

"people in the inner circles hold the view that the new province should consist of the six counties, the idea being that the inclusion of Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan would provide such an access of strength to the Roman Catholic Party, that the supremacy of the Unionists would be seriously threatened."

It was this ideology, fundamentally sectarian, that led to a six county Ulster in the *Government of Ireland Act* of December 1920 (John Kendle, *Walter Long, Ireland, and the Union, 1905-1920*, Glendale/Dublin, 1992, p.186 citing W. Long, *Report on Visit to Ireland*, January 1920).

Other in depth articles, also vital to assessing the character of English rule in Ireland, were produced on the power politics at work in Dublin Castle. The articles were prompted by a series of actions taken against supporters of Dáil Éireann. For example, the *Irish Bulletin* (26 January 1920) carried a headline: *English Labour Delegates Astonished. Irish Industries Commission Suppressed by Force*. It then reported that a British Labour Party delegation had witnessed armed forces eject members of a *Commission of Enquiry* into Ireland's industrial resources from the Cork City Hall and had commented that it could not see any reason for such an action, "*unless it be part of a deliberate policy, calculated to hinder the development of Irish industries*" (IB, 26 Jan. 1920 pp 218,219).

In another example, the *Irish Bulletin* (2 Feb.1920) reported, under the headline *Wholesale Raids and Arrests by English Forces*, that over fifty homes had been raided in Dublin; and that Robert Barton, MP for West Wicklow, had been arrested. Barton's subsequent trial by court martial and deportation was reported later (IB, 2 Feb. 1920, p.234 and 24 Feb.1920, p.299).

Although it was not specified by the *Bulletin*, it was significant that Barton, as head of the Dáil Department of Agriculture, had created a *National Land Bank*, with Erskine Childers and Lionel Smith Gordon as leading advisers. All three men were Protestants. The arrest of Barton, therefore, was a blow not only to the development of Ireland's agricultural resources but also to the plans of Dáil Éireann for Protestants to play a leading role in the sensitive issue of land reform.

One hardly needs to note that this ecumenical approach by Dáil Éireann, and

the ruthless suppression of it by Dublin Castle, completely undermines the claim of Peter Hart that the republican movement was sectarian. His claim of "*ethnic cleansing*" refers to the years 1922/1923 and needs to be assessed in that context. (Peter Hart, *The IRA at War 1916-1923*, Oxford University Press/Oxford, p.237)

Faced by these events, and others like them, such as the deportation of c.50 Dublin citizens to Wormwood Scrubbs without trial in early February, the *Irish Bulletin* attempted to identify more precisely those responsible (IB, 9 Feb.1920, p.249 for *Representative Irishmen Deported*).

It headlined the issue of 24th February 1919: *Facts Concerning the Real Ruler of Ireland*. The starting point for this exposure of the regime in Dublin Castle was the statement in the *Sunday Chronicle* that "*the real ruler of Ireland is Sir John Taylor*" (IB, 24 Feb.1920, p.295; see IB 12 Dec.1919, p.131 for an earlier veiled reference to Taylor by Arthur Griffith). This title was justified by the *Irish Bulletin*, in a remarkably detailed account, which maintained that Taylor, the Assistant Under-Secretary, was "*the inspiring figure of the coercion regime*".

The case against Taylor was made by providing details of his career; his association with Arthur Balfour, when he was Chief Secretary for Ireland in the 1880's; his association with Walter Long as Chief Secretary in 1905-1906; his re-emergence, once again in association with Long, to a more influential position in 1918; and his dominant role at the Castle in late 1919/early 1920 with the absence of Ian Macpherson, Chief Secretary, from Ireland.

That Taylor—who it was claimed had contributed to the Piggott forgeries against Parnell, and to the preparatory work on the *Perpetual Coercion Act of 1887*—was the dominant power in Dublin Castle, spoke volumes about the British administration in Ireland. The exposure was made more complete, when the *Irish Bulletin* revealed Taylor's links with Alan Bell.

On 9th March 1920, the *Irish Bulletin* reported that Taylor had recalled his former colleague to Dublin Castle "*to assist in the connection of conspiracy charges against the Republican leaders*" (IB, 9 March 1920, pp 339,340). Bell's role with the English Secret Service in the 1880s and his part in the Piggott forgeries was then outlined. Copies of Bell's recent directives to Bank Managers to attend the Police Courts, Inns Quay, Dublin, on 8th March, to reveal their transactions with

Dáil Éireann or any banned organisation were then given. Bell was to preside over this court and his private papers reveal that he knew what he was looking for. In his file were: cheques from Michael Collins (Dáil Loan), from Robert Barton and Lionel Smith Gordon (National Land Bank), from Bishop Fogarty and James O'Mara (Dáil Trustees); and from Darrell Figgis (Secretary of Commission into Ireland's Resources and Industries).

Files on the deaths of policemen were also kept. (See Bell File, *List of Questions to Bank Managers*, and *Crime Enquiries* re. his investigation into the killing of policemen, CO 904/177/1, NA Kew).

In other words, Bell was engaged in a significant attack, not only on the constructive work of Dáil Éireann, but also on the activities of the Squad that Michael Collins had created.

The *Irish Bulletin* concluded that Bell had been appointed a Resident Magistrate to conceal his real work. The powers enjoyed by Bell, it maintained "*are greater than those conferred upon any of the Judges of the High Court of Justice in Great Britain and Ireland*"; and cited the *Freeman's Journal* that—

"no judge of the High Court in Ireland could order the witness to answer. But Mr Alan Bell, who holds office at the bidding of the Executive... may decide the great issues that are reserved from the judges of the High Court. And Mr Bell is a gentleman without legal training" (IB, 11 March, 1920, pp 346,347; Weekly 'Act of Aggression', IB, 8 March 1920, pp 35,351).

The detailed accounts of Taylor and Bell tell us much about the *Irish Bulletin* and the character of the war: for the *Irish Bulletin* State terror, as exemplified by Taylor and Bell's use of DORA [*Defence of the Realm Act*], was as much an enemy of Dáil Éireann as the British Crown Forces.

One does not use the term '*state terror*' lightly: it was used by William Wylie, the legal adviser to Dublin Castle at the time, who referred to Taylor and his supporters as "*the Taylor gang who believed in reprisals and terrorism and whose slogan was "No Home Rule..."*" (Leon O Broin, *W.E. Wylie and the Irish Revolution 1916-1921*, Gill and Macmillan/Dublin, 1989, p.53).

The term '*Terror*' was also used by the *Freeman's Journal*, when selecting a title for a book of its cartoons for the years 1920-1921. That book was called *The Reign of Terror*, and the cartoons were the work of an English artist, Ernest Forbes Holgate (1879-1962), known as '*Shemus*' (Felix M. Larkin, 'Terror and Discord. *The Shemus*

Cartoons in the Freeman's Journal, 1920-1924', Farmar/Dublin, 2009).

There would appear to be lessons here for the writing of the history of the period but, despite some fine articles, little attention is paid to this aspect of the conflict in the recent book on *Terror in Ireland, 1916-1923*, edited by David Fitzpatrick. (Lilliput/Dublin, 2012; see comprehensive reviews of this book by John M. Regan and Niall Meehan in the *Dublin Review of Books*).

CONCLUSION

The *Irish Bulletin*, having exposed the powers of Alan Bell, remained silent about his death. He was killed in Dublin, on 26th March 1920, by members of the Squad of Michael Collins. It was the policy of the *Bulletin* not to publish details of IRA killings. While this does diminish the comprehensive coverage given to the War, it does not take away from the accuracy of its account of British rule in Ireland, both civilian and military.

Instead of dealing with Bell, the *Bulletin* gave extensive coverage to the killing of Thomas MacCurtain, Lord Mayor of Cork, on 20th March 1920. The deaths of MacCurtain and Bell led to major changes both in Dublin Castle and at the *Irish Bulletin*.

The administration at Dublin Castle was changed by the enforced resignation of Sir John Taylor, Assistant Under-Secretary, on 19th April 1920 and the earlier appointment of Hamar Greenwood as Chief Secretary on 2nd April 1920.

The work of the *Irish Bulletin* was also changed by the arrest of Frank Gallagher on 27th March and his imprisonment in Mountjoy, where he joined the other prisoners on Hunger Strike. He was not released until 14 April and he was too weak to resume work until the end of the month (Hogan, *Four Glorious Years*, pp 149,150).

Gallagher was arrested under the name of David Hogan (see Frank Gallagher, *Days of Fear*, Murray/London, 1928 for an account of his hunger-strike).

Robert Brennan assumed the major responsibility for the *Irish Bulletin* during this period and he was greatly helped by Erskine Childers. These two men, therefore, were mainly responsible for the last month's publication of the *Bulletin* which appears in Volume 1.

Brennan and Childers began a new initiative on 23rd March. On that date Childers sent an article to the *Daily News* entitled *Military Rule in Ireland*. It was published on 29th March and was followed by seven other articles in April and May.

Extracts from these articles were then used by the *Irish Bulletin* to telling effect. For example, on 7th April, under the heading, *Military Rule in Ireland, what it Means to Women*, the *Irish Bulletin* recounted the case histories of several women—including that of Mrs. Maurice Collins, five weeks short of confinement whose husband was arrested under 14B of DORA and who was raided several times in the early hours of the morning.

Childers also wrote about an incident at Brennan's own house, in which his young wife and three young children were raided by soldiers with bayonets in the middle of the night, and he concluded that "*this is not a civilised war*". Brennan chose not to include this account of his own family in the *Irish Bulletin* (IB, 7 April 1920, pp 402,403; Erskine Childers, *Military Rule in Ireland*, Dublin 1920, pp 8-12).

Another extract from the *Dáil News* was published in the *Irish Bulletin* on 21st April 1920 under the heading, *The Army of Spies and their Work*. The words of Childers (one of the last items in this book) sum up the aims and aspirations of all those who worked in the Dáil Department of Publicity:

"I want to insist on this general statement that an attempt is being made to break up a whole national organisation, a living, vital, magnificent thing, normally and democratically evolved from the intense desire of a fettered and repressed people for self-reliance and self-development. This attempt, if we are to give words their right meaning, is the great, the fundamental crime" (IB, 21 April 1920, p.442; Erskine Childers, *Daily News*, 19 April 1920).

In a remarkable way, this analysis by Childers mirrors the conclusion by Lord Decies, made in March 1918 and cited earlier, that for Sinn Féin "*the leading text is that England holds Ireland by force, divorced from moral right*". This clear expression of the continuity of the lines of conflict confirms the suggestion that the year 1918 might be considered as the start of the Anglo-Irish War. Significantly, too, in the light of the recent book on *Terror in Ireland*, when the articles by Childers in the *Daily News* were published in French, they appeared under the title, *La Terreur Militaire en Irlande (The Military Terror in Ireland)*.

The very title summed up the case that the *Irish Bulletin* and Erskine Childers were trying to make: that is, the terror associated with military rule was preventing the democratic institutions of the Irish Republic from working. Moreover, it was clearly spelt out that the policy of that emerging democracy was not sectarian.

By not recognising the source value of the *Irish Bulletin* and the manuscript

material of those who worked on it, Peter Hart, and others, have constructed an alternative historical narrative; and, herein, lies the supreme irony. Many of the papers of Erskine Childers are to be found in the Manuscript Room at Trinity College and could profitably have been used to good historical effect.

However, on the one occasion that Peter Hart did refer to the Childers Papers, he was selective in his use of them. Although he did quote from the unpublished essay by Childers on *The Irish Revolution*, in which he described the Irish Volunteers as "*the soul of a new Ireland*" (Hart, *IRA and Enemies*, p.165), he saw fit not to include another passage from the essay in which Childers stated that—

"it is worth noting once more that the violence evoked in this year (1919) was slight. Nor was it indiscriminate or undisciplined. At no time, neither then nor subsequently, have civilians—Protestant Unionists living scattered and isolated in the South and West, been victimised by the republicans on account of their religion or religious opinion" (Erskine Childers, '*The Irish Revolution*', 8, Childers Papers, 7808/29, Trinity MS).

I adverted to the way in which Hart had used the essay by Childers in my review of his book in 1998 (see *The Month*, Sept./Oct. 1998, pp 381-383), but, as with the questions relating to his selective use of the Official Record of the Rebellion, no answers were ever given.

The use of source material is central to the historical debate and the issue is compounded by the fact that, from the very first, Peter Hart's publications were aired not only in the pages of academic studies but also in the pages of the press. Indeed, they were promoted by Kevin Myers in the *Irish Times* and by Eoghan Harris in the *Sunday Independent*.

The interventions by Harris are motivated, on his own admission, by a political purpose. Writing in the *Sunday Independent* on 17th December 2006, Harris admitted that he was a member of the Reform Group which "*for the past ten years have been trying to put Southern attacks against Protestants in 1921-1922 on the public agenda*" (*Sunday Independent*, 17 Dec. 2006).

Harris has certainly pursued his campaign with the vigour of a polemicist who is not prepared to let facts get in the way of his political agenda. Both in his weekly column in the *Sunday Independent*, and in some feature programmes on RTE, he has given prominence to events which are, in his words, "*at the very heart of our Sectarian History*" (Ibid; see Brian P Murphy, '*Poisoning the Well or Publishing the*

Truth?' in Niall Meehan, ed., *Troubles in Irish History*, 2008).

For better or worse, the academic reputation of Peter Hart has become associated with the populist polemics of Eoghan Harris.

In the midst of this historical debate, it will surely be accepted that the objective use of original source material is a prerequisite to the construction of any sound historical narrative; and, in that context, the advice of Alice Stopford Green is still relevant: "*we do not want in Ireland, the absence of history, we do want a larger study of its truth*" (Alice Stopford Green, *The Westminster Gazette*, 11 March 1904).

The specific opinion of Alice Stopford Green on the IRA would also appear to be relevant. She was a Protestant, a distinguished historian, and her niece, Dorothy Stopford, was a doctor practising in Kilbrittain, West Cork—at the centre of IRA activities. This is what Alice Stopford Green wrote of the IRA in the late 1920's:

"It would be hard to find in the country a body of men equal to the Irish Volunteers. Sober, self-respecting, upright, they give the unique spectacle of an army of revolutionaries protecting life and property, maintaining the only law and order that now exists in Ireland, suppressing burglary and crime, doing equal justice in their courts to Protestant and Catholic, landowner, policeman, Republican and Unionist" (Alice Stopford Green, *The Irish Republican Army*, Benjamin Franklin Bureau/Chicago; see also Leon O Broin, *Protestant Nationalists in Revolutionary Ireland. The Stopford Connection*, Gill and Macmillan/Dublin, 1985).

(Concluded)

Irish Bulletin, a full reprint of the official newspaper of Dáil Éireann giving news and war reports, Index

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Volume 2, 3rd May 1920 to 31st August 1920. 540pp.

Volume 3 1st September 1920 to 1st January 1921. 695pp. Index. ISBN 978-1-872078-24-3 .

Volume 4a 3rd January 1921 to 16th March 1921. 366pp.

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Volume 6 (final volume) in preparation

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The Fragile Dominance Of Democracy!

Is democracy compatible with freedom?

That question is raised by an article given prominence in the *Irish Times* on July 20th.

The blurb sentences on the article tell us that: “*Democracy needs to be fought for every day. Triple lock, an independent judiciary and a free press are no guarantee against populism*”.

Democracy is unstable. It cannot settle down to a peaceful mode of life. It must always be at war. It only exists when it is being fought for. When the fighting stops it is in danger.

Pro-democracy movements are therefore a good thing in themselves. It is not to the point to ask whether it seems possible that they could establish a viable State in the place of the State they are attacking if they succeeded. Their purpose—their virtue—is destructive rather than creative. If they succeeded, they would soon lose much of their virtue.

The *Irish Times* does not say that in so many words, but it is the impression one gets from its coverage of events seen in the light of the view that democracy must be fought for every day.

The article tells us that—

“we must understand that democracy, by its very nature, is a fragile condition; that it needs constant maintenance, reform and protection. An independent judiciary is the keystone. But democracy needs to be fought for every day, even in countries where it has existed for decades or even centuries.

Ninety years ago next year, the Nazis swept away the Weimar Republic, the most sophisticated democracy in Europe...” (*Democracy needs to be fought for every day*, Oliver Sears, 20.7.22).

The Weimar Republic was a model democracy. It was constructed according to a model. And models have no life in them. Movement breaks them.

The Weimar system was constructed in a defeated nation, under the eyes of the victors of World War One. Its German architects modelled it on a confession of guilt, on behalf of the nation, for causing the War in which Germany had been defeated.

That confession was made under pressure of a Food Blockade, enforced by the Royal Navy, which was causing mass starvation in the German population. Food supplies were not let into the country until the Republican Government, hastily assembled in November 1918, signed a statement in

June 1919 that Germany had been entirely responsible for the World War.

The confession of War Guilt was made to appease the victors, and the Constitution for the Republic was drawn up in accordance with the ideology of the victors—the propaganda ideals broadcast across the world during the War, for military purposes, by the victors.

Those ideals were not in accordance with the actual Constitutional practices of the victor states, but the scribes who wrote down the model Constitution, having made a false confession of German War Guilt, were not in a fit mental condition to question the ideals presented to them by the victors.

The false confession may have been made for the immediate humanitarian purpose of allowing the populace to be fed. And confession may be good for the soul—though the matter is open to question. But in Germany the implications of the false confession had to be lived out with disastrous consequences in the beautiful Weimar Constitution that was too good for this world.

The Weimar Republic was a democracy without authority. It had to be so in order to meet the requirements of the victors. And, if what was said about Germany by both the British and French States (and by the Irish Home Rule Party) during the War had been taken in earnest in the 1919 settlement, Germany would have been abolished. The War propaganda said in substance that the Germans were unfit to be allowed to conduct a state.

The French wanted a break-up of the German state into a number of smaller states. But the British soon backed away from the implications of their War propaganda and insisted that the unitary German state should be retained, with the deletion of Alsace-Lorraine, and they conducted a vigorous anti-French propaganda around 1920-22. Their reason was that the breaking up of Germany would restore French predominance in Europe. They insisted on maintaining a weakened German state in order to weaken France. And that British policy, combined with the internal instability of a German democracy which lacked authority, determined the course of European events.

Was the Weimar democracy “*swept away*”? Wouldn’t it be more descriptive of its mode of disappearance to say that it just *disappeared*?

Weimar had a model Constitution, suited

to model citizens—chess pieces. It lacked authority in the sense of consensual coercive power. It could not cope with the forms of life that asserted themselves within it.

The sense of authority in the German state in 1914 was Monarchy, as it was in the British state. The motive power of the state was controlled by an elected Parliament in Germany no less than in Britain. And the Parliamentary franchise was certainly not less extensive in Germany than in Britain.

But the British war propaganda—pioneered by Irish Home Rule journalists—immediately characterised the German State as a barbaric Autocracy, while describing the British State as a Democracy.

The British State was geared for war-making. Its citizens—who were “*subjects*” of the Crown—knew how to behave when the Crown declared war.

The German State had never made war.

Neither the Government nor the citizens knew just how to behave politically when war was declared. It had been forged in 1870-71, when the French Empire launched an entirely aggressive war on Prussia for the purpose of disrupting the process of German unification that had begun. The French aggression had the contrary effect. It accelerated the process of state formation.

The German State formed in 1871 called itself an *Empire* because it was formed by a coming together of many German Kingdoms with the King of Prussia at its head, who was therefore called an Emperor. The component kingdoms remained under their existing governing structures, merely being federated under the union.

The German Empire was an Empire of Germans. The British Empire was an Empire of any bits of the world that Britain could lay its hands on. But the British War propaganda made very skilful use of the title of the German State in order to use the word *Imperialist* at every opportunity in referring to it. It was able to use the word “*Imperialist*” against Germany in denunciatory form while itself glorying in the fact that it was an Empire.

If Britain—with just a third of the adult population on the Parliamentary Register—was a democracy, then so was Germany. But the British characterisation of Germany as an Autocracy and itself as a Democracy was not questioned in Britain. The entire society went into propaganda mode. Everybody understood that the only truth about the enemy that mattered was that he was Evil, and that all Evil could be attributed to him.

On the German side there was complete failure to understand the British mode of war-making, and to respond to it in kind. The

Germans had no conception of *Total War*, which was the only kind of war that Britain was capable of. The Chancellor set off on the wrong foot by saying that it had been found necessary for Germany to engage in a slight breach of International Law by marching an army through Belgium. The British propaganda seized on the remark to represent the Germans as law-breakers whenever they found it expedient, and asserting their own position as being that they would suffer defeat rather than survive by committing the slightest breach of law.

Two years later they forgot that this was their position when they violated Greek neutrality and set up a Greek Government which joined them in war on Turkey, and nobody reminded them of it—well the Irish Christian Brothers did, but we're all agreed today that they were sadistic monsters and their views don't count!

If England had found itself in Germany's 1914 position with regard to Belgium, it would have gone on the moral offensive, and denounced Belgium for having broken the law of neutrality which bound it by engaging in secret negotiations with one of its guarantors against the other.

Belgium was not a sovereign state, entitled to make Treaties or Agreements, secret or otherwise. It was itself subject to a Treaty made by others about it. The Germans found evidence that it had been negotiating with Britain but were unable to make use of it. They were unable to fling themselves into moralistic frenzy at a moment's notice, as the English were.

A retired German General, Bernhardt, had published a number of books before the War, in which he tried to explain the English mode of diplomacy and war to the Germans. He had little success. But the British propaganda seized on those books in 1914 as demonstrating the wickedness of the German moral outlook.

One of these books, *Deutschland und der nächste Krieg* (1912), was published in English translation in 1914 under the title, *England As Germany's Vassal*.

If Democracy is fragile, the source of its instability is itself. It is inherently expansionist, and therefore restless. Its expansionist restlessness makes it the most destructive force ever seen in the world.

Undemocratic States may sometimes go to war with their neighbours. Democracy has no neighbours. It can tolerate nothing but itself in the world. It regards any part of the world that is not governed as a democracy as an aberration that needs to be rectified, and that it is its duty to rectify it.

The first step towards rectification is the destruction of the undemocratic system of

state that exists. And, if the next step—the establishment of a Democratic State—is not taken, so be it. It is better that there should be an ungoverned chaos than an undemocratic Government.

Is fearr ciall cheannaighthe ná ciall ard mhuinte [sense bought is better than sense taught, ed.]. Bought sense is the sense that is taught by the actions of the States which made Democracy an obligatory world ideal. The teacher may say *Do as I tell you to, and not as I do*. The Creator, after all, has rights prior to the rights which he confers on his creature. But it is just not possible to do what he says, when what he does over-rides your attempts to do so!

All that needs to be said in proof of this is: Iraq, Libya, Egypt and Syria!

Iraq was founded by Britain as a corrupt Monarchy in order to fulfil promises made to a feudal family in the Western Desert in 1916 in return for the issuing of a *Jihad* against Turkey from Mecca. It was later given independence as a Treaty State when Britain had the idea of establishing a new Treaty Empire. In 1941, when Britain wanted to pass an Army through Iraq in order to take control of Persia (Iran), independent Iraq—which had declared Neutrality in the War—insisted on supervising the transit. Britain brushed aside the Baghdad Government and set up a puppet regime in its place.

After the World War the *Baath* movement developed. It established a liberal regime in Iraq under which the two major religions and many minor religions lived together and allowed the State to introduce Western values gradually. But then the West decided that it was not good enough for the Iraqi regime to be liberal, it must also be democratic. This meant that it must have a Government elected by the free conflict of political parties.

It was suggested that the forces of liberal democracy were suppressed in Iraq by the one-party system. We suggested that what was being suppressed was the antagonism of the major religions. Britain and the USA invaded Iraq, destroyed the liberal regime, and called on the people to arise. Deprived of the State with which both had been able to make an accommodation, the rising of the people took the form of a war of Shia against Sunni. Large numbers of Christians were forced to flee. Now, over twenty years later, Iraq is still without a Government.

Hillary Benn, a Minister in the Labour Government of the time, said complacently: *We gave them their freedom, and it was up to them what they did with it*.

The author of the *Irish Times* article,

Oliver Sears, makes sparing use of the word, "*freedom*". He uses it only once: "*The very laws designed to protect democratic freedoms are abused in order to dismantle them*". But even this one use seems excessive in the light of his argument as a whole—which is that the law is needed as a protection against democratic freedom.

Democracy is contained, held in place, by a "*triple lock*" made up of "*free elections*", and a "*free press*", and "*an independent judiciary*". But how does the independent judiciary stand with relation to freedom?

Is its function to be an authority over freedom: to limit freedom so that Democracy can be preserved? That seems to be the general idea.

A book was published by Cambridge University last year with the title: *To Save The People From Themselves*. I didn't get around to reading it. I felt I knew already what must be in it—a variation on a theme set by Plato two and a half thousand years ago in *The Republic*, which I read as a teenager and have never felt inclined to read again.

Of much greater realism and relevance was Plato's *Menexenus*, in which Aspasia, the mistress of Pericles (forbidden by Athenian law to marry him because she was not Athenian by birth) explains to Socrates that the secret of Athenian democracy is that it is not a democracy at all, but a disguised oligarchy.

The Republic is 'social science', and is therefore suitable for the Academy. *The Menexenus* is not, and therefore very little is heard of it.

Oligarchy is the nub of the issue. And oligarchy is organic, and therefore not constructable by formula.

England was an aristocracy after the last trace of actual monarchy was abolished in 1714. After 1732 it became an oligarchy, and did not entirely cease to be oligarchist after 1918 when the democratic franchise was introduced.

In Russia monarchy broke down suddenly into democracy in February 1917. The democracy failed to govern the state and was displaced by oligarchy in the form of Democratic Centralism. In 1990 democratic centralism was discontinued in favour of simple democracy, which produced chaos and became intolerable to the populace. Something like democratic centralism has now been restored to popular satisfaction. The individuals who did well for themselves in the democratic jungle of the 1990s protest vehemently against it.

I remember when a Military Governor of Pakistan—Ayub Khan I think—announced

that he would introduce *Guided Democracy*, and the liberal ridicule that was directed at it. Guided Democracy was taken to be a contradiction in terms.

I also remember when a liberal democratic Constitution, theoretically perfect, according to the laws discovered by 'Political Science', was drawn up for Nigeria in Whitehall and conferred on the former colony. That perfect Constitution came to nothing because the peoples inhabiting the territory were not tokens that could be slotted into the various parts of it. They had strong cultures of their own and these cultures did not give way at the touch of liberal civilisation. What democracy did was stimulate these cultures to assert themselves forcefully.

Does "*freedom*" as a substantive noun have any definite meaning? French existentialist literature searched for a meaning for it, but I do not recall that it found one.

Depending on circumstances, one is free to do this particular thing or not to do that, but freedom to do nothing in particular and not to be obliged to do anything doesn't amount to much. For the word to have meaning, it seems that it must have to do with particulars.

Nonconformism has an overtone of freedom to it as a word. But the Nonconformists were the most conformist people in England and Ireland in their day. What they refused to conform to was the largely empty Christian routines of the Church of England. They lived within tight systems of beliefs and rules within their own sectarian structures, while the Conformist majority lived in disgraceful enjoyment of whatever the moment offered as it passed.

Nonconformity, after failing to establish itself in political power under Cromwell, established itself as an economic power under the aristocracy during the century and a half while it was excluded from political power, and it presented itself in 1832 as the irresistible power of Capitalism. It demanded access to the State Power established by the aristocracy. The outcome was the feudal-capitalist Oligarchy of 1832-1918, under which Capitalism became the irreversible mode of existence of British life, and set itself the mission of making Capitalism the mode of life of the human race by means of Empire, Trade, and Biblical Christianity.

Capitalism is inherently expansionist. The market must expand continuously so that the surplus of goods produced in each phase of production can be realised in the market as money-profit. A major purpose of the Empire came to be the expansion of the market for British commodities into

pre-capitalist regions of the world. *Trade follows the flag.*" And the Flag was for a long time on intimate relations with the Bible.

Whatever the ultimate fate of Socialism as a comprehensive alternative to Capitalism will be, it has failed for the time being. It rose and fell in the course of the twentieth century. The forms of democracy associated with it fell along with it. For the time being, Democracy without Capitalism is out of the question.

Oliver Sears says "*democracy by its very nature, is a fragile condition*". There is no doubt about it. It is restless by nature because it must disrupt itself continuously by its own workings. Every thing about it is short term.

It is the dominant force in the world, and it is fragile.

And it is by far the most destructive human force the world has ever seen, precisely because it is powerful and fragile.

I read Marx's *Capital* when I was a teenager in Sliabh Luacra, working as a labour in the Creamery Co-op, in a social situation in which life was mostly lived outside the market. I was left with the impression that he had envisaged many of the financial devices by means of which Capitalism had kept itself going far beyond what he expected, and in that sense had facilitated it. John Martin disagreed, and, having looked at *Capital* again recently, I can see that he was right.

Angela Clifford in the 1970s wrote a series of articles showing that British Imperialism was a generator of capitalism throughout the world and not, as Lenin said, its "*Final Stage*". This was taken up by the late Bill Warren, a Professor of Political Economy from the Gorbals in Glasgow, who was based in the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

Bill tried to give this idea currency in the New Left, so that policies more appropriate to what was actually happening might be worked out. The New Left preferred to hold onto obsolete ideas by giving them Byzantine modes of expression.

Empires of the pre-Capitalist era usually exacted a tribute from their conquests but let the various peoples carry on being what they were. That was especially the case with the Turkish Empire in the Middle East—which the Home Rule Party helped Britain to destroy in the Great War.

Capitalist Imperialism remakes the peoples it conquers into consumers of commodities and destroys their age-old cultures by means of education—in accordance with Socrates's maxim that "*the unexamined life is not worth living*".

Oliver Sears embraces this new mode of life, which is lived in a fragile condition sus-

tainable only by a hectic process of change. He sees it being threatened by Populism, especially Poland and Hungary—and by Putin of course:

"Populism... shows scant regard for the law, its ideology is based on fear of change, fear of being usurped, and fear of losing power..."

In other words, Populism is conservative.

It used to be the case that the Law was generally conservative of the system within which it was established. A couple of years ago, *Studies* carried an article in praise of Peter Sutherland, the organiser of World Capitalism—a system which had thrown the whole world into flux. He praised the EU Law as a freely-acting force in the breaking up of old patterns of life which did not serve the world market well.

He saw the unsettlement of the world and the consequent mass movement of peoples from East to West, and from South to North, as one of the greatest events of modern times—modern times being the last half millennium. It was a Good Thing that long-settled peoples, content with being what they were, should be shaken up and thrown about by forces they could not resist. Lethargy is not progressive. It is a drag on the market, and it is destiny that human life should be lived individualistically in a competition of one against all in a global market.

Archimedes said that, given firm ground to stand on, he could move the world with levers. For Peter Sutherland an Independent Judiciary, detached from the populace, is both the firm ground and the lever by which national conservatism will be overcome and global flux will become the substance of democracy.

It is only two years since *Studies* showed us that future. It has been snatched from us already. But it was a fraud from the start.

The test case was the confrontation between the Judge-made law of the EU and the democratically-made law of Poland and Hungary. The other members of the EU—whose Governments all appoint their own Judges within their own jurisdictions in one way or another—decreed that Poland and Hungary would be in breach of law if, after radical changes of Government and policy, they acted to bring the Judiciary into line with those changes.

The United States—the creator of post-1945 capitalist democracy—does that kind of thing all the time. But the EU, with Ireland to the fore, declared that Poland and Hungary were in breach of law for doing it. They also declared that certain laws enacted by their elected Parliaments were in breach of European law. But the European 'law'

they were allegedly in breach of was not legislated law. It had not existed when they joined the EU. Nor had it been brought into being by the various amendments of the European Treaties down the years.

And the new EU-made Law intruded into the sphere of domestic policy, which remained a national prerogative under the European Treaties.

It was slipped into existence by Judicial Decree. In other words, the EU Judges made the laws of which they judged Poland and Hungary to be in breach!

Judge-made law was placed above democratically-made law.

The distinction between Legislative and Executive was cast aside, and so was the case made by Poland and Hungary that law is not done like that in a democracy.

And Oliver Sears is given a platform by the *Irish Times* to complain:

“So afraid was the EU of pushing Poland and Hungary into Putin’s sphere that the breach of the EU’s rule of law by both countries has not been effectively challenged by Brussels...”

Fear of Putin is keeping the EU elite more honest and democratic than it wishes to be, by curbing its authoritarian inclinations!

The article concludes:

“Twenty years ago next year, the Nazis swept away the Weimar Republic, the most sophisticated democracy in Europe... For a number of years my mother, a Holocaust survivor from Poland, has told me that she sees her life coming full circle. I wonder if we can afford not to believe her...”

It is not clear what “*sophisticated*” means when applied to a State—and clear meaning is necessary to useful discussion of matters of State under present circumstances. The word would be improved by being shortened to *sophistical*. Weimar was governed by sophistry in Plato’s sense of the word: *smart and groundless*.

Weimar might almost be described as a Government without a State. The Republic was declared in a hurry in a situation of military defeat, mutiny and rebellion. Its only practical meaning was that the Monarchy was abolished and denounced. There was nothing to take its place. As soon as it was declared by the Social Democrats, a rebellion was launched against it by Rosa Luxemburg’s anti-Leninist Communists. The rebellion was weak but the Government was weaker. In the absence of an apparatus of State, a degree of order was maintained by vigilante groups of ex-servicemen, and it was one of these that saved the Government.

Then, during the next six months, the Republic devised the *Weimar Constitution* under the eyes of the victorious Allies,

Britain and France (with America on the side-lines), while Britain tightened up the Food Blockade that it had operated during the War. The Blockade, which was causing widespread starvation, was maintained until the Government agreed to issue a false confession: that Germany bore the entire responsibility for the World War.

And the Constitution, designed to conciliate the Allies, and approved by them, was a recipe for weakness.

The Monarchy, around which a traditional sense of authority existed, was rooted up. There was nothing else to take its place. And so self-help movements grew up throughout the society. The main ones—the Communist Party and the Fascist movement—were incipient State Systems. There were also Monarchist, Social Democrat, Nationalist, and regional separatist systems.

Underneath the superficial veneer of Government—where Civil Society would be if there had been an effective State—rival state systems were in conflict. National Socialism prevailed in 1933, made itself acceptable by the purge of the Brownshirts in 1934, and for the next few years was assisted by Britain in freeing Germany from the restrictions imposed on it by the Versailles Conference/League of Nations in 1919.

National Socialism brought order to disorderly Germany. That is how it was experienced outside the narrow sphere of political activists.

Anti-Semitism increased—but that was a much wider phenomenon in the West, with differing causes. It arose from the destruction of the Austrian and Russian Empires and their replacement by democratic nation-states. The Jews, with their ambiguous mode of national existence, had had a place in the life of the Empires. They were subjected to an occasional small-scale pogrom, but for the most part were left in peace to do the business of the Empire in the commercial and professional sphere.

When the Austrian Empire were broken up suddenly in 1919, they were out of place in the new national democracies, where they were met with immediate waves of anti-Semitism.

That is one point on which events are very unlikely to move in a circle. Germany, assisted by Ukrainian nationalism, has seen to that. It is only in Russia that Jews survived in large numbers. It was from Russia that a bulk of Jewish population was supplied for the imposition of a Jewish State on Palestine. It was Russia that committed the United Nations to the formation of a Jewish State. And it was Russia that supplied the armaments for the Jewish War of Liberation against Britain and the associated Jewish war of destruction on the Arab population in the territory designated by the newly-formed

United Nations for the Jewish State, and also in the neighbouring territory.

Then, when the Jewish State was secured, and made viable by ethnic cleansing, and Russia imposed restrictions on Zionist activity within its own borders, Zionist propaganda depicted Stalin as Hitler’s successor in Jewish affairs.

On August 7th, shortly after reading Oliver Sears’ article, I happened to be listening to Radio Eireann’s *Sunday Miscellany* (its most original programme), and, when an uncharacteristic item appeared in it—about “*Stumble-stones*” in Dusseldorf—it struck me as being of a kind with the *Irish Times* article. So I listened to the end, when authors’ names are read out. And so it proved to be.

“*Stumble-stones*” are engravings on the pavement, saying in effect that Jews once lived here but they were taken away and killed.

Sears remarked that the disappearance of Jews was not memorialised in this way in Poland. It would have been more to the point—but not advantageous—to have mentioned Kyiv. Most Poles were probably not sorry to see the Jews being removed, but I never came across any suggestion that Polish Nationalism assisted. And it was a Polish Nationalist who penetrated an extermination camp and managed to get to London with an account of what went on it, only to find that London did not want to know just yet.

The Poles were victims themselves, but they were the national population of the country and therefore they could not be treated as the Jews were treated. And, if the populace were not sorry to see the Jews being removed from their midst, and were not horrified by the train-loads of Jews going to the Camps, they were not the ones who were doing it. And, in the catastrophic War that Britain got going and then stood back from, that is the difference between Guilt and Innocence. The Polish State quite rightly condemns attempts to implicate it in the Holocaust.

Ukrainian Nationalism actually did engage in Holocaust activities. But I assume there are no “*Stumble-stones*” in Kyiv—otherwise Oliver Sears would no doubt have told us about them.

And then there is the other Holocaust involving the Jews.

My mother-in-law also survived the European Holocaust, by means of the Zionist escape-route. But in Palestine she behaved as an immigrant, not as a coloniser. She was therefore regarded as having gone native by the colonisers. In 1947 she escaped the other Holocaust, though losing all her belongings.

I have observed, at close quarters in Israel, the attitude of Jews towards Arabs and

I cannot imagine that, given the kind of opportunity presented in eastern Europe in the hinterland of the invasion of Russia, the Arabs would not suffer, at the hands of the Jews, the fate of the Jews at the hands of the Germans and the Ukrainian nationalists.

As it was, they were only ethnically-cleansed in 1948: driven out by a demonstration of “*shock and awe*”, and by occasional massacres. Many of them,

or their immediate descendants, are still about. They know exactly where they came from.

That is a very good reason why there are no Arab “*Stumble-stones*” in Jerusalem. And yet Israel is presented as one of the model democracies of the world.

Oliver Sears asks:

“How can those of us who remember the sacrifice to rescue democracy made

by our forbears, 80 years ago, resist this seemingly relentless assault on our values today?”

It is a rash question. What he considers to be democracy did not make sacrifices to rescue itself. It did not rescue itself—except in De Valera’s Ireland, where it had not lost itself. It was incidentally rescued by Russia in the course of defending its own values.

Brendan Clifford

2022 Casement Wreath Laying at Dún Laoghaire

The annual wreath laying to mark the anniversary of Roger Casement’s execution on August 3rd 1916, took place outside the house where he grew up in Sandycove, Dún Laoghaire. As has become customary the assembled crowd was addressed by the current Cathaoirleach (Speaker/Chair) of Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council; this year the holder of that office is Councillor Mary Hanafin of Fianna Fáil.

Councillor Hanafin, as might be expected from a speaker who is a former Minister for Education and a former history teacher, provided a comprehensive account of Casement’s contribution. She ranged over his reports for the British Foreign Office exposing rubber slavery in the Belgian Congo and the Putumayo region of Brazil and Peru to his activities as an Irish nationalist. Casement’s work in the field of human rights, she said, could be seen as an example of what can be achieved from the inside of a political administration.

Referring to how the Council was looking forward to the official unveiling and opening of the recreation area around the newly installed statue of Casement, the Cathaoirleach touched on the story of how a previous Casement statue had ended up being dispatched to Kerry. At the time, in the late sixties, there were sensitivities around the developing conflict in the North, and despite a strong desire on the part of Charles Haughey and others that the statue should be situated in Dún Laoghaire, the Council backed down. Those days are now behind us, she said, and the new statue will be a landmark on the coast of South Dublin.

As in previous years the proceedings were officiated over by local community

activist, Margaret Brown. Piper Michael Maher provided a fitting rendition of Mo Ghile Mear. As Chair of the Roger Casement Summer School, I read out a poem about Casement by Dora Sigerson Shorter. I then read out the following tribute to Sean Seosamh O Conchubhair, a driving force behind Casement commemorations in Kerry over many years (the text was provided by Dr Angus Mitchell).

‘We would like to make a special mention this evening to the life of Sean Seosamh O Conchubhair (O’Connor) who passed away peacefully on Monday last in Tralee and who will be buried tomorrow at the Old Rath cemetery in County Kerry.

For over sixty years, Sean Seosamh was the tireless defender of Casement throughout Munster. He was the last surviving member of the Roger Casement Memorial Committee that arranged the commemorative events in Kerry in 1966 and raised the necessary funds to build the monument to Casement and Robert Monteth near Banna Strand. Later, he would harness the great regard that the people of Kerry have for Casement in his work in co-founding Gaelscoil Mhic Easmainn in Tralee, a vibrant Irish language school that has achieved so much in sustaining the speaking of the language.

In 1991, Sean Seosamh was responsible for a second monument to Casement unveiled at the small ringfort (MacArt’s Fort) where Casement was captured on Good Friday 1916. This place became the venue every year, (either on Good Friday or 21 April), for a commemorative event that cherished the legacy of Casement as a supporter of the Irish language, as a humanitarian and as an Irish revolutionary.

As is so often the case with those who touch Casement’s life, it is fitting that Seán

Seosamh should be reposing at his home in Tralee this evening at the very hour that you are gathered in Dublin remembering Casement on the site of his birth and on the day of his judicial assassination.

We salute you Seán Seosamh for all you did for Casement, our prayers are with you and may your soul rest in peace.

Margaret Brown concluded the proceedings by thanking the Cathaoirleach, the public representatives who were present, the committee of the Roger Casement Summer School who organised the event, and the audience for attending. Wreaths were presented by the 1916 Relatives Association and the Summer School.

Dave Alvey



From left to right, Dave Alvey, Councillor Mary Hanafin, Margaret Brown, Councillor Michael Clarke (Fianna Fail), Senator Barry Ward (Fine Gael) and Councillor Kay Feeney (Fianna Fail)]

Is Salman Rushdie Just Being Naughty But Nice?

Ahmed Salman Rushdie, writer, was born on the 19th June, 1947, in Bombay in what was then British India, the only son, with three sisters. Muslims; his father, was educated at Cambridge University. He sent his son, at the age of 14 to attend Rugby, a private school. Later he too would attend Cambridge University and attain an MA in history. After that he entered the advertising industry from 1970 to 1980. His crowning glory was his logo '*Naughty but Nice*' for a product. He had already published his first novel *Grimus* in 1975, a part-science fiction, and was generally ignored by the public and literary critics.

His future looked like he was going to be a run-of-the-mill novelist, his main achievement was being published at all. Then in 1981 he won the Booker Prize. Magic Realism was in vogue at the time, with authors such as Jorge Luis Borges, Mario Vargas Llosa, and Juan Ruifo, being the main contenders. Women readers especially were fascinated by this style of writing. Salman Rushdie, with his *Midnight's Children* joined that list. This novel follows the life of a child, born at the stroke of midnight as India gained its independence, and is endowed with special powers and a connection to other children born at the dawn of a new and tumultuous age in the history of the Indian sub-continent and the birth of the modern nation of India.

The character of Saleem Sinai has been compared to Rushdie himself, which he rejects. But there is something of the magic realism about the rise of Rushdie, as the Western World lined up behind him. I found the reading of this novel heavy going as I don't particularly like magic realism. It took a few of Latin-American authors to the top but where are they now, compared to Rushdie?

After that came *Satanic Verses*, with the Iranian *Fatwa* consolidating his position as someone who would be useful to the West in their anti-Islam drive. It seems that bombings and the occupation of Muslim countries to enforce the Christian values of neo-liberalism wasn't enough. They had found someone who had been able to move the proverbial mountain in the shape of Iran, the UK, the US and the EU. This was the superman of literature, *naughty but nice*.

When the *Fatwa* was issued against him in 1989, Prince Charles was quoted as saying about the need to protect him 24/7: "*We are spending a lot of money on a not very good writer.*"

Charles had obviously missed the point. The *Satanic Verses* no longer had anything to do with writing. Both *Midnight's Children* and *Satanic Verses* must be the most unread best-sellers ever. Just to buy *Satanic Verses* is yet another brick to be thrown at Iran!

Rushdie claims to be secular and not believing in any supernatural entities, whether Christian, Jewish, Muslim or Hindu. Later, in 1990, he said that he had renewed his Muslim faith, and repudiated the attacks on Islam made by characters in his novel. Later still, he said he was only pretending. He must have learnt that the *Fatwa* couldn't be reversed, no matter how much the person designated for that punishment pleaded for mercy and took back their criticism, and apologised sincerely.

Catholicism is constantly criticised but it is too well established in the Western World for any damage to be done. The last armed attack on it, after being lambasted by a Unionist government in Northern Ireland for 50 years, was during the Long-War of 28 years, within the 20th Century, when its cultural expression of a national identity, managed to rise above the loyalist death squads, aided and abetted by the military intelligence of the British Army. But Islamic nations have had severe bombings and occupations with mosques destroyed and the Koran burnt by Western troop invaders. They are going to be very sensitive to one of their own not only rejecting Islam for himself but for the whole Muslim World. On top of that he was now being described as a British/American novelist.

So what is *Satanic Verses* about? I read it with great difficulty when it was first published, as it was again written in the magic realism style. I can't remember the ins and outs of the plot, so I have had to resort to a summary of the novel I found on the Internet. That has revived my memory of a tough read.

"This complex and multi-layered plot focuses on two protagonists, both Indian Muslims living in England. Gibreel Farishta is a successful film actor who has suffered a recent bout of mental illness who is in love with an English climber, Alleluia Cone. Saladin Chamcha is a voice-over actor who has had a falling out with his father. Gibreel and Saladin meet on a flight from Bombay (Mumbai) to London. The plane is hijacked by Sikh terrorists over the English Channel. The book opens with Gibreel and Saladin, the sole survivors, falling into the sea."

This is the sub-plot that angered many Muslims:

As Gibreel descends, he is transformed into the angel Gabriel and has a series of dreams. The first is a revisionist history of the founding of Islam, and it is the details of the sub-plot that angered many Muslims. The character based on Muhammad is called Mahound, and he is attempting to found a monotheistic religion in the polytheistic town of Jahilia. As in an apocryphal legend, Mahound receives a vision allowing the worship of three goddesses, but after realising that the confirming revelation was sent by the devil, he recants. A quarter of a century later one of his disciples ceases to believe in Mahound's religion, but in the town of Jahilia he converts. Prostitutes in a brothel take the name of Mahound's wives before the brothels are closed. Later Mahound falls ill and dies, with his final vision being one of the goddesses.

Saladin is transformed into the devil as he falls into the sea. Later he grows horns and goat legs with cloven hoofs. The two men crawl from the sea onto the land. Saladin is arrested as an illegal immigrant. After being hospitalised, he escapes only to find that his wife is having an affair with one of his friends. His misfortunes continue as he loses his job. However, his rage at Gibreel for failing to intervene when he was arrested eventually transforms him back into a human. In the meantime, Gibreel is reunited with Alleluia, but an angel tells him to leave her and spread the word of God in London. He is hit by a car of an Indian film producer, who is planning a trio of religious films in which Gibreel will star as an archangel. Later Gibreel and Saladin meet at a party, and Saladin decides to kill him. However, although he has various opportunities, he does not murder Gibreel and instead induces him to believe that Alleluia has several lovers. Gibreel eventually realises that Saladin has tricked him and resolves to kill him. However, when Gibreel finds Saladin in a burning building, he rescues him.

Upon learning that his father is dying, Saladin returns to Bombay and reconciles with him. He inherits a substantial sum of money and reconnects with a former girlfriend. Separately, Gibreel and Alleluia also travel to Bombay, and a jealous Gibreel murders her and then kills himself.

A third storyline introduced through another dream of Gibreel's begins in the village of Titlipur, where a young girl named Ayesha and her adoptive parents, Mirza Saeed Akhtar and his wife, Mishal live. Ayesha declares that the angel Gabriel has revealed to her that Mishal has breast cancer but that if the entire village walks to Mecca, Mishal will be healed. The pilgrimage is long and arduous, and many pilgrims die along the way. Others lose faith. When they reach the sea, Ayesha says that the seas will part for them, but that doesn't happen, and the pilgrims drown.

Get it? I still don't. I only understand that

sub-plot that upset the Islamic world.

There were jeers about the protestors burning a book which they had never read. If they had read the sub-plot, or were told it, then that was enough agony to get along with for the moment.

Published by Viking Penguin on 28th September 1988 in the UK, and in the US on 22 February, 1989. (546 pages long); It was put up for the Booker Prize but lost. It looked as if there was determination to bring this book to a wider readership, despite its improbable fantasies. It was to be a wrecking ball. Without the Iranian Fatwa it probably would have just died. But Iran was living in the real world and not in the world of magic realism.

Of course there has been Western '*Fat-was*'! I am reminded me Obama's *Thursday List* which he signed off every week: these were the people who didn't agree with his *civilising mission* in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and were to be murdered by drone. If the militant was sitting at home with his family, well, that was just too bad. In Afghanistan, a recent bladed drone butchered someone, whom the US accused of plotting the 9/11 attack. That brought joy to the US president Biden.

Pre-empted Fatwas against the Palestinian people recently, by Israel, killed 47, including 15 children. You know by now that no country is going to bring Israel to a war crimes court.

It's quite amazing what *Satanic Verses* has done for Salman Rushdie—along with great danger, resulting in the recent 15 stab wounds he has received. Whole countries and their governments are again speaking out on his behalf at his fight for *free speech* but, as an Iranian spokesman said recently: *Free speech doesn't meant you can attack our faith.*

You just have to gasp at the number of awards, honours and recognition he has received from the Western World:

Austrian State Prize for European Literature (1993)
The booker prize (1988) for *Midnight's Children*.
Golden Pen Award
Hans Christian Andersen Literature Award (2014)
Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Indiana University (2018)
Honorary Doctor of Letters from Emory University (2015)
James Joyce Award from University College Dublin (2008)
Outstanding Lifetime Achievement in Cultural Humanitarian from Havard University (2007)
PEN Pinter Prize (UK)
St Louis Literary Award from the Saint Louis University Library Associates.

(previous recipients have been Saul Bellow, E.L Doctorow, and Arthur Miller)
Swiss Freethinkers Award (2019)
He was knighted for services to literature in the Queen's Birthday Honours on 16th June, 2007.

This June, 2022, Rushdie was appointed a Member of the order of Companions of Honour (CH), in the Queen's speech, for services to literature.

It looks like there has been continual provoking of Iran and of the Islamic World since 1988.

His works of fiction includes:

Grimus (1975)
Midnight's Children (1981)
Shame (1983)
Satanic Verses (1988)
The Moor's Last Sigh (1995)

The Ground Beneath Her Feet (1999)
Fury (2001)
Shalimar the Clown (2005)
The Enchantress of Florence (2008)
Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights (2015)
The Golden House ((2017)
Quichotte (2019)
Haroun and the Sea of Stories (1990) for children
Luka and the Fire of Life (2010) for children.

Looks like the West will fight Islam to the last Rushdie. I'm blaming the UK, US and EU for Rushdie's plight, more than I blame Salman Rushdie, and I blame them too for the most recent incident.

Wilson John Haire

15.8.2022

Michael Collins

continued from page one

Irish Government that appointed them read about it in the British papers the following day.

The British ultimatum was that all five of them must sign immediately or war would follow.

Collins said later that the British threat of immediate war had nothing to do with his signing. Another of the delegates, Robert Barton, said that he signed only because of the ultimatum. He was the last to sign. The British Prime Minister told him that, if he did not sign, he would be personally responsible for the war that would follow. Collins did nothing to shield him from the wrath of the Prime Minister. And Barton, a Protestant landowner, did not feel that he could bear the responsibility for bringing fresh war on the nationalist population when the head of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, along with the founder of Sinn Fein, were against him.

It might be that Collins had not surrendered to the threat of force when he acted against the instructions of his Government, and signed the 'Treaty' instead of referring it back to his Government to deal with.

If that is so, it means that he had decided beforehand to make this deal with the British Government, and to do so without revealing his intention to his own Government.

Nevertheless, the 'Treaty' was signed under duress, and only because of the duress, because of the way Barton was brought to sign.

Griffith had made it clear to his Government beforehand that he was in agreement with the British proposals. But he had also

agreed that an attempt at a settlement based on these proposals would split the country and he undertook, when returning to London in a final attempt to improve the British terms, to bring the matter back to the Government before doing any signing. If he had not given this undertaking, the Government would, presumably, have made other arrangements.

Collins had not even informed his Government that he considered the British proposals acceptable, though he had, apparently, done so with the Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood conspiracy, of which he was Secretary.

Collins's action subverted the regime established in 1919-21. It split the Government, the Dail, and the Army.

He gained a majority of one in the Government—but only because Barton felt obliged by his signature in London to vote for the 'Treaty' in the Government before going on to oppose it.

Collins also gained a small majority in the Dail, but it was much, much too small to carry the day decisively on such an issue—which was to replace the Dail Government with a Government under the Crown based on the 1920 British *Government of Ireland Act*—which the Dail had rejected. (The Northern Ireland administration was set up under that Act.)

Collins lost the Army, and deprived it of the Government to which it had sworn allegiance.

It owed no allegiance to his Provisional Government, set up on British authority at a meeting of the Parliament of Southern Ireland, which was the Treatyite half of the Dail.

The Dail kept on sitting, and going through the motions of being a Government, but its effective powers were transferred to the Provisional Government.

Ukraine and Russia

It is astounding that in a country which makes Neutrality its fundamental principle of foreign policy, that there should be outrage at the First Lady calling for negotiations ! To their credit, two MEPs, Clare Daly and Mick Wallace, have been among the few to support the call for negotiations.

Below is the letter which gave such offence to our pacifist warmongers:

I was disappointed and dismayed that your editorial "The Irish Times view on the war in Ukraine: escalating to stand still" (July 20th), commenting on the war in Ukraine, did not encourage any ceasefire negotiations that might lead towards a peace settlement between the Russians, the Ukrainian forces and the separatists.

Until the world persuades President Vladimir Putin of Russia and President Volodymyr Zelenskiy of Ukraine to agree to a ceasefire and negotiations, the long haul of terrible war will go on. How can there be any winner?

The Ukrainian people have suffered tens of thousands of casualties and are now losing up to a thousand soldiers a day, killed, wounded or taken prisoner. Your editorial states that in the war it is estimated that 25,000 to 27,000 Russians have been killed in the fighting.

For people grieved by the suffering and longing to hear some mention of peace or negotiation it was so welcome to read the deeply concerned and thought-out article by the historian Geoffrey Roberts, emeritus professor of history at UCC, saying that now is the time for peace negotiation ("Ukraine must grasp peace from jaws of unwinnable war", Opinion & Analysis, July 13th).

This is surely a moment of moral choice. Concerned people of the world anxious to live together in peace and sustainability must demand that this war be brought to an end so that lives are saved, and there is a lessening of the suffering, and the reconstruction of lives and livelihoods can begin.

Or the choice is to let the conflict go on, and the killing go on, with thousands more soldiers, young men and men in their prime, dying on the front line, and civilians including children threatened with death, fear and destruction of their homes, schools, hospitals and basic services.

Continuing the war of course makes the climate change crisis worse which is resulting in millions of people in Africa, and elsewhere, being put in further danger of starvation, and the endangering of the food security of so many in different parts of the world.

In our own conflicts, whose centenaries we have been commemorating, each time the fighting was ended by a ceasefire being called, followed by negotiation. This was so in the 1916 Rising, in the War of Independence, and in our tragic Civil War.

In 1916, in the first World War, the great German composer Gustav Holst collaborated with the English poet Clifford Bax to create the great anti-war peace anthem 'Turn back O man, and quit thy foolish ways'.

Their words speak to us across the century and surely are now even more relevant.

"Turn Back O Man, and quit thy foolish ways.
Old now is earth, and none may count her days,
Yet thou, its child, whose head is crowned with flame
Still wilt not hear thine inner God proclaim,
Turn back, O Man, and quit thy foolish ways.
Earth might be fair, and people glad and wise.
Age after age their tragic empires rise,
Built while they dream, and in that dreaming weep.
Would they but wake from out their haunted sleep,
Earth could be fair, and people glad and wise.
Earth shall be fair, and all its people one,
Nor till that hour shall God's whole will be done!
Now, even now, once more from earth to sky
Peals forth in joy the old, undaunted cry,
Earth shall be fair, and all its people one."

Sabina Coyne Higgins (IT 21.7.22)

(Since leading the furore against this letter, the *Irish Times* Editor has resigned. Ed.)

Under a *Treaty* worthy of the name, between Ireland and Britain, the Irish Army would have been the IRA. That would not have suited Britain at all.

It gave Collins a new Army, a regular paid Army, which it armed and financed.

The purpose of this elaborate new Army was to destroy the IRA.

Collins may have fantasised about using his new army to conquer Northern Ireland, but that was not what he was given it for. When he attacked Northern Ireland in May 1922 he found, apparently to his surprise, that it was part of the British state and defended by the British.

Lord Birkenhead and Winston Churchill may have whispered certain things to him in London for a certain purpose, but when they established him in power they were not going to let him whittle away parts of their state.

The only enemy of the southern Treaty State was the Army dedicated to the Republican State.

Collins did his best to evade the logic of the situation but, after many twists and turns over seven months, Whitehall obliged him to make war on the IRA. This time there was no doubt that he acted under duress and did what he wanted not to do—rather like he made Barton do on December 6th 1921.

What he did seems to have unsettled the balance of his mind. He was increasingly at odds with his Provisional Government. He imagined himself as a soldier, which in fact he had been only briefly in 1916. He did not have the mentality of a soldier, the crisp factualness focussed on the matter in hand.

He insisted, as Commander in Chief, on driving into the heart of enemy country—the country from which he had emerged to be remade by the outer world.

He had become alien to it. He had become a kind of displaced person who related to others by means of a fierce *bonhomie*.

When his convoy was ambushed he ordered it to stop—instead of 'driving like hell', as the very experienced Major General Dalton, who was second in command, had ordered.

Then, instead of taking cover, he wandered about the road, firing random shots into the dusk, until somebody shot him.

It seems that by usurping the powers of Government on December 6th he had made himself a problem to himself. ■

Sick Days

The present Covid-19 pandemic which is raging around the world since October 2019, and likely to continue at a lesser level for another year or so, is resulting in much time out for those affected. And it seems that everybody is affected at some time by the fatigue, the headaches, and other symptoms. Hopefully it will pass eventually.

Whether it was caused by Covid-19 or otherwise, the number of sick days taken by employees of Cork County Council in 2020 was 17,758 and the number of sick days taken last year was 17,789. There seems to be a remarkable similarity between the two numbers.

The expression "*Sick Days*" has a completely different meaning for Public Service workers than it has for other people. For the latter, a sick day is a day on which they are too ill to work. The sick person will probably be in bed and taking paracetamol.

Whereas the Public Servants taking a "*Sick Day*" may be found enjoying a day in the garden, or shopping, or on the golf course.

Because, you know, Public Servants are entitled to take "*Sick Days*", whether they are sick or not.

Indeed, I am reliably informed by one of them that, when they are really ill they may be found mooching around their workplace saying they are "*not feeling very well today*", and doing no meaningful work, because they want to keep their "*Sick Days*" for some holiday or leisure activities.

When I was waiting at the public counter of a Tax Office, I observed one side of the following telephone conversation:

Yes well can you tell me how many sick days I have left?

OK – seven is it? Well I'll take those before the end of April. Thank you. Bye".

I was amazed because I had never before heard of someone taking sick days in advance. I asked a Trade Union member about the ethics and morality of this and he said ethics and morality have nothing to do with it: this was an Agreement worked out and settled between the Trade Union and the State, which is the employer.

I disagree. Fictitious "*Sick Days*" are basically unethical. If they were recognised and called "*holidays*", we would know where we are, but it is unreasonable to call *them* "*Sick Days*" when everyone involved knows they are not.

Then that adds to the substratum of lies and deceptions which is endemic in the Public Service these days. It does not stack up.

CROSSLEY TENDERS

Hundreds of Crossley Tenders remained when the English left in 1922: they were the most commonly used transport of the English forces in Ireland.

They were made by Crossley Motors Ltd., which was at that time said to be the 15th biggest motor vehicle manufacturer in the world.

The vehicles used by General Michael Collins in his August 1922 tour of West Cork were: a Leyland open touring car, a Rolls Royce armoured car, and a Crossley Tender.

The Leyland was abandoned at Béal na Bláth, where Michael Collins was shot dead in an ambush. His body was put on to the armoured car for transport to Cork city, but the car became bogged down in a field near Killumney while taking a detour around demolished sections of the road. So it was on the Crossley Tender that Michael Collins's body completed its journey to Shanakiel Hospital, Sunday's Well, Cork.

The company, Crossley Brothers, was founded by two Irishmen when they bought the business of a Mr. Dunlop of Manchester, who was a manufacturer of india-rubber machinery. One of their biggest customers was Macintosh & Co.

However, it turned out that they had paid over its value for a business which was running down. The brothers worked very hard at it and they had about twenty men employed, but business was declining when Frank, the elder brother, who spoke German, discovered a German small engine in 1869 which he thought could be improved.

It was a gas engine invented by a Ger-

man, Dr. Otto. The brothers bought the patents and Frank greatly improved the design and the sales took off successfully. The trade in small steam engines became redundant.

However, Frank had conscientious scruples about the use to which some of their engines might be put. He and his brother were teetotallers and it seemed wrong to Frank to sell engines for the purpose of lifting, pumping and lighting in the brewing industry.

Likewise with the supply of engines for generating electricity to light theatres, which Frank regarded as possible occasions of sin and therefore to be avoided.

This led to tensions within Crossley Brothers. Frank consulted with biblical experts. His brother William proposed a solution which was adopted: the net profit was calculated on the selling price of each engine, and Frank's share of the profits from engines sold to brewers and theatres would not be taken by him but would instead be paid to a charitable cause nominated by Frank.

In his private life, Frank lived in accordance with the Holy Bible. He was in his time one of the largest subscribers to the Salvation Army.

He began his religious life as a Church of Ireland member and later, disagreeing with some of its doctrines, he became Evangelical.

He did not believe in Eternal Punishment. In a letter to Mrs. Booth he says: "*Punishment is one thing, Eternal Punishment is quite another*".

He and his wife built a Missionary and evangelical centre, 'Star Hall' in Manchester. They sold their home and moved into 'Star Hall' to do their mission work better. He sent huge sums of money to help Armenia. After Frank died, the company was reorganised as Crossley Motors.

He died in 1897. And he would have been absolutely horrified to find his beloved engines being used as Crossley Tenders by the English army in Ireland.

Frank Crossley was a supporter of Irish Home Rule and war of any kind was abhorrent to him.

Frank Crossley's conscientious conduct is a long way from how things are done these days.

Michael Stack ©

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

The paper of record?

On Saturday, 6 August, the *Irish Times* published an article by Barry Roche about the burning of the Kingstons' big house in Mitchelstown in 1922. The article went on to claim that during the famine the Kingstons had been good landlords.

My Murphy ancestors came from Mitchelstown, and in 1846, during the famine, were evicted, penniless, starving, riddled with disease and poverty, by these "good landlords". The story of what they did to us was passed on from generation to generation in my family.

The *Irish Times* article was an outrageous and deeply offensive insult to the memory of all those who suffered at the crowbars and eviction ramps of the Kingstons. In our case myself and my brothers, my father and my father's father were all born in England, but we never forgot who drove us there.

I wrote a letter to the *Irish Times* in complaint, but the paper of record has not published it. So much for the record.

I post my letter, which is polite and reasonable, here so that you can judge for yourselves.

Eoin Ó Murchú

<eomurchu46@gmail.com>

6 Aug 2022

To: letters editor, Irish Times

A chara,

I can't describe the fury I felt when I read Barry Roche's article about the burning of the Kingstons' big house in Mitchelstown in 1922.

Whatever the merits of the house itself, Roche's comment that the Kingstons were "good landlords during the famine" can't be let stand. My ancestors were tenants of these "good landlords" during the famine. They were evicted in 1846, and left starving and utterly destitute to make their way to England. Many of their group died on the way.

The "good landlords" needed the land to switch from tillage which, after the repeal of the corn laws, could no longer ensure their lifestyle, to pasture, for which Mitchelstown is now a byword. The price for this switch was paid for in the lives lost, the lives truncated, and the lives spent in misery, poverty and exile.

I was born in England 100 years after that eviction, and in England because of that eviction. In my family, the story of the Kingstons was passed on from generation to generation, and I will pass it on to my grandchildren too. They will never be forgotten or forgiven.

Is mise le meas

Eoin Ó Murchú

Organised Labour!

September 2022

More than 2,800 Dublin Bus drivers are set for pay rises worth more than €7,000 each to combat the cost of living.

They will ballot next week on a proposed 15.5pc wage hike over the course of five years. (Irish Independent-6.8.2022)

Their unions – Siptu and the National Bus and Rail-workers Union (NBRU) – have not issued a recommendation.

Sources described it as the best that could be achieved through the industrial relations process.

If accepted, the proposed deal means the average driver who works five days a week will get a total increase of more than €7,000 by January 2025 because the initial pay rises are backdated.

Their basic pay, which now stands at €44,699, will rise to €49,087 by January next year, and €52,077 by January 1, 2025.

The proposed package is backdated to 2019, which means much of it will be paid upfront.

THE ball is in Apple's court, according to SIPTU, in relation to the ongoing pay dispute with 408 workers employed as general operatives at the Apple manufacturing facility in Hollyhill, Cork

SIPTU representative Joe Kelly said there needs to be "some give" from the company in relation to the requests of the Siptu represented workers.

"The company are not unwilling to talk and we will do everything we can to avoid industrial action, but the ball is in the company's court."

SIPTU are seeking a pay increase of 5.5% for their members to cover the period October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022, due to inflation and the increase in the cost of living since early 2022.

Apple proposed and paid a 3% increase, backdated to October 1, 2021, and recent proceedings at the Labour Court recommended a further 1.25% pay increase.

However, the workers in question have rejected the recommendation, seeking a further 1.25% increase on top of it.

Apple started in Cork over 40 years ago, with a single manufacturing facility and 60 employees, and is now home to 6,000 employees.

In the past five years, it has invested over €250m into expanding its campus in Cork. It recently announced a new expansion to the campus, to accommodate 1,300 workers. Apple's Cork campus is home to its only wholly owned and operated manufacturing facility in the world.

HISTORIAN Professor A. Roger Ekirch has argued that before the Industrial Revolution, an interrupted sleep pattern was dominant in Western civilisation. He has provided evidence from more than 500 sources in the ancient, medieval and classical world. It was once the habit to have a first and second rest during the night while experiencing a peaceful time of wakefulness in between.

Instead of being concerned over being awake during the middle of the night, people would use this time for prayer, reflection, sex, chores and even visiting. This pattern was broken by the Industrial Revolution. Long working days and regimented factory schedules meant people could no longer sleep as their bodies dictated.

For efficiency, they began compressing sleep into a single cycle. Biphasic sleep — two shorter periods of sleep within a 24 hour cycle — might be a natural cure for insomnia.

However, it is hard to imagine this working in the modern world as it requires going to bed soon after dusk.

WAR? continued

seeing that nobody else was going to do it, replied:

“Of course not. What Britain does best is lead other countries into war” (speaking on *Vine Show*, 14.2.22).

In other words, Britain creates wars but does not fight them!

The Northern War lasted for 28 years, 1970-1998, the longest single continuous national struggle since the *Nine-Year War* (1594-1603) led by Hugh O'Neill and Red Hugh O'Donnell.

If this wasn't a War, then what is a War?

Language in Politics!

“When is a war not a war? When it's a conflict. When is an invasion not an invasion? When it's a special operation.

“Along with the truth, language is one of the first deaths when a despot goes to war.”

Russia's assault on language in the name of propaganda got into full swing within days of the invasion of Ukraine. (*Irish Examiner*, 10.3.2022)

Michael Clifford is Special Correspondent for the *Irish Examiner*. He has been working in print and broadcast journalism for well over twenty years.

“... A defect of most serious consequence to our national character and fortunes, which are but the *results* of character, is the absence among a large proportion of our upper and middle classes of a *self-respecting spirit of nationality*”.

(*The Nation*, 4.11.1843)

Isn't it a pity Michael, RTE, and the media *entourage* don't apply the same forensic standards to a conflict that ran in their own country for 28 years. The '**Troubles**', an outsider would almost believe, was nothing more than a load of old Biddies from the Falls and the Shankill dressed in pinafores and armed with Roller Pins knocking the shit out of one another, just for the gas!

And yet, at the height of the conflict, 21,000 British soldiers were engaged in an endeavour to put the conflict down but failed and the British Government was forced to negotiate!

If the Dublin media apply the same standard to the Ukrainian/Russian conflict, don't look for too much objectivity in their pronouncements on that conflict! The national broadcaster, RTE is starting to look and sound like “*The Voice of NATO*” in Ireland.

The Real History of The Northern War

In August, 1969, came a pivotal event in the collective experience of the Catholics of the North after the Unionist Pogrom of that month set off a defensive Insurrection. Things could never be the same again. And they weren't!

The Catholic community, let down in its hour of need by both the British Labour Government of the State and by Jack Lynch's Government in Dublin, for the first time fell back on its own resources. In the vital hour it produced something from itself that transformed its situation, turning its position from one of subordination to that of equality.

The Insurrection turned into a 28 Year War that set out to solve, once and for all, the political predicament that the Catholic community of the North had been sealed into back in 1920-21 by Westminster. That was when Britain set up the perverse political construct known as 'Northern Ireland' that generated an eternal conflict between its two communities, in which 'the minority' always came off worst.

The Northern Catholics not only suffered Partition in 1920-21, being cut off from the rest of the Irish Nation, which entered a new phase of development without them, but they were also separated from the UK State and its functional political structures. They were, therefore trapped in a political limbo between states, with no means of escape.

Their escape attempts were barred not only by the British State that had consigned them to this political quarantine but also by their brethren in the Irish State and its major party, Fianna Fail.

The primary responsibility for that conflict lies with the architects and operators of the system that gave the minority community a stark choice only between permanent second-class status or war.

Ultimately the War was ended to the advantage of the community, though short of its final objective, in such an effective way that momentum was carried from War to Politics.

Catastrophe and Resurgence: The Catholic Predicament in 'Northern Ireland' —

Volume I:

Catastrophe 1914-1968-Author Pat Walsh-2014-p.p. 334. Contact:

lane.jack@gmail.com

Catastrophe and Resurgence: The Catholic Predicament in 'Northern Ireland' —

Volume II: Resurgence 1969-2016-

Author Pat Walsh-2016-p.p. 586. Contact:

lane.jack@gmail.com

British Protectorate?

“Is Ireland becoming a type of British protectorate, and can we keep pretending we are neutral when experts here and in other nations must think it's patently obvious we are not?”

“A few years ago it was revealed that the Government had reached a secret agreement with Britain that the Royal Air Force (RAF) would protect Irish skies, as we didn't have any fighter jets to do the job.

“The British knew we didn't have the fighters to intercept and shoot hijacked planes out of the sky. They therefore offered to protect our skies in a deal from which the Defence Forces were excluded, even though the RAF asked for their input. This lack of consultation between the Government and its own military baffled the RAF. It also baffled the Defence Forces and questions are still being asked today about their exclusion from the talks.” (Sean O'Riordan, Defence Correspondent-*Irish Examiner*-8.8.2022)

continued on page



LABOUR

Comment

ISSN 0790-1712

VOLUME 40 No. 9

CORK

ISSN 0790-1712

So It Was A War ?

The Taoiseach has said he is not ruling out a coalition with Sinn Féin at the next election, but said he does not anticipate Mary Lou McDonald becoming Taoiseach.

Micheál Martin said, while he is not rejecting a coalition with the main opposition party, Sinn Féin is guilty of “poisoning” younger generations with its attitude towards the ‘Troubles’.

When pressed on whether he would serve as Ms. McDonald’s Tánaiste, he said he did not “anticipate” that either. Mr Martin went on to say he had two fundamental differences with Sinn Féin — on policy and on the North.

“The Troubles — a euphemism for bloody conflict

the term had the advantage that it avoided ascribing blame to any of the participants”

(Eamon Phoenix-Irish Times-12.8.2019)

Mr Martin said the difference on the North was “deeper” for him and said Sinn Féin should “face up to the fact that violence [in the North] was wrong”.

However, the Taoiseach said he was not saying that, if the two parties were in a position to form a government, that it would necessarily be a deal-breaker for him.

“I’m not saying I’m ruling it out. I’m not saying it’s an issue that becomes a breaking point in the future,” he said.

“But I would have thought it’s a legiti-

mate political issue of the day because in many ways this idea of the gun being the answer to everything poisoned previous generations of Irish people that led to what happened.

We shouldn’t poison a new generation, again, in the notion that violence can be worth it or violence is justified. That’s all I’m saying.

“It doesn’t become a barrier potentially, but it’s something that they need to deal with, in my view. There is a tendency that this is being glorified somehow. I think we owe it to the younger generations that this wasn’t a good War and it wasn’t a just War and it damaged a lot of people, it killed a lot of people.” (Irish Examiner-26.7.2022)

So he would go into government with people who waged an unjust war for almost 30 years?

In 30 years, 3,700 people were killed in Northern Ireland. The equivalent death toll in the United States would be 600,000—ten times the American losses in Vietnam. One in 50 of Northern Ireland’s people were injured, equivalent 5 million people in America—Could any one imagine a citizen of the U.S. referring to such a toll on human life as “The Troubles”?

Deep in the mind-set of people like the Taoiseach and Michael Clifford of the *Irish Examiner*, along with the Revisionist element is a servility and a lack of esteem in relation to the national struggle : it is a characteristic especially amongst the media element in the former ‘Second City of the Empire’.

The very idea of young Irishmen and women, after 50 years of discrimination and denial, challenging the might and power of the former Imperial Power is ludicrous to the Iveagh House set. Even worse — led by a Barman from Belfast and a Butcher from Derry—for God’s Sake!

In the eyes of these people the Irish are only at their best when fighting and supporting the Wars of Britain and always under British leadership.

Proxy Warriors!

A prominent British Parliamentarian, Tobias Ellwood (Chairman of the Defence Committee), when asked in a radio interview whether Britain could act alone against Russia over the Ukraine,

continued on page 15

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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