

Was Casement Right In 1916?

Philip O'Connor
page 4

Michael Portillo & Irish Times

Dave Alvey page
page 18

Who Started The Civil War?

Brendan Clifford
page 21

Murder Of Noel Lemass *Labour Comment*

back page

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European Values

On May 9th Ursula von der Leyen visited President Zelensky in Kiev to celebrate "Europe day". Ukraine used to celebrate that day as "Victory Day", to commemorate the Soviet victory against fascism. But no more. That memory has been erased as well as all insignia of the Soviet era. Fascist leaders have been rehabilitated and streets have been named after them. The Russian language has been suppressed and history has been rewritten in the service of the current ideology. Opposition parties are banned.

The European Commission President announced:

"Courageously, Ukraine is fighting for the ideals of Europe that we celebrate today".

Ukraine is a fascist state with some liberal democratic window dressing. So, the same law that outlawed Soviet insignia also banned fascist images. But the numerous examples of Nazi imagery on Ukrainian tanks and uniforms shows this part of the law is for presentation purposes only.

Since the coup of 2014, the fascists have infiltrated the security services and army. It is these people that control the State. When Zelensky was elected on a platform of making peace with the Donbass, he was confronted with the reality of the Ukrainian State and was forced to continue the war. The Russian speaking comedian from a Jewish family is content to be a puppet of Ukrainian fascists and American neo-cons.

But what is happening in Ukraine goes beyond the fortunes of that benighted country. As von der Leyen has said it's also about European values.

Continued on page 2, Column 1

The 'West':

Bungling Around The World!

President Assad of Syria attended a meeting of the Arab League on May 19th. BBC radio announced the event by saying that this was the first time for ten years that he had ventured out of Syria. He had been a pariah because "he made war on his own people. He has broken his own country to secure the power of his own family..."

Twenty years ago Syria was developing, on Western lines, as a liberal secular society under the rule of the Baath Party. It was not democratic in the sense of having a Government elected through the conflict of many political parties. It was a one-party state in which one party had elicited widespread consent to the establishment of public life on liberal secular lines.

Iraq had been conducted on similar lines until the United States, urged on by Britain, decided to destroy it.

Continued on Page 2, Column 3

The Housing Crisis

There is no doubt that the rapid rise in population and general economic growth has caused pressure on our infrastructure.

Nowhere is this more evident than in housing. When people talk about how easy it was to buy a house in the 1960s and 1970s, it should be remembered that in 1960 the population of the Republic was

2.8 million; it is now over 5.06 million and still growing.

Social factors have exacerbated the problem. In 1960 the average household size was 4.0 people per housing unit; it is now 2.7. So, using some back of the envelope calculations, the number of occupied housing units in 1960 was 700,000, but

now the number is 1,874,074. So, while the population of the country has increased by 81%, the number of occupied housing units has increased by 168%.

While it could be said that being able to achieve such a rapid increase in the housing stock over the last half century was a significant achievement, it appears that we have a housing crisis. Can it be inferred from this that, if the supply of housing met

continued on page 15

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
European Values. Editorial	1
The 'West': <i>Bungling Around The World!</i> Editorial	1.
The Housing Crisis. John Martin	1
Readers' Letters: Strategy And Ordnance. Pat Walsh	3
Was Casement Right To Be Pro-German In 1916? Address by Philip O'Connor to the <i>Roger Casement Summer School</i>	4
Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (Books, Culture And History)	12
The Brian Murphy <i>osb</i> Archive, No. 3, Part 3: <i>Poisoning The Well or Publishing The Truth,</i> Protestant Voices That Reveal an alternative Hidden History to that of RTE and Peter Hart Number Three, Part Three	13
Biteback (1): <i>Irish Times Coverage Of Protestant Abuse—</i> <i>small step forward and two backward!</i> Unpublished Letter to 'Irish Times'	14
Ukraine: Origins! Editorial.	17
2023 Northern Ireland Local Government Elections: results. David Morrison	18
Michael Portillo And The <i>Irish Times.</i> Dave Alvey	18
The Morrison Report. Ursula Von Der Leyen's Panegyric To Israel David Morrison	20
Who Started The Civil War? Brendan Clifford	21
Inglis The Perfidious! Paul R. Hyde	25
Gaza Stills. Wilson John Haire (Poem)	26
A Correction! Donal Kennedy	26
Biteback: Too Many Of You, <i>Not Enough Space For Me !</i> Chris Fogarty	26
Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Housing; Water and Other Services; Land Zoning; Health Services)	27
<p>Labour Comment, edited by Pat Maloney: <u>Murder Of Noel Lemass</u> Irish Independent, 24.10.1923 (back page) Organised Labour: Workplace Relations Committee Report Pay Deal To Match Inflation (page 30)</p>	

The 'West':

continued from page 1

The act of destruction (initiated by "the greatest deployment of shock and awe ever seen in the world", according to Washington), announced the end of dictatorship and the people were exhorted to rise up and establish Democracy. What happened instantly was an outbreak of sectarian anarchy. British 'Defence' Minister, Geoff Hoon, welcomed the anarchy in the House of Commons as an expression of freedom.

A couple of years later, when Iraq was a scene of all-out religious war, another British Labour Minister, Hillary Benn, justified the Bush-Blair invasion of Iraq by saying, in a radio interview: "We gave them freedom. It was up to them what they did with it."

The social forces that were suppressed in Iraq by the "dictatorship" (the liberal, Western-oriented one-party state which was enlisting popular engagement in its project to make it functional), were traditional forces of religion and community which had lived easily together for centuries under the Ottoman Empire, but which resisted being over-ridden and marginalised by the development of the liberal nation state.

To page 3

It used to be the case that Fascism—or its more virulent form Naziism—was taboo. When looking at World War Two, the historian had to confront the image of an emaciated Concentration Camp survivor staring at him from behind the barbed wire. When faced with such horrors all analysis became superfluous.

But von der Leyen and Joseph Borrell have broken that taboo. Once again German tanks are rolling across the steppes of Ukraine.

It seems that Europe's post war anti-Fascism was not so ingrained. The truth is that none of the Allies fought the war to defeat Fascism; still less to protect the Jews.

Britain was hoping that by conceding the Sudetenland to Hitler, and by encouraging the Poles to take an intransigent position in relation to Danzig, that the Nazis would be emboldened to continue the fight against the Soviet Union. Hitler, after all, was an admirer of the British Empire

and in *Mein Kampf* thought of Russia as Germany's India.

But Stalin trumped the British plan with the Molotov Ribbentrop Pact and the Nazis turned west.

All the players in the conflict acted in the interest of their own State, including de Valera's Ireland. (And, in that respect, it is interesting to contrast de Valera with our current political leaders. De Valera forged an independent foreign policy in the face of severe pressure from Britain, which considered invading the country, whereas our current leaders can only do the great Western Powers' bidding. When our President's wife called for peace negotiations in Ukraine, our political Establishment recoiled in horror.)

But each country's experience of the Second World War was very different. The Concentration Camps were not in Western Europe and Hitler did not consider the

Anglo Saxons—unlike the Slavs—inferior to the Aryan race.

At this year's victory day speech in Moscow, Vladimir Putin generously acknowledged the contribution of the Americans, the British and the French to the War against Nazi Germany, but in truth the Soviet Union bore the brunt of the Nazi onslaught and therefore the effect on the Russian people was more profound.

The past year has shown how superficial the memory of Fascism is among the Americans and Western Europeans. After almost ninety years, the original failed British plan has now been realized. Fascism is being used as a spearhead to attack Russia and this time there is no Western Front.

All the anti-racism, and the denunciations of anti-Semitism, count for nothing. The economic well-being of Europe must be put at risk in order to destroy the Russian State. That is the true meaning of "European values" today. ■

The 'West':

continued from page 2

The traditional Middle East was conquered by Britain, with enthusiastic Irish Home Rule support, during the Great War. The Irish Independent hailed the decision to make war on Turkey as completing the great war of liberation which was begun by the war on Germany.

As Britain conquered the Middle East, against strong Turkish resistance, in 1915-16, it began governing it as an extension of its Indian Empire. But then it suddenly changed its mind and decided that the Middle East should undergo a nationalist development under British guidance instead. The great principle on which it justified its World war was the rights of nations to self-determination. It did not implement that principle in Ireland, where there was a national movement eager to take off. But it decided to apply it to the Middle East—Mesopotamia, as it was called, where there was no nation.

Then France, which was bearing the main burden of the War on Germany, demanded a bit of the Middle East. The Middle East therefore had to be divided—Balkanised—and the various bits into which it was broken and designated as nation-states were taken under tutelage by the British and French Empires to show them how to be nation-states. And also how to be democratic, because Democracy too had been adopted as a slogan in the War, and Britain introduced the democratic franchise at home in 1918.

Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine: none of these territorial regions into which the Ottoman Middle East was broken up signified the existence of a nation. They were Imperial constructs, each of which had a mixture of peoples of a pre-national kind.

But the pre-national life was decreed to be obsolete and reactionary and not to be tolerated. These regions were therefore required to simulate national existence—but, in their efforts to do so, they were continuously hampered by the supervision exercised over them by the Imperial Powers which insisted that they must give up the ways of living in which they had existed more or less at peace with each other for many centuries. They were not allowed to go backward—but they were obstructed in going forward.

The Imperial Powers that insisted they must go forward also insisted that they must be obedient to their creators when doing so.

Strategy & Ordnance

The superiority/inferiority of individual weapons and military ordinance is something which obsesses people in bedrooms and such issues deflect them from thinking strategically about wars. In essence the Russians are attacking various targets with the objective of degrading Ukrainian air defences so that the Russian air force can enter the skies more safely.

No Westerner ever explains why Russia continues to attack Kiev when all its missiles are shot down by air defences. Let's say this is true. Only idiocy would result in persistence and if Russia has a limited number of missiles it would simply use them elsewhere.

So this is all about getting the Ukrainians to fire their 5 million dollar a piece Patriot missiles, hopefully getting them down with 500 dollar Iranian drones and old missiles.

It is military maths and is how the Second World War was won. If a Patriot takes down a Kinzhal, it is really irrelevant, unless every Kinzhal is taken down.

Pat Walsh

The only real State in the Middle East since the destruction of the Turkish Empire has been Saudi Arabia. It is the only State based on internal unity of purpose and maintained by internal forces. It is, by any intelligible standards that could be applied, an illiberal dictatorship. But that is not how it is described by US/UK. They only describe States as dictatorships when they have it in mind to destroy them. They cannot contemplate the destruction of Saudi Arabia as they contemplate the destruction of their own creations. Its purposeful cohesion bewilders them. And so they have accommodated it, treated it with respect, and dealt with it as a pillar of the Free World.

When US/UK destroyed the Baath regime in Iraq twenty years ago, the forces of Islamic Fundamentalism which were released were forces they themselves had nurtured in Pakistan for use against the Communist regime that was established in Afghanistan.

That Communist regime was an internal Afghan development supported by the Soviet Union. The US felt that it was necessary that it should be destroyed. Liberal propaganda met with no response in Afghan society. The force which the Communist regime was curbing and superseding was the force of traditional religion against the State, and that is what the USA tended to for the purpose of subverting the Communist State. It sharpened, and modernised in certain ways, the force that had arisen against Britain in the Sudan in the time of the Mahdi. And it succeeded. It brought Islamic Terrorism into

being for a purpose, but did not—could not—extinguish it when that purpose was served.

The destruction of the Baath regime in Iraq made way for the rise of an Islamic State. This fostered an Islamist subversive movement in Syria. The Assad Government resisted it. Assad began "killing his own people". The US, with the UK as a side-kick, was killing the same people in "the war against terrorism"—but of course they were not its own people.

Because Assad was killing his own people, Britain declared his Government illegitimate and withdrew recognition from it. It recognised as the legitimate political authority in Syria a minuscule liberal-democratic grouplet that, if it ever existed, has long-since disappeared. The substance of the movement against Assad was always Islamist of the kind the US had fostered in Afghanistan.

Britain was convinced that the Assad regime would be swept away. When that happened only cranks would pry into awkward details.

Unfortunately a Russian State was on the way to being reconstructed out of the chaotic oligarchic, anarchic democracy of the Yeltsin era, and it did not see that the destruction of the Syrian State would be to its advantage. It made an agreement with the Assad Government, which enabled the latter to survive, and to extend its rule over most of the state of which it is the legitimate Government under United Nations rules. Only the parts occupied by the USA and Turkey remain in revolt against it.

(Iraq, on the other hand, does not yet have anything resembling a national Government.)

A year ago, early in the Ukraine affair, the major outrage in the litany of outrages attributed to Putin was his support for the Assad Government. That has not been mentioned recently. It must have been sensed that it would not play well with this reappearance of Assad as a Middle East statesman. And, if the present trend continues, Britain will have the problem of re-recognising him diplomatically. Has it ever before in its history had to do such a thing?

Another notable on that same day

was the meeting of the G7 States—the democratic world?—on the site where the leader of the democratic world, under no pressure of military desperation, used a nuclear bomb on an undefended city: Hiroshima.

The BBC announced the meeting as follows:

"The Leaders of the G 7, the world's leading Western-faced economies, have gathered in Japan for a Summit."

"The world's leading Western-faced economies"! Is this an admission that the West has failed to realise its destiny of globalising the world under its hegemony has reverted to being just a part of the world?

But, as the Ulster Volunteers (UVF) mobilised against Home Rule with the connivance of a Tory Establishment, the slide to World War that this propelled changed everything.

Irish radicals began to rethink their position. A turning point for them was Redmond's extraordinary speech in early September 1914, a month after Britain declared War on Germany, committing the Irish Volunteers to join the British Army to fight its cause in the Great War, "wherever the firing line extends".

Redmond bet the fate of Home Rule on a British victory, envisioning a triumphant post-War Empire in which Home Rule Ireland would co-rule as Britain's "partner".

Following Redmond's speech, the Irish Volunteers split, with the majority following Redmond. But a significant minority took an opposing position, determined to uphold the independence of the Irish Volunteer movement. It was only a minority of that minority that decided from the start that the world had changed utterly to one of an all-out existential conflict to the finish, and that they must prepare an armed insurrection to rescue the fate of Irish independence from its consequences.

Among these were Roger Casement and James Connolly, who until this point had never remotely contemplated involvement in such a military venture.

THE "GALLANT ALLIES"

The 1916 Rising was the founding act of the Irish State. It did not succeed in vindicating the Republic it declared as it was crushed militarily, but the Proclamation and the Rising were explicitly endorsed by the new Sinn Féin movement in its 1918 Election Manifesto and in the Dáil's Declaration of Independence of January 1919.

The Proclamation declared a Republic in which all citizens, men and women, would have equal rights and duties. It declared the Rising to be the Irish Nation striking for her freedom, with the support of *"her exiled children in America and gallant allies in Europe"*—i.e. the German and Austrian Empires.

This latter phrase has in recent times become a matter of inner anguish for a great many academics, commentators and not a few politicians.

But it is an anguish, or embarrassment, of which there was no sign whatsoever before the 1970s. In the 1966 fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the Rising, the surviving crewmen of the German U-Boat that brought Casement to Ireland

Was Casement Right to be Pro-German in 1916?

Address to the Casement Summer School in Dún Laoghaire,
6th May 2023
by
Philip O'Connor

THE OUTBREAK OF WORLD WAR IN 1914

The events of July-September 1914 changed Europe and the world forever. WW1 is the determinant of all subsequent events of the 20th century, down to the present.

Without that War—the hitherto greatest mass slaughter in European history—and despite the even greater slaughter of WW2, we can state unequivocally that there would have been no Bolshevik Revolution or Soviet Union; no humiliation of Germany or rise of Hitler; no WW2 or subsequent Cold War; no Middle-East chaos . . .

How Africa, the Middle East and Asia subsequently evolved, and how Europe became economically, culturally and politically subservient to the US, were all determined by it.

And in Ireland there would have been no 1916 Rising.

What would have occurred instead is unknowable: so determining was the "Great War" in all that followed its outbreak. There may have been other wars, or a later world conflagration, but there is no evidence that these were inevitable.

It is even conceivable that the European Union would have already happened in the 1920s, as the rise of German economic power was the major pre-1914 factor

in the world, and moves towards such a peaceful economic union of Europe were already being discussed in both political and industrial circles.

In Ireland, the eventual evolution of a separate state, from the limited scope of a Home Rule parliament as proposed in the 1912 Westminster Bill, was a perspective widely shared—including by many who later took a far more radical approach, as the World War utterly changed the circumstances in which everything unfolded.

To imagine how peaceful things had become a decade before 1914, it has only to be noted how Irish insurrectionist conspiracies had evaporated: to such an extent that Britain wound down its massive spying and informer network. The Home Rule leader, John Redmond, often shared platforms with old Fenians, but this was by then a purely image-building exercise, as Fenianism had become no more than a nostalgic affair.

Pádraig Pearse shared a platform with Redmond at a great rally in 1912 to welcome the Home Rule Bill. Similarly, the "revolutionary socialist" James Connolly moved the motion at the 1911 Irish Trade Union Congress to establish a separate Irish Labour Party to represent the interests of workers in an anticipated Home Rule Parliament.

in 1916 attended as honoured guests of the Irish Government, alongside de Valera and Lemass.

The term “*gallant allies*” was due to the influence of Roger Casement and James Connolly as the two internationalists among the revolutionary leaders of 1916.

What do we mean by “*internationalists*”? It is that both men saw the Irish national cause, and their role in it, in what we would call “*global*” terms today.

The two were originally quite different, Casement a liberal and humanitarian who assumed an Irish nationalist future evolving alongside a liberal-ruled British Empire, while Connolly was an international socialist, who had seen an Irish Republic as a revolutionary cause within a wider struggle against international capitalism.

The term “*revolutionary*” had no violent connotations at this time, and socialists of all hues casually referred to themselves as “*revolutionaries*”.

Both men had already developed views of the world in which the dominant player was the British Empire, of which Ireland was just one colony. While seeing colonial exploitation as systemic in an Imperialist world, they saw Britain’s dominant power as based in its command of the seas, exercising a stranglehold over the world.

Opposing Imperialist Power was as important to both men as the specific issue of achieving Irish Independence, though both saw a free Ireland as key to unravelling the Empire globally. They had come to this position independently.

Both would have treated with derision today’s fashionable interpretations of WW1 as having “*broken out*”, or the Powers having “*sleep-walked*” into it, as they both saw it as a conscious bid by Britain to end the rise of an unacceptably successful commercial rival, Germany, and destroy it as a challenge to itself.

In the now irreversible showdown initiated in 1914, both saw Ireland’s interests dictating that it now ally itself with Germany and promote a German victory, or Europe would be destroyed and Ireland remain enslaved.

CONNOLLY

James Connolly was a lifelong socialist militant and republican. He had been a notable figure in Scottish Socialism and in the US Labour Movement before settling in Ireland.

Connolly remained an International Socialist until August 1914. He initially

reacted to the outbreak of war as the nominal position of the Socialist International informed him. This was that a war between imperial predator powers was occurring and workers should rebel and bring it to an end by mass civil disobedience, i.e. a general strike.

In advocating this socialist position, Connolly approvingly cited speeches by anti-war European socialists, such as the left-wing German Reichstag member, Karl Liebknecht.

But, as he observed the ideals of the Socialist International proving to have been nothing more than a chimera, as workers and socialists went fervently to war on behalf of their respective countries, he abandoned this position as delusory in the face of the new reality, and re-assessed what was happening in the world.

Within two weeks, he ended his silence with a re-assessment of what was occurring.

In *The Irish Worker* of 28th August 1914, which he produced from Liberty Hall, the headquarters of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union of which he was a leading official, he published an editorial, ‘*The War Upon the German Nation*’, siding with Germany against Britain. It was a position he would maintain up to his death.

In siding with Germany, Connolly aligned specifically with the pro-War majority, reformist, wing of the German Social Democratic Party, which saw the war as one of national defence against a strategy of encirclement and destruction at the hands of the British “*pirate*” Empire and the ‘*Entente*’ it had created for the purpose.

It is not conceivable that Connolly did not read Casement’s 1913 pamphlet, *The Crime Against Europe*, which had warned that Britain was plotting and planning a war to destroy Germany, its new commercial rival, and with it threaten the future of European civilisation. This small collection of Casement’s essays was banned in Ireland but produced by Irish Republican Brotherhood circles in the US and smuggled in, where the IRB quickly circulated it.

Connolly’s and Casement’s positions on the War were henceforth identical. Where they differed was only in Casement’s ignoring of the socialist issue, which had never concerned him.

For Connolly, not only was Germany being attacked by a “*pirate*”, but the future of European Socialism—or Social Democracy—required a German victory.

For him, Germany’s parliamentary, local government, industrial, training and health systems represented the most highly socialised form of Capitalism yet developed. These were, from a worker’s and socialist perspective, far superior to those of Britain.

The German Social Democratic Party—the famous SPD—was the largest and mightiest socialist party in the world. By contrast, Britain was an Imperial Power dependent on colonial possessions and domination of the seas, with a labour movement that did not as yet exist much beyond the bounds of Trade Unionism.

After *The Irish Worker* was banned by the Dublin Castle authorities as “*sedition*”, Connolly founded *The Workers’ Republic*, likewise producing it from Liberty Hall. He continued in the same vein with articles on what was at stake in war—Germany’s industrial and social systems—until the *Workers’ Republic* too was banned in early 1916. He reproduced articles by pro-War German Socialists and pro-German American and other commentators, never again even mentioning the “*internationalist*” anti-War tendency in European Socialism or quoting figures like Karl Liebknecht.

As regards Ireland, Connolly was a Socialist Republican—indeed he can be said to have invented the term. He evolved a nationalist position not dissimilar to what Pilsudski had created for Polish Socialism against the Internationalism espoused by his compatriot, Rosa Luxembourg.

Connolly also combined his Irish Citizen Army with the Fenian Irish Republican Brotherhood—going so far as collaborating with figures such as Laurence Kettle, who had been one of his major protagonists during the great Dublin Strike and Lock-Out of 1913.

From there it was a straight road to 1916, with Connolly’s conviction on the need for an armed rebellion a determining factor in ensuring it occurred. In preparing for it, both he and Casement aligned their cause with that of Imperial Germany, “*our gallant allies*”.

CASEMENT AS LIBERAL

Casement was very different to the worker, Connolly. He was not a socialist and rarely dealt with issues of industrial economics. He had a romantic association with Irish Nationalism from his youngest days: there is a large collection of Young Ireland and Fenian ballads among his papers, many transcribed in his own hand.

But Casement was an ardent liberal. There was no contradiction in his mind at

this time between those two things, just as at the time there was no contradiction for Connolly between his Internationalism and his Irish Republicanism.

Casement had risen professionally in the consular service of the British Foreign Office. While on what was effectively a spying mission in the vast Belgian colony of the Congo, he witnessed the brutal savagery through which its rubber-harvesting economy was administered. This deeply moved his humanitarian instincts and would lead him to campaign publicly on the issue. He sent detailed reports on all of this to the Foreign Office, which would subsequently use them judiciously with its customary skill to enforce Belgium's compliance with British aims.

That the Congo was King Leopold's private estate is an assertion that is only half true. The colony was run by Belgian administrators and military personnel, and huge numbers of Belgians profited from the murderous exploitation. Belgium became an enormously wealthy country on the back of it.

But Belgium—which would be transformed into “*gallant little Belgium*” in the 1914 war propaganda—was itself an abnormal entity, created in 1831 by the Powers—primarily Britain and Prussia—to serve as a buffer state.

Much would later be made of Belgium's “*neutrality*”, but that status was something vague and purposely ill-defined, not by Belgium, which had little agency in the matter, but by its “*protecting Powers*”.

The British Foreign Office ultimately used Casement's reports to pressure the Belgians to bring them into line on the role of their 'neutrality' in the coming 'Great War' against Germany, and to permit French and British armies enter their territory.

The Germans had believed that Belgium's neutrality would allow for the peaceful passage of their armies through the country to confront France, which had declared war on it. They were to be shocked to the core at the stance Britain took in the event in July 1914, in alleged “*defence of Belgian neutrality*”.

Casement's exposure of the horrific exploitation of indigenous peoples—also in the Putumayo region of the Amazon—is portrayed today as another purely “*humanitarian*” crusade. But again it had its geo-political aspect. Britain at that time was the major commercial power in South America, and the companies Casement investigated were based on English capital.

His reports were again for dilatory use by the Foreign Office.

Having formed a view of the predatory and exploitative essence of Imperialism, Casement retired from the Foreign Office and threw himself into the service of the Irish nationalist movement just as the Home Rule crisis was mounting.

But he did this without abandoning his basic liberal affiliations—indeed quite the opposite. Casement had become a highly celebrated humanitarian and the Liberal Party in Britain, which wore its liberalism and humanitarianism on its sleeve, feted him.

That party had condemned the outrages of the Concentration Camps and terror tactics employed by the British in the Boer War; it stood for liberal global governance; and in 1914, until the last moment, it supported a peaceful resolution of differences with Germany. It also supported Irish Home Rule and social reform at home.

Casement was at this time probably the best-known Irishman in the world. In his consular career, he had come to know personally many of the people in the very highest echelons of the British Liberal Establishment generally, and the Foreign Office in particular, not least the then Foreign Secretary, Lord Edward Grey himself.

He knew their inner workings intimately, their *modus operandi*, and how the British State conducted itself in its world affairs.

Indicative of Casement's international standing at the time was how, when on a trip to the US in 1912, he could simply stop off in New York and have President William Taft meet him to discuss the Putumayo atrocities.

Casement's standing was further reflected in how, with the emergence of the Imperialist-sponsored Ulster Volunteer Force threatening to overturn Home Rule in defiance of the Liberal Government and constitution, he rapidly emerged as a central figure in a committee of Irish-associated Liberal notables in London, formed in response to raise funds for, and organise the arming of, the Irish Nationalist Volunteers.

Casement had been elected to the Executive of the Irish Volunteers on the day of its founding in November 1913 and soon also emerged as its *de facto* ambassador to the Irish-American Clan na Gael organisation, run by the formidable old Fenian, John Devoy.

The small but high-powered London Committee consisted of an array of dazzling figures:

Alice Stopford Green, a leading Irish historian, Protestant Home Ruler, and London socialite, was the daughter of a Church of Ireland Bishop, and she was married to a well-known British historian. Her London circle included the cream of the Liberal Party, with Lord Asquith, Viscount Haldane, Edward Grey and others, as well as Fabians such as the Webbs: regular attendees at her drawing room parties.

Tories such as Augustine Birrell and Arthur Balfour also regularly attended. She and Casement had a common friend in E.D. Morel, also a humanitarian campaigner on the Congo. Irish nationalists in her circle ranged from Pádraig Colum and Eoin MacNeill to the grandees of the Irish Party.

Others associated with the Committee and its fund-raising included Mary Spring Rice, daughter of Lord Monteagle and a cousin of Sir Arthur Cecil Spring Rice, British Ambassador to the US. Most of the Committee and its circle had Irish connections, were mainly Protestant and Liberal, and sympathetic to or members of the Irish Party.

Erskine Childers was another well-gotten Irishman, connected with British Naval Intelligence. Other supporters included Sir Thomas Myles, Conor O'Brien, Captain George Fitz Hardinge Berkeley, James Creed Meredith, and Hervey de Montmorency.

The Committee organised the running of about 1,000 German rifles into Howth and Kilcoole in late July 1914, literally a week before the outbreak of War, which would come even to most MPs as a bolt from the blue.

Those 1,000 guns made 1916 possible, but no-one involved in the gun-running Committee had insurrectionist plans. Rather the opposite—they wanted to provide Redmond with back-up, to face down the Tory-UVF plot to prevent Home Rule by force.

Many leading members of the Committee would go on to serve Britain in the War. For them, the Tory/UVF mutiny against Home Rule was a mutiny against the constitution, which they would defend by defending Irish Home Rule as true and loyal Liberals.

But some on the Dublin Volunteer Executive already had more ambitious

plans and Redmond, sensing this and keen to keep control of any armed force, demanded that the Executive be re-configured to have a majority appointed by him.

Casement played a key role in having the Executive accept this proposal.

Until July 1914, in other words, Casement was a mainstream Irish nationalist supporting a strategy of alliance with England's Liberals to achieve Irish Home Rule.

That Casement was also in contact with radicals and Fenians was, as we have seen, nothing unusual. Fenianism and Young Irelandism formed Ireland's popular, even sentimental, political culture, while Redmondism had become its dull pragmatic politics.

It was the World War that changed that.

WERE CONNOLLY AND CASEMENT WRONG ABOUT GERMANY AND BRITAIN?

Casement never tired of trying to educate people on the truly formidable nature of the British State, especially its finely-honed and managed Establishment, and how it worked. He often despaired at the incomprehension which he met on this.

Ireland and Britain operate differently in times of existential crisis. If the British have their civil-military complex, known as the Establishment, to fall back on, the Irish can be said to ever resort to the "*Illegal Organisation*". And so it happened after August 1914.

It has also been said that the British don't hate the Irish; they only despise them, which is something different. It is not Irish revolutionaries they despise. This was made abundantly clear in the years after 1914 and also in the Good Friday talks. Rather it is the naïve supplicant mainstream type, of the Redmond or Jack Lynch variety, who they have ever held in contempt. "*If I may say so, sur, that's a fine hat you're wearin' today.*"

There is a very — purposely — distorted perception today of the Germany of 1914, as in some way the same Germany, or a direct precursor of, the dreaded *Third Reich* of the later Hitler period. While there were of course continuities and similarities, with aspects of the latter traceable to aspects of the former, the same could be said of many states that experienced fundamental upheavals, such as pre- and post-revolutionary France.

But on the notion of WW1 as a clash between Democracy and Autocracy, as the British wartime propaganda had it, Germany in 1914 could well have claimed

to win any contest on which of them was more or less 'democratic' than the other.

Both were evolving parliamentary monarchies. Full male suffrage was introduced in Britain in 1918, having only been widened beyond an oligarchical elite to two-thirds of the male adult population in the 1880s and to women over thirty in 1918. Germany, on the other hand, had a full male franchise from the founding of the Reich in 1871, with a full female franchise from 1919 after this was promised in the War—as also happened in Britain.

At Regional and Local Government levels, in both countries, the suffrage was restricted in various ways, though it was certainly much wider in many German municipalities as compared with Britain.

As regards the effectiveness of parliament, a key criterium is its control of budgets. Many will be surprised to learn that in Imperial Germany, "*Money Bills*", i.e. budgets, and even *Army Bills*, required majority Reichstag approval from the 1890s.

Before about 1910, Germany was not viewed as anything other than a parliamentary monarchy. The notion of a "*Prussian Autocracy*" was slowly worked up by British propaganda from the early 1900s as part of the build-up to the bloody showdown.

Many will be surprised to learn that at that time it was Germany that was regarded as the main protector state of the Jews of Europe. German armies in the East were welcomed as liberators by Jewish communities, while in Britain and Ireland Jews were subject to attack by jingoist mobs, and shops burned out, on the basis that they were German fifth-columnists. A former Jewish Lord Mayor of Belfast—an ardent supporter of the Union—was removed from the city's role of honour.

These perceptions only changed after the US entered the War and Britain signed the *Balfour Declaration* in 1917.

Furthermore, the Britain that declared war on Imperial Germany in 1914, ostensibly in the name of liberty, democracy and poor little Belgium, was composed—not just of the British Isles—but a whole vast Empire, across which none but its white populations had the vote.

Indigenous colonial populations were excluded entirely from the democracy. While whites formed a majority in the "*dominions*" of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, they were but a tiny minority in South Africa.

The large indigenous populations of colonised countries, such as India, were nevertheless expected to participate fully in the War, no less than white subjects.

Britain's land empire, which had begun with the slave plantations of the Caribbean Islands that formed the basis for the take-off of British Capitalism, covered a fifth of the globe by 1914, with effective control also over many other areas, such as China.

Germany, for its part, had a "Reich" of German-speaking areas of central Europe, a smattering of recent colonies in Africa, and a few small possessions in the Pacific serving as naval coaling stations. It had 'acquired' these only after the 1880s—i.e. very recently—on foot of the *Congress of Berlin* at which the European Powers agreed a colonial carve-up in a way intended to avoid them coming into conflict with each other.

Bismarck disliked colonies and saw no need for them. His perspective was a Europe-centred economic-based Power, trading and concerting with other continental Powers.

The agitation for German colonies came from pressure groups demanding that Germany emulate Britain, including in its concept of the "*white man's burden*". German colonies, in contrast to those of Britain, were few and inconsequential for its economy.

There were brutalities and atrocities in the German colonies much as in any other. These became a major issue in the 1906 German Elections, when both Catholics and Social Democrats sought an end to colonial misrule and a more humanist approach to colonised peoples. It was a position very similar to that of the English Liberals.

There were differences in Britain too over the future of its Empire. Tories at the time were true "*conservatives*", wishing to conserve the Empire as it was, and hostile to experiments both in self-rule or humanitarian or other "*interferences*".

The most vigorous Imperial element in Britain was a group calling themselves "*Liberal Imperialists*", who organised in some secret, at elite level. They held sway in places such as the Foreign Office and among business and intellectual circles. They gathered in groups, such as that behind the remarkable journal, *The Round Table*.

A leading Liberal Imperialist was Cecil Rhodes, who had acquired a vast fortune

from mining and other 'enterprises' in southern Africa. He was one of the wealthiest men in the world, and a key figure behind the *Round Table*.

IMPERIALISM AND THE WORLD WAR

In 1900, Britain, though declining industrially compared to the dual rising Powers of Germany and the USA, nevertheless had a still expanding Empire. Rhodes was planning a "*Cairo to Cape*" railway, to link the entirety of British Africa.

Britain was also expanding in East Asia after consolidating Burma and Malaya, and planning to extract Mesopotamia and other territories from the Ottoman Empire in order to link India by land to the Mediterranean.

The Empire was still very much on the move!

The Liberal Imperialists had a developmental concept of Empire, with the white dominions as the model for a process of voluntary Imperial integration. This concept extended to how they viewed Irish Home Rule, which Redmond bought into in 1914.

The self-rule concept of the Liberal Imperialists did not yet extend to the black or so-called 'yellow' peoples of Africa and Asia. Such subjects were as yet only at the stage of been brought through the 'basics' of Christianity and loyalty. It would be a long process.

Indians were regarded as being at a "*higher stage*". Great numbers of middle-class Indian settlers were brought to the African colonies to form a commercial middle class. Plans for incorporating Mesopotamia included "*clearing out*" the Arabs from the Euphrates Basin and replacing them with hundreds of thousands of Indians. The Indian middle classes in these colonies were regarded as reliably loyal.

But despite these territorial experiments, Britain was primarily a maritime Power.

Admiral Sir Halford MacKinder (1861-1947), the founder of "*geopolitics*", saw Sea Power as the key to world domination. He described the Eurasian landmass—an area of the globe where Britain held possessions only at its peripheries—as a problem. But it was the "*heartland*" of the planet and whoever controlled it controlled the world.

MacKinder proposed a British mega-strategy for securing control of the Eurasian heartland by projecting over-

whelming maritime power around the globe. You didn't need to conquer such places anymore, just strangle them from the sea.

Britain ensured it maintained a navy which in strength and numbers outmatched the next three in the world combined—at the time those of France, Germany and the US.

MacKinder's geopolitical doctrine became central British Imperial strategy. For Liberal Imperialists, such a plan was best realised in conjunction with the rising fellow Anglo-Saxon Power, the United States of America. They made great efforts to insert their influence into US elites in order to build this great alliance, and eventually succeeded.

MacKinder's geopolitical doctrine was bequeathed to the US after Britain bankrupted itself in the First World War. Britain did so in the hope that, while the crude US would provide the brawn, it would remain the brains of the enterprise. This was indeed the case for a while, until the US comprehensively took over the whole project after WW2.

MacKinder remains central to US global military/maritime doctrine to this day.

Although some still hold that Europe "*sleep-walked*" into a World War in 1914, there is growing acceptance that, from soon after 1900, Britain began to prepare for a War to crush its rising commercial adversary in Europe, Germany.

A system of alliances with France and Russia was constructed, and plans laid to entice Germany into a war-trap by breaching Belgian 'neutrality', while Russia—to which Britain secretly promised the reward of Constantinople—would move its millions-strong mass forces west as an irresistible "*steam-roller*", crushing Germany from the East.

Britain would deploy only a token land army to France/Belgium—the Expeditionary Corps—while France bore the brunt of the fighting. Britain's primary role would be at sea, imposing a Naval Blockade to strangle commodity and food imports to Germany.

This long-laid policy was executed with brilliance and precision from the first days of the War. German merchant ships were impounded on the high seas or in ports around the world and supplies to Germany totally cut off. German industrial products, financial assets and patents were seized.

The German U-Boat campaign was a meagre response to this grand strategy.

There is an interesting Irish event illustrating the predicament Germany found itself trapped in just before the War. German Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg was desperate to avoid war with Britain, and was convinced it could be avoided.

When Darrell Figgis and Erskine Childers came to Hamburg to purchase arms with the funds raised by Casement's London Committee, they met extreme reluctance to sell them any. As Figgis recalled in his 1927 memoir, *Recollections of the Irish War*:

"Later I learned the cause of their reluctance. I little thought when I learned it how strangely I should afterwards remember it, when the whole world was at war. For, a few weeks before this, Carson had run his rifles at Larne, and these rifles had been bought in Hamburg. Germany, I was told, believed that Britain was looking for a cause of war, and the German government had therefore warned all firms that they must under no circumstances sell arms to Ireland. Another affair such as Larne... might bring serious consequences that Germany was anxious to avert. This, be it remembered, was told me before our affair at Howth, and two months before the European war. I thought it fantastic then, though I soon had cause to know that the fear was genuine."

Figgis and Childers only got around the problem through a pretence that they were acting for rebels in Mexico, not Ireland. But the incident is very telling.

CASEMENT IN GERMANY

Casement had a profound and informed understanding of Britain as a predatory Global Power from his time as a respected British diplomat.

He saw it relentlessly targeting Germany commercially and militarily, and understood that Britain's geo-political goals were only achievable through the destruction of Germany. Britain's key asset was its control of the seas.

Were Germany to defend itself in such a conflict, Ireland's objective interest would be to side with Germany.

Until 1914, these seemed as yet theoretical ideas, but Casement believed they were about to be implemented—often highlighting incidents illustrating this, such as British attempts to prevent German transatlantic connectivity through Irish ports in 1911.

But, with the outbreak of War, and Redmond's aligning of the Volunteers

with the cause of the British Empire, the challenge became concrete and immediate. Casement's espousal of the Liberals and Home Rule now changed radically.

He hurriedly collected some articles he had written and published them in a famous pamphlet, *The Crime Against Europe*, critiquing British imperial strategy and describing the War as a deliberate British strategy. Until Britain's domination over the seas was broken, he wrote, all other states would be at its mercy.

It was in Germany's interest and essential to its very survival to break Britain's monopoly of the world's seas. This was also key to an independent existence for Ireland, positioned as it was on England's western Atlantic flank.

An Independent Ireland was now in Germany's interest, just as once it had been in France's—as Napoleon himself admitted in exile that he had realised too late:

“As an Irishman,” Casement wrote, “I have no fear of the result to Ireland of a German triumph. I pray for it; for with the coming of that day the ‘Irish Question’, so dear to British politicians, becomes a European, a world question.”

Casement's writings were widely read in Irish circles, having appeared in Padraig Colum's *Irish Review*, and in the US in Clan na Gael's *Gaelic American* and *Irish Freedom*. His *Crime Against Europe* appeared in numerous editions even before the War started.

In August 1914 Casement, together with Devoy and the Clan na Gael leadership, met with the German Ambassador in Washington. They drafted a petition to Kaiser Wilhelm, calling on Germany to publicly commit in its war aims to an Independent Ireland.

Recognising “*the German cause*” “*as their own*”, they stated that, while “*We should hope for a German triumph over an enemy who is also our enemy*”, an Ireland liberated from Britain would also be a “*sure gauge for a free ocean for all who traverse the seas*”.

They sought a German Government *Declaration*, committing to support Irish Independence. With a letter from Clan na Gael stating its “*fullest confidence*” in Casement, and his “*authority to speak for and represent the Irish Revolutionary Party in Ireland and America*”, Casement travelled to Germany via Norway to negotiate directly.

He finally succeeded in having an initially reluctant German Chancellor issue the *Declaration* he and Devoy sought on

20th November 1914, its wording largely drafted by Casement. This committed to support Irish Independence and confirmed that, if the fortunes of war brought German troops to Ireland, they would act in accord with that commitment.

This was a diplomatic triumph for the Irish Volunteers, Casement telling MacNeill that it represented the first “*international recognition of Irish nationality*”.

Casement pursued two further objectives, likewise in agreement with Clann na Gael and the Irish Republican Brotherhood: the raising of an “*Irish Brigade*” from Irish prisoners of war to fight only in Ireland, and the organising of arms for the Irish Volunteers. These were agreed in a formal 10-clause secret “*Treaty*” he concluded with the Germans in December 1914.

Though the Brigade remained secret and the Agreement was not published, it stated that, only if it proved impossible to get the Brigade to Ireland could another deployment be considered, which Casement had to personally approve, such as assisting Egyptian patriots “*to expel the British from Egypt*”, because “*a blow struck at the British invaders of Egypt ... is a blow struck for a kindred cause to that of Ireland*”.

Casement was a true internationalist!

But the effort to raise the Brigade flopped, with just fifty “*physically healthy but of the lowest moral calibre*” volunteering. Most prisoners clung to their loyalties as British soldiers or Home Rule supporters.

Casement's travails in Germany are well known since Angus Mitchell's excellent edition of his German diary was published in 2016, under the title of *One Bold Deed of Open Treason*.

But what most comes across in Casement's German diary is a growing exasperation with the Germans themselves. As a well-known international figure, he enjoyed access to and socialised with the upper echelons of the German foreign policy establishment.

But his growing frustration with them was less at their unwillingness to deliver on obligations under the *Declaration* than their extraordinary naivety about the British and the nature of British strategy. The German elites remained incorrigible Anglophiles!

This was already apparent in Casement's struggle to get the *Declaration* of German support in December 1914, as revealed by Karin Wolf in her 1972 book,

Sir Roger Casement und die deutsch-irische Beziehungen (“Casement and German-Irish Relations”).

Berlin had already been extremely reluctant to countenance the talks between their Ambassador in the USA with Devoy and Casement, instructing him on 28th August 1914 to proceed with caution and not commit, as a Declaration supporting Irish Independence might “*forfeit sympathies of [the] English population and of America*”!

Even as Chancellor, Bethman-Hollweg, as Wolf relates, the German Government continued—until the end of 1914: five months after the start of the War—to hope for a reconciliation with England, and remained eager that Germany do nothing to exacerbate tensions.

The German Ambassador in the US therefore delayed committing to Casement, though he urged Berlin that “*should Great Britain nevertheless choose a fight to full mutual exhaustion*”, Germany should consider accommodating the Irish.

As he later wrote:

“The decisive point appears to me to be whether there is any prospect of coming to an understanding with England or whether we must prepare ourselves for a fight to the life and death. In the latter case, I would recommend meeting Irish wishes, assuming of course that there really are Irishmen prepared to help us” (Wolf, p25).

When Casement arrived in Berlin in October 1914 and told them of the British attempt to murder him while in Norway, one Undersecretary, in a secret report, expressed barely concealed incredulity that an English gentleman could ever contemplate doing such a dastardly thing!

Once it was clear that Britain had no interest in a compromise, Bethmann-Hollweg finally met Casement, who later wrote of a speech the Chancellor gave soon after: “*It is a fine speech—but too late. He recognises now, after the event, that England made the war!*” (Mitchell, p. 109).

In this own diary, Casement recounts meeting many upper class Germans pining for reconciliation with England, noting of one:

“He is most unhappy—he would really prefer to be in England! I can see that... His true feeling is with England and he wants only peace between them” (Mitchell, p. 105).

The blindness of this love, as Casement often recounted, disabled the Germans

from understanding the British or their war strategy:

“The more I see of the ‘governing classes’ in Germany the less highly I estimate their intelligence. They are ‘not in it’ with the English... These people, whose supreme interest it should be to have complete freedom and equality at sea, will not take the necessary steps... A fixed, unchanging Irish policy is essential to freedom at sea of every power competing with England. That is the first rule to master.”

And later:

“Solf, German Minister for the Colonies... confessed... that they had all been deceived by English ‘nice manners’ and ‘hearty hospitality’... and said it would have paid Germany well to have engaged a few Irishmen as guides to the British character in international affairs!” (Mitchell, p111-3).

Casement grew ever more despondent and was often ill, spending much of 1915 in a sanatorium outside Munich. But he continued writing, particularly for the English-language *Continental Times*, focusing relentlessly on the nature of British strategy, the issue of naval dominance and the need for Germany to fight for the freedom of the seas.

The practical organisation of arms for Ireland passed back to Clan na Gael and the IRB, who organised the shipment to coincide with the Rising.

When the ‘Aud’ carrying that substantial shipment was scuttled off Cork after Wilson’s administration, despite ostensible American neutrality, betrayed German Embassy papers revealing its location to the British, Casement decided to return to Ireland to have the Rising aborted, convinced it faced catastrophe.

By providing arms, even if the ship was sunk, and facilitating Casement’s return, the Germans fulfilled their commitments under the Declaration of November 1914.

CONCLUSION

To answer whether Casement was right to ally the Irish cause with Germany in 1916, maybe I could invert British Foreign Office morality for which anything that advances the interests of Britain are right and proper, by applying a similar morality to Ireland.

But that, in fact, was not Casement’s position. While not specifically a supporter of Germany, he saw its resistance to the British War to destroy it and remove it as a commercial competitor as in Europe’s, and hence Ireland’s, vital interests.

Wars are ever more unpredictable as they progress.

Already by 1916, Britain’s strategy of quick victory through French defence, Russian ‘steam-roller’, and British Blockade had not, as many had expected, produced a result.

Germany’s unexpected success against these apparent overwhelming odds had meant it had withstood, and had even begun to gain the upper hand. The Ottomans also had not collapsed, with the attempted Anglo-French invasion a disaster.

Britain was finally forced after all to pour in a mass army to the meat grinder of the Western Front, and to only pray and work for an American entry into the War.

But these events came mostly after the 1916 Rising.

Hope for American Government assistance for either Irish Independence or to defend the Freedom of the Seas were a non-starter before that, as the pro-British US Presidency of Woodrow Wilson was, despite ostensible US neutrality, already

covertly assisting the British implement their Blockade of Europe from 1915.

All things change, and with America’s entry into the War in 1917, long after the execution of both Casement and Connolly, the new Sinn Féin would turn to trying to mobilise Irish-American opinion to have the US back Irish demands at the promised post-War Peace Conference.

How perceptive Casement had been was revealed by how that campaign turned out. Wilson’s principle of “*Self-Determination for Nations*” would not apply to the French or British Empires.

Ireland was excluded from the Peace Conference and would have to fight its way alone to a settlement with Britain.

These experiences shaped the Irish State in its perceptions of the realities of World Power Politics. These were perceptions that determined its stances at the League of Nations in the 1930s, its neutrality in World War Two, and its persistent efforts to re-join Europe thereafter.

Whatever the many faults of the EU, it, and not the Atlantic Powers, remains Ireland’s destiny.

Public Meeting

Bankruptcy of Western Policy or Collective Death Wish?

“Above all, while defending our own vital interests, nuclear powers must avert those confrontations which bring an adversary to a choice of either a humiliating retreat or a nuclear war. To adopt that kind of course in the nuclear age would be evidence only of the bankruptcy of our policy—or of a collective death-wish for the world.”

President John F. Kennedy

at

American University, Washington DC, 10 June 1963

Discussion Introduced

by

Dr. Pat Walsh

Friday

9 June 2023,

7-9pm

**Upstairs room, ICTU premises
45-47 Donegall Street, Belfast BT1 2FG
(beside John Hewitt Bar).**

All welcome

Books, Culture and History

I left off my May article in the *Irish Political Review* when looking at the review in *The Irish Times* (19th April 2014) by Nicholas Allen of *'The Books that Define Ireland'* by Bryan Fanning and Tom Garvin. The book was published by Merrion Press (an imprint of Irish Academic Press) Dublin, 2014.

There were thirty books in all reviewed in the academic tome, and were produced alternately by each academic/historian. I was genuinely amazed to see that Canon Sheehan's *'The Graves at Kilmorna'* (1913) was included and was reviewed by Garvin. Because by this time Canon Sheehan's works had been excluded by those in literary/academic life here in Ireland. But then again this was a propitious time for the literary revival of Canon Sheehan. In 2013 *'The Graves of Kilmorna'* was republished by Brendan Clifford and the Aubane Historical Society, Millstreet, Co. Cork with a very thorough Introduction by Clifford. And there were also extracts of some of Canon Sheehan's other novels reproduced at the end of the book.

Also in the same year, 2013, there was a book of *'The Collected Letters of Canon Sheehan of Doneraile 1883-1913'*, Edited by Monsignor James O'Brien, Smenos Publications, Somerset, England. This book was launched by the then Cardinal Pell, Archbishop of Sydney, at the Embassy of Australia to the Vatican. As Taoiseach Enda Kenny, Fine Gael, had closed the Irish Embassy to the Vatican, the Australian Ambassador, John McCarthy, generously provided his Embassy for the Launch and for "*providing accommodation to the Irish community for the occasion*", as the July/August 2013 edition of *'Alive'* reported.

"It was noted, however, that the Irish ambassador to the Holy See did not attend, and was not represented, at the event."

However, the attendance did include "representatives from the American, Australian, Czech and other diplomatic missions several Cardinals and officials of the Roman Curia". Cardinal Pell described 'The Collected Letters' as "a valuable contribution to the rediscovery of an important Catholic writer and a significant contributor to Irish Catholic Literature". The Australian Ambassador, John McCarthy, recalled that—

"the priest's novels circulated in practically every English speaking country.

It Is Time

Some of them were also translated into various European languages. Copies of 'My New Curate' were printed in Boston and retailed in London, Calcutta, Melbourne and Sydney."

Mons. O'Brien spoke about—

"the Canon's literary world and the development of the Catholic novel in 19th century Europe. A reaction to hostile political and cultural forces, Catholic novels helped to clarify Catholic identity and consolidate the Catholic community in a hostile cultural environment."

And then UCC's School of History organiser supreme Gabriel Doherty organised a Conference with the theme:

"A Different discipline: revisiting Canon Sheehan of Doneraile (1852-1913)—Author, Activist, Priest". Friday 26th and Saturday 27th April 2013.

Speaking at the Conference were academics from such diverse backgrounds as:

Professor Martin Putna, former Director of the Vaclav Havel Library, Prague on 'Irish and English Catholic Literature and Its Czech Reception',

Fr. Joseph Hubbert, Niagara University on 'Sheehan and Heuser: Collaborating for the Upkeep of the Church',

Professor Eda Sagarra, Trinity College Dublin on 'The Canon in Germany',

Dr. Ruth Fleischmann, University of Bielefeld (retired) on 'Canon Sheehan's 'Apprehensions about the Ireland of his Time'

Along with others, including Mons. James O'Brien—who really has done huge research and has to be congratulated for allowing us new insights into the Canon—and who Official Ireland refused to acknowledge, until they had to; and really the glimpse allowed will, they hope, be enough.

Speaking for some friends and myself, 'this glimpse' has awakened a hunger for the rest of the works of this Mallow-born priest, and I predict more and more people will be similarly consumed. As Brendan Clifford has confirmed, Canon Sheehan was a born storyteller and quite gifted as a literary man.

But, if one read the review by the now *Emeritus* Professor of Politics, Tom Garvin of University College Dublin (UCD), in *'The Books that Define Ireland'*, the sheer shock of the banality that passes for academic analysis in this country would be enough to put anyone off. (All italics: JH).

Clifford is right when he wrote that all academic/cultural writing here is done with an eye to "*the powerful British*" (and increasingly American) "*universities who have hegemonised academic life in Ireland*"—with the added twist that it is the Irish taxpayer who pick up their bills. This is what the well-poisoners have brought us to! But, like all impositions, it will run its course—even if former Taoiseach and present Tánaiste, Micheál Martín, Fianna Fáil, insists that it is "*our shared history*" (with Britain) that will restore us to new and greater imaginings. As if?!

In his *Introduction* to the *'Collected Letters'*, Mons. James O'Brien shows us what research went into the writing of his book. He worked in Libraries/Archives in such different places as the US, Europe et al. One of his particular concerns is that:

"A further area concerning the researcher's attention is that of the often significant literary figures who translated Canon Sheehan's works. They were translated into at least ten European languages. Several of these writers were closely associated with the literary renouveau catholique movements" [Italics Mons. O'Brien].

O'Briensuggeststhatthisparticularworkof tracing the archives of such translators would be worthwhile. He did find out that it was—

"Fr. Joseph Bruneau of Baltimore who translated his works into French. In this respect, it may prove rewarding to locate and investigate the papers of Oskar Jakob and Anton Lohr, his German translators, Alois Koudelka who translated three of his novels into Czech, Izidor Cankar his Slovenian translator, Angelo Mauri his Italian translator, as well as the papers of his Hungarian translators—Victor Cholnoky, Viktor Kereszty and Lajos Cziklay."

According to Tom Garvin's poisonous review, Canon Sheehan:

"was obviously better on priests than laypeople, and far better on men than he was on women; women he idealised, demonised and sentimentalised in classic Victorian fashion".

And Garvin preposterously wrote that Sheehan's—

"vocation to the priesthood was awakened by encountering a young seminarian from Maynooth and experiencing an adolescent

feeling of hero worship. He was fascinated by the glamorous cloak and general costume of the young man.”

This latter writing by Garvin is taken from ‘*A Spoiled Priest and other Stories*’, but is twisted to convey to our modern ears another meaning altogether. Of much more import was this observation from Sheehan himself:

“Many a summer evening we watched and envied the little batches of Fenians going up to drill in the dark recesses of Buckley’s wood. For the sublime and sacred feeling that took these tradesmen away from work and pleasure was also the passion of our youth. The shadow of ’48, and the wild music that came out of that shadow were upon us, and we were watching with beating hearts and kindling eyes the preludes of 1867.”

“But once more returning,
Within our veins burning
The fires that illumined dark

Aherlow’s glen;

We raise the old cry anew,
Slogan of Con and Hugh:
Out and make way for the Fenian men.”

Sheehan said that one of those men sang this “*fine ballad of Innominatus, called in the Irish Anthologies ‘The Fenian Men’*”. And he “*remembered how it thrilled us to hear those words*”.

The account above is also written about in “*Patrick Sheehan—The Boy*” in Father Heuser’s biography.

It is really necessary to deny that Canon Sheehan ever saw women in this three-dimensional way—his whole life was too interwoven with women for that to have any truth. He was born in Mallow in 1852—

“the third of five children of whom only Sheehan and his younger brother, Denis, survived into adulthood—his parents, youngest brother, John, and both sisters died of consumption between 1863 and 1871.”

And, in the ‘*Collected Letters*’, there is much letter-writing by Canon Sheehan to various women, especially his cousin, Hannah Sheehan of Mallow, subsequently Sr. Columba of the Five Wounds (1869-1918). There were also his letters to another cousin, Hannah O’Connell, subsequently Mother Ita Ignatius (of the Presentation Convent, Doneraile (1867-1950), to be found—

“in the archives of the Presentation Convent, Doneraile and [which] conserves, by far, the most extensive collection of material relating to Canon Sheehan”.

These were given to Mother Ita by Sheehan’s brother—his executor, Denis Sheehan.

When Herman J. Heuser was writing his biography of Canon Sheehan, it was Mother Ita who gave him most of the material he needed. Thus ‘*Canon Sheehan of Doneraile: The Story of an Irish Parish Priest as Told*

Chiefly by Himself in Books, Personal Memoirs and Letters’ (Longman Green & Co. London, 1917) is a fairly good account of this priest and land agitator and indeed of wider politics itself.

In ‘*Collected Letters*’ there is a good account of the obstacles that faced Mother Ita when sending “*parcels to the United States inconveniently addressed to a German born national*”. After World War 1 started, the introduction of military censorship temporarily halted her sending on these parcels. Intriguingly Mother Ita got some help in sending on her packets of correspondence by sending them

“directly to the office of the chief military censor in London from where they were cleared for passage to New York and eventually to Philadelphia. It is not to be excluded that Lord Castletown of Upper Ossary, a trusted advisor of the government, was of assistance in the matter.”

In this roundabout way, Father Heuser got his material for the biography, according to Mons. James O’Brien. It needs to be pointed out here that Lord Castletown was a good friend of Canon Sheehan as he had married into the St. Leger family of Doneraile.

Again Tom Garvin gets it so wrong by stating that Patrick Augustine “*was surrounded by priests all his life*”. When his parents died, leaving him an orphan, his father who “*had kept a licensed premises and possibly also a bakery*” left a sum of money to Fr. John McCarthy who became his guardian and sent him “*to St. Colman’s College, Fermoy for a classical education*”.

All of the Canon’s life was blighted by poor health and his final exams were affected by this state of affairs. So he had to retake his final year there, where he “*took first place in the examinations*”. And then he went to Maynooth where:

“from the outset, he disliked the place and he was plagued by ill health. The academic year of 1872-1873 was spent recuperating at home. He was eventually ordained at the Cathedral of St. Mary and St. Anne’s in Cork on the 18th April 1875.”

In one of those chance encounters of life, Fr. Herman Joseph Heuser was in Dublin in July 1897 *en route* to Louvain, “*when he chanced on ‘Geoffrey Austin: Student’*”.

“He immediately recognized the significance of the novel and especially its potential to influence a debate then going on in Germany concerning the place and role of Theology in the civil Universities and in the Gymnasias. He arranged for a German translation of the book, and, through Gill and Son, he wrote to the author inviting him to become a contributor to the *American Ecclesiastical Review*”

—which the Canon was, as his nature, initially hesitant about.

Then came ‘*My New Curate*’ (1900), which attracted—

“widespread success and quickly went through several editions and was translated into all the major European languages. While well received in Britain, Germany and the United States, it generated mixed reactions in Ireland, where, in some quarters, it was perceived as an attack on the clergy and drew some pungent clerical criticism, including an article published anonymously in the ‘*United Irishman*’ by a priest of the diocese of Cloyne which greatly offended Sheehan”.

‘*Luke Delmege*’ came next, which went down well in Britain and the States but caused a furore in Ireland. Indeed it:

“unleashed a torrent of criticism, much of it of a personal nature. The anonymous critic among the Cloyne presbyterate once again penned a vitriolic attack on the book in the ‘*Irish Independent*’.

More seriously, the February 1902 issue of the ‘*Irish Ecclesiastical Record*’ published a long critique of the book. It was written by Fr. John Horgan, Professor of Modern Languages at Maynooth College. Both the author and the place of publication lent a certain official allure to the article which set out to crush Sheehan’s “*sly and pungent criticisms of clerical training in Maynooth*”.

Canon Sheehan, “*sensitive at the best of times*” was appalled. He drew back and, while accepting in writing to Fr. Heuser in Philadelphia, he noted that, though the rest of the world was “*positive with regard to ‘Luke Delmege’*”, he was obliged to yield to the prejudices of his critics in Ireland by picking his steps more carefully and that he had—

“determined not to touch this delicate clerical question any more, nay even, to rest altogether from literary work, and devote all my time to my parish and people... With this he abandoned his plan to write a clerical trilogy and almost stopped writing altogether” (All of the Italics in the above are by Mons. James O’Brien).

Brendan Clifford is well-versed about how Maynooth “disparaged Canon Sheehan”. Next month I will visit such books by Clifford as ‘*Canon Sheehan: A Turbulent Priest*’, Irish Heritage Society in conjunction with Aubane Historical Society, June 1990, Millstreet, Co. Cork and Tallaght, Dublin; and ‘*A North Cork Anthology*’, Aubane Historical Society, Millstreet, Co. Cork, 1993: where his essay on ‘*A Disparaged Writer*’ is to be found.

And, of course there is still Tom Garvin, whose in this field work needs to be addressed, as I already acknowledged and who sets new standards of disparagement of Sheehan in ‘*The Books that Define Ireland*’.

Julianne Herlihy, ©

The Brian Murphy osb Archive

Poisoning The Well or Publishing The Truth?

Part Four

continued fom May *Irish Political Review*

Protestant voices that reveal an alternative hidden history to that of RTE and Peter Hart

In my letter to the *Sunday Independent*, I listed several Protestant voices and asked Eoghan Harris to respond. These voices are listed below:

Firstly, the voice of *Matilda Pearson*, sister of the two victims of the Coolacrease killings in 1921, who asked the IRA men taking part in the attack on her home, why they were doing it and received the reply, as recorded by herself: "*Don't think we are doing this because you are Protestants. It is not being done on that account*". Is this evidence compatible with a sectarian interpretation of the killing of her brothers?

Secondly, the voices of Robert Barton (head of Dail Eireann's Department of Agriculture), along with Erskine Childers and Lionel Smith Gordon, all Protestants and all appointed by Dail Eireann in December 1919 to direct the fortunes of the *National Land Bank*. Is it credible that Dail Eireann would have placed Protestants, such as these, in charge of land reform, if they had wished to drive Protestants from the land?

Thirdly, the voices of Sir Horace Plunkett and George Russell (AE), both Protestants, who continued to support the work of the Co-operative Society throughout the War? Is it possible that they would have co-operated with native Irish farmers, if the farmers, themselves, and their families had been associated in sectarian warfare?

Fourthly, the voices of the Church of Ireland Bishops of Meath and Killaloe, Dr. Kathleen Lynn, Alice Stopford Green, Albinia Brodrick, James Douglas and several other Protestants, as well as the distinctive voice of Dr. Herzog, the Chief Rabbi, who joined with many Catholics in January 1921 to assist the work of the Irish White Cross Society. Is it credible that so many Protestants would have joined

in this charitable enterprise to redress the damages of war, if that war had been sectarian?

Fifthly, the voices of the Protestant members of the first Irish Free State Senate, which ought to have some special significance for Mr. Harris, unless he is prepared to reject the heritage of the body of which he is a member. Among these voices are to be found those of Alice Stopford Green, Sir John Griffith, James Douglas (the first three persons to be elected to the Senate by the Dail in December 1922), W.B. Yeats and Douglas Hyde. Is the election of such distinguished Protestants to the Senate in any way compatible with a sectarian war against the Protestant community?

One could have presented other examples of Protestant voices: for example that of *Lionel Curtis*, whose views on Kilmichael were reported above, and who stated in June 1921, the very month of the attack on the Pearson home, that—

"to conceive the struggle as religious in character is in any case misleading. Protestants in the South do not complain of persecution on sectarian grounds. If Protestant farmers are murdered, it is not by reason of their religion, but rather because they are under suspicion as loyalists. The distinction is a fine, but a real one."

These measured words by Curtis, coming as they do from an experienced British official, fresh from the corridors of power at the Paris Peace Conference, should alone be sufficient to send Peter Hart and Terence Dooley back to the historical drawing board. And yet even more Protestant voices, speaking the same language of religious toleration and understanding, are to be heard.

For example, other distinguished Protestant voices were provided by Lord Henry Cavendish Bentinck, Basil Williams, John Annan Bryce and many others, who joined the *Peace with Ireland Council*, formed

in England in October 1920, to campaign for an end to war in Ireland. One might also have presented some of the Protestant voices who expressed their views publicly to the *American Commission on Irish Independence* in late 1920 and early 1921: for example, that of the socialist, *Louie Bennett*, the Dublin-born Secretary of the Irish Branch of the *Women's International League*; or that of *Caroline Mary Townshend*, the Gaelic organiser for Bandon, County Cork (an area that was central to Peter Hart's thesis), both of whom testified that they had not experienced any sectarianism in their work or in their organisations.

One could have selected many other Protestant voices who expressed their views to the press in the Summer of 1920, while pogroms were taking place in the north of Ireland and whose views, as mentioned above, have, without explanation, been ignored by Peter Hart. For example the voice of the *Reverend I.C. Trotter*, a Protestant rector at Ardrahan, County Galway, who wrote (*Irish Times*, 23 July 1920) that—

"during my experience of over thirty years in the County of Galway, I have not only never had the slightest disrespect shown to me or to those belonging to me as Protestants, but from the priests and people, gentle and simple, have received the utmost consideration and friendship."

The next day, 24th July 1920, a letter from G.W. Biggs appeared in the *Irish Times* declaring that:

"I have been resident in Bantry for 43 years, during 33 of which I have been engaged in business, and I have received the greatest kindness, courtesy, and support from all classes and creeds in this country."

When Niall Meehan reproduced this letter (*Irish Times*, 5 November 2007), during the debate on the RTE film on Coolacrease, he contrasted it with two leading articles in the paper by Niamh Sammon (20 October), Director of the RTE film on Coolacrease, and Ann Marie Hourihane (25 October), both of which had conveyed the idea of sectarian conflict during the War of Independence.

Meehan concluded that, given a choice between the views of the Protestant, Biggs, who was on the spot, "*and Hourihane and Sammon, who were not, and the reporting of the Irish Times then, and now, I take the Protestant view*".

His conclusion is compelling and revealing: compelling because it presents

an authentic Protestant voice of the past; revealing because it provides an interesting glimpse into the policy of the *Irish Times* in the present.

Writing as one whose letter (6 November 2007) presenting Protestant voices of the period was rejected for publication, one is forced to conclude, surprisingly but significantly, that, while the *Irish Times* in 1920, at the height of the War, was willing to publish Protestant voices that spoke of toleration, the *Irish Times* of to-day resists the publication of letters that tell the same story.

It has firmly committed itself to the views of Niamh Sammon and to the sectarian view of the period as presented in the RTE *Hidden History* programme. To their credit the *Irish Examiner* and the *Sunday Independent* have given open access in their Letters Pages to all points of view.

The omission of these Protestant voices from the thesis of Hart and from the RTE's *Hidden History* (and one must include the pages of the *Irish Times*) has been compounded by the failure to acknowledge the many ways in which the Dublin Castle administration and the British Crown Forces, often using the Martial Law legislation of the *Defence of the Realm Act (1914)* and the *Restoration of Order in Ireland Act (1920)*, directly attempted to prevent Catholics and Protestants from working together. For example, the arrest of Robert Barton, the most prominent Protestant member of the Dail administration, in early January 1920 and his confinement in England until the end of the War; the regular raids on those involved in administering the funds of the National Land Bank; the destruction of many Co-operative creameries; the closure of the Dail Eireann Courts, which were recognised by Protestants themselves as dealing fairly with land disputes.

Any historical narrative that neglects these actions by the British administration in Ireland and refuses to acknowledge the many examples of Protestant and Catholic accord is open to many questions. Peter Hart has failed to produce answers to those questions; Eoghan Harris has failed to produce answers to those questions.

Two conclusions may be drawn: firstly, the historical writing of Peter Hart, and the championing of it by Eoghan Harris, has introduced a sectarian dimension into Irish history that is not merited either by the source material; and, secondly, the RTE *Hidden History* programme, by aligning itself with the Hart/Harris ideology, has failed to provide the 'truthful, honest and correct' interpretation of the

events at Coolacree that was so sincerely sought by one of the surviving Pearson family. The manner of the killings was unforgivable but, in order to respond honestly to the questions of the surviving Pearson family, the film should have been set in the context of an historical narrative that reflected accurately the religious character of the War. Protestant voices of the time, be they Irish or British, do not speak of that war as sectarian.

As for the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, which I am told has upheld the impartiality of the film: one can only presume that it was unaware of the many issues that have been raised above. Was it aware that Eoghan Harris represented an organisation, the *Reform Group*, with a specific public agenda? Was it aware that this agenda was only made tenable by the selective use of source material by Peter Hart in his book on *The IRA and*

its Enemies? Was it aware that this same source material inspired Alan Stanley to write his book on Coolacree on which the RTE film was based? Was it aware that Niamh Sammon, the film's Director, in selecting the story for film purposes, opted for the opinion of Eoghan Harris that the story was about an "atrocious *against a harmless dissenting Protestant family*", and rejected the contemporary evidence of Matilda Pearson, a member of that family, that the attack was not carried out because the Pearsons were Protestants? A response to these questions would be welcomed. In the meantime, with so many questions unanswered, it seems reasonable to ask the ultimate question: is the RTE film on Coolacree revealing a hidden history or is it concealing a hidden agenda?

[Conclusion of *Poisoning The Well*.
More from the Brian Murphy archive
next month.]

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***Irish Times* Coverage Of Protestant Abuse— small step forward and two backward (Letters Page still a no-go area)**

Unpublished Letter To *Irish Times*

"Minister Roderick O'Gorman has tasked Sheila Nunan with completing "negotiation with religious bodies, on his behalf, in relation to contributions to the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme". [*]

It remains a scandal that, two and a half years after the Mother & Baby Home Commission of Inquiry was completed, no survivor has received a payment. The proposed scheme is restrictive, requiring six months residency, excluding time sent out under institutional control. A sensible pathway would have been to permit survivors to apply to a revived Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB) scheme. That has not been done for reasons of cost. Mother and baby institution survivors are second class victims.

Your report (24th May) did not include the important point that the Church of Ireland is included in negotiations.[*] They will prove difficult, for two reasons.

First: after the M&B Commission report was published, the Church of Ireland engaged in disingenuous dissociation

from the Irish Church Missions (ICM), a Church of Ireland missionary society most closely associated with Bethany Home, the largest Protestant-ethos institution. CofI clergy are ordained into the ICM. In 1964 a Church of Ireland clergyman declared in court, under oath, that Bethany was run by Church of Ireland Social Services. Whether or not strictly correct, it shows that Bethany was integral to the CofI's social control of Protestant women. Methodists and Presbyterians also were involved. The Church of Ireland may not, presumably, be disassociating itself to the same extent from Denny House, formerly known as the Church of Ireland Magdalen Home.

Second: no money was paid by Protestant ethos institutions to a previous payments scheme. Survivors of Smyly's Homes, a 'Church of Ireland Children's Home', who suffered the worst kind of abuse, were included in the RIRB compensation scheme. Smyly's contributed nothing to an associated indemnity fund, which Roman Catholic religious orders funded. The money was dispensed to Caranua, that further assisted survivors. Roman Catholic money funded the needs of some

Protestant-institution abuse-survivors.

Will history repeat itself? Sheila Nunan has her work cut out.

Yours., etc.,
Niall Meehan

[*] <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/174c9-appointment-of-director-of-authorized-intervention-tuam>

LETTER TO IRISH TIMES

25.5.2023 Unpublished

Sir, - Congratulations to Patsy McGarry and to the Irish Times. Foregrounding Church of Ireland school refusal of "a request for details surrounding allegations of child sexual abuse" (May 25th) is important. Silence gives the public an impression of something to hide. Refusal by 11 schools individually to respond substantively implies also a silencing strategy. Could it be, as well, that victims taking legal action are persuaded to remain silent, publicly, on their experience?

Contrasting this silence with McGarry's other story, on the same page, concerning the government's scoping inquiry into abuse only at Roman Catholic schools, points to two things. First, the relative success of a strategy of silence that focuses attention elsewhere. Second, it demonstrates that the government's inquiry is sectarian. Any former pupil wishing to discuss abuse at a Church of Ireland ethos school has nowhere to go, officially. Past-pupils of first-class schools are second-class victims.

In March I queried the sectarian nature of the inquiry with Minister for Education Norma Foley. TDs Fergus O'Dowd, Aodhán Ó Ríordáin, Brid Smith and Violet Anne Wynne asked questions. The minister's response failed to address the issue.

I also wrote to the Church of Ireland. I asked, in particular, about abuse of pupils and choristers of St Patrick's Cathedral and Grammar School during the 1980s. Abuse of one pupil/chorister was brought to the school and cathedral's attention. It was hushed up. An unreported 1989 court case, unknown to other victims or to parents generally, resulted in perpetrator Patrick O'Brien receiving a 2-year suspended sentence. School and Cathedral authorities failed in their duty of care to other abused children. Consequently, a career paedophile continued to sexually abuse children until the 1989 victim saw O'Brien back working in the Cathedral. He contacted former classmates. They learned of O'Brien's criminal conviction and took action. O'Brien was convicted of the St Patrick's abuse in 2016. As it seemed a suitable case for investigation, I asked the CofI to request inclusion in the

terms of reference of the scoping inquiry. Instead of acceding to my request, the CofI referred my correspondence, based on the public record, to the Garda Sexual Crime Management Unit. I have not heard from gardai but perhaps the Church of Ireland should.

The terms of reference of the scoping inquiry should be changed so that the Church of Ireland may be held to account.

Yours etc.,
Niall Meehan

Explanatory Note

On 25th May, the *Irish Times* published an extensive article by Patsy McGarry, Religious Affairs Correspondent, with this headline: '*Abuse allegations made against priests in 19 Catholic diocesan colleges nationwide*'. The article contained also the section below.

"No response from

Protestant boarding schools

Repeated attempts over recent months by *The Irish Times* failed to get any response to a request for details surrounding allegations of child sexual abuse at what were or are Protestant boarding schools for boys in the Republic.

The schools contacted were Bandon Grammar School Cork, Kilkenny College, Dundalk Grammar School, Rathdown School Dublin, Midleton School Cork, Wilson's Hospital Westmeath, Villiers School Limerick, King's Hospital School Dublin, Sligo Grammar School, St Columba's College Dublin, Wesley College Dublin.

It is not as though sexual abuse was unknown in such schools. In his autobiography, *Full On*, broadcaster and former Government Minister Ivan Yates describes his years at the since-closed Protestant boarding school Aravon in Rathmichael, Co Dublin, as "*unremitting torture*", where he was sexually abused by the owner and headmaster, Charles Mansfield.

In 2016 eight pupils were suspended pending the outcome of an investigation at King's Hospital School in Dublin into allegations that a teenage boy there had been sexually assaulted.

In 2008 King's Hospital was party to six figure settlements, along with Swim Ireland, involving 13 female victims of convicted sex abuser Derry O'Rourke, who had been employed by the school as a swimming coach. The victims claimed O'Rourke was allowed remain there despite several complaints about him to the school from 1973."

Concluding Remarks

The phrasing above "*Repeated attempts over recent months by The Irish Times ...*" coincides with Niall Meehan alerting the paper to the sectarian basis of the Government's scoping inquiry in

early March. If so, despite censoring his letters on this subject for over three years, the *Irish Times* may, on this occasion, have noted their content. Let us see if the 'paper of reference' continues to refer to abuse in Protestant-ethos schools, and whether it reports on Sheila Nunan's attempt to extract a Church of Ireland contribution to the Mother and Baby Institutions Payments Scheme.

The Housing Crisis

continued from page one

the demand the average household size in the Republic would be less than 2.7? Perhaps closer to the EU average of 2.2?

Many critics accuse the State of having failed, but the same critics were saying similar things following the global financial crisis just over a decade ago. They thought the country was "banjaxed"; that there would be a return of net emigration; that we were building too many houses etc. If such comments were taken seriously, there would have been no new investment in infrastructure.

In simple terms, there are not enough housing units for the demand. It's unlikely that anything can be done about reducing demand (short of social engineering), therefore supply must increase.

In recent years Ireland has had a high level of unoccupied residential units. However—possibly because of property taxes—the vacancy rate has declined from 4.9% to 4.3%. So, while more can be done to reduce the vacancy rate, the bulk of any increase in supply will have to come from new build.

There are four main elements to supply: raw materials; land; regulations; and labour.

While there have been raw material shortages in the past year, causing inflation, these have diminished.

In theory land is not a problem. The Republic's density of population is 72 per square km compared to 281 for the UK; 123 France and 241 Germany.

This leaves us with the regulatory framework and labour.

As regards the regulatory framework, it's always the case that builders and developers don't like to be constrained. But in recent years we have witnessed the consequences of too little regulation. The costs to the State of the pyrite fiasco far exceeded any possible costs that would have been incurred as a result of increased regulation.

Nevertheless, there have been lengthy delays in planning applications. Are the rights of property owners excessive in this country?

Politicians on the Opposition Benches like to decry “red tape” when there are delays, but denounce the Government for “light touch regulation” when the consequences of taking short cuts emerge.

Perhaps, Eamon Ryan is right when he says that the resources of the State have not kept pace with the growth in the economy.

At present there are about 30,000 housing units produced in a year. Most experts estimate that we need twice that amount to satisfy the demand for housing. The biggest constraint to building supply is the shortage of labour. This is a problem regardless of what proportion of new build is done by the State or the private sector.

There is full employment in the economy. In such circumstances the labour required to increase supply can either be imported from abroad or be transferred from other sectors.

The problem with importing labour from abroad is that the new immigrants will have to be housed. In the last year 80,000 Ukrainians have arrived in the country. This is quite high compared to other countries. For example, the UK has taken in 200,000 and France 119,000, even though these countries have 12 or 13 times the population of this country.

This recent wave of immigration mostly consists of women and children, which need to be housed, but are unlikely to contribute to the supply of housing.

If the labour required to increase supply is to come from the existing workforce, it will have to be transferred from another sector of the economy. Alternatively, labour within the building industry could be diverted from non-residential to residential building.

This requires centralised social planning which may have to resist short term political pressures. Economic activity in one sector in the economy must be suppressed in order to release labour for building housing units.

This is not happening at present. For example, in the hospitality industry it was considered necessary to extend the lower 9% VAT rate to September 2023.

Do we really need to stimulate the tourism industry? It could be said that there is not an obvious crossover between labour in tourism and labour in the building industry. The skills are different. But not stimulat-

ing tourism would put less pressure on the general labour market.

Secondly, there is a direct connection. Tourism requires people to be accommodated. If labour is building hotels rather than residential units, the challenge of providing for the housing units is accentuated. And in recent years landlords have found it more profitable to let their properties short term to tourists (through Airbnb) than renting long term to Irish residents.

Finally, the State has embarked on a policy of retrofitting our existing housing stock.

In normal circumstances this would be a laudable policy. But the labour involved in this project could be used to supply new houses with all the highest of environmental standards.

But perhaps tourism is more important than providing housing to our population? Maybe a rigid adherence to environmental objectives takes priority?

If this is really the case, we should cease describing the housing shortage as a “crisis”.

John Martin

Ukraine: Origins!

The defeat of Germany in the Second World War was commemorated in the Ukraine on a different date from its commemoration in Russia. A commentator on *Sky News* explained that one of the ways in which Russia had been oppressing the Ukraine was by imposing its commemoration on it.

He also explained that the Ukraine had suffered more casualties in that War than Russia had, leaving it to be understood that the Ukraine had contributed more to the defeat of Nazism than Russia had.

When we refer to the Ukraine today, we mean the anti-Russian regime established in Kiev by the 2014 *coup d'état*, to which Ireland made a contribution in the form of Pat Cox.

The precursors of this regime in 1941 certainly suffered casualties, some of them in conflict with the Nazis, but it was mainly in conflict with the Communists (the Russians) that they suffered them.

Ukrainian nationalism, which was then very much a minority tendency in the Ukraine, was an active ally of Nazi Germany. It had two reasons for being so. One was hostility to the Russians and the other was hostility to the Jews.

Anti-Semitism was integral to Ukrainian Nationalism. It was what characterised it on its first appearance in 1917, and it erupted strongly again in 1941 and made a notable contribution to the ‘*Final Solution*’ of the Jewish problem.

Western Ukraine and Poland were the homeland of the Jews in the days of the Russian and Hapsburg Empires. They enjoyed a considerable amount of security and autonomy in the Russian Pale of Settle-

ment. That ended when the Tsarist Empire collapsed and nationalist developments were fostered in its place. The nationalist development in the Western Ukraine led immediately to the killing of Jews in 1917.

The Ukrainian nationalist movement declared Ukrainian independence in 1917, but it was effective only within a small region of the area called the Ukraine, and it never came close to establishing an orderly Government. It was challenged from the start by strong Anarchist and Communist movements, and was then marginalised by the interventions of an Allied Army whose purpose was to re-impose the Tsarist State.

The outcome of those conflicts was the construction of a territorial Ukrainian state by the Communists as part of the Soviet Union.

Communism was then widely regarded as a form of Jewish conspiracy. Winston Churchill was of that opinion. And it is undoubtedly the case that Jews were disproportionately active in the Communist movement.

Anti-Russian, anti-Communist, Anti-Semitic—the three ran together in practice as a rough equation for Ukrainian Nationalism.

The *Irish Examiner* of 1st April carried a review of a biography of Joseph Roth, a Jewish novelist best known for *The Radetsky March*. Roth was born in the town of Brody, in the Austrian Empire. Brody was a Jewish city in the multi-national Hapsburg Empire which was to come under Ukrainian control by way of Poland. Roth seems to have looked on Ukraine as his homeland.

The title of the article is “*The Wandering, pandering Seer Who Relished Life In The Flux*”. The blurb on it says:

“*Roth would have been surprised by the*

Russian nationalism we are witnessing today in Ukraine”.

The review tells us that Roth—

“witnessed the disastrous consequences of the newly formed centrally-planned economy in the Soviet Union, when he travelled there as reporter in the 1920s; that he noticed the rise of fascism in Germany making it a super-nationalistic state (not the only one); that he was suspicious of all forms of nationalism, including Zionism; and that the fall of the Dual Monarchy was the most powerful experience of his life.”

The author of the biography, Kevan Pim—

“...notes how nearly all of Brody’s Jewish population perished in the holocaust. Most were deported in 1943 from the Nazi-built Brody Jewish ghetto to the Belzec death camp where they were exterminated.

“Pim says Roth’s journalism and novels feel relevant to read in the present moment, when the borderlands where Roth was born are once again being contested.

“In a time when ugly reductive nationalisms threaten to overpower liberal aspirations, Roth spoke to us urgency and power [sic]”, the biographer explains.

“Roth would not have been surprised by [the Russian aggression] we are witnessing today in Ukraine”, the author concludes.” Because he grew up in that part of east-central Europe where ethnic tensions were always bubbling away. The tolerance, internationalism and humanity of his writings is something we should really cherish and hold onto...”

The “*reductive nationalism*” which is dividing the world today is the Ukrainian nationalism which refused to allow the Ukrainian state which emerged from the Soviet Union in 1991 to be conducted as a multi-national state. The extreme nationalist force, which enacted the de-Russifying *coup* of 2014, acknowledges its source in the anti-Semitic Ukrainian nationalism which helped the Germans with the Holocaust in 1941-43.

Anti-Semitism had to be worked up by the State in Germany, but when the German State moved into Ukraine, it was there waiting for it, having resisted the efforts of the Russian State to suppress it.

The Russian State of that pre-Soviet period might be fairly described as an *Empire*, if the meaning of ‘Empire’ is that it was not a state based on nationalism. If the operative distinction is between nationalist states and Empires, then the Russian state was an Empire and was at ease with the fact that many different peoples existed within it. The States into which Roth’s Imperial homeland was broken up by Britain and France at Versailles were States based on Nationalism, and required to function as national units. They were required by the arrangements made for them to be nationalist.

They had to devise workable forms of nationalisms for themselves and therefore they became fascist. The Jews were a people of the Empire that was destroyed, and therefore they stood in the way of the development of the middle class of the new states. Anti-Semitism was general in the Europe that was remade by the Versailles Conference.

In Russia, however, the Communist development of the Empire opened up all spheres of it to Jewish activity (which had previously been restricted). The small Ukrainian nationalist movement, which aspired to development on Western lines, was therefore intensely Anti-Semitic.

Roth died in January 1939. The destruction of his home town of Brody began in 1941. Is it likely that he would have been in sympathy with Ukrainian nationalism, as the *Examiner* article suggests?

As to the “*disastrous consequences of the newly formed centrally planned economy in the Soviet Union*”, it was the productive power of that economy, and the willingness of the populace of the Russian state to fight in defence of it, that made possible the survival of a substantial Jewish population in the post-War world. The Soviet Union became a haven for many Jews in Eastern Europe during the Second World War.

It is not prudent for supporters of Ukrainian nationalism to bring up the Jewish question in connection with it.

Ireland in 1939-45 was “*the neutral island in the heart of man*”, according to Louis MacNeice. MacNeice was an Ulster Protestant who disdained both Nationalism and Unionism in their popular manifestations. He settled down to be a BBC propagandist mid-way through the Second World War, after it had become a war of Germany against Russia, and of the Fascism that had saved Europe from Communism in the 1920s (according to Winston Churchill) against the Communism from which Europe had been saved. The BBC was an organ of Communist propaganda in those years.

Britain, which had begun the war in 1939 over the trivial issue of the transfer of the German city of Danzig to the adjacent German state of East Prussia, would have lost the War—in the sense of having to call it off—if Fascist Germany had not attacked Communist Russia in 1941, and if the Communists had not done what the Democracies had failed to do: held the German Armies and driven them back.

Britain needed the Communists to succeed where it had failed, and therefore it made a Pact with the Devil (as Churchill put it!). But it never ceased to see the Communists as its main enemy (Churchill again).

While Russia was in the process of defeating Germany, and driving it back across the East European countries which had joined it in the invasion, Britain described the Russian advance as a *liberation* of those countries. But, as soon as Germany was defeated, Britain had to see the Russian advance as a conquest and a subjugation.

Russia did not immediately vacate the East European countries which had invaded it in alliance with Germany, and allow them to enter a new alliance against itself, this time with Britain and America, and therefore it ceased to be a liberator and became a conqueror and oppressor!

The Ukrainian nationalist movement engaged in some slight conflict with Germany because Hitler would not allow it to form a State. Bandera, at least, was interned by the German for a while. But, on the whole, the Ukrainian nationalists co-operated with the Germans. And their Anti-Semitic purpose was achieved.

The suppression of Ukrainian Fascism seems to have taken about ten years after 1944. It then seems to have become extinct (apart from exile movements in Canada and elsewhere), until it re-appeared suddenly in 2014.

In the meantime Moscow, when Yeltsin was taking command, severed its connections with the Ukraine without taking any precautions against the possibility that it might become a hostile State.

Was such a thing ever before done in the world?

The Ukraine became an entirely independent State through no act of its own. It was a nation-state without a national purpose, and apparently not very sure of its nationality.

But it existed. And, because it existed, it had to make something of itself. And, when it searched the past for origins, all there was to find was Petliura and Bandera. So these were given public status in Ukraine, even before the *coup d’etat*, and an attempt was made to give an acceptable post-fascist explanation of them.

The enthusiastic supporters of Ukrainian nationalism, in Ireland as elsewhere, are either ignorant of the sources of Ukrainian nationalism, or they are intent on using all the resources of the State to prevent thought about it. It disturbs the idealistic picture of the World War that has been very serviceable for so long.

But why should Ireland be concerned about that? Because it no longer has the courage it had when it refused to take part in that worst of all wars, and thumbed its nose at Louis MacNeice. ■

2023 Northern Ireland local government elections

	%vote (2019)	%vote (2022)	%vote (2023)	Cllrs (2019)	Cllrs (2023)
SF	23.2	29.0	30.9	105	144
DUP	24.1	21.3	23.3	122	122
All	11.5	13.5	13.3	53	67
UUP	14.1	11.2	10.9	75	54
SDLP	12.0	9.1	8.7	59	39
TUV	2.2	7.6	3.9	6	9
Green	2.1	1.9	1.7	8	5
PPF	1.4	1.1	1.0	5	2
Aontu	1.1	1.5	0.9	1	0
Others	8.3	3.8	5.3	28	20

The local government elections on 18 May were a triumph for Sinn Fein, which became the largest party in local government in Northern Ireland with 144 councillors out of a total of 462, an increase of 39 compared with the last local government elections in 2019.

Its share of the vote increased dramatically from 23.2% to 30.9% compared with 2019 and marginally compared with last year's Assembly elections when its share was 29.0%.

Sinn Fein has taken votes from the SDLP, whose vote share declined from 12.0% in the 2019 local government elections to 8.7%

in 2023. But overall the nationalist vote share (Sinn Fein, SDLP & Aontu) increased dramatically from 36.3% to 40.5%.

On the Unionist side, in this election, the DUP won exactly the same number of council seats (144) as they did in 2019, but their vote share declined slightly from 24.1% to 23.3%. However, this represented a small recovery compared to last year's Assembly elections, when their vote share was 21.3%. Then they had lost votes to Jim Allister's TUV, which achieved a remarkable 7.6% vote share. That was not replicated in the local government elections this year, when the TUV share fell sharply to 3.9%.

The other unionist party, the UUP, replicated its poor performance in the Assembly elections last year - it got a vote share of 10.9% compared with 14.1% in 2019.

Overall, the Unionist vote share (DUP, UUP & TUV) decreased from 40.4% in 2019 to 38.1% in 2023. This means that in these 2023 local government elections, for the first time in a Northern Ireland election, the total nationalist vote (40.5%) exceeded the total unionist vote (38.1%).

Finally, the Alliance Party maintained their position as the third largest party in Northern Ireland with a 13.3% vote share.

David Morrison
26 May 2023

Michael Portillo and the *Irish Times*

A documentary on the Irish 'Civil War' by Michael Portillo (*Taking Sides*, RTE television, 10/05/2023), has ruffled feathers at the *Irish Times*. Interviewed on RTE radio an hour after Portillo himself had been interviewed, Diarmaid Ferriter, a columnist with the paper, criticised Portillo for being sensationalist, labelling his opening words in the documentary, "*patronising*". The following day's edition carried a misleading review of it by the paper's television critic, Ed Power (IT, 10.05.2023). Together with its at times hysterical opposition to Brexit these responses shine a light on how the paper often adds unnecessary needle or aggravation to relations between Ireland and Britain.

In *Taking Sides* Portillo uses archived British Cabinet documents to show that Churchill wanted the RAF to bomb the Four Courts building in Dublin while it was occupied by the anti-Treaty IRA in April 1922. The plan was to blank out the

British identifying symbols on the wings of the planes and replace them with insignia of the Treatyite Free State. In the event, the operation was shelved and the Four Courts garrison was forced to surrender following bombardment by the Free State army with artillery borrowed from the British. British Cabinet minutes used by Portillo also show that the Free State Provisional Government requested gas of an indeterminate nature from the British to be used against the IRA.

The controversial statement made by Portillo at the start of the documentary reads: "*Here is history that Irish people may prefer not to know*". It might have been more accurate had he said: "*Here is history that Irish revisionist historians would prefer not to be seeing the light of day*". Ferriter's reply is that these matters were already well known, but that is true only for the small circle of historians who specialise in that period of history. Before Portillo's programme they were not public knowledge in Ireland.

The revisionist narrative of the 'Civil War' is a mishmash of wishful thinking and anti-republican prejudice. The IRA is portrayed as a ragbag of diehards who, being unable to accept the democratic will of the people, precipitated unnecessary violence. Political responsibility for the debacle is placed on de Valera. The democratically elected Dáil Government of 1919-21 is downgraded as a "*counter state*", and the way that the British Government forced Collins and Griffith, under threat of an "*immediate and terrible war*", to sign the document that became known as the Treaty without discussing it at Cabinet in Dublin, is obfuscated through a welter of unnecessary detail.

In reality the British skilfully exploited weaknesses in Collins and Griffith and intentionally created a rift in the Irish camp. Once the Treaty was signed, Churchill was in the driving seat. Causing one group of Irish Republicans to make war on another was a good outcome from his perspective and that of his Government. De Valera, on the other hand, far from deliberately instig-

ating conflict, was aware of the British desire to make trouble and was active in cooperation with Collins in attempting to prevent a split. His focus was on defending the democratically-elected Dáil Government.

The British Government, represented in the main by Churchill in the months after the signing of the Treaty, pressed actively for War to be made on the anti-Treaty forces. Indeed, as Portillo shows, Churchill was gung-ho to authorise RAF involvement in a reckless manner if Collins failed to deliver what he had been out-manoeuvred into agreeing.

Portillo's treatment of the Irish 'Civil War' is interesting because it is honest. He is not constrained by the tortuous requirements of revisionists at the *Irish Times* or in academia. More significantly, neither is he constrained by the long-standing policy of the British Foreign Office which, through the medium of Oxford and Cambridge Universities, has been a main driver of Irish historical revisionism.

A TRIVIALISING REVIEW

Ed Power's piece reviews *Taking Sides* as a piece of television. As such he seems at one point to take a favourable view, saying that the programme "*finds its focus and sticks to it*". He compares it positively with other RTE documentaries about 1916-23 that "*suffered a po-faced quality*". But these favourable comments are buried in an article that is mostly disparaging and trivialising. Power's review is ultimately misleading. Its final paragraph reads

"It is pacy viewing and it is interesting to learn that, far from being shocked at the Civil War, the British seemed to have regarded it as almost inevitable. Of course, Portillo's clubbability helps. There is a sense that he would make for great company over a tot of brandy. Next up, they should have him front a documentary about Dustin the Turkey at Eurovision 2008 and the long shadow cast by that act of musical self-destruction."

Earlier Power describes Portillo as a "*puffy cover version of Margaret Thatcher*" who has "*reinvented himself as a chummy documentarian*".

Actually, Portillo is a lot more interesting than that. Certainly, he was a Minister in one of Thatcher's Governments and at one time was considered a frontrunner to be Leader of the Conservatives and a future Prime Minister. But then a few unlucky bounces of the ball caused him to leave politics and he made a new career as a broadcaster. In that role he has put to good use the communication skills required of political leaders, but also shown a refreshing open-mindedness. Portillo is upfront about his political background and his own prejudices and is all the more interesting for that. That his father

was a Left-leaning supporter of the republican cause in the Spanish Civil War seems to have freed him from the ideological dogmatism that is the scourge of modern politics.

PROFESSOR KENNY PUTS HIS OAR IN

The *Irish Times* had one more stab at Portillo through its Letters Page. Professor Colum Kenny, whose writings on the 'Civil War' have been refuted in this magazine in a number of articles by Brendan Clifford (see *Professor Kenny and the 'Treaty'*, Irish Political Review, April 2023 and *Further Comments on Professor Kenny's Books*, Irish Political Review, May 2023) had a letter published on 16th May. His main point was that a careful reading of the Cabinet Minute used in the documentary does not prove that the Free State asked for poison gas; it only refers to a request for gas grenades that could be used to clear the rebels out of their strongholds; the inference that this meant poison gas was made by members of the British Cabinet.

According to Kenny:

"The whole thing may have been a ready-up by British intelligence eager to propose such gas to Dublin."

But Kenny offers no evidence for his assertion and fails to deal with the substantive point made in the documentary that the Provisional Government was working in cahoots with the British. His final paragraph encapsulates a number of the weaknesses of Irish revisionism. Asserting that the Provisional Government was not filled with "*zeal to pulverise the foe*", as stated by Portillo, he concludes:

"This matters precisely because events then are still weaponised today for various purposes. I carry no can for any of the parties that claim descent from the Civil War factions, but republicans such as Collins and Griffith were neither British stooges nor uncivilised."

Kenny claims that he carries no can for either side in the War, that events in the War are still weaponised and that Collins and Griffith were not British stooges—yet he himself is on the side of Collins and Griffith, he himself has weaponised events to undermine the anti-Treaty case and his claim to objectivity stretches credibility. In short, his protestations seem shallow compared to the bluff honesty with which Portillo acknowledges his prejudices.

BREXIT

There is of course another reason, apart from his judgement in matters pertaining to Irish history, why Michael Portillo is unlikely to find favour among writers in the camp of the *Irish Times*: he is a supporter of Brexit.

A journalist with the *Financial Times*, George Parker, is often interviewed on RTE

radio for his views on current developments in the UK. Asked for his opinion after the Brexit result in 2016, he said that the relationship with the EU had been a source of division in UK politics for many years. Finally, a method of resolving the issue had, rightly or wrongly, been agreed: it would be decided by referendum. Parker had wanted the UK to remain in Europe but now accepted that the matter had been settled by the UK electorate.

Unfortunately, that common sense attitude was not shared by the various components of the Remainer camp: the Blairites, the anti-Brexiters in the Tory Party, the legal establishment, the *Guardian* newspaper—in short, the Liberal Establishment. So, the process of separating from the EU entailed a lot of unnecessary turmoil.

From an Irish Governmental perspective, in the run-up to the referendum, it made sense for Irish representatives to articulate how Brexit might affect Irish interests, as a peripheral issue in the UK debate. However, then Taoiseach Enda Kenny overreached himself by actively campaigning to bring out the Irish vote in Britain against Brexit.

Over the long years of the Brexit negotiations the *Irish Times* became involved in the UK debate in a way that was similarly inappropriate. Its position was doubly wrong: it was *ad idem* with the Remain camp in working to overturn or nullify the referendum vote; and, at a more fundamental level, it failed to respect the sovereignty of the UK, the vehemence of its hatred of the Brexiters made no allowance for the fact that Ireland and the UK are separate jurisdictions.

To conclude, it is fanciful but instructive to visualise a world in which Ireland and Britain enjoy harmonious cooperative relations based on mutual respect. The primary obstacle in the way of such a development is the 'long game' being played by the British Foreign Office, a game in which Irish independence has never been fully recognised. Somewhere in the bowels of Whitehall resides a dusty old policy document in which the return of independent Ireland to the British orbit is laid out as a long-term aim. The passing of a hundred years has not diminished or noticeably altered that strategic objective.

A secondary, much less important, obstacle is the revisionist project of distorting Irish history in line with the British view.

In Michael Portillo's documentary we get a glimpse of what the Anglo-Irish relationship might look like if the actual legacies of history were recognised as a basis for Foreign Policy diplomacy on both sides of the Irish Sea.

Dave Alvey

The Morrison Report

Europe and Israel are bound to be friends and allies. Your freedom is our freedom. Happy birthday to all the people of Israel. [We urge readers to listen to this speech via this link for the adulatory tone, Ed: "*Israeli Activist Calls Out EU Commissioner's Racist Lies*" on YouTube <https://youtu.be/2w5hdNvv5Vo>.]

Ursula Von Der Leyen's Panegyric To Israel

The establishment of the state of Israel involved the expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians from their land

75 years ago, on 14th May 1948, David Ben-Gurion, the head of the Jewish Agency, proclaimed the establishment of the state of Israel. 750,000 Palestinians were expelled from their land in the course of its establishment.

In 1947, Britain handed over responsibility for the future of mandate Palestine to the UN and a UN Commission recommended a partition plan involving the creation of separate Jewish and Arab States. This was endorsed by the UN General Assembly in Resolution 181, which was passed on 29th November 1947 by 33 votes to 10, despite the opposition of the Palestinians and all Arab states.

At that time, about 2 million people, 1.4 million Arabs and 600,000 Jews, lived in mandate Palestine. The partition plan was extraordinarily generous to Jews, who made up less than a third of the population and owned less than 6% of the land. Despite this, the partition plan allocated almost 56% of the land to a Jewish state, containing the vast majority of the 600,000 Jews in Palestine but also with a large Arab minority.

The Zionist leadership accepted the partition plan publicly, but with the clear intention of expanding the territory allocated to Jews by the UN and of expelling the bulk of the Arabs living there. The Israeli State was established in this expanded territory, which amounted to around 78% of mandate Palestine.

Around 750,000 of the 900,000 Arabs living in that territory were either expelled or fled beyond the borders of mandate Palestine—to Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, or Transjordan—or to the West Bank and Gaza. Much of this ethnic cleansing—of around 300,000 people—had already taken place by the time of Ben-Gurion's declaration on 14th May 1948.

At the end of the war, an Arab minority of only 156,000 people remained within the state of Israel. Of this number, 46,000 were internal refugees who were either expelled or fled from their homes and land and had to continue living in other places inside Israel.

(*)

With limited exceptions, Palestinian refugees were never allowed to return to their homes and land. To this end, during the War, and in the years immediately following it, Israel destroyed approximately 400 abandoned Palestinian villages and Palestinian neighbourhoods in cities, or settled Jewish immigrants there. Over time, the villages' names were erased from the map, marked as "ruins", or renamed in Hebrew.

Most of the land in those villages was appropriated immediately after the 1948 War and became State land through the Absentees Property Law, which defined Palestinian internal refugees as "*present absentees*". Further land expropriations followed in the coming decades. Palestinian internal refugees were also barred from returning to their villages, due to restrictions on movement imposed by the military administration that ruled over Palestinians in Israel until the end of 1966.

In all, 85% of the land holdings that were owned by Palestinians within the area that became the State of Israel prior to 1948 were expropriated and became state-owned land. As a result, agricultural lands, which constituted the main sources of income for the Palestinian minority that remained within Israel, were also seized by the state.

(*)

On 27th April 2023, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, sent a video message [1] to the Israeli President on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the foundation of his state. The text of it is as follows:

"Dear President Hertzog, dear friends.

Seventy-five years ago, a dream was realised, with Israel's Independence Day. After the greatest tragedy in human history, the Jewish People could finally build a home in the Promised Land.

Today, we celebrate 75 years of vibrant democracy in the heart of the Middle East. Seventy-five years of dynamism, ingenuity and ground-breaking innovations. You have literally made the desert bloom, as I could see from my visit to the Negev last year.

Today we also celebrate 75 years of friendship between Israel and Europe. We have more in common than geography would suggest: our shared culture, our values, and hundreds of thousands of dual European-Israeli citizens have created a deep connection between us."

No mention there that "realising the dream" of a Jewish sState involved the ethnic cleansing of over 80% of the indigenous Arab population from the 78% of Palestine that became Israeli territory. In fact, no mention of Palestinians at all. It's as if they don't exist, and never existed.

No mention either of the fact that, for the past 56 years, the Israeli State has occupied the other 22% of Palestine and established Jewish Settlements there, which continue to grow in size and number. The EU has been known to apply economic sanctions to States that engage in this sort of behaviour (for example, to Russia, with respect to Crimea) but different rules seem to apply to Israel.

As for the "*75 years of vibrant democracy*", von der Leyen doesn't seem to realise that by no stretch of the imagination can Israel be described a democracy. The most basic principle of such a system of government is that everybody subject to the rule of the Government emerging from the electoral process should have a vote. But millions of Palestinians in the occupied territories haven't got a vote and are excluded from the election of the Government which rules over them.

As for the "75 years of friendship between Israel and Europe", a few days after she spoke there was a hiccup in the friendship when the EU delegation in Israel refused to meet a senior member of the Israeli Government. The Minister in question was the Minister of National Security, Itamar Ben-Gvir. Apparently, although according to von der Leyen the EU shares "values" with Israel, it doesn't share "values" with this Israeli Minister: his "views contradict the values the EU stands for", the EU says [2].

As a result of this conflict of "values", the EU delegation had to cancel its Europe Day (9 May) diplomatic reception, because Itamar Ben-Gvir was scheduled to represent Israel at it.

(Clare Daly MEP has produced four short video responses to von der Leyen [3]. They are excellent, as usual.)

David Morrison
23 May 2023

References:

- [1] twitter.com/EUinIsrael/status/1651088583644594177
- [2] www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/8/eu-in-israel-cancels-europe-day-event-over-ben-gvirs-involvement
- [3] twitter.com/ClareDalyMEP/status/1658131096440127490

Who Started The Civil War?

The period of Centenaries is almost ended. Collins has used the Army the Empire gave him to beat the IRA. Cosgrave, heir to the part of him that was politically functional under Whitehall supervision of implementation of the 'Treaty', has consolidated the new regime by means of exemplary murders. Only the mutiny of the Treatyite Major-Generals, which led to the abolition of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, remains to be got over next year—and then, finally, the acknowledgement by the Treatyites that they had been duped by the British with the Boundary Commission.

REMEMBERING

It was not the business of the State, as currently constituted, to remember the other side of things. There is no longer a Civil War party in it. It has disembowelled itself. It was the Civil War party that gave it internal life after Britain had established it in military dominance. But the Civil War party has repudiated its origins and has retrospectively become a Treaty party. And now the only thing connecting Sinn Fein with the past is its name.

The State is therefore left without a dynamic. And, without a dynamic, what meaning can it have for itself?

Having made itself meaningless, it has for the first time sent representatives to take part in a British Coronation ceremony. Britain now claims a history of a thousand years. It has, during those thousand years, denied to others the possibility of having a history. Its meaning lies in its continuous existence. Where else is meaning to be found?

Irish pilgrims to the Coronation may commend themselves on having finally reached maturity by discounting the past. The past was worthless because it was not the present. 'All our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death' (Macbeth, Ed.). History was a nightmare from which we had been trying to escape, and from which we have now escaped.

But where is there to escape into, but somebody else's past?

The centenary of the Address to the Legion of the Rearguard (24th May 1923: when De Valera called on Volunteers to

dump arms, Ed.) seemed to pass unnoticed. But then there was an unexpected eruption of memory in connection with the killing of Liam Lynch—who had sworn allegiance to the elected Republic and would live under no other law. Micheal Martin, the Leader of Fianna Fail found himself surrounded by constituents who had suddenly ceased to be zombies without memory, and he had to stand awkwardly amidst them while they remembered!

*

"Bill Kissane... in his *Politics of the Irish Civil War*... remarked that 'the dominant view' among historians was that the anti-Treaty side in the Civil War 'was very much in the wrong'. Yet it should also be said that if the Irish electorate had a clear democratic choice between partition and an all-Ireland republic of some kind—a choice free from British and unionist threats of violence—then most voters on the island would almost certainly have opted for an all-Ireland republic and Sinn Fein would not have split. Rejection of the will of the majority on the island and continuing imperialism were at the root of the conflict. The island of Ireland had long been a political unit before 1920, albeit one with a large unionist minority, and small nations elsewhere in Europe were winning democratic sovereignty in the aftermath of the First World War. The pro-Treaty side did not run an Irish tricolour flag up the mast because the Irish Free State represented its ultimate ambitions, but because that form of state was seen as the best possible option in the face of repeated British threats of overwhelming force" (Prof. Colum Kenny: *A Bitter Winter: The Irish Civil War*, p12).

What does this paragraph say? That the British and Ulster Unionist refusal to allow a Republican Government to be established democratically in accordance with the will of the voters split Sinn Fein—but that, with a democratic settlement being made impossible by the British resort to overwhelming force, the decision of the Treatyites to submit to British threats was the best thing to do for the time being. That passage cancels out the message which Professor Kenny wrote his book on the Treaty.

ARRANGING NOT TO KNOW!

Professor Kenny was chosen by the Irish Times (the British paper in Ireland) to say what was right thinking on the 'Treaty', which should be encouraged

by the State, and what was wrong thinking, which should be discouraged. He criticised statements by Government Ministers for saying that it was up to individuals to form their own opinions on the 'Treaty'. He suggested that it was wrong, and was potentially subversive of public order, on the part of the Government, not to insist that the Treatyites were right and their opponents were wrong.

He re-asserts that view on pages 9 and 10 of *A Bitter Winter*, but contradicts it with this paragraph on page 12. But I would say that that confusion is characteristic of most writing on the Treaty and Civil War.

Kissane's book was published in 2005 by the Oxford University Press. I had not read it for that reason. I was asked about twenty-five years ago if I would write a chapter for a collection on Northern Ireland that was being prepared for OUP publication. I said I would write a chapter on the decision of the British political parties to exclude Northern Ireland from their sphere of operation and the probable consequences of that decision. I knew that this offer would be taken for a refusal. Oxford would have no truck with the suggestion that the bizarre system of Government imposed on the Six Counties by Whitehall was essentially responsible for the War. And so it proved to be.

I reviewed Oxford's treatment of Northern Ireland in the book, *Northern Ireland, What Is It?* And did not bother my head with it after that.

British censorship is very effective because it is conducted democratically. Effective democracy implicates all citizens in the State. British democracy, as it is, is in no sense the realisation of an ideal or abstract theory. After it was established in practice, it was held out Imperialistically as an ideal which all should commit themselves to, or as a formula of political science which could be put into effect anywhere, at any time, if evil tyrants did not keep popping up. But, in its own development, it was constructed by means of a gradual broadening out of the representative system from the top down. It began as an aristocracy and did not entirely lose its original character when, a couple of hundred years later, its base was broadened to include everybody.

The British democracy does not wish to know that it established within itself a provocatively undemocratic system of regional government—excluded from the organic political life of the rest of the state—locking the two hostile communities in that region into a hot-house

antagonism that produced a war. It does not wish to know that, and has arranged not to be informed of it. How can anyone arrange not to know what he does not want to know without knowing it? It's a logical impossibility but a practical necessity of British public life. Oxford University knew what it did not want to know. So did I, and that is why I offered to tell it as a way of parting company with it.

'Civil War' Politics?

Nevertheless, out of idle curiosity, I looked up the reference given by Professor Kenny. What Kissane says on that page is that the winners dominate writing on the event which they won. But then I noticed that I was quoted on that page, from a talk I gave at Newmarket (Co. Cork) thirty years ago.

I did not pretend that I had any original information to convey about the 'Civil War'. I had been immersed in Northern affairs since the late 1960s and had scarcely given a thought to Southern affairs after the mid-19th century. But Aubane had got going, and a group in Newmarket wanted a meeting on the subject, and I had been away from Slieve Luacra for a very long time and was interested in seeing it again.

What I remember saying is that it was not a class war, and was not a war against Partition. It was a war about the Oath to the Crown. And I concluded by pointing out the obvious: that an effective system of party-political conflict of the kind that is necessary to what is called democracy had resulted from it.

I did not know that it was the first public meeting about the 'Civil War' that was ever held in Newmarket, and that there was concern about it passing off peacefully. It did. But there was an interesting discussion afterwards.

About thirty years before that, I had spent a few weeks in the British Newspaper Library, reading the newspapers about the first half of 1922. This was not for the purpose of writing anything. I made no notes. I was related to a Moylan through my Culloty grandmother, and had a distant connection with the Collins Family through a marriage that caused some excitement when I was about seven years old, and I wanted to get an impression of the period.

The impression I got was of Collins purposefully and systematically constructing a new Army and biding his time until it was strong enough to contest the issue with the IRA, while de Valera delayed—trying to evade the issue—and refusing to give leadership to the IRA. I don't think I said any of this at the meeting.

But afterwards I got talking with Donie Murphy, who had published a book about Collins and had interviewed everybody he could find about him. He agreed with the impression I had got from the newspapers about Collins' purposeful preparations for war, but had a different picture of Collins after he put his preparations into effect. He had brought about a situation which he was unable to deal with purposefully. He found he was destroying his own world. He became a nervous wreck and kept himself going with drink while hoping for a way out. (I have mislaid Donie Murphy's book and have not met him since so I hope I am not misrepresenting him. I am grateful to him for that discussion.)

I notice on the facing page of Kissane's book the comment that, in contrast to American writings on the American Civil War,

"Irish historical debate is fragmented and remains fixed on the role of personalities in producing conflict. So great has this emphasis on personal responsibility been that there has been little analysis of the issue of causality itself..."

I have no idea of what "causality itself" might mean, if it doesn't just mean the way the succession of events is understood.

Collins launched the Civil War. The power to do it lay with him, and only with him. There may have been social elements wishing him to do it, which praised him for doing it, and swept him along with their admiration once he did it. But those elements had no means of executive action. The course of events had centralised the means of action for the time being in the person of Collins.

Rory O'Brady, with whom I held a long-distance discussion, was interested in how social forces act in bringing about events? I could only answer that the power of decisive political action in the Irish side was centralised in the Republican leadership in 1920, and in Collins after he split the Government and took power into his own hands with British backing.

Social and economic interests of various kinds may determine the bias of political development in the long run under stable conditions, but the immediate issue of War and Peace in Ireland in 1922 was decided by the action of those who controlled the armies.

Nicholas Mansergh, a senior Imperialist civil servant with an estate in Ireland who engaged in subliminal attempts to undermine Irish neutrality in the Second

World War, delivered a series of lectures at a ladies College in Dublin during the Second World War about The Coming Of The First World War. He denied, quite rightly, that it was a "capitalists' war". It would be a different thing if he had denied that it was a capitalist war.

The capitalists did not get together and decide that Britain should make war on Germany for the purpose of wrecking German Capitalism as a commercial rival. It was the Government that did that. Some capitalists protested against the disruption of business by the War. The Economist, which was then much more a publication serving capitalism than it is now, indicated that it did not believe the reason given by the Government about the necessity for war—the march of a German army through Belgium. But the capitalists did not have the power to stop the Government from making war in their interest. And, once the War got going, they set about profiting from it.

The Liberal Party, the historic party serving the promotion of capitalism, was in Office thanks to the support of the Irish Home Rule party, which perhaps served the interests of small capitalists and hucksters and aspiring Shoneens. The Liberal/Home Rule alliance—which was not a Coalition but was closer than Coalitions sometimes are—was the greatest governing power in the world. It was encountering fierce opposition at home because of its Irish Home Rule project. It seemed to be on the brink of a civil war—which might well have turned out to be a British civil war, rather than just one fought in Ireland. But the opportunity arose to establish unity at home by putting into effect the preparations that had been made secretly for war on Germany and they seized it.

It took more than four years to break down Germany. Those were good years for capitalists but the outcome was bad for Capitalism. And the first post-War Election saw the crushing of the party alliance that had launched the War—the Liberal Party and the Home Rule Party—and the filling of Parliament with "the hard-faced businessmen who looked as if they had done well out of the War", and the disappearance from it of what had become a Shoneen party.

And that Parliament, in the moment of Britain's great victory, was soon brought to a realisation of the fact that it had lost its Imperial independence of action in the world by the arrangements it had made with the United States in order to win.

The certainties (routines, realities) of the pre-War era were broken. It was no longer the case that every English child "born into the world alive/Was either a little Liberal or else a little Conservative" [as Gilbert & Sullivan put it, Ed.]. And the Party which had maintained a kind of British Irishness for close on half a century was suddenly not there anymore. (It might have become the governing party of the 26 Counties in 1916 if it had agreed to implementing the Home Rule Act with the exclusion of the Six Counties, but it refused and passed into oblivion.)

The new Sinn Fein party—a de facto merger of the Volunteers of 1916, represented by Cathal Brugha, and the Irish Republican Brotherhood—restored after 1916 by Michael Collins on a commission from Kathleen Clarke—won the 1918 Election and was never challenged by any force outside itself. No Royalist or Dominion movement was ever formed against it. When a local government body in Limerick hinted at such a project, it was quickly brought into line with the official position—which was that independent government had been established in Ireland on the authority of a mandate from the electorate and Britain must come to terms with that fact.

The authority of the Sinn Fein Government, in the short run, could only be broken from within. There were no organised social or political forces outside of it that could challenge it.

There were tensions within the movement. The main tensions was between Brugha, the soldier and Constitutionalist, and Collins, the Conspirator and organiser of assassinations. A functional state requires both. It seems to have been generally agreed that it was de Valera who made the State functional by enabling the two to work together.

Collins, supported by Griffith, destroyed the functioning State system when he made a separate deal with the British Government, and undertook to set up—against the Government of the Republic based on the Dail—a Provisional Government authorised by Britain and based in a 26 County Parliament. He drew members from the Dail to act as a Southern Parliament under the British Act, so that he could become Chairman of the Provisional Government under British law, and acquire an Army under British authority. The acquisition of an Army that was under his command was an important thing for him.

He was, said Griffith, "the man who won the War". The War was fought against Britain. If he had won it, why was Britain giving him an Army? Why did he not have command of the Army with which he had won the War?

Because the War had not been won—a point insisted upon by De Valera, when the 2nd Dail met after the Truce. And, because he was not the leader of the Army that persuaded the British to negotiate.

What did Collins intend doing with the Army Britain gave him? Or to put the question the other way around, the realistic way: Why did Britain give him an Army?

If Britain negotiated a Treaty with the Dail Government, the Army that swore allegiance to the Dail, the IRA, would have continued to be the Irish Army. Britain therefore made a point of not making a Treaty with the Dail Government. What it undertook to do was make a Treaty with a Government of Southern Ireland, if one was set up under the terms of the British 1920 Act which the Dail had rejected.

The business of Collins and Griffith, once they signed their Agreement with Britain, was to disable the Republican system of government, established by the Dail on Irish electoral authority, and establish a 26 County system under British authority.

They might have done this by proposing to the Dail that it should transfer its power to another body—as Hitler did with the Weimar Parliament a dozen years later. They preferred an indirect approach. They gained a small majority in the Dail (by obfuscation and IRB discipline) for a motion of support for the 'Treaty' document. Then they withdrew their supporters from the Dail to another place to be the Parliament of Southern Ireland and have the Provisional Government set up, and then they returned to the Dail and operated a system of Dual Government through it.

A war between Collins's Provisional Government Army and the Army which had sworn allegiance to the Dail Republic became practically inevitable at that point.

The reason it was inevitable was that it was the reason Britain had given Collins an Army. He may have imagined that, once he got his Army, he could do what he pleased with it. But Whitehall kept a close watch on him. It played him like a puppet until it got him using the Army it had given him in the way that it intended it to be used.

He denied that he had acted under duress on 6th December 1921. It is indisputable

that he acted under duress on 28th June 1922. But it might be that there was an element of "civil society" pressure acting on him in Dublin on 28th June that was entirely absent in London on December 6th. He had been cultivating the social elements that flocked around him since December 6th, and the influence back on him of those elements was possibly a factor inhibiting him from calling General Macready's bluff on June 28th.

Civil Society

"Civil society" is a rather slippery concept at the best of times. Was there a civil society capable of purposeful action in Ireland? Was there anything but civil society in Ireland?

Treaty propaganda ridiculed the idea that the Republic had ever actually existed. If it never existed, then what was there but a form of social protest?

The most coherent and purposeful civil society I know of was the overthrown Puritan regime in Restoration England, which was allocated a separate sphere of action by the Act of (Protestant) Toleration and the Occasional Conformity system.

The Slave Trade was thrown open to that society around 1690. It beavered away, constructing Capitalism in the caverns beneath the Corridors of Power. It was facilitated by the Whig aristocracy. Then, in the 1820s, as far as I could discover, it asserted itself under the guidance of Francis Place, and threatened what the Ulster Unionists in 1974 called a Constitutional stoppage by means of the banks, if it was not admitted to the corridors of political power. Capitalism was enfranchised in 1832 and money triumphed over land in 1848.

And of course in Ulster the development of the 17th Century Protestant colony was entirely a civil society development. Belfast constructed itself as a bourgeois town—a perfect town for showing the way to the French Revolution, if only it had been in France—and then as an industrial city, without the benefit of a Charter. It had its first Election in 1832. There were four contenders for the two seats: all of them were reformers. The first two to be nominated said they were Liberals, and the other two therefore had to be Tories.

That's one of the difficulties of getting an idea of civil society in Ireland if it is taken to be a national unity. It consisted of two very different societies: one developed from an early 17th century colony in Ulster

and the other being the survival of native society in the rest of the country. The Northern colony had developed through self-sufficiency. The surviving native society had lived for many generations under the rule of an aristocratic, Protestant, estate-owning colonial stratum, that was parasitic on it, that had monopolised land ownership, the professions, and education, that had tried to monopolise religion, and that had been in decay ever since Britain abolished its independent Parliament of the Kingdom of Ireland in 1800, but which remained dominant in many spheres of business well into the 20th century.

The native population had never been a civil society in relation to the Ascendancy Kingdom in the 18th century, or to the British Government in the 19th.

As the Parliamentary franchise was broadened in the second half of the 19th century, the Home Rule Party organised it for mass voting, but since those votes did not produce a Government, they were not an experience in democracy (as either Professor Lee or Professor Garvin claims) because a democracy is the governing system of a State.

The first act of government in which a section of the populace can be said to have played an active political part is the Land Purchase Act of 1903, brought about by strong agitation against Landlordism followed by purposeful collaboration with the Unionist Government at Westminster. This political collaboration was carried through with the guidance of William O'Brien, the land agitator, and Canon Sheehan, the novelist.

It is a development that is unknown to the academic historians, apparently because it was opposed by the Home Rule Party, but it had far-reaching consequences—the first of which was the loss by the Party of its seats in Cork in the 1910 Elections, and the second of which might be fairly said to be the War of Independence.

The 1903 Act produced a large class of small landowners. The War was mainly fought in the region where the land reform was carried out most thoroughly. The organisation of that class was the ICMSA (Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers), which made possible the Economic War of the 1930s that led to British military withdrawal [evacuation of its remaining bases, Ed.].

The most general social organisation was the Catholic Church, which is now often treated as if it had been the State Church.

It was not the State Church. It was not funded by the State. It owned no great tracts of land inherited from feudal times. The only State Church there had ever been in Ireland was the Protestant Church, which was also the owner of great estates.

The Catholic Church might have been a State Church (and therefore a National Church) if an agreement of the Hierarchy with the Government 1808 had been put into effect. Its implementation was stopped by a rebellion of the Dublin Catholic middle class—an event which I described in *The Veto Controversy*.

It was normal for the Catholic Church to have some formal arrangements with the States in which it functioned. Because of the Veto affair, the Church in Ireland remained directly under Rome, and politically free of Government connections, either British or Irish. It had a national character because of the way the populace ensured its survival under the Penal Law system, and therefore had many irregularities in Roman eyes. Cardinal Cullen was sent to Ireland in the 1840s to regularise it. He succeeded in places—for instance in Dublin, a city built by the Protestant Ascendancy in the 18th century and abandoned by it in the 19th—and he failed altogether in other places.

The action of the Church in politics in 1922 was therefore not uniform. The Provisional Government enlisted its support in Dublin—where it seems to have been most influential. When I was a child in Slieve Luacra I saw it being denounced from the congregation during Mass—with nobody indicating disapproval—for its disgraceful attempt to wield Excommunication as a political cudgel in 1922.

I assume the Excommunications had some effect in consolidating the 'Treaty' coup d'etat against the Republic in the metropolis, and in providing it with an ersatz ideology, but they were not what caused the 'Civil War', nor what made it possible.

The conditions that made it possible was the deal Griffith and Collins made with Whitehall, and its cause was the ultimatum given to Collins by Whitehall in late June 1922 along with Macready's judicious delay in implementing the orders given to him by Whitehall.

If Macready had acted promptly to clear out the Four Courts, Collins might well, on the spur of the moment, have joined the IRA, with which he was already collaborating in action against Northern

Ireland in breach of his Treaty signature.

It appears that he acted impulsively, at the eleventh hour, when he signed the 'Treaty', rather than acting to a pre-conceived plan. There is no way of knowing for certain because his organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, destroyed all its records when dissolving itself after the 'Mutiny of the Major-Generals' in 1924, and the Free State Government (the continuation of the Provisional Government) also engaged in wholesale destruction of official records when it lost the Election in 1932.

On 28th June 1922 there was nothing to guide Collins but impulse. None of the undertakings he gave to his followers to get them to vote for his 'Treaty' had worked out. He had complained to Whitehall that it was making it too obvious to everybody that it was pulling his strings. He was being humiliated. But the future still depended on him—on the way he would jump when cornered. There was no way of know which way he would jump until he jumped. That is the degree of objective causation that there was in determining the course of events. On 27th June 1922 the situation was full of possibilities. Nobody knew Collins mind, and it seems probable that he did not know it himself, until he acted. In the beginning was *The Deed*.

The deed was his, but it seems that he felt alienated from its consequence. He was caught between two minds, and became an isolated figure within his own creation. The conduct of affairs passed increasingly into the hands of his single-minded lieutenants, who knew their own minds. Cosgrave and Mulcahy committed themselves imposing the new political system by means of terror without limit.

Whitehall almost despaired of Collins. General Macready said he could not be relied upon until he started killing. Churchill, who had great hopes for him as a convert to the Imperial cause, came to see him as being held back by an element of residual republicanism; and he feared that "dog would not eat dog". Tim Pat Coogan, his greatest admirer, compares him, in his final meeting at Whitehall, to a wild animal sensing that he was being caged.

With his "National Army" he was a pivotal figure between the British Army and the IRA. He was the only means available to Whitehall for bringing about a 'Civil War' in Ireland. He came good for it in the end, but it appears that he destroyed himself as a political force by doing so.

Brendan Clifford

Inglis the Perfidious

Readers of *Anatomy Of A Lie* and of *Decoding False History* will be familiar with the extensive duplicity of Brian Inglis' 1973 biography of Casement in which selective framing and omission, altered documents, false attributions and other chicanery govern his treatment of the notorious diaries.

Those readers will by now have understood that his intellectual dishonesty was necessary in order to convince everyone that the diaries are the work of Casement. They will also have understood by now that Inglis knew very well they were forgeries.

Readers will recall how Inglis ignored the very long hand-written journal which Casement wrote while in the Putumayo in 1910 now known as *The Amazon Journal*. The original is held in National Library of Ireland.

Soon after publication of Inglis' book, he was challenged to explain why he had ignored this authentic document of 140,000 words in favour of the disputed shorter 'Dollard diary' of 1910. His response was simple, ingenious and utterly false. He wrote that the handwritten journal now in NLI is not the 1910 original, but is a cleaned up copy made by Casement in 1913. This falsehood is exposed in part on pages 55-56 of *Anatomy Of A Lie* but one crucial aspect has only recently come to light.

The history of the journal is as follows: the document was written by Casement day by day during his three-month investigation in the Putumayo region and brought back to England on his return. Thereafter it was kept with his other possessions until late 1912.

At that time a Parliamentary Select Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of Charles Roberts MP with the remit to further report to Parliament on British responsibility for the abuses in the Putumayo. In December 1912 Casement wrote to Roberts offering his journal to the Committee as evidence.

"I have dug up my diary of my days on the Putumayo - a very voluminous record indeed ... the diary is a pretty complete record ... written down red hot ... it is extensive and much of it written with pencil ... a faithful transcript of my own mind at the time ..."

Casement left England on 31st December 1912 for a rest holiday in the Canaries and brought the journal with him. On 24th January 1913, Roberts sent a telegram to Casement via the consulate in Tenerife asking for the journal to be sent promptly. On 27th January Casement sent the journal to Roberts who acknowledged receipt on 1st February:

"Your telegram reached me at Orotava ... I came over here at onceand now send you the diary. I had it with me, but have not read it for two and a half years! There is much... would expose me to ridicule were it read by unkind eyes—its only value is that it is honest... I was greatly overworked... I am sometimes very hard on individuals... I wrote then with resentment strong in me... I felt very fierce and furious against the men who had connived at concealing the crimes. But there—you have the diary, such as it is ..."

The journal remained in Roberts' care until July 1913 when it was returned to Casement in London. Most probably it was then stored in his luggage at Allison's in London until late 1914 or early 1915 when the luggage was seized by the CID. The journal along with other property was handed over to Gavan Duffy after the execution in 1916 and later was donated to NLI either by Casement's cousin Gertrude Parry or by Duffy himself.

Casement described his journal to Roberts as follows:

"It is often almost unintelligible altho' I can read it all... I advise you strongly to have it typed ... it will take an expert to read it and decipher it ... was written with (obviously) never a thought of being shown to others but for myself alone ..."

This description corresponds to the document held today in NLI. It is partly written in pencil and some pages are almost illegible. Its tone is often angry and intemperate, highly personal and emotional. There can be no doubt as to it being the original 'real time' record of 1910.

In his 1974 Coronet paperback edition, Inglis wrote in an annex as follows:

"The other was a copy of his Putumayo diary, which he made for the use of the Select Committee investigating the affair. As he told the Chairman, he was sending

the copy because

"naturally there is in it [the original diary] something I should not wish anyone else to see"...".

However, Casement did not write this quoted sentence to Charles Roberts. Inglis inserted the words in parenthesis and attributed those words to Casement to support his claim which he knew to be false. Categorical proof of this is found in the original letter of 27th January 1913 written by Casement to Roberts:

"Naturally there is in it something I should not wish anyone to see—but then it is as it stands."

This is the sentence seen by Inglis in the Casement-Roberts Correspondence held in Rhodes House. Inglis altered the original by deleting the last seven words and a dash, adding three words in parenthesis and added the word 'else'.

Inglis then made a surprisingly clumsy mistake in alleging that Casement told Roberts that he had altered this copy to conceal something in the original. In short, he 'confessed' to Roberts that the document was not 100% genuine. It was a risk Inglis felt he had to take.

Thus by falsifying his report of a genuine document, Inglis created yet another innuendo which has deceived countless thousands of readers worldwide for half a century. Inglis was indeed a master of the devious art of deception.

The author is indebted to *The Amazon Journal* edited by Angus Mitchell, Lilliput Books 1997, and in particular to original research by Dr. Mitchell on pages 36-39. Readers are referred to chapter 2 of *Anatomy of a lie* and to the Introduction in *Decoding False History*.

Paul R. Hyde. 2023. ©

Paul Hyde:

Anatomy Of A Lie: Decoding Casement

(Paperback)

£13.99

220 Pages

Publisher: Wordwell

Gaza Stills

They line up for the camera,
the remainder of families,
still in life as in death,
they don't complain,
make no requests,
they will get nothing
and have nothing
but checkpoints,
high walls,
razor wire,
Israeli fighter jets
who strike at their children,
their mothers,
their fathers,
their grandparents,
their phones are listened to,
their faces are in a data bank,
and now the camera
of a foreign magazine.
pries into their soul,
the adults are still,
the children are still.
the camera sees nothing
but a quiet resistance,
there is no crying
of the young,
no wailing
of adults
no facial expressions,
no grief
no smiles,
it's a calm pool
where the water doesn't ripple.
A voice enquires of their
losses,
but there are no losses,
their dead are still with them,
in their hearts and in their
minds,
in Palestine.

Wilson John Haire.
21.5.2023.

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Too Many Of You, Not Enough Space For Me !

To “*avert catastrophe*” the *Club of Rome* (CR), the *Council on Foreign Relations* (CFR), and *World Economic Forum* (WEF) have become Neo-Malthusians.

They call for an 86% reduction of Earth’s population. Politicians and the mainstream news media promote that reduction—from 7.9 billion to 1.1 billion.

The population reduction has started. Financed by our taxes, the murderers are promoting wars, attacking production of fuel, food, and minerals, creating gain-of-function diseases, imposing antibody-weakening injections, and promoting abortion and “*transgenderism*”.

The Rev. Thomas Malthus (1766-1834) pandered to England’s aristocracy who wanted fewer 'common' persons around. Their wealth from the industrial revolution and from slavery in the Caribbean and Ireland had made them imperious—like today’s super-rich members of the CR, CFR, and WEF? To wipe out half of the population during Ireland’s 1845-1850 Holocaust* “potato famine” they deployed into Ireland more than half (67 regiments) of their 126-regiment empire army. That army robbed Ireland’s producers of their abundant food crops and escorted them to the ports for export. Half the population starved to death. My grandfather, Kieran Fogarty (1839-1923) survived it. His sister Sara didn’t.

But Malthus erred, fundamentally. Today’s Malthusians err in exactly the same way.

Malthus’s contention that population increased geometrically while food production increased arithmetically proved wildly false. Malthus assumed muscle-powered agriculture was permanent, where “*every rood maintained a man*”. Better seeds, fertiliser, and mechanisation were beyond him. Malthus is utterly refuted. It is food production that has increased “*geometrically*”, while Ireland’s population increased only *arithmetically* if at all. Families have become far smaller throughout the developed world.

Today’s Malthusians’ err by believing that current factory smokestacks and sewers are permanent; that “*only by closing factories, driving EVs, and becoming poor, can we end pollution*”.

Malthus’ followers murdered some five million in Ireland. Will Neo-Malthusians, in their blind imperiousness, achieve near-omnicide?

Just as Robert F. Kennedy jr. is heroically exposing one Neo-Malthusian gang, Malthus himself was exposed by many—most notably by English farmer and activist Member of Parliament, William Cobbett.

Chris Fogarty,
May 2023 ©

* Reported as “famine” in *The Cork* (now Irish) *Examiner* newspaper from 4th May 1846 until 19th November 19, and elsewhere.

A Correction!

Donal Kennedy writes that in his article, Turf Development Board Limited:
Dispute With Engineering Staff, 1936
in the May
Irish Political Review

He wrote *Herbert Spenser* instead of *Edmund Spenser*

and *Vicars* when he meant *Vickers*

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

Housing

Health and Housing are the two biggest problem areas in Irish politics. And the Irish politicians are very good at talking about them and also very good at doing nothing effective to solve the problems.

The shortage of housing can be divided into two problems, both of which could be solved by the Government. Firstly, the finance. Very few people have the money to buy a house and those few are wealthy people who will buy a large house. For ordinary people, on ordinary incomes, the money must be provided by either the Local Authority building the houses and letting them out at rents—or subsidised rents, which people can afford—or by financial institutions providing loans at reasonable rates, so that people can build their own houses.

Mortgage rates of interest in Ireland are among the highest in Europe. The reasons are partly because of the legal difficulties of the lender in dealing with a defaulting tenant and partly because of profiteering by the banks and other lenders. These two problems could be fixed by a resolute Government.

On no account should US-style vulture funds be allowed into the Irish housing market. Instead, there should be a legal mechanism for ownership of the houses of defaulting tenants to be passed over to the Local Authority, which will then assess and charge the rent appropriate to the tenant's income.

The second and much bigger-side of the housing problem is the *Planning Acts*. There is over-planning and plainly far too much of it! And the Planning system in Ireland is commonly regarded as corrupt. There would be neither need, nor opportunity for corruption if the Planning Acts were more fairly applied. For example, the words “*sustainable development*” appears in every decision to grant or to refuse Planning Permission: and yet no one can explain what is “*sustainable development*”? It is pure jargon.

Planning Officials take a negative approach to applications. But applicants should be viewed as people who are helping society by building houses: instead they are viewed as people to be controlled and

restrained. This negative view should be corrected. It should be taught to planners that streets of houses were built before ever the *Planning Acts* were introduced, and these streets and houses are perfectly acceptable. Planning officers should be instructed to encourage house builders. It might be useful if every refusal of Planning Permission was automatically reviewed by an Inspecting Planner, to ensure that the decision was correct and to give advice to the applicant as to exactly why permission was refused.

Water and Other Services

Very many Planning Permissions are refused for the reason that Utility Services are not available. This reason for denying Planning Permission should be made illegal by law because, if the Services are not made available by the Council, householders can provide their own. Wells can be bored for water, septic tanks can be bought ready-made for waste, and electricity should be supplied by law to every new house at a reasonable connection charge.

Land Zoning

Land Zoning sounds reasonable on the face of it, but it is used as a weapon by those Councils which do not wish to extend Water and Sewerage systems. It is also widely recognised in Ireland that some zoning can be changed or influenced by corruption of Council officers. There is no good reason for the zoning of land for residential housing or for land used for agriculture or horticulture.

It is appropriate to zone land for industry and for major retail developments, such as Shopping Malls, and for major infrastructure—such as sewerage, or water-treatment plants, or communication masts. But zoning should not be needed for land used for farming, nor for residential housing, nor for individual shops.

A new *Planning and Development Act* is presently in course of being enacted and it has no new thinking in it. It is just more of the same bureaucratic preoccupation with control and more control—all 753 pages of it! It is an outrage but no one seems to care enough to change things. (The Irish do not 'do' justifiable outrage like the French.)

The Planning Act presently in force is the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, which runs to 267 pages: and it could have been a lot less if residential housing and agriculture had been made exempt from planning permission. So, instead of reducing the complications and cost of getting planning permission, the present Government is proposing actively to make law for a further 486 pages of complications and costs.

At present, it can cost up to 5,000 euro or more to get Planning Permission for a house, and if the Government gets away with the new proposed Act, the cost per house will increase.

All the evidence is that the Government do not really, actually care.

In addition, during last month, Minister for Finance Michael McGrath, Fianna Fáil, announced an unexpected increase in tax collected, amounting to 63 billion Euro. He could have solved quite a lot of the housing problems with 63 billion Euro. But not a mention was made about housing in this connection.

Health Services

Also, of course, a few billion Euros would have helped to build a few hospitals. Last month there were 74,000 patients waiting for hospital beds. That means the Health Service is out of control and, worst still, the Government is doing absolutely nothing about it, except talk. But does the 63 Billion Euros exist? Can politicians be relied upon to tell the truth anymore? The Department of Finance is notorious for getting their figures wrong! But 63 Billion out? That is just not believable.

Councillor Thomas Gould, Sinn Féin, of Cork City Council, reported a few weeks ago that he accompanied his aged father recently to Cork's Mercy Hospital Outpatient Department and, after ten hours waiting with him, his sister came in and relieved him: but they had to wait another four hours before her father was attended to. The Outpatient Department is situated in a temporary-looking pre-fab. What an awful way to treat a citizen. And this is repeated with variations all over Ireland.

Now where are the 63 Billions, and where are Minister for Finance Minister McGrath (FF) and Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly (Social Democrats), respectively? It is simply frightening and seems only to get worse.

The Government

The present Government Coalition of Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil and the Green Party is undoubtedly the worst Government of Ireland since 1922. Its conduct just does not stack up. Minister Eamon Ryan, Green Party is busy thrashing cities and towns by narrowing car and lorry lanes by pouring a huge tonnage of concrete, while at the same time proposing to compulsorily acquire pieces of people's gardens so as to widen 'Bus Lanes'—all at enormous expense—while State services, such as provision of housing and hospitals, are deprived of funding.

A new conspiracy has been tacitly accepted by all TDs, Senators and County Councillors to stay in Office, drawing inflated salaries and expenses, for as long as possible, and do as little work for their constituents as they can get away with. And, in the meanwhile, there does seem to be a money-tree at Leinster House. It just does not stack up.

Michael Stack ©

LEMASS continued

ing head of the Free State military Secret Service at the same time. MacEoin states that McGrath was not responsible (ibid, p131, Uinseann MacEoin, *The IRA in the Twilight Years, 1923-1948*, Argenta Publications, 1997, ibid.p.131)

A SENSE OF SHAME!

The Civil War was by far the most important event in Independent Ireland. It shaped the structure of politics and the State profoundly. Yet it is almost universally regarded as best forgotten—and as quickly as possible. It is regarded as some terrible mistake.

This attitude has a very debilitating effect on people because it really is soul-destroying if a society tries to accept that it is the product of some historical error. In fact, nearly all Irish history is fast becoming to be seen as some kind of nightmare of awful events by fashionable thinkers these days.

Even the current Commemoration events are done in an almost shame-faced manner—get the bloody events over and done with as quick as possible and move on!

The Civil War produced a functioning party system. If it had not happened we would probably have had 90 years of one-party Sinn Fein government. That was the only feasible alternative. The detractors of the Civil War parties might ponder on that.

Every country worth its salt has had a civil war that helped define it in the world. The Republic is no exception, and its time the Irish Civil War was assessed in that context.

A Substantial Figure

McGRATH, Joseph [1888-1966]. (TD, Sinn Fein, Dublin St. James's, 1918-21; Dublin NW, 1921-23; (CnaG) Mayo North, 1923-24.

Minister for Labour, Dail Cabinet, Jan.-Dec., 1922; Minister for Indust. & Commerce, Provisional Government August-December 1922. Minister for Industry & Commerce, Dec. 1922—March 1924.

McGrath supported the Anglo-Irish Treaty, saying that everything that was in the Dail's Democratic Programme could be put into force through the Treaty and that there was sufficient scope to achieve the freedom to which they aspired. During the Civil War he was seconded to the Free State Army as Director of Intelligence and

was in charge of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

Resigned from the Executive Council in March 1924 in protest at the Government's reaction to the Army Mutiny, which he described as being due to the muddling, mishandling and incompetence of the army administration. Resigned with eight other TDs from the Dail and Cumann na nGaedheal in October, 1924.

Trained as an accountant. Manager, insurance section, Irish Transport & General Workers' Union. Active in IRB, and Irish Volunteers. Fought in 1916. Imprisoned on three occasions. Acted as Secretary to Michael Collins in 1922 Treaty negotiations.

ORGANISED LABOUR

WRC Report: The number of hearings and decisions processed by the Workplace Relations Commission (W.R.C.) last year soared by nearly 30%, as the impact of the pandemic on case scheduling "abated significantly". (Irish Examiner-9.5.2023)

The WRC's latest Annual Report shows that over the course of 2022, the number of hearings held by the WRC Adjudication Service increased by 28%, while the number of decisions/recommendations issued was up 27%, when compared to 2021.

The report notes that "hearings are taking longer than anticipated" following a 2021 Supreme Court ruling, which imposed requirements for the affirmation of evidence on oath, cross-examination, and adjournments in the WRC process, and that this is impacting on the availability of Adjudication Officers. However, the report says the impacts of this abated during 2022.

"Of the 12,780 complaints received by the WRC last year, more than a quarter (26%) related to Pay. 1,851 complaints related to Discrimination, Equality and Equal Status, an increase of 16% compared to 2021, while the number of complaints relating to Terms and Conditions of Employment (1,222) increased by 26%. Complaints relating to Unfair Dismissal decreased by 10%, to a total of 1,518 by the end of last year. (Irish Examiner, 9.5.2023)

Pay Deal to match inflation—Public sector workers want their next pay increase

After his Dail career became labour adviser to Siemens-Schuckert in the building of the Shannon hydroelectric scheme. Co-founded the Irish Hospitals Sweepstake in 1930, which became a major funding source for Irish hospitals.

Director in several other Irish companies. Developed major interest in horse racing and breeding.

(Anthony White, *Irish Parliamentarians, Deputies and Senators 1918-2018*, IPA publication, 2018)

The *Morning Post* was a conservative daily newspaper published in London from 1772 to 1937, when it was acquired by The Daily Telegraph.

to match inflation and are willing to ballot for industrial action if the offer from the Government falls below that. (Irish Examiner, 13.5.2023)

That is according to a survey by the country's largest public sector union Fórsa to which 20,000 people responded—a quarter of its membership.

More than 80% of respondents said the upcoming pay negotiations should yield increases that match inflation.

It found a clear majority are in favour of Forsa organising a ballot for industrial action if negotiated increases are below that. (Irish Examiner, 13.5.2023)

Employers fear Sick Pay rules will lead to a surge in absenteeism—Barry Whelan, group CEO of Excel Recruitment, said employers are anticipating a rise in employee absenteeism will follow new statutory sick pay entitlements. (Irish Examiner-5.5.2023)

Employers are concerned that staff absenteeism will become increasingly disruptive as the new company-funded statutory Sick Pay cover climbs from three days in 2023 to ten days in 2026.

With the Sick Leave Act 2022 effective since January, owner-managers in SMEs are already reviewing possible cuts to their contributions to employee healthcare and pension schemes, as well as investing less in staff training, education and even on-the-job perks like free or subsidised canteen food. *****

LEMASS continued

the mouth and his own revolver was left beside the body.

WHO KILLED NOEL LEMASS?

Despite the demand by the Jury at the Inquest in 1923 for a Judicial Inquiry — no such Inquiry ever took place.

“A review of all the evidence by the late Supreme Court judge Adrian Hardiman pointed to Captain James Murray of the Free State Army intelligence department” (*The Irish Times*, 2.5.2023).

“Before his death in 2016, Mr Justice Hardiman was commissioned by the Lemass family, which includes the Haughey family, to carry out a review of evidence related to the case.

“The inquest into Lemass’s death found that the “armed forces of the State” had been “implicated in Lemass’s removal and disappearance”...”

“Moreover, according to two witnesses, Captain Murray had openly boasted about killing Lemass and dumping him in the Poulaphouca river. When the coroner requested that Captain Murray attend the inquest and give evidence, the Army refused to release him saying that he was already in military custody by them for other crimes.

“In June 1925 Captain Murray was convicted and sentenced to death for the murder of Joseph Bergin, a military policeman, on December 13th, 1923. Bergin, it is alleged, had been on the side of the anti-Treaty prisoners in jail. Murray protested that he was acting under orders from the head of military intelligence Colonel Michael Costello.

“In a statement given to gardaí, Murray made the extraordinary admission that: “I thought that the job was one of the usual unofficial executions.”

Murray was convicted of murder and sentenced to death. He was reprieved but died of Tuberculosis in Portlaoise Prison in 1929. He was only 30.

“In 1927, former Free State minister Joe McGrath won a celebrated libel action against an author named Cyril Bretherton who had named him as the man responsible for Noel Lemass’s death. The £3,700 award, a colossal sum at the time, allowed McGrath to set up the hospital sweepstakes and become one of the new State’s first indigenous millionaires.

“In his review, Mr Justice Hardiman concluded that it remains a possibility that McGrath, in his status as head of the Free State’s military secret service, ordered the killing of Lemass and that Murray carried it out.

“Mr Justice Hardiman suggested that documents related to Murray’s life might

be interrogated even at this remove and that the transcript of his trial lists a number of unofficial executions including possibly that of Lemass. There is also a number of secret files related to an interrogation of Murray at St Bricin’s Military Hospital which are worthy of further analysis.

“Mr Justice Hardiman also suggested that Lemass was the inspiration for Samuel Beckett’s first novel in the French language, *Mercier et Camier*, which was a prelude to his most famous work *Waiting for Godot*. The reference to the “grave of a nationalist, brought here in the night by the enemy and executed” is to Lemass” (*The Irish Times*, 2.5.2023).

SEAN LEMASS

Seán Lemass famously never spoke about his brother and was always anxious to move on from the Civil War. “*Terrible things were done on both sides*”, he said in 1969, the year before he died, “*I’d prefer not to talk about it*” (*The Irish Times*, 2.5.2023).

In his 1994 book, “*Sean Lemass: A Biography*”, Michael O’Sullivan refers to a remark Sean Lemass made to Michael Collins of—

“...how an indiscreet reference by Lady Lavery to Michael Collins may have caused the murder of his brother, Noel.”

“In the spring of 1966 *The Irish Times* published a photograph of the Taoiseach, Sean Lemass, in an unusually pensive mode. It was close to the anniversary of the Easter Rising, and—although no one knew it except Lemass himself—he was only months away from his own retirement. In the photograph he is standing at the graveside of Joe McGrath, and McGrath’s death must have prompted a more than usually sombre set of reflections.

“McGrath was his former comrade in arms. He had been his OC when they were interned at Ballykinlar, Co Down, during the War of Independence. They were sundery by the Civil War, at the end of which the security forces, reputedly under McGrath’s direction, were responsible for Lemass’s older brother’s abduction and death.

“A decade or so later, an awkward handshake at a race meeting buried the hatchet. McGrath was to become one of Fianna Fail’s major financial backers (he also supported other parties), and his death, certainly for Lemass, signalled the end of an era, just as it must have re-awakened the embers of long-banked fires” (John Horgan, *Irish Times*, 27.1.1998)

MURRAY, COSTELLO AND MCGRATH

At the Lemass Inquest, on 22nd October, 1923: “*Two witnesses gave evidence that an Army captain, the name of Murray, was involved in the abduction; he was stated at this time to be in military*

custody.” (Unseann MacEoin, *The IRA in the Twilight Years, 1923-1948*, Argenta Publications, 1997-p.85)

Captain James Murray was sentenced to death for the murder of Joseph Bergin, a military policeman on 12th June 1925. Commuted, he died in Maryborough Prison (Re-named Portlaoise Prison from 1929) in July, 1929.

Murray’s trial, for the murder of Curragh military policeman, Joseph Bergin, commenced in Dublin on 9th June 1925. Letters read on the following day, suggested that Col. M. J. Costello, Director of Intelligence, had assisted Murray in fleeing the country. During the course of Murray’s four-day trial, the case of Noel Lemass was mentioned but was not pursued. Murray was sentenced to death on 12th June 1925. (ibid. 117)

NOTE:

“Murray at that time was on the staff of Col. M. J. Costello, chief of Army Intelligence; but any suggestion that he was aware of Murray’s behaviour is not sustained” (ibid. p.167).

“Fionan Lynch, Attorney-General, had earlier said that Murray would be released provided he left Ireland; he had fled to the Argentine after the killings, but was persuaded to return for a normal jury trial. Evidence there had convicted him (ibid. p.167).”

The Supreme Court listed for July, Captain Murray’s appeal against a sentence of death. Judgement was Reserved in the appeal of Captain James Murray according to a report of 8th July 1925. Four days later, it was announced the appeal was refused.

The death sentence on Captain James Murray was commuted to one of life; in a report of July 20, 1925—

“Captain James Murray: Mid-July, 1929 marked the death in Maryborough Prison of Capt. James Murray, ex-Free State Army, and a remote killer figure of the Civil War. A number of unauthorised killings of the 1923 period in the Co. Dublin area were attributed to Murray, and a group of Free State military led by him” (Unseann MacEoin, *The IRA in the Twilight Years, 1923-1948*, Argenta Publications, 1997).

MACEOIN ON THE LIBEL CASE!

Joe McGrath, former Minister, was reported on 3rd February 1927, to have taken an action, in which he won damages, against Cyril Bretherton, a *Morning Post* journalist who, in a book, accused McGrath of being responsible for the death of Noel Lemass in 1923; McGrath (who later founded the Sweepstakes) be-

continued on page 30



LABOUR

Comment

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Murder Of Noel Lemass

“MURDER VERDICT IN LEMASS INQUEST”

“STATE FORCES IMPLICATED”

“THE JURY’S FINDINGS”

“CALL FOR JUDICIAL INQUIRY”

(The Irish Independent, 24.10.1923)

“ We are satisfied that the remains are those of Noel Lemass. We also agree with the medical evidence that he was brutally and wilfully murdered.”

“We have not sufficient evidence produced to satisfy us who the actual perpetrator was.”

“We are convinced that armed forces of the State have been implicated in the removal and disappearance of Noel Lemass from the streets of Dublin. We demand of the Government a Judicial Inquiry on the evidence produced at this inquest.”

“This was the verdict returned by the Coroner’s jury at Rathmines yesterday” (The Irish Independent, 24.10.1923)

The murder of Noel Lemass was one of the most brutal and barbaric killings in the Civil War. The details of the crime, which later emerged at the Coroner’s Inquest, shocked and horrified the Irish people. It was one of the worst of the 106 murders carried out by the Free State forces during the months of 1922/23.

Civil War started 28th June 1922 and ended on 24th May 1923, when Republican Commander-in-Chief, Frank Aiken issued a “Cease Fire and Dump Arms” order officially ending Republican involvement in the conflict.

Noel Lemass’s arrest and murder was all the more diabolical in the light that the Civil War had ended six weeks previously.

CAREER

“LEMASS, Noel: Anti-Treaty.

Captain. Intelligence Officer. Captured in Glencullen, Co. Wicklow by Free State army but escaped from custody. Re-captured 3 July, 1923. Suspected of tampering with Collins’s mail, he was allegedly kidnapped and killed by Criminal Investigation Department

(C.I.D.). Body found in Dublin mountains 12.10.1923” (Who’s Who in the Irish War of Independence and Civil War 1916-1923, Padraic O’Farrell, The Lilliput Press, Dublin, 1997).

Noel Lemass, the eldest son of John Lemass and Francis Phelan, was born over the family’s Hatters’ business at 2 Capel Street, Dublin in 1897. He was the elder brother of a future Taoiseach, Seán Lemass. On leaving school, Noel began to work in his father’s business.

The Lemass family had travelled far from their remote French Huguenot origins by the time the family came to Ireland via Scotland in 1820. They established a successful drapery business in Armagh and then moved to Dublin. Trade flourished and John Lemass’s Parnellite sympathies earned him a place on Dublin Corporation. His grandson Noel was born in Capel Street in 1897.

EASTER WEEK 1916

Late on Easter Monday night, 24th April 1916, when Noel Lemass learned that the Rising had begun, he immediately reported to the Volunteers’ headquarters at the GPO and was sent across to an outpost in the Imperial Hotel (now Cleary’s) where he fought throughout the week.

After the surrender, he was held at Richmond Barracks, but was released a fortnight later with a group of other youths. Arrested during the Tan War, 25th November, 1919, Lemass was sentenced to one year’s imprisonment with hard labour for possession of arms.

Noel Lemass opposed the Treaty of December 1921 and took the Republican side in the Civil War. Shortly after the beginning of the War in June, 1922, he was arrested and held at Gormanstown Internment Camp but escaped some weeks later and reported back to the IRA.

On 3rd July 1923, he was re-arrested by the Free State secret police as he walked along Wicklow Street in central Dublin after lunch with a friend at the Wicklow Hotel and taken to the CID headquarters at Oriel House, Dublin. He was never seen alive again.

Following weeks of torture he was brutally murdered and his mutilated body, recently shot, was found near the Military Road on the Featherbed Mountains near the Dublin/Wicklow border on 12th October 1923. A Celtic cross today marks the spot where his body was found.

In a crude attempt to make his murder look like suicide, he was shot through

continued on page 29

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