

Irish Foreign Affairs

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“Every nation, if it is to survive as a nation, must study its own history and have a foreign policy”
—C.J. O’Donnell, *The Lordship of the World*, 1924, p.145

Contents

Editorial - Greece p. 2

JFK Conspiracy Theories Part 4 *John Martin* p. 8

Conor Cruise O’Brien: Diplomat or Dictator? - A Preview
Pat Muldowney p. 14

Starving the Germans: the Evolution of Britain’s Strategy of Economic Warfare During the
First World War—The French Connection Part 3 *Eamon Dyas* p. 15

‘Emergency Czechmate’ or Wartime Dialogue?
Dev, the ‘Irish Institute’ and the Masaryk Affair
Manus O’Riordan p. 20

A Dangerous Delusion: Why The West Got It Wrong about Nuclear Iran
Interviews with David Morrison p. 27

Documents

A Pardon for Deserters - Letters p. 30
De Valera’s Reply to Churchill 16 May 1945 p. 31
Speech by Brendan Halligan on Europe p. 33
What If? —The start of WWII — 9/11 p. 34
Irish Soldiers Deployed Abroad Today p. 35
Mali’s Natural Resources p. 36

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When the attempted coup against the Gorbachev regime in the Soviet Union failed in August 1991, *Problems Of Communism* (a forerunner of this journal) said that an era of intense nationalism around the world had begun.

Until that moment the world had been an arena of contention between two incompatible socio-economic systems: Capitalism and Communism. Direct war between the two systems which aspired to dominate the world was averted by the fact that since 1948, when the Soviet Union caught up with the United States in the arms race by making a nuclear bomb, each had the power to destroy the other. The conflict between the systems was therefore confined to secondary areas of the world. Only proxy wars could be fought. The proxy wars were internal conflicts in Third World countries in which each side had support from one of the World Powers and something like a 'level playing field' was thus established.

When Mikhail Gorbachev brought about the collapse of the Soviet Union with his simple-minded, starry-eyed, notion of democracy, universalist capitalism dominated the world, at least in principle. By the late 1990s it was being stated authoritatively that the primary function of all Governments was to facilitate capital investments in their economies from Imperialist centres, and safeguard those investments.

International Capitalism, Globalism, had arrived. But so had Nationalism as a phenomenon that popped up everywhere.

Capitalism had fostered Nationalism in its Cold War against the Soviet Union. But the collapse of the Soviet Union led to a spontaneous growth of Nationalism everywhere.

Capitalism generates the nationalism which it seeks to override.

Arthur Griffith, the founder of Sinn Fein, put it this way:

"Between the Individual and Humanity stands, and must continue to stand, a great fact—the Nation."

Arnold Toynbee, in his mammoth *Study Of History* came to a similar conclusion that industrial capitalism and nationality ran together.

Capitalism as a pure form of itself, untainted by Imperialism has never existed. The experience of the past twenty years, during which it has had free rein in the world, does not suggest that it is capable of existing. Post-nationalist capitalism as a world system appears to be a delusion.

If it was possible, the place where it might have been realised is the Northern half of the American continent. It was an 'empty' space, colonised in the first instance by English democrats, fleeing from the feudal/monarchical elements of English life. They took the free market with them across the Atlantic. They asserted their independence from the Mother Country which had hatched them. And the world was their oyster—or at least the 'empty' half of an immense Continent was.

The fact that the half-Continent was not literally empty is beside the point. It was empty in principle. Jefferson, as President, made an authoritative statement that US sovereignty stretched to the Pacific when in fact it had not yet got half-way there, and he gave the actual inhabitants fair warning that they would probably be exterminated, actually using that word. The

USA spread westwards, clearing the ground of all obstacles as it went, and treating the humans who were in the way as wild beasts.

David Bailie Warden, a young, idealistic, Presbyterian clergyman, escaped persecution as a United Irishman by fleeing to America. He became a good American citizen, dedicated to Progress. In 1819 he published a *History Of The United States*. He recorded the shameful fact of slavery in the southern states. But the ongoing genocide he saw as a progressive work of clearing the wilderness.

The genocide was not completed until the end of the 19th century. A soldier who took part in one of its final episodes was an officer with the American Army in Europe in 1917. When, after winning the World War for Britain, the USA sat back and reviewed its situation in the 1920s, a number of books were issued by mainstream publishers which contrasted the clean, hygienic and eugenic, mode of Protestant colonisation in North America with the messy Spanish intervention in the South where, under the influence of reactionary Catholic dogma, the superior European stock sank into the inferior native stock through intermarriage.

And, during World War 2, while Himmler was handling the Jewish problem in the way he thought was right, Hollywood produced a Western in which John Wayne saw off a horde of natives, and a good citizen commended him with the words: "*We need more men like you to exterminate these savages*".

So let's admit the power of the Puritan conscience and see the North American Continent as an empty space for the development of capitalism free of all pre-capitalist influences. In causative terms the exterminations were without effect on capitalist development. There were no compromises—no appeasements. If there was ever a place where a pure form of Capitalism might settle down in contentment, it was North America.

But what did the US do when it reached the Pacific? It crossed the ocean and compelled Japan, which had been living peacefully within itself for a couple of centuries, to open itself to international market relations. And then, little more than a generation later, it concluded that war with Japan would soon be inevitable—because Japan had become capitalist.

Why could the United States not settle down in the immense space which it had cleared of 'inferior' peoples for itself? The ideology of Aryan supremacy possibly had something to do with it. But it seems likely that this ideology survived, after the domestic genocides had been completed, because it fitted in with the expansionist dynamic that is intrinsic to capitalism, and that must express itself unless it is subjected to strong social and political constraints.

Capitalism is a British invention. Elements of it can be found in many places, but the combination of the elements into a system came about in England after a century and a half of spurious religious 'Reformation', Revolution and Counter-Revolution had shredded the traditional society and had destroyed Monarchy without establishing popular government.

In Germany the Reformation was a development within German culture. In England it was a destructive force. Puritanism triumphant might possibly have established a settled state and society operating by Mosaic law. Cromwell prevented that development. He saved the Common Law, which by that time meant whatever the upstart gentry wanted it

to mean. Thereafter the Puritans were excluded from political office but were given their head in society by a ruling class of upstart gentry which had become a progressive aristocracy subject to nothing but itself and which had conceived the ambition of world domination. It was through that combination of wild Puritanism and aristocratic Imperialism that capitalism as a freely operating system came about in England and it was through the same combination that it was expanded into a world system by the Puritan colonisation of North America and the Slave Trade, of which England gained a virtual monopoly in 1712.

But, despite the vast contribution made by the Slave Trade and Slavery to English power, England was no more likely to become a slave society than was the Soviet Union. Forced labour in the Soviet camps was an adjunct to socialist development, contributing to primary accumulation, as England's great slave labour camps in the Caribbean contributed to primary accumulation for capitalism. When industrial slavery in the Caribbean had served the purpose of fuelling the take-off of capitalism, a "moral sense" arose which found slavery abhorrent to Christian principles.

This "moral sense" did nothing reckless, however. Slavery was phased out gradually in the interest of industrial capitalism based on wage labour. England stopped its own Slave Trade in 1808, and set about stopping everybody else's too. But it kept up its Slave Labour Camps for a further thirty years. And, when it abolished slavery as an offence against Christianity, it was not the slaves that it compensated but the slave-owners, whose property it was abolishing. Thus, in the very act of abolishing slavery in a loudly-proclaimed spirit of humanity, it recognised that the slaves had been the legitimate property of their owners.

Dr. Johnson, a Tory reactionary, did not acknowledge the legitimacy of slavery and the invaluable contribution it was making to the consolidation of the capitalist money system. Whenever there was news of a Slave Rebellion in the Caribbean, he toasted it and wished it well. That was the great weakness in his character. His right-thinking associate and biographer, Boswell, was always trying to put him right about it.

This is not irony. It is history.

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Capitalism would not have flourished as well as it did without the help of Genocide and Slavery. They were helpfully incidental to it.

English Imperialism carried capitalism around the world, but it did so within the formal trappings of Empire. The USA in the 1940s had to save England in a World War which it had started but was unable to win. But, by the time the Second Front was launched in 1944, what England needed to be saved from was not the enemy but an ally.

Fascism had saved capitalist civilisation from Communism in Central Europe in the chaos that resulted from the destructive Versailles Peace. Winston Churchill frankly acknowledged that to be the case.

The situation in 1944 was that Britain had again made a mess of a World War. It had collaborated with Hitler to build up the power of Germany from 1933 to 1938. Then it declared war on Germany in 1939 on the indefensible issue of Danzig. It gave a military guarantee to Poland which it dishonoured. It declared war on Germany with the intention of getting France to fight it. After the defeat in France in June 1940, it kept the war going by means of its naval dominance with the object of spreading it to neutral countries. The United States refused appeals to come and save it in 1940 and 1941. In June 1941 the British policy of spreading the war met with major success in the form of the German invasion of the Soviet Union. President Roosevelt provoked Japan into war. Hitler supported Japan by declaring war on the USA. The USA wanted to get going with war in Europe as soon as possible, but Churchill delayed from year to year—no doubt waiting to see how the Soviet/German War would resolve itself. By the Summer of 1944, the Soviets had not only stopped the German advance, but had begun gutting the German Armies, and were pressing westwards hard.

Britain had bungled its handling of the world, as its Superpower between 1919 and 1939, so badly that its fundamental enemy (the Soviet Union) was poised to emerge from the war of the Empire against its secondary enemy (Germany, restored as a major Power) in dominance in Central Europe.

The Second Front of June 1944 did not have the object of preventing Germany from winning. Germany was no longer in a position to win by that time. The function of the Second Front was to prevent the Soviet Union, which had already made the defeat of Germany certain, from liberating too much of Europe from Nazism.

Churchill had said before the War, and he repeated it after the War, that, if it came to fundamentals, the Soviet Union was the enemy.

What the US did in 1944-45 was gain a base area in Western Europe against the fundamental enemy, who was an accidental, and all too effective, Ally.

The intermediary force between the two systems, Fascism, was cleared away. In the American view the British Empire, which took itself to be a directing force in world affairs, was another intermediary force. Its purpose from the moment it entered the War was to get rid of the swaddling clothes of Empire and set capitalism free.

Thus the two world systems came face to face in 1945. It then took 45 years for one of them to collapse and for capitalism to come into its own.

During this period the remaining formal Empires from the pre-1914 era were dismantled.

The Tsarist Empire had dissolved of its own accord, in 1917, under stress of the expansionist war in Europe, to which Britain had diverted it from its more natural expansion in Asia.

Britain, supported by France, had broken up the Hapsburg and Ottoman Empires into nation states in 1919.

It was not under pressure of national rebellions (such as occurred against the British Empire in Ireland) that the Hapsburg Empire was broken up. The peoples of the Hapsburg Empire were loyal to it in a way that the Irish were not loyal to Britain. But Britain denied independence to the Irish, who had been nationally-organised against it, while it set up peoples (mixtures of peoples) with little or no prior national organisation, as independent nation-states in Eastern Europe.

And it actively propagandised the welter of peoples in the Middle East with a kind of racial or religious hostility to Turkey which it called national in order to raise an army to fight the Turks. It then, in collaboration with France, suppressed the general Arab state which the leaders of the Arab Revolt tried to establish in 1919. And it set up a series of spurious nation-states, with no internal national coherence, to suit its own purposes and that of France. The shaping of the diverse peoples of these areas to the nation-states set up by Anglo-French Imperialism required forceful national action by the internal rulers of those states—which could be denounced as Tyranny when the Imperialist creators felt that the creations were becoming too independent.

The Jewish problem in its modern form was generated by the destruction of those two Empires.

The Jews were the middle class of the Hapsburg Empire. They had their recognised place in it.

The Empire was broken up into a series of nation-states with inadequately-developed middle classes. The formation of those states was not the culminating act of a long national development. Nationalism was instigated by the formation of those nation-states. The Jews, as the people of the Empire, could not act as the national middle classes. The native middle classes had to fill themselves out and displace the Imperial Jews. Therefore anti-Semitism was endemic as a medium of social development in the new East European states.

In its Middle Eastern policy Britain adopted the Zionist movement as a counter to the Arab nationalism which it had fostered. It made Zionism a force in world affairs. The Irish, who had elected an independent Government, were locked out of the Versailles Conference while the Jewish nationalist movement, which claimed national rights in Palestine despite having been absent from it for two thousand years, was present at the Conference. Jewish colonisation in Palestine was fostered by Britain until it was strong enough to assert its independence and set up in the business of conquest for itself.

The destructive arrangements made by the British Empire after the German collapse of late 1918 generated the forces on which Britain made war in 1939. Its second World War brought Communism to Eastern Europe and East Germany, where it faced the United States in West Germany.

The French Resistance to Nazism came to power in 1944, reasserted the Imperial rights of France, and fought dirty wars in Indochina and Algeria in defence of them. The British Empire fought dirty wars against the Malayan Anti-Fascists and against Kenyans who opposed the continuing process of white colonisation. But neither Empire was formally sustainable. By the time capitalism, driven by the United States, staked its claim to universality, and sole legitimacy, in 1990, no more than a few fragments of formal Imperialism remained.

This new, universal, capitalism asserted universal right without responsibility. The formal Empires had at least pretended to assume responsibility for dealing with the consequences of their destructive activities. They did not assume that capitalism was an arrangement of things that arose naturally from human nature, and that where it did not work well the reason must be the influence of tyrants, or socialists, or other evildoers.

A century ago, when there was still a substantial pre-capitalist section in the world, a Marxist explanation of Imperialism was the capitalist need to create new markets in order to make expanded reproduction of capital possible.

Each capitalist is in competition with every other capitalist. The purpose of each is to make a profit. The profit must then be invested with the object of making further profit. And so it continues on an ever-increasing scale. Within the terms of the dynamic of capitalism there is no resting point. The market must expand continuously so that capitalism can continue. As the home market approaches saturation point, a catastrophic slump is warded off by Imperialism, which turns pre-capitalist societies into markets for capitalist goods. Capitalism thus becomes international. That was Rosa Luxemburg's view before the Great War.

When Britain launched the World War in 1914 it had arranged for Germany to be isolated from the world. The Royal Navy immediately cut it off from its sea-borne trade. France was at war with it in the West, Russia in the East, and neutral Italy, a German Ally, was brought into the War against it with an offer that it might seize Austrian territory. Nevertheless the German economy did not collapse. Direction by the State, combined with industrial ingenuity kept it going. This led to a new idea of Imperialism being formed by Russian Marxists. Imperialism was organised capitalism. Money, the most volatile element of capitalism, was meshed with industry and State direction to meet the requirements of war production. The combination was called Finance Capitalism, and it was seen as a phase in the transition from Capitalism to Socialism. Bukharin, the theorist of the Bolshevik Party, published a book called *Imperialism And World Economy*. And Lenin, the politician, wrote an Introduction to it.

In the mid-1970s there was a muffled argument about Imperialism in Belfast. A group—which adopted the philosophy of Louis Althusser as a perfected form of Marxism-Leninism, and set out to establish a true Marxist theory of the state in Ireland and of the Irish relationship with Britain—disagreed with the old-fashioned, unscientific way the word *Imperialism* was being used by the Republicans who were fighting the War. They belonged to a rival Republican tendency, which had adopted Marxism, and which desisted from war-making after a couple of years. Their Marxist conceptions under which they made war did not correspond with the reality in which they acted and this led to their actions becoming grotesque.

The rigorously scientific Althusserian Marxist-Leninists—one of whom is now a Professor and the other a member of the House of Lords—joined forces with those Republicans—Official, not Provisional—and set about elaborating a theory of the "*Northern Ireland state*". In the course of this they made use of the Bukharin/Lenin concept Imperialism as integral Finance Capitalism in criticism of the Provisional Republicans.

But there was no such entity as the Northern Ireland state. Northern Ireland was only a region of the British state. And neither was there a Bukharin/Lenin theory of Imperialism.

Bukharin had the habit of creating tight systems of thought which took off at a tangent from reality and soon lost contact with it. Lenin was a politician for whom theory was a means

of keeping tabs on reality. In his head, therefore, theory never became systematic. His favourite Goethe quotation was, “*Theory is grey my friend, but the eternal tree of life is green*”.

When, after the Revolution, it was necessary to draw up a new programme, he refused to have Bukharin’s tight definition of Imperialism.

“Comrade Bukharin did not quite correctly explain the reason the majority of the commission rejected all attempts to draw up the programme in such a way that everything relating to the old capitalism would be deleted. The majority rejected those attempts because they would be wrong. They would not correspond to the real state of affairs. Pure imperialism, without the fundamental basis of capitalism, has never existed, does not exist anywhere, and never will exist. This is an incorrect generalisation of everything that was said of the syndicates, cartels, trusts and finance capitalism, when finance capitalism was depicted as though it had none of the foundations of the old capitalism under it...

“When Comrade Bukharin stated that an attempt might be made to present an integral picture of the collapse of capitalism and imperialism we objected to it... Just try it and you will see that you will not succeed... Comrade Bukharin made one such an attempt... and himself gave it up. I am convinced that if anybody could do this it is Comrade Bukharin... We in Russia are now experiencing the consequences of the imperialist war and the beginning of the dictatorship of the proletariat. At the same time in a number of regions of Russia, cut off from each other more than formerly, we frequently see a regeneration of capitalism and the development of its early stage... If the programme were to be written in the way Comrade Bukharin wanted, it would be... a reproduction of all that is best that has been said of finance capitalism and imperialism, but it would not reproduce reality, precisely because reality is not integral. A programme made up of heterogenous parts is inelegant... but any other programme would simply be incorrect...

“We are living at a time when a number of the most elementary and fundamental manifestations of Capitalism have been revived.

“To escape from this sad reality by creating a smooth and integral programme is to escape into something ethereal, that is not of this world. And it is by no means reverence for the past, as Comrade Bukharin politely hinted, which induced us here to insert passages from the old programme... The capitalism described in 1903 remains in existence in 1919...

“Nowhere in the world has monopoly capitalism existed in a whole series of branches without free competition, nor will it exist... To maintain that there is such a thing as integral imperialism without the old capitalism is simply making the wish father to the thought... Imperialism is a superstructure on capitalism... In reality there exists a vast subsoil of the old capitalism...” (March 1919, Report On Party Programme).

Excessively systematic theorising of a particular phase of capitalist development in a particular place led to a denial of the possibility of effective nationalism. Lenin’s untidy conception became a major influence on Third World national developments.

After seventy years the Leninist development ran out of steam in Russia. Its weakness was that it did not provide a diffuse medium of thought for society at large. It has often been criticised for being a kind of religion, but a religion is what it was not; that is why it atrophied.

Lenin was greatly influenced by Chernyshevsky’s *What Is To Be Done?* Dostoevsky, who had been a revolutionary, recoiled from Chernyshevsky’s rationalist vision of life and became a

reactionary obscurantist. Lenin made something powerful out of Chernyshevsky combined with Marx. Its power is still operative in parts of the world, but in its home base it was given the *coup de grâce* by Dostoevsky, in the form of Solzhenitsyn.

The Leninist system, while it lasted as a major state power, exerted a constraining influence on Capitalism. When it collapsed, Capitalism found itself alone in the world. How does Capitalism function when the whole world is capitalist—where there is no enemy system in being, and no large region lying outside the market?

The argument against nationalism a century ago was not so much that it was wrong, as that it had become impossible since Capitalism, through its Imperialist development, had become an international system. Those who adopt an ideological stance against nationalism on moral grounds might argue that it continued to be an active force during the past century because the international capitalism of Euro/American Imperialism was only a superficial crust in much of the world and that capitalism still remained to be generated at the base of many societies. And, since that has now been accomplished, the era of Post-nationalism has now arrived in earnest and that henceforward nationalism can be no more than a kind of wayward, voluntaristic evil.

John Lloyd, *Financial Times* journalist, and former member of the former Communist Party of Great Britain, wept tears of repentance over his participation in Stalin’s crimes—it must have been a vicarious, imaginary participation. He exulted in the *Financial Times* when Boris Yeltsin shelled the Russian Parliament (which harboured nationalists), ruled as a Presidential democrat, and threw the Russian economy open to strong centres of Western capitalism. He then preached war on Iraq in Irish publications in 2003, and weeps no tears over his responsibility (actual, not vicarious) for the present condition of Iraq. Why should he? Iraq is now a democracy within the approved international order of the world. It is no longer a representative dictatorship tending to the national interests of Iraq, so what else could it be but a democracy?

And Lloyd is an apostle of Post-nationalism. (See *Irish Examiner*, 1st February.)

These positions are mutually coherent. But they do not correspond with the reality of things now, any more than was the case a century ago.

Democracy and Nationality were conceived together in the French Revolution and they remain incapable of viable existence apart from each other. And the nation, as Stalin explained in the classic work on the question, is a social form intimately connected with Capitalism.

Capitalism may exist everywhere. It may be springing up from the base everywhere, as well as being imposed from the top. But it is not international in any other sense. It exists in national blocs which are in rivalry with each other and are committed to developing at each other’s expense. The necessity of expanded reproduction of invested capital is ineradicable from the system. And the fact that the pre-capitalist world has gone only means that each capitalist country seeks to expand at the expense of the others. World capitalism is not a harmonious system capable of being run by a world democracy.

The European Union, constructed in the aftermath of World War 2 under the auspices of Christian Democracy of Germany supported by that of Italy and by Gaullism in France, aimed to establish a “*social market*”—an organised market subject to control by a pervasive culture. It achieved considerable success during the Cold War between Communism and Capitalism. When the Cold War ended the European system was disrupted,

chiefly by Britain, which had been incautiously admitted to it. Christian Democracy was found to be a form of corruption. There was random expansion, fuelled by the delusion of world domination.

The original Europe of the 1950s, the Europe of The Six, was supra-national in its leadership. It was European because of its common experience of the Second World War and of the preceding inter-War period under British dominance. It was committed to an integral development of Europe which would make it invulnerable to British “*balance-of-power*” manipulation. That development continued for a while after the first tranche of new members was admitted in 1972. Britain was admitted, along with Ireland, in that tranche. It was admitted because the Prime Minister of the time, Edward Heath, appeared to have committed Britain to a future as a European state. But Heath’s Government fell within a couple of years.

The Labour Party was very doubtful indeed about a European future for Britain. It was a Labour Minister who expressed sadness at the prospect of England’s thousand-years of independent glory petering out in European banality.

Margaret Thatcher replaced Heath as Tory leader and the subversion of Europe began. Balance-of-power policy towards Europe—Churchill described it as “*the wonderful unconscious instinct*” of the British people—was back on the agenda.

Ireland was admitted to Europe as one of a pair with Britain. It benefited greatly from the supra-national conduct of the EU, but it was itself a source of weakness to Europe. It had lost the sense of itself by crumbling morally in a diplomatic confrontation with Britain over Northern Ireland in 1970. It tried to escape from itself into Europe. And, though its particular interests were the opposite of British interests with regard to Europe, it was often a second voice for Britain in the ‘high politics’ of the situation. And on the Irish ‘Left’ an anti-European “*Irish Sovereignty Movement*” was launched, which largely echoed British anti-Europeanism.

The British purpose was to reduce the European project to a free market for itself, while exempting itself as far as possible from everything else. Its relentless pressure, given opportunity by the ending of the Cold War, ended the supra-national conduct of the Community and replaced it with internationalism which, in this instance at least, works out as a competition of nationalisms. And this required the participants to have a degree of realistic national will.

It appears that Ireland has re-discovered itself to an extent in the course of the banking crisis, and has freed itself from its escapist attitude to Europe.

Greece, evidently, has not.

It settled accounts with Germany over the 2nd World War a generation ago. It was a full and final settlement. Now there is a movement which wants to re-open the matter and demand more compensation.

Greece did well out of the EU but neglected to tend to its own affairs while doing so. When the bank crisis hit, it found itself in a hopeless position. The EU, from which it had gained so much, seemed to be on the verge of crumbling. Every few weeks the British media reported its imminent collapse. All that was sound in it was Germany. The EU therefore became the Fourth Reich. (For British commentators in the sixties it was the Holy Roman Empire revived.)

Greece has been very much the plaything of European power politics for much of its modern existence.

At the start of Britain’s two World Wars of the 20th century, it had competent Governments which saw where its interests lay, but Britain got the better of both of them. In 1914 Britain offered it a big piece of Turkey, if it would declare war on Turkey. King Constantine, supported by his Chief of Staff, General Metaxas, refused. Greece had recently doubled its size in the Balkan War and needed time for digestion. Britain invaded, overthrew the Government, and installed its own Government with Venezelos as puppet. Turkey was defeated and Constantinople was under British occupation. Lloyd George urged the Greeks to go and take Anatolia. They did so, with wholesale atrocities which should be put in the balance of any humanitarian accounting. But the Greeks were cleared out of Asia Minor, where they had lived in peace for centuries under Turkish rule, by an unexpected Turkish resistance.

Twenty years later General Metaxas was in power. Italy went to war to take possession of territories it felt it had been promised by Britain in 1915 for joining the war on Germany. Britain, which had lost the battle in France and was looking to expand the War, wanted to intervene in support of Greece against Italy. Metaxas, who was conducting an effective defence against Italy, refused the pressing British offer of assistance. It wasn’t needed, and he reasoned that, if he brought Britain into his War, Hitler would be obliged to come in on the Italian side.

Metaxas died. His weak successor made alliance with Britain. Germany made alliance with Italy. Greece was conquered, delaying the attack on Russia by six weeks. A strong Communist resistance developed in Greece. The pre-War ruling circles formed a Government under Nazi hegemony and fought the class war against the Communists. Nazism was defeated by Russia. The Nazi collaborators in Greece were supported by the Western allies in a Civil War.

The Irish Minister for Defence and Justice, Zionist Alan Shatter, has condemned Irish neutrality in the 2nd World War. Ireland should have offered itself up to Britain for the fighting of the War. (It could have done no war-making of its own if it had declared war on Germany because Britain, in the course of allowing it to form an independent government, had compelled it to fight a ‘civil war’ in 1922-23, from which it had never recovered militarily.)

Greece, freed from Metaxas, who has been denigrated as a German agent by British propaganda for trying to save Greece from both of Britain’s World Wars, offered itself up to Britain with disastrous consequences.

The Second World War, which is a series of wars of very different kinds, given a spurious unity by British propaganda, is very much in need of deconstruction. Europe is at a point where it can only go forward by going back to basics.

Professor W. Alison Phillips of Trinity College, who published an anti-Irish history of Irish affairs in the early 1920s, which is now much admired, also published a History of the Greek War of Independence 1821-33. His Concluding Remarks run:

“To the constitution of a nation, ...more is needed than an extension of territory or a guarantee of the Powers; and it has been questioned whether the character of the Greeks is such as to warrant their being entrusted with any extended dominion. It is pointed out that, as a nation, they are bankrupt, and, as a people, though possessing many attractive qualities, factious, unstable, and dishonest. Yet, though all this may be said of them, and, indeed, appears only too clearly in the history of the War of Independence, that war, and the one which has just

been concluded, prove that the Greeks are capable of making great sacrifices for the sake of a national ideal; and it is possible that, with a wider field on which to work their conceptions of duty and patriotism would likewise expand. To maintain that the Greeks are, as a race, incapable of establishing and maintaining a powerful State, is to ignore the teaching of a long, if comparatively neglected, period of history. The Byzantine Empire was a Greek State; and, hopelessly corrupt as it doubtless too often proved itself at the centre, it nevertheless preserved civilisation and the remains of ancient culture for a thousand years against barbarism which, from the north and east, threatened to overwhelm them... There never was an age when Greece was peopled by a race of heroes and philosophers, or when her counsels were governed by the purest patriotism. The Athenian crowd which listened to the masterpieces of Aeschylus or Sophocles was as fickle as the Athenian crowd of to-day; (*The War of Independence*, 1897, p403-4).

The barbarism of the North became Germany. German culture, more than any of the other modern national cultures, developed itself through absorbing the culture of ancient Greece. And the immediate future of Europe seems to depend to a great degree on the ability of Germany to cope with the nihilism with which Greece has been overcome. □

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JFK Conspiracy Theories Part 4: The CIA

by John Martin

It is said that the Gods have long ceased to care about the affairs of men. But Robert Kennedy knew it was not true. We can occasionally escape the consequences of our actions, but not always. Sometimes the unseen forces wake from their slumber and then even the President of the United States must pay.

William Manchester, John F. Kennedy's biographer, recorded that following the assassination, Jackie Kennedy's despair was deepened when she learned that the chief suspect was a Marxist (Manchester, page 469). It should not have happened that way. A liberal President had rode into the hate capital of the South. A right wing assassin would have confirmed the President as a martyr to the civil rights cause. That was the meaning that she wanted and searched for in vain.

But Bobby Kennedy knew that the meaning was all too clear. He had no illusions. As the events unfolded in the days following his brother's death not even the errors of the Dallas Police Force nor the subsequent murder of the assassin could obscure the truth. He could read it with his eyes closed.

The facts of the assassination are known, but they do not speak for themselves. They must be infused with meaning.

After Oswald had committed his terrible heroic deed the Gods had no longer any use for him. He descended to earth from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository Building and was left to his own devices. On the streets below he fumbled for a transport ticket only to discover that the bus returned in the direction from whence he had come and was jammed in the traffic that his action had caused. He hailed a taxi. The driver took the fare, and thought that the dishevelled Oswald looked like a tramp. There would be no tip!

When Oswald returned to his boarding house, his thoughts turned to escape. But what was he escaping from? Not from the police! It was only a matter of time before they were on his trail. He was the only employee of the Texas School Book Depository who had fled the scene of his crime. The rifle that was left at the sixth floor had been posted the previous March to a P.O. box registered in his name. Oswald had rented a room in the boarding house under an assumed name, but the FBI knew where his wife lived and she knew the telephone number of the boarding house. It was only a matter of time before the net would close in.

Perhaps his instinct was to avoid waiting passively for his fate. He wanted to escape his modest abode. His capture needed to be on neutral territory. Three quarters of an hour after the assassination Oswald murdered Officer J.D. Tippit.. Was this done to prolong his freedom? Norman Mailer in his book *Oswald's Tale*, thinks the Tippit killing was a mistake on Oswald's part. The assassination of a President was in the realm of history and was beyond normal experience and understanding. But the people could understand only too well the murder of a policeman, a husband, father and a working

man, who moonlighted as a bouncer to supplement his meagre income.

Although Oswald's actions in the aftermath of the assassination have the quality of a panicked frenzy, he recovered his *sang froid* following his arrest. He revelled in the attention of the world press. It was a stroke of genius for him to deny his guilt by claiming he was a "patsy"; a word that rightly or wrongly will always be associated with him. Jack Ruby claimed that Oswald had a smirk on his face moments before he was shot.

But the most disturbing aspect of the assassination was Oswald's politics. Jackie Kennedy was by no means the only person who wished that the assassin had been from the political right. Oswald's allegiance to Cuba had a significance, which only Bobby Kennedy and a small circle of people on the highest echelon of the State could appreciate.

There are many things which can be said about Oswald. He was egotistical; semi-literate; a wife beater; incapable of holding down a job; a misanthropist; a social misfit; a fantasist; and a psychopath. All of those descriptions might be true. But he was more than that. He saw himself as a man of destiny. In his diaries he wrote the following:

"what would happen if someone would stand up and say he was utterly opposed not only to the government, but too (sic) the entire land and complete foundations of his socially (sic)" (Manchester, p53).

William Manchester writing in the 1960s may not have known what Bobby Kennedy knew about the significance of Oswald's Cuban allegiance, but he knew enough to know it was trouble. His book on the assassination is an early example of an author pretending that Oswald was someone other than what he was. Although Manchester could be described as an establishment writer, who is convinced of Oswald's guilt and the fact that he acted alone, he is just as guilty as conspiracy writers of giving a distorted view of the assassin.

Oswald's politics are dismissed as being incoherent. Instead he is portrayed as a product of the hate filled environment of Dallas. Indeed, Manchester compiles an impressive rap sheet against the city itself: He tells us that in 1963 the State of Texas had a higher rate of homicide than any other State and Dallas led Texas. This had nothing to do with the underworld or outsiders. From January to November 22, the city with a population 747,000 had 110 murders, which was more than the whole of England in the same period (Manchester, page 67).

It was also deeply conservative and 97% Protestant. Although John F. Kennedy had a Texan running mate (Lyndon Johnson) 62.5% voted for Nixon in the 1960 presidential election. Extreme right wing groups such as the Minutemen, the John Birch Society and the Christian Crusaders had strong support in the city.

When the liberal Democrat Adlai Stephenson visited the city in October 1963 he was assaulted.

Two days before the assassination a Rev. J. Sidlow Baxter told 5,000 delegates of the Baptist General Convention of the Texas American electorate:

"one of the greatest blunders in its history when it put a Roman Catholic President in the White House...religious convictions must outweigh political loyalties. ...vote not Democrat or Republican, but Protestant".

Manchester tells us the audience rose in acclamation cheering Amen (Manchester, page 72).

This is not to say that all Dallasites were reactionaries. Manchester says a minority welcomed the President, but he refers to them as the "underground". Following the assassination a child from a conservative family commiserated with a member of the "underground" on the death of "your President". But was he not "your President" as well came the reply to the conservative.

Dallas school children in a salubrious suburb cheered when they heard of Kennedy's death.

In 1963 Dallas still had difficulty coming to terms with the outcome of the American Civil War. When Kennedy arrived he was greeted with Confederate flags. Some placards had the words "Yankee go home!"

The superintendent of the Texas School Book Depository, where Oswald worked, is quoted as saying "except for my niggers the boys are conservative, like me, like most Texans". He didn't like Kennedy because he was a "race mixer".

A leaflet with a photograph of Kennedy and the caption "wanted for treason" was distributed in the days before his arrival. The *Dallas Morning News* carried an advertisement with black borders outlining the "crimes" of Kennedy.

Manchester notes plaintively that Lee Harvey Oswald pored over the pages of the *Dallas Morning News*.

It is true that Oswald read the *Dallas Morning News*, but only because it was lying around his workplace. He was an avid and indiscriminate reader, but it would be ridiculous to suggest – as Manchester does – that it had any influence on Oswald.

The city of Dallas in 1963 may have been a nasty, mean spirited place, but it was entirely innocent of the assassination of Kennedy. Lee Harvey Oswald was completely unrepresentative of any social force within that city. If he had been typical of Dallas, he would not have presented such a problem for the American political class.

Lyndon Johnson may not have known what Bobby Kennedy did, but he could not fail to appreciate the international ramifications of Oswald being a Marxist. When he appointed Judge Earl Warren to chair a commission to investigate the assassination the truth was the least of his concerns. Here is how Earl Warren himself described his appointment:

"...the President told me how serious the situation was. He said there had been wild rumours, and there was the international situation to think of. He said he had just talked to Dean Rusk, who was concerned, and he also mentioned the head of the Atomic Energy Commission, who had told him how many millions of people would be killed in an atomic war. The only way to dispel these rumours, he said, was to have an independent and responsible commission, and that there was no one to head it except the highest judicial officer in the country. I told him how I felt. He said if the public became aroused against Castro and Khrushchev there might be war.

'You've been in uniform before,' he said, 'and if I asked you, you would put on the uniform again for your country.'

I said, 'Of course'

'this is more important than that,' he said.

'If you're putting it like that,' I said, 'I can't say no'.' (Manchester, Page 717).

The Democratic Party was also terrified that any left wing association with the assassination would lead to a right wing backlash resulting in the party losing power for a generation.

The Warren Commission succeeded in its immediate objective of "dispelling rumours". In the words of one of its members, the future President Gerald Ford, "it told the truth, but not the whole truth". The whole truth was not revealed until more than a decade later as a consequence of the Watergate scandal.

The whole truth was that Oswald, the uneducated loser, had penetrated one of the darkest secrets of the American State and, much more than this, was prepared to act on it. That was something the Warren Commission was not prepared to investigate. And even when this truth was revealed, it was obscured behind the Kennedy myth.

William Manchester was well aware of the power of myth and played his part in perpetuating it. At the funeral of John F. Kennedy a line from *Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet* was quoted:

"...when he shall die, take him and cut out in little stars, And he will make the face of heaven so fine. That all the world will be in love with night. And pay no worship to the garish sun."

That is not true of anyone in all of history, but people have a great need for it to be true and in this respect Manchester shows some profound psychological insights into the Kennedy myth:

"What the folk hero was and what he believed are submerged by the demands of those who follow him. In myth he becomes what they want him to have been, and anyone who belittles this transformation has an imperfect understanding of truth. A romantic concept of what may have been can be far more compelling than what was. 'Love is very penetrating,' Santayana observed, 'but it penetrates to possibilities, rather than to facts'. All the people ask of a national hero is that he should have been truly heroic, a great man who was greatly loved and cruelly lost. Glorification and embellishment follow. In love nations are no less imaginative than individuals" (page 710).

In the case of a leader, who is cut down in his prime the "possibilities" have not yet been tarnished by the "facts". After Kennedy's death facts began to emerge which revealed Kennedy to have been all too human, but we are too much in love with the myth.

The facts must not be allowed to undermine the myth and therefore they are distorted or explained away. This tendency is most evident among conspiracy oriented writers, but is not confined to them. To preserve the myth they must pretend, in spite of all the evidence, that Oswald was a right winger and that Kennedy had no responsibility for his actions on Cuba.

Cuba was to Kennedy, what Vietnam was to Johnson. It was by far his most important foreign policy challenge. The actions of the Kennedy Administration on this foreign policy matter do not sit well with the Kennedy myth. The defenders of the myth explain them away in two ways. Firstly, his policies on Cuba were a continuation of those under the Eisenhower administration. Secondly, he was not responsible for the policies pursued under his administration. These policies were determined by the CIA, which acted independently of the President.

Both defences are extremely weak. It is true that Eisenhower did have a policy of assassinating Fidel Castro among other world leaders (note 1), but there is no evidence of the Kennedy administration ending that policy. Indeed, there is plenty of evidence to the contrary, as we shall see later. It is very significant that after Kennedy was assassinated the policy of assassinating Castro was not continued (note 2).

The idea that the CIA acts independently of the President is almost completely untrue. This independence of the CIA is a fallacy, which is beloved of conspiracy theorists. Their theory is that the CIA or some renegade element resented Kennedy interfering in their activities and this gave them a motive for killing the President. The theory appeals to the guardians of the Kennedy myth because it exonerates the President of CIA actions - in particular against Cuba - and it obfuscates Oswald's political motives.

The CIA is, in fact, the plaything of the President. The Director of the CIA is appointed by the President and he can be fired at his whim. In the mid 1970s the wise old Irish American Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan noticed that Jimmy Carter had become a defender of the CIA whereas before he became President he was one of its sternest critics. Moynihan wryly remarked: "he's just discovered it's his CIA."

The Central Intelligence Agency as its name suggests is responsible for intelligence and counter intelligence in the interests of the United States. Its sphere of operation is largely outside the United States. However its counter intelligence role involves the prevention of foreign subversion on domestic soil. But on domestic matters it is subordinate to the FBI. The State found itself in a legal minefield following the Kennedy assassination. It appears that killing the President was not a Federal crime and therefore the responsibility for its investigation rested with the Dallas Police. However, following the setting up of the Warren Commission there was no ambiguity. The FBI was the lead investigator; the CIA's role was to investigate Oswald's activities in the Soviet Union.

The other noteworthy feature of the CIA is that it is not (arguably) subject to domestic law, or at least, it was not subject

to domestic law in the 1960s. This matter was put to the test in 1964. In February of that year, a KGB operative called Yuri Nosenko defected to the United States. He claimed that he handled the case of Lee Harvey Oswald when the latter was in the Soviet Union. Nosenko's story was that Oswald was never a KGB agent and that the Soviet authorities very quickly lost interest in him. His Russian wife had anti socialist tendencies and the Soviets were quite happy to see them both leave the Soviet Union.

In the course of his interrogation it became very clear that some of the information he gave about the KGB was wrong. There then arose the question of why Nosenko was giving incorrect information. One view was that he had exaggerated his status within the KGB in order to ingratiate himself to his hosts and that he had given information about aspects of the KGB that he knew nothing about. The other view was that Nosenko was not a genuine defector and was in fact a double agent whose purpose was to spread misinformation.

The FBI accepted Nosenko's *bona fides*, but the CIA was split down the middle on the issue. The legendary head of counter intelligence James Angleton believed he was a double agent. This presented a problem for the CIA, which had Nosenko in its custody. How could it release someone whom it thought might be a double agent - and not just any double agent - but someone who could conceivably have been spreading misinformation on a matter concerning the assassination of a President. If, contrary to Nosenko's story, Oswald was a KGB agent and had been acting as such when he killed the President, the implications were staggering.

On the other hand, on what basis could it keep Nosenko in custody? The principle of *habeas corpus* would require him either to be released or stand trial. Richard Helms, who was then a Deputy Director of the CIA and later became the Director, said in his testimony to the *House Select Committee on Assassinations* (HSCA) that the CIA sought legal advice from among others the Deputy Attorney General of the United States Nicholas Katzenbach.

The advice that was given was that Nosenko had the status of "exclusion and parole," which meant that the Immigration and Naturalization Service had technically excluded Mr. Nosenko from the United States but had also temporarily "paroled him" to the custody of the Central Intelligence Agency. This ingenious piece of advice effectively meant that the CIA could do what it wanted with Nosenko. It had always been the understanding that the foreign activities of the CIA were not subject to American law; it was now established that the CIA was not subject to American law in relation to foreign citizens on American soil.

It should be said that Katzenbach in his testimony to the HSCA (1979) denied that he had given such advice. In the present writer's view, Helms' testimony is more credible, but even if Katzenbach was being truthful it is indisputable that the CIA acted as if it was above the law in this matter.

At the HSCA hearings an official CIA spokesman, designated by the then Director of the CIA to testify on the Agency's behalf, described the conditions to which Nosenko was subjected. Congressman Sawyer summarised the evidence as follows:

"Mr. Nosenko was taken into custody in this country by the CIA after defection or after alleged defection, held in a so-

called safe house on a diet of tea and porridge twice a day, was allowed no reading material. The guards were instructed neither to talk to him or smile to him. He was subjected to 48 hours at a crack interrogation. This being while they built a separate facility somewhere else in the country; namely, a device described by him as a bank vault, and then built a house around the bank vault to put this man in and then kept him there under the equivalent of some 3 years with that kind of thing, 1,277 days to be specific, at which point they finally gave up and gave him some emolument and put him on their payroll and let him go.”

At no stage did Helms dispute this evidence. However he did make the following defence, which would be hilarious, if it were not so shocking:

“One of the problems we had with him [i.e. Nosenko – JM] during his first period of time in the United States was he didn't want to do anything except drink and carouse (note 3). We had problems with him in an incident in Baltimore where he started punching up a bar and so forth. One of the reasons to hold him in confinement was to get him away from the booze and settle him down and see if we could make some sense with him. The fact that he may have been held too long was therefore deplorable, but nevertheless we were doing our best.”

But although the CIA was not subject to domestic law it does not follow that it is autonomous. The President determines policy and then makes careful arrangements not to know how the policy is implemented. The elected representative of the people must be above reproach.

The biggest scandal of Watergate was that the burglars had CIA connections. Richard Helms, who was then the Director of the CIA, was sacked by Nixon for being less than compliant on a domestic matter. It was perfectly acceptable for the CIA to be unleashed on the world, but the Washington Establishment could not stomach it being used as the President's weapon in domestic politics. After Watergate the lid was lifted on the CIA and the Republican Party made sure that if there were secrets to be revealed they would not be restricted to the Nixon Administration.

It suited both the Republicans and Democrats to pretend that the CIA was autonomous and independent of the President. But if the fiction was to be preserved someone in the CIA had to be sacrificed – or appear to be sacrificed – in order to protect the innocence of the people.

Richard Helms was the ideal scapegoat. His career in the CIA spanned the Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon eras. Unusually, his appointment by Johnson to the position of Director of the CIA was not regarded as political. It only arose after Johnson's original choice was forced to resign because of sheer incompetence. The fact that Helms was not well connected with either party made him particularly vulnerable.

Helms' biographer, Thomas Powers, notes that despite his austere appearance he liked to dine in the best Washington restaurants, but he did not want to dine alone. He wanted to preserve his pension entitlements while remaining loyal to his erstwhile colleagues in the CIA.

The political establishment, on the other hand, wanted to punish a representative of the CIA, but not too much; not enough to undermine the functioning of the State.

There was no possibility of Helms being charged with the attempted murder of Castro or the torture of Nosenko. It was decided that he would be charged with the relatively trivial offence of lying to a Senate Committee on CIA involvement in the overthrow of Allende in 1973. Note: lying to the Senate was the charge; not overthrowing the government of Chile.

The matter was concluded in November, 1977 when Helms entered a plea of *nolo contendere*. In other words he did not admit guilt, but on the other hand did not contest the charge. The presiding judge Judge Barrington D. Parker issued a suitably pompous and hypocritical rebuke:

"You considered yourself bound to protect the Agency....Public officials at every level, whatever their position, like any other person, must respect and honor the Constitution and the laws of the United States."

He fined Helms 2,000 dollars and gave him a two year *suspended* sentence. Powers notes in his book that after the hearing Helms was driven to Bethesda, Maryland where he was given a standing ovation by 400 retired CIA officers, who stuffed two waste paper baskets full of cash and cheques which more than covered the 2,000 dollar fine.

Helms had taken a hit without undermining the organisation.

At the HSCA hearings some politicians expressed dissatisfaction at the former CIA Director's lenient treatment. But Helms was having none of it. In a reply to Congressman Christopher Dodd he made his feelings clear:

“...you are singling me out as to why I didn't march up and tell the Warren Commission when these operations against Cuba were known to the Attorney General of the United States, the Secretary of Defence, the Secretary of State, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the President of the United States himself although he at that point was dead. All kinds of people knew about these operations high up in the Government. Why am I singled out as the fellow who should have gone up and identified a Government operation to get rid of Castro? It was a Government wide operation, supported by the Defence Department, supported by the National Security Council, supported by almost everybody in a high position in the Government.”

He also revealed some interesting information on how the anti Castro militias were financed:

“In December of 1962 the brigade comes back to the United States having been bought off with drug supplies by the Attorney General [i.e. Bobby Kennedy – JM], et cetera. President Kennedy went to the Orange Bowl in Miami and greeted them in December 1962 and assured them, and this may not be an exact quote, as follows: "I will return this banner to this brigade in a free Havana". Those operations went on nonstop during 1963. If that doesn't indicate there was bad blood between President Kennedy and Fidel Castro, I don't know what does.”

It was very clear that if a more serious charge were brought against Helms he would have had an unimpeachable defence: all his actions were authorised by the President. The American political establishment - unlike its Irish counterpart in 1970 (the

Arms Trial) – was not prepared to risk the damage to the State that would ensue.

While in the 1970s, following the Watergate scandal, there was a dramatic increase in the level of Congressional oversight of the CIA, no such condition applied during the Kennedy era. It is also the case that there was never greater Presidential involvement in the day-to-day operations of the CIA than during the Kennedy era.

In the Autumn of 1961 Bobby Kennedy was assigned to deal with the CIA. The code name for the post-Bay of Pigs plan to “get rid of Castro” was “Operation Mongoose”. Thomas Powers in his book notes:

"No Kennedy programme received less publicity than Operation Mongoose or more personal attention from the Kennedys, and in particular from Bobby" (Powers, P135).

Operation Mongoose was the single largest clandestine program within the CIA. Robert Kennedy kept himself briefed on the operation by the Director of the CIA, John McCone, who was a Kennedy appointee. But he also was in frequent contact with Helms and lower ranking CIA operatives.

There is no ambiguity about Operation Mongoose’s objective of “getting rid of Castro”. “Getting rid of Castro” could mean just overthrowing Castro’s regime without actually killing him, although as Richard Helms pointed out in his HSCA testimony, one of the consequences of regime change is that the leader of the deposed government tends to be killed. However, we know now - since the CIA has admitted it - that “getting rid of Castro” *did* include assassinating him. There is no doubt about that. However, there may be some doubt – but not much - as to who knew what.

In the present writer’s view the Kennedys were aware of assassination plans and indeed initiated them in such a way that would give them “future deniability” to use a phrase of Admiral Poindexter in the Iran-Contra controversy many years later.

Powers notes:

"On August 10, 1962...the Special Group Augmented held a meeting in the office of Secretary of State Dean Rusk to discuss Operation Mongoose, the Kennedy administration's post-Bay of Pigs plan to get rid of Castro". Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara suggested that "perhaps the SGA ought to consider solving the Castro problem by killing him."

This was ruled out of order and was not included in the minutes. Later the Director of the CIA John McCone phoned McNamara and "protested that talk of assassination was completely inappropriate in such a meeting and that he didn't want to hear any more of it" (Powers, p129).

It seems that McCone’s real objection was that the forum at which the matter was discussed would require some form of record.

It should be emphasised that McNamara was a Kennedy appointee and was not a CIA man. But was McNamara on a solo run? It seems unlikely. Elsewhere Powers notes:

“William Harvey, head of Task Force W, the CIA's end of Operation Mongoose, received an official memo from Edward G. Lansdale, the Kennedy brothers' personal choice to run Mongoose on August 13, 1962. The memo asked Harvey to prepare papers on various anti-Castro programs "including liquidation of leaders". Harvey told him of the "stupidity of putting this type of comment in writing in such a document".

Here again the problem was the “stupidity of putting this type of comment in writing” rather than the policy of assassination itself. According to Powers, Harvey was told by Richard Bissell - a deputy director of the CIA before he resigned after the Bay of Pigs fiasco - that the policy of assassination came from the White House.

Can anyone seriously believe that two Kennedy appointees (McNamara and Lansdale) could separately come up with the idea of assassinating Castro independently of President Kennedy?

Of course, knowledge of the assassination policy was not confined to the Kennedy Administration. The intended victim could not fail to be aware of the unsuccessful attempts on his life.

In September 1963, just over two months before the assassination, Fidel Castro gave an interview to Daniel Harker of the *Associated Press* at the Brazilian Embassy in Havana. In the course of the interview in which he described President Kennedy as a “cretin” and the “Batista of the times” he made the following remark:

“We are prepared to fight them and answer in kind. United States leaders should think that if they are aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders, they themselves will not be safe” (Summers, p436).

There is absolutely no evidence that Castro ever attempted to assassinate Kennedy, but the thought was in his mind. And a thought, once expressed, can have a curious existence independent of its originator. The thought was carried in various American newspapers, most notably the front page of *The Times-Picayune* (9/9/63), a venerable New Orleans newspaper. In September 1963, Lee Harvey Oswald, the pro Castro activist, was residing in that city.

If Oswald had somehow missed *The Times Picayune* report, he could hardly have failed to notice that the thought had made its way into the various left wing publications to which he subscribed.

Of course in any one day there are millions of thoughts expressed. The vast majority of them if they penetrate the mind of the reader at all are quickly forgotten. It cannot be known for certain what influence Castro’s thought had on the mind of Oswald.

However, an acquaintance of Oswald, Michael Paine, testified to the Warren Commission that in October 1963 Oswald had said to him:

“...you could tell what they [the *Daily Worker* - JM] wanted you to do ... by reading between the lines”.

Paine said he had tried to read the issue that Oswald had given him and had no idea what he was talking about.

There is no accounting for how people react to information that is given to them. A normal person, with the information available in 1963, might have dismissed Castro's thought as anti-American propaganda or the ravings of a paranoid leftist. Only a very select few knew that the Kennedy administration was engaged in a plot to assassinate Castro. For most people in 1963 the idea would have appeared preposterous.

However, Oswald "knew" that the Kennedy Administration was indeed plotting to kill Castro. This could have been evidence of his insanity. There was no rational reason why the waif-like Oswald with no inside knowledge or connections could "know" what other more informed, educated and intelligent people did not know. It could be said that it was chance or a freak occurrence, but that doesn't quite capture the complex elements at play. It would be nearer to the truth to say that the Gods had intervened. There was a logic to the assassination of Kennedy, but it was beyond the control of any individual or group. Oswald did not plan to be in a building overlooking the Presidential motorcade route; it just happened that his place of employment was there, which he had secured long before the Presidential route had been planned.

Bobby Kennedy knew this. His private investigators had confirmed that Oswald had acted alone long before the Warren Commission had reached the same conclusion. But it was no consolation to him. He and his brother had conspired to kill Castro. They had sowed the wind. Although the chain of cause and effect was obscure and complicated, he must have come to the anguished realisation that their own actions had reaped the whirlwind. That was something he had to live with for the few years that remained of his life. □

Notes:

- 1) The CIA attempted to assassinate Fidel Castro; Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba; President Rafael Trujillo of the Dominican Republic; and Rene Schneider the commander and chief of the Chilean Army. All of these plots were revealed in a collection of CIA documents known as the "Family Jewels". None of them were successful. In the case of Lumumba the British got there first (*Agence France Presse*, 4/2/13).

The failure of the CIA to assassinate these leaders puts a dent in the idea beloved of conspiracy theorists that the CIA is an omnipotent force. Richard Helms claims in Powers' book that he never liked the CIA's black operations. His objection was less to do with morality and more to do with the fact that the organisation was not very good at them.

On the other hand, Helms defends the record of the CIA in its core competence of intelligence. He says that the CIA was able to tell the President in advance that the "6 day war" in the Middle East would be short and that the Israelis would win it.

He also claims that their information on North Vietnamese military strength was far more accurate than US army's intelligence, which President Johnson relied on for his decisions. But he admits that the CIA fell down on

counter intelligence during the Vietnam War. It was only at a late stage when it began spying on the South Vietnamese government that it realised the extent of Viet Cong infiltration of that government. Any information that the US had sent to Saigon was quickly leaked to the enemy.

- 2) Lyndon Johnson continued the policy of destabilising Cuba, but it appears that there was no longer a policy of assassinating Castro.
- 3) From February to April 1964, Nosenko was given some freedom pending the construction of the "safe house".

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Conor Cruise O'Brien: Diplomat or Dictator? - A Preview

by Pat Muldowney

[Pat Muldowney is translating from Irish a 1974 book by Risteárd Ó Glaisne on Conor Cruise O'Brien. O'Brien served in the Irish diplomatic corps and was seconded to the United Nations for Katanga/Congo. Parts of it are quite illuminating re the then-independence of Irish foreign policy, taking a firm stand against western imperialism at the height of the Cold War. He presents the book to IFA readers in this article.]

***Conor Cruise O'Brien agus an Liobrálachas,* by Risteárd Ó Glaisne, Clódhanna Teo., 1974.**

In 1960 the Belgian colony of Congo became independent. Belgium, aided by France, Britain, the USA and apartheid-era South Africa, militarily backed a secessionist puppet regime in the mineral-rich southern province of Katanga.

Following the murder in 1961, by Katangese forces, of Patrice Lumumba, socialist Prime Minister of the Congo, the United Nations sent military forces, including Irish soldiers, to the Congo to prevent the break-up of that country.

The Fianna Fáil foreign policy of non-alignment with either side in the Cold War had been successfully implemented in the U.N. by Fianna Fáil minister Frank Aiken. An Irish career diplomat was put in charge of the U.N. operation, including a U.N. military campaign against secessionist Katanga.

In the course of this action the U.N. General Secretary Dag Hammarskjöld was killed in a mysterious plane crash while attempting a political settlement. A company of Irish soldiers under siege by secessionists was forced to surrender, and the Hammarskjöld plan was defeated. Under U.S. rather than Belgian influence, Katanga was re-integrated into the Congo state in 1962, and the Katanga secessionist leader Moïse Tshombe became Prime Minister of Congo in 1964.

The professional diplomat representing Dag Hammarskjöld in the Congo was Conor Cruise O'Brien. In his 1974 book - *Conor Cruise O'Brien agus an Liobrálachas* (Liberalism) - author Risteárd Ó Glaisne tracked O'Brien's life and career up to that point: including his post-U.N. academic activities in Ghana and New York, and his subsequent political role in Ireland.

In 1974 O'Brien was Labour Party Minister for Posts and Telegraphs in a Fine Gael-Labour Coalition government, in which he was acquiring notoriety for censorship and other authoritarian methods. By examining O'Brien's actions, statements and writings up to that point, Ó Glaisne's book seeks to understand the apparent paradox of, on the one hand, O'Brien's left-liberal writings, and, on the other hand, his authoritarian activities in government. What emerges in this 1974 study is a degree of intellectual inconsistency, aggravated by O'Brien's rather arrogant temperament. In 1974 the full pattern of O'Brien's relationship to Irish nationalism had yet to manifest itself.

Born in 1917 to Catholic/agnostic parents, O'Brien said he experienced the 1932 Fianna Fáil electoral victory as a relief from conservative clericalist oppression. He joined the Irish Department of Finance as a professional civil servant in 1942, transferring to the Department of External Affairs in 1944. O'Brien claimed that his transfer from Finance to External Affairs was made possible by Frank Aiken, who had to wield his

political influence against the opposition of Joe Walshe, the civil servant permanent head of the Department of External Affairs. Walshe was an extreme Catholic who had been appointed under the earlier Treatyite Clann na nGaedheal government.

O'Brien's own account of these matters was published in an American magazine, the *Atlantic Monthly*, in 1994:
<http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/unbound/flashbks/ireland/cruis194.htm>
<http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/unbound/flashbks/ireland/cruis794.htm>

In the latter article O'Brien attempts to justify his seemingly paradoxical conduct:

... I claim an underlying consistency and continuity. I was brought up to detest imperialism, epitomized in the manic and haunting figure of Captain Bowen-Colthurst, who murdered my uncle Frank Sheehy-Skeffington during the Easter Rising. As a servant of the United Nations, I combated a British imperialist enterprise in Central Africa in 1961--the covert effort to sustain secession in Katanga in order to bolster the masked white supremacy of the then Central African Federation. From 1965 to 1969, in America, I took part in the protest movement against an American imperialist enterprise: the war in Vietnam. And from 1971 until now I have been combating an Irish Catholic imperialist enterprise: the effort to force the Protestants of Northern Ireland, by a combination of paramilitary terror and political pressure, into a United Ireland that they don't want. I addressed the Friends of the Union to show solidarity with that beleaguered community against the forces working against them within my own community. And I suppose my Protestant education has something to do with that solidarity.

Risteárd Ó Glaisne (1927–2003) was born Richard Ernest Giles near Bandon, Co. Cork. The family, Methodist in religion, was settled in the area from the 16th century Munster Plantation. Ó Glaisne learned Irish Republicanism from teachers in Bandon Grammar School, and his command of the Irish language was perfected in the Blasket Islands. When the Blasket population moved to the mainland in 1953, Ó Glaisne was trusted by them to manage details of the transfer on their behalf.

A teacher by profession, he was also heavily involved in religious ecumenism and the Irish language movement and wrote many books in Irish and English on current affairs. Conor Cruise O'Brien's espousal of Ulster Protestant anti-Republicanism seems to have been the motivation for Ó Glaisne's detailed 1974 study of what O'Brien was "all about".

In more recent times another Cork teacher (subsequently university academic) Alan Titley has played a similar role in analysis and commentary in the Irish language. Titley's background is Catholic. Irish language broadcasting, journalism, analysis and commentary is, on the whole, of a higher standard than the English language variety - perhaps because the participants are more motivated and less mercenary.

A study of Conor Cruise O'Brien by Niall Meehan can be read in *Counterpunch*:
<http://www.counterpunch.org/2008/12/22/conor-cruise-o-brien-1917-2008/>

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Starving the Germans: the Evolution of Britain's Strategy of Economic Warfare During the First World War—the French Connection Part 3

by Eamon Dyas

Eugène Etienne, the power behind the *Entente Cordiale*.

The most significant individual in the French colonial movement from the late nineteenth century up to the First World War was Eugène Etienne who was born in the district of Oran in Algeria. After moving to Paris he became a successful businessman but returned to Algeria in 1881 where he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies as a representative of Oran and champion of the colonist minority. He was Under-Secretary in the Colonial Department 1887-88 and again in 1889-92. By 1904 he was Vice-President of the Chamber of Deputies and President of the Foreign Affairs group in the Chamber and in January 1905 he became Minister of the Interior as a result of changes in the Cabinet of Maurice Rouvier (with whom he was also a business associate). Etienne was an imperialist but he was also an Algerian colonist who believed that French foreign policy should concentrate on consolidating its territorial empire close to home in north Africa rather than wasting resources in far-flung territories that were more trouble than they were worth. He viewed the Egyptian issue in this context and rather than expend effort on gaining territory in Egypt—effort that had little chance of success—he advocated bartering French interest in the area for control of Morocco, something that he viewed as critical to continuing French control of Algeria:

“It was Etienne’s Moroccan pressure group which most strongly supported the idea of an Anglo-French barter of Egypt and Morocco and sought to convert to it Theophile Delcassé, French Foreign Minister from 1898 to 1905. Since the start of his political career Delcassé had been closely identified with colonist policies and had been a founder member of the *groupe colonial* in the Chamber. As Minister of Colonies in 1894 he had received a presentation from the *parti colonial* . . . and he became Foreign Minister in June 1898 partly as a result of colonialist support. Etienne and his friends made their first attempt to convert Delcassé to the policy of an Egypt-Morocco barter in the autumn of 1898 and during the Anglo-French crisis caused by Marchand’s arrival at Fashoda.” (Christopher Andrew, *France and the Making of the Entente Cordiale*, Historical Journal, Vol.10, No 1, 1967, pp.92-93).

Etienne’s position within the wider imperialist group was not one that was universally held. As has been stated, it was not shared by Delcassé at the time of his appointment as Foreign Minister in 1898. It was not until after abandoning his attempts to get an anti-British agreement with Germany and having been thwarted by Britain in his efforts to partition Morocco with Spain, that he changed his mind in early 1903. Delcassé was more of a classical imperialist whose vision was not easily diverted by a perspective that viewed the empire from that of the restricted perspective of the North African colonist. Nonetheless Etienne’s views were supported by a significant alliance of politicians, businessmen and senior military figures even though it was a minority position, particularly in the Chamber of Deputies. In these circumstances he saw that the best way of advancing his opinions was not in open political debate but by lobbying in the dark corridors of the Chamber. He sought means of restricting debate on issues affecting his

programme to the narrowest band of participants even if this meant the exclusion of part of his own wider group from access to information and political discussion. Thus, early on in the proceedings he was instrumental in convincing the *groupe colonial* to use their influence in the Chamber to ensure that parliamentary debate on foreign affairs be restricted to those occasions when public discussion would not interfere with diplomatic negotiations. This meant that on those occasions where an issue of foreign affairs was the subject of diplomatic contact, there would be no discussion on the issue in the French Parliament. This objective achieved, it meant that:

“The preference for private, rather than public, pressure inevitably necessitated the concentration of initiative in relatively few hands. The *groupe colonial* as a whole was too amorphous a body to be kept in a permanent state of mobilization or to maintain the necessary secrecy.” (C. M. Andrew and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *The French ‘Colonial Party’: its Composition, Aims and Influence, 1885-1914* in *The Historical Journal*, Vol.14, No1, march 1971, p.110).

He could then use the necessity of “required” secrecy to neutralise the majority position in the wider Chamber and advance that of his own. By the time that serious negotiations began with Britain in the run-up to the *Entente Cordiale* he had more or less set the momentum and direction of such talks, at least from the French side. Besides making life as difficult for Delcassé as possible in the French Chamber prior to his conversion, Etienne and his supporters had begun their own secret overtures to Britain. This began to pay off at the start of 1903 when Britain initiated a strategy that had as its object the prevention of an alliance between France and Germany—an alliance, as we have already seen, that Delcassé had previously attempted. Determined to take advantage of Britain’s new strategy in seeking an agreement with France, Etienne maintained the pressure on Delcassé:

“Even after Delcassé told Etienne in the Spring of 1903 that he intended to open negotiations with England, Etienne did not relax his pressure. He preceded Delcassé’s visit to England in July 1903 by an article in the *National Review* advocating an exchange of interests in Egypt and Morocco and by a visit of his own to England to discuss the idea with Lansdowne, Chamberlain, Balfour and other English politicians. Delcassé’s private secretary wrote to a friend that Etienne seemed to have been convinced by his visit that, in return for Egypt, England would allow France a free hand in Morocco . . .” (Andrew, *France and the Making of the Entente Cordiale*, op. cit., pp.102-103).

But clinching the deal was problematic as at no time during the negotiations was the wider French Cabinet made aware of them. In that situation, Etienne (who at this time was not even part of the Government), having laid out the road in advance was then forced to sit back and trust that what he had arranged would come to fruition.

“In England, approval of the *Entente* was in every sense a collective decision by the cabinet as a whole. As soon as negotiations with France began in July 1903, Lansdowne asked for the views of other government departments. Throughout the course of negotiations the cabinet was regularly consulted and its approval sought. In France, however, the cabinet did not discover the outline of the proposed agreement until negotiations had been in progress for six months. While Lansdowne referred throughout the negotiations to the views of the British cabinet, the French ambassador referred simply to the views of ‘Monsieur Delcassé’. And the bargain which formed the basis of the *Entente*—the barter of Egypt and Morocco—was urged on Delcassé not by his colleagues in the cabinet, but by Eugène Etienne and the leaders of the *parti colonial*.”

(C. M. Andrew, *The French Colonialist Movement during the Third Republic: the unofficial mind of imperialism*, in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 26, 1976, pp.161-162).

Once confident that the talks were on track Etienne then set about galvanising domestic support for what he saw as the future French arrangements in Morocco—arrangements that had as a central component the encouragement and ensnarement of the Sultan in French financial commitments.

“In December 1903, four months before the signing of the *Entente*, the *Déjeuner du Maroc* became the nucleus of a new *Comité du Maroc* with Etienne as its first president. Part of Etienne’s purpose in transforming an informal pressure group into a formal organization was doubtless to raise funds. In this he was eminently successful. During its first year the new committee collected 180,000 frs, of which over 50 per cent came in large subscriptions of 1,000 frs or more from financial institutions. There is little doubt that the benevolence of the banks was prompted by expectations of financial reward, the expectation in particular, of the *Comité du Maroc*’s assistance in arranging a series of lucrative loans to the Sultan. The largest single donation after its first year—12,000 frs in 1910 from a syndicate of Paris banks which had just negotiated a new Moroccan loan—seems to have been given in recognition of such assistance.

The *Comité du Maroc*’s opponents inevitably sought to brand it as ‘an organisation of financiers . . . the value of whose securities stood to rise with a French occupation’. But anxious though it was to encourage French investment in Morocco, the *Comité* was equally anxious to prevent an uncontrolled scramble for concessions. . . . And though eager to establish French control of Moroccan finances, it was privately critical of the extortionate terms imposed on the Sultan by the banks.” (Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, op. cit., pp.115-116).

The role of French banks in destabilising the Government of Morocco will be gone into later. At this stage it is clear that Etienne’s private reservations regarding the extortionate terms that the banks imposed on the Sultan have to be taken with a pinch of salt as they did not get in the way of his larger ambition. Within the year Etienne’s *Comité* was also involved in supporting illegal military preparations for the eventual French takeover of Morocco:-

“The *Comité du Maroc* quickly spent its first years’ revenue. Through the French legation in Morocco with which it had close links, it founded a pro-French Arabic newspaper and established two new French schools. It also commissioned a geological survey of Morocco and subsidized expeditions to

various parts of the country. These expeditions were presented to the public simply as geographical explorations. In reality they were meant to map out the land for an eventual military occupation by General Lyautey’s forces on the Algerian border. One of the explorers, Segonzac, was described by Lyautey’s deputy, Saint-Aulaire, as an ‘*éclairateur de notre armée*’. In addition, the *Comité du Maroc* secretly gave Lyautey funds to assist, by bribery, the ‘discreet penetration’ of Morocco which he pursued in defiance of his orders from Paris. Jonnart, the Governor-General of Algeria, urged the *Comité* to continue the good work. (ibid., p.116)

Colonel Hubert Lyautey, a friend of Etienne and a keen advocate of Moroccan annexation, had taken command of the Ain Sefra garrison in the Southern Oran Province in 1903. Lyautey was also a close friend of Jonnart, the Governor-General of Algeria and we will come across Saint-Aulaire again in the context of the bombardment of Casablanca. Thus was put in place the unholy alliance between finance, military and politicians which was the critical development that led to the eventual French takeover of Morocco.

This also was the expression in French politics with which Britain formed an alliance when she signed the *Entente Cordiale* in April 1904. That expression continued to pursue its hidden agenda in the immediate aftermath of the *Entente* and in full confidence of Britain’s acquiescence. In January 1905 the Prime Minister of France and friend of Etienne, Maurice Rouvier, appointed him Minister of the Interior in a cabinet reshuffle. Etienne now had control over the area of Southern Oran since Algeria came under the jurisdiction of the Interior Ministry and this enabled him to consolidate the military and administrative arrangements for a proposed incursion into Morocco when the time was deemed favourable. Etienne was given yet more influence in November 1905 when he was moved to become Minister of War.

“In the fall of 1905, Etienne, who had taken over the portfolio of the War Ministry, requested that his allies in the Tangiers legation come to Paris to exchange views on the Moroccan situation. Saint-Aulaire and Captain Leon Jouinot-Gambetta, who was a nephew of Leon Gambetta and protégé of Etienne, were invited to Paris. The reasoning behind this move was simple; Etienne was now in a position to affect the military situation along the Algerian-Moroccan border. Already, as the new chief of the War Office, he was planning to promote Lyautey to the position of commander of the Division of Oran. Linked with a War Minister who was an imperialist militant, Lyautey prepared for continued action on the Algerian-Moroccan border against those unspecified Moroccan bandits.” (*Lyautey and Etienne: The Soldier and the Politician in the Penetration of Morocco, 1904-1906*, by James J. Cooke. Published in *Military Affairs* by the Society for Military History, Vol. 36, No. 1, February 1972. p.17).

But then the Germans spoiled the party by backing the Sultan’s demands for an international conference on the future of Morocco. As a result, less than six months into his new position, Rouvier, with Russia incapable of fulfilling its military commitments to France and unsure of Britain’s will and capacity to provide an effective alternative through military support, put pressure on Delcassé to resign rather than risk a war with Germany. Delcassé was replaced in June 1905 by Leon Bourgeois who was more in sympathy with Etienne’s mixture of diplomacy and hidden action in his approach to Morocco.

But Etienne's influence now extended beyond the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Rouvier's Government:

"Determined immediately to expand military forces in Algeria, Etienne suggested to Maurice Berteaux, the Minister of War, that troops in the Sahara be reorganized into more mobile striking units. Citing more examples of alleged depredations committed by unspecified Moroccan 'bandits' in southern Algeria, Etienne called for more military troops along the Algerian-Moroccan border. Knowing that such an action would disturb Morocco's government and civilian population, Etienne used all of his massive political influence to see that it was done." (ibid., p.17).

By the end of 1905, Etienne and his group believed they were in a position to oversee a takeover of Morocco but the decision of the French Government to take part in the proposed German conference on Morocco and the outcome of that conference under the terms of the Act of Algeciras proved a disappointment to their ambitions. However, as we will see later this was only a temporary setback as the arrangements put in place by Etienne did not go away – the fact that it was Lyautey's military forces that led the invasion and occupation of Oudjda in April 1907 in defiance of the Act of Algeciras is testimony to this.

A diversionary word about Etienne's political tactics in the French Chamber in manipulating his country to a takeover of Morocco in 1911. The manner in which he manufactured an atmosphere of Parliamentary secrecy leading up to the negotiations with Britain prior to the *Entente Cordiale* and after were uncannily similar to those adopted by the Liberal Imperialists in the years prior to war. In the aftermath of the French colonialist endgame at Fez in 1911 his tactics in Morocco became an object of interest in Britain which was reflected in an article in *The Nation*:

"The art of conducting this game lies in creating at each stage a situation which leads inevitably to the next. . . It avoids the presentation of a clear issue to the electorate and Parliament, with whose consent to the ulterior plans the manipulators of the manoeuvre contrive to dispense. There can be little doubt that if the French people or the French Chamber were asked to answer with a 'Yes' or 'No' whether they desired to embark upon the conquest of Morocco, their decision would be an emphatic and nearly unanimous negative." (*Modern Methods of Conquest*, published in *The Nation*, 6 May 1911. Quoted in Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, op. cit., pp.124-125).

The similarities between Etienne's tactics in 1911 in bringing about the French invasion of Fez and the methods used by the Liberal Imperialists in leading Britain into war in August 1914 is unmistakable and indeed not dissimilar to the methods used by modern democracies as navigation tools to war.

French politics after Algeciras.

With Delcassé's position becoming increasingly marginalised, the movement for accepting the Moroccan-German proposal for an international conference gained momentum in France and was given impetus as other countries began to fall in behind the proposal. The Moroccan-German proposal was first accepted by Italy and then by Austria followed by the other powers until, finally, by France and Britain. The international conference was held at Algeciras in Spain between 16 January and 7 April 1906

and out of it came what was known as the Act of Algeciras. The main element of the agreement behind this Act was the restoration of Morocco's future '*based upon the independence of the Sultan, and the integrity of his dominions,*' and providing that if any precedent arrangement between the Powers and Morocco conflicted with the stipulations of the Act, the stipulations of the Act should prevail. In other words, any arrangements which France may have made with Morocco prior to the Act were now null and void if such arrangements infringed the stated independence of Morocco. However, under the terms of the Act Germany recognised the right of France to assist in the Sultan's administration of the country and also agreed for Spain and France to be given responsibility for policing the Moroccan ports. Germany managed to achieve its own agenda through the acceptance by the other Powers of her legitimate right of access to the Moroccan economy for its commerce and enterprise and the right to equality of treatment in the allocation of public works contracts issued by the administrative authorities of Morocco (this included contracts issued directly by the Government of Morocco and the French authorities in Morocco).

Prior to and after his departure Delcassé had come to represent that element in French politics which wished to confront Germany head on and rely on the ability of France and her allies to win any subsequent war. The failure of this approach, culminating in the Act of Algeciras, led to a significant change in French politics. But, despite its failure, the thinking represented by Delcassé continued to hold sway among an influential section of civil servants, younger nationalist politicians and diplomats associated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in what became known as the '*bureaux*'. The '*bureaux*' also had allies among significant members of the French military as well as politicians and industrialists. As a result, in the years after the Act of Algeciras, French foreign policy in general and the Act of Algeciras in particular, became an arena where its direction was contended between the school of thought represented by Delcassé at one extreme and, on the other, those who sought an accommodation with Germany with the more pragmatic followers of Etienne fluctuating between both camps:-

"In the years after the conference of Algeciras French foreign policy was dominated by the question of Morocco. The nation as a whole was profoundly pacific, apathetic towards Morocco and averse to any policy of advance there that might provoke war. This attitude was markedly reflected in parliamentary opinion and the government, headed since October 1906 by Clemenceau with his protégé Pichon at the foreign office, proclaimed its adhesion to the act of Algeciras. Apart from the general apathy stood, however, a small but active and influential minority determined that Morocco should fall to France. To all who desired this 'national solution' it was plain that the prime obstacle was Germany but there were differences of opinion as to the course that France should adopt. For some it was important to resist all attempts by German interests to infiltrate into Morocco and to be wary of entering an agreement with Germany on the problem. '*For her*', warned a commentator in the organ of the *Comité de l'Afrique française* in January 1907, '*Morocco is a bait with which she seeks to get us to swallow the hook which would tie us to the general policy of the German empire.*' France, in the view of this group, which represented the Delcassé tradition, should defend her position in Morocco and seek where possible to extend it, trusting in herself and her friends to solve the question ultimately in her favour. In contrast stood those who, far from fearing Franco-German *rapprochement*, hoped for it, not only as a means to secure Morocco but as in the best interests of France." (*The Franco-German Agreement on Morocco, 1909* by E. W. Edwards.

It is not strictly correct to attribute a position to Clemenceau and his foreign minister Pichon as one which consisted of them simply accepting the Act of Algeciras to the detriment of French ambitions in Morocco. Both politicians continued to harbour such ambitions and, although Clemenceau was not a great advocate of French expansion, he always said that he made an exception when it came to Morocco. What Clemenceau believed was that the gaining of Morocco was not worth the risk of a war with Germany.

With regards to the military arrangements with Britain he was more of a sceptic. He did not believe that Britain had the ability, in terms of its military commitment to France, to compensate for the loss of Russia's military commitment (so lost as a result of the Russo-Japanese war and the 1905 Revolution) in the event of such a war. Under such circumstances the best policy was to operate within the terms of the Act of Algeciras by which it was possible over time for the special interest of France in Morocco to be accepted by Germany. He acknowledged that the key to this acceptance was German agreement and he sought, within the constraints of the alliance with Britain, to further the cause of that acceptance. In nurturing German goodwill within the terms of the Act of Algeciras he differed from those colonialists who, having no sense of obligation to the Act, nonetheless, recognised that in its aftermath the cooperation of Germany was required to advance French claims in Morocco. This element, represented by Etienne, believed that this could be done through a mixture of direct action in Morocco and diplomatic efforts for closer commercial links between France and Germany. As a consequence of both these "pro-German" positions there emerged an impetus to encourage closer financial co-operation with Germany. Also, there remained the more extreme elements behind the '*bureaux*' who advocated action in Morocco in defiance of Germany in the full belief that should it result in war, British support would be both forthcoming and adequate to defeat Germany even in the absence of Russia.

Thus the way in which French politics expressed itself in terms of Germany was not a simple one where the imperialists/colonialists lined up on the anti side and the non-expansionists lined up on the pro side. With regards to French policy on Morocco the Algeciras agreement saw the decline of the straight-forward anti-German position of Delcassé and the '*bureaux*' and the rise of the more pragmatic approach of both Clemenceau and Etienne—notwithstanding the differences between them.

Clemenceau's distrust of Britain.

The situation which the French colonialists had signed up to regarding the advancement of French interests in Morocco had been formulated on the basis of the long-standing alliance with Russia (dating from 1892) and the more recent military agreements with Britain arising from the *Entente Cordiale* of 1904. However, at this stage there was no Triple *Entente* as Britain had not yet signed an alliance with Russia to complete the triangle (the Anglo-Russian alliance was not signed until 31 August 1907). This created a sense of apprehension among certain elements of the French imperial bloc. Russia had traditionally been viewed as Britain's great enemy and the prospect of her making common cause with Russia even for the sake of France was something that was the basis of ongoing anxiety among these elements. After 1905, with Russia's

potential military contribution taken out of the equation for several years, the belief or otherwise in Britain's will and capacity to provide effective military assistance became all the more critical in influencing the direction of French politics.

All of which presented Clemenceau with a dilemma. A revolutionary in his youth, Clemenceau lived for a while in the U.S. and married an American citizen (they later divorced). He was also the editor and owner of the newspaper that published Emile Zola's *J'Accuse* in response to the Dreyfus scandal. Clemenceau became Minister of the Interior in the left-wing coalition Cabinet under Ferdinand Sarrien in the aftermath of the fall of the Rouvier government in March 1906. Discarding his radical background, in his position as Minister of the Interior he reformed the police and authorised repressive policies against the workers' movement. He became Prime Minister of France as a result of the resignation of Sarrien in October 1906 having established himself as the strong man of French politics in opposition to the workers' and socialist movement. The circumstances of his defeat in the Chamber on 20 July 1909 and his subsequent resignation will be gone into later but he was again Prime Minister between 1917 and 1920. He was a staunch Anglophile with many contacts among the English establishment and, like many French politicians, he retained a desire to avenge what he saw as the French humiliation of 1871. In short, he was a politician with no apparent reason to reach an accommodation with Germany. Yet, as we will see, it was on his watch that the groundwork was laid for an agreement with Germany that almost thwarted the British Liberal Imperialists' plans for war.

Clemenceau's wish was that France had the freedom to pursue her own agenda in Europe without having to steer a course between the two most powerful countries, one with the most powerful army and the other the most powerful navy. Yet, he was a realist politician who recognised his country's position within the evolving European hostilities. As a result, his efforts to maintain good relations with Germany carried with it the danger of alienating Britain and his task involved him walking a tightrope between British and German sensibilities and negating as far as possible the domestic influence of Delcassé's '*bureaux*' as well as the position represented by Etienne's colonial party. He believed that the *Entente Cordiale* with Britain could prove to be a real danger to France (see H. A. L. Fisher, *A History of Europe*. Published by Edward Arnold Ltd., London, 1957. p.1076). As far as he was concerned, the loss of Russia as an effective military ally after 1905 was a real disaster for France and one for which the *Entente* with Britain could offer no compensation:

"The Anglo-French *entente* offered no substitute, for even if British help were forthcoming, the military strength of Britain was insignificant and her navy would be of little use to France in withstanding what was expected to be the decisive first shock of war. Germany held the key both to Morocco and to the security of France herself, and only with German consent could French ambitions be realized without another dangerous crisis." (*The Franco-German Agreement on Morocco, 1909*, by E. W. Edwards, in The English Historical Review, Vol. 78, No. 308, July 1963, p. 487).

Although finding himself needing to maintain good relations with Germany for the sake of his Moroccan aims and in order to neutralise the challenge posed by the Etienne grouping he could not afford any accommodation with Germany which upset Britain.

Fisher and Lansdowne had earlier, during the first Moroccan crisis, promised Delcassé the use of the British Navy against Germany and the landing of troops in Schleswig-Holstein in the event of war. However, Clemenceau rightly calculated that what was required was the presence of British troops on French soil in sufficient numbers to successfully confront the German Army but at the time that Clemenceau came to power in 1906 and for some years afterwards he remained unconvinced that even such a commitment from Britain would be sufficient to compensate for the loss of Russia as a military ally. It was only when Russia began to recover from the military and social setbacks from the Russo-Japanese war that the wider imperialist community in France began once more to reinvest in the prospect of a war with Germany. In the meantime however, there remained the uncertainty—an uncertainty added to by the ignorance among leading British politicians of the secret war agenda:

“Disquiet in Paris, however was not without reason and by no one was it felt more acutely than by Clemenceau who made the military aspects of the *entente* a persistent theme in his meetings with British ministers. Something of his apprehension as to the uncertainty and inadequacy of British military action in support of France had emerged in and following his conversation with Campbell-Bannerman in Paris in 1907. A year later at a time when Anglo-German tension seemed to bring nearer a conflict from which France as the friend of Britain could not hope to escape and in which she would suffer heavily unless she were given adequate British assistance, he again opened the subject at Marienbad to King Edward and Goschen, the British ambassador in Vienna to whom he said,

‘. . . once let our people realise, as I do, the price which France may probably have to pay for England’s friendship, if her military resources are allowed to remain as they are now, and away goes the *Entente*, away the men who promoted it and away go the friendly feelings which are so much advantage to both countries.’ (Clemenceau to Pichon, 29 August 1908)

A report from Huguet, the military attaché in London, in November when the international situation had become critical could have done nothing to remove the disquiet in Paris. Huguet had had an important conversation with Lord Esher from which two significant points emerged. In the first place Esher, though himself believing that in the event of a conflict Britain would intervene on the side of France, confirmed what the French already knew: that there was still division in the Cabinet on the very principle of intervention which the radicals, led by Churchill, would probably oppose. Secondly, the Committee of Imperial Defence was split between the blue-water school and the advocates of land war, so that with the essential strategic questions undecided there was no possibility of effective British intervention in the event of a continental war developing rapidly, even if the Cabinet were ready to approve it.” (As reported in Paul Cambon to Pichon, 18 November 1908 and cited in Edwards, op. cit., p.498-499). [Note:- Paul Cambon was the French Ambassador to Britain and the brother of Jules Cambon, French Ambassador to Germany. Paul. Stephen Pichon was the French Foreign Minister - ED.]

As has been shown earlier, the significance of the differences within the Committee of Imperial Defence between the blue-water school and the advocates of a land war were seriously exaggerated and there is no need to revisit that issue. The references to Churchill as leader of the radicals likely to oppose any intervention by Britain on the side of France may have been

true in 1908 but both he and Lloyd George, the other leading radical who were supposed to be sympathetic to Germany’s position, within the year had switched sides after they were brought into the Liberal Imperialist fold. As we will see later the fact that Lloyd George and Churchill were welcomed into Asquith’s inner circle was one event in that fateful period 1909-1910 which witnessed several developments that represented the change in climate caused by what was happening in French politics. The conversation between Clemenceau and Campbell-Bannerman referred to in the above quote revealed the extent to which Liberal Imperialist plans had been concealed even from their own Prime Minister:-

“Exactly how little Campbell-Bannerman knew concerning the talks he had authorized became embarrassingly clear in April 1907. French premier Georges Clemenceau made the logical but incorrect assumption that his English guest had approved the joint staff plan to send the BEF to northern France and expressed the hope that recently announced cuts in British military estimates would not compromise its ability to perform this mission. A horrified Campbell-Bannerman replied that British public opinion would never permit the BEF to be used in such a Continental operation, joint plan or no joint plan. Grey later persuaded the prime minister to withdraw this categorical veto and substitute an ambiguous statement reaffirming the nonbinding character of the staff talks but leaving open the possibility that a wartime British government might at some future time approve dispatch of the BEF to France. The real significance of the incident was its revelation of Campbell-Bannerman’s complete ignorance of the Continental focus of the contacts he had authorized in January 1906.” (*The British Cabinet and the Anglo-French Staff Talks, 1905-1914: Who Knew What and When Did He Know It?*, by John W. Coogan and Peter F. Coogan. Published in *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol 24, No. 1, January 1985, pp.115-116).

Grey was somewhat disingenuous to inform Campbell-Bannerman that the plans for a British expeditionary force only remained a ‘possibility that a wartime British government might at some future time approve’ when such plans had already been formulated and under constant review in both countries. This evidence of ignorance of the Liberal Imperialist war plans at the very highest levels of the British Government could not but have added to Clemenceau’s sense of uncertainty and distrust. As late as 1909 Clemenceau remained suspicious of British motives. In a conversation with Alexander Iswolsky, Russian Foreign Minister:-

“Clemenceau told Iswolsky at Carlsbad on 24 August 1909 that he feared that in the event of an Anglo-German war Germany would fall on France while Britain, safe behind her sea wall would let the Germans exhaust their strength in Europe while she gained Germany’s trade and colonies.” (Edwards, op. cit., footnote p.509).

At the time of his meeting with Iswolsky in August 1909, Clemenceau had resigned as Prime Minister but he was obviously aware of the *plan idéal* that motivated British thinking. The fact that subsequent developments compelled them to abandon that plan in no way takes from the accuracy of Clemenceau’s estimation in 1909. Before he resigned in 1909 he had come to an agreement with Germany—an agreement which revealed the extent to which he was hedging his bets on the future relationship between France and Britain and which in turn was to cause real disquiet among France’s British allies.

□

‘Emergency Czechmate’ or Wartime Dialogue? Dev, the ‘Irish Institute’ and the Masaryk Affair

by Manus O’Riordan

In the March 2013 issue of *Irish Foreign Affairs* Jack Lane writes: “The Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA) [formerly the Irish Institute of European Affairs – MO’R] is the Irish imitation of Chatham House [the Royal Institute of International Affairs; formerly the British Institute of International Affairs 1920-26 – MO’R]. It is the nearest thing the Government has to a think tank about major international issues.” But the self-styled, if similarly named, Irish Institute of International Affairs, operating in wartime Ireland, most certainly did not act as a think tank for the Government. Or, perhaps I should be more precise. It did not provide any service whatsoever as far as the **Irish** Government was concerned, whatever about serving the needs of a **British** Government at war. In a Dáil debate on 9 November 1944, the Taoiseach, Éamon de Valera, pointed out:

“It is well that the position of this body calling itself the Irish Institute of International Affairs, and the character of its activities, should be generally known. I am informed that this body was first set up in 1936, following a visit to this country of the Secretary of the Royal Institute of International Affairs in Britain. The British Institute of International Affairs is, of course, well known. It is a body which commands considerable respect and authority in Britain and other countries. It is a body founded by royal charter and the terms of its charter provide just those safeguards as regards the non-party political nature of its activity, and the objective character of its work and publications, which have given the British Institute the authority which it enjoys in the eyes of serious students of international affairs. No one, for example, could conceive of the British Institute participating in the politics of the day, or conducting propaganda against the foreign policy of the British Government in power. Much less can one imagine the British Institute, without the knowledge of the British Government or the Foreign Office, inviting members and officials of foreign Governments to come to London to attend meetings at which matters affecting the British foreign policy of the day would be discussed and speeches hostile to, or critical of, that policy would be made. If the British Institute did that sort of thing, it would soon lose the position which it holds to-day. It would be regarded, and quite rightly so, as a focus of propaganda and as a body whose activities were harmful to British relations with other countries and to British interests generally. But, of course, the British Institute does not do anything of the kind. In time of peace, its studies and publications are objective and authoritative as to statements of fact, carefully avoiding, in accordance with the charter, expressions of opinion on current international affairs. In time of war, as is the position at present, the British Institute works in close association with, and indeed in certain respects, under the actual control of the British Foreign Office.”

“Now, let us turn to the so-called Irish Institute of International Affairs. I make the contrast between the two bodies for two reasons – firstly, because, as I say, the Irish Institute was set up following a visit of the Secretary of the British Institute in 1936, and, secondly, because owing to the circumstances and the similarity of the titles of the two bodies, people, and

particularly foreigners, are apt to draw the conclusion—and in actual cases have drawn the conclusion—that the Irish Institute is a body of the same character and standing as its British counterpart—that it is a regularly constituted institute with objects similar to those of the Royal Institute of International Affairs; that official safeguards have been provided for the non-party political and objective character of its work similar to the safeguards provided in the royal charter in England; that if it does not work in actual association with the Department of External Affairs here, as the British Institute works with the Foreign Office in London, at least that it is careful not to place itself in a position of conflict with its own Government, and that, therefore, when it issues an invitation to a member of a foreign Government or foreign diplomat to address one of its meetings, the invitation can be accepted in the assurance that, when the person invited arrived in this country, he would find that his visit was known beforehand to the Irish Government and welcomed by it.”

“It is well that the facts about this so-called Irish Institute of International Affairs should be known. First of all, it is not a chartered body. It has no kind of official recognition or approval. Indeed, it has no legal existence whatever, and the title ‘Irish Institute of International Affairs’ is simply self-assumed. Having no legal existence, it is subject to none of the legal safeguards with regard to the character of its activities which are provided in the case of the British Institute in its charter... I am satisfied beyond all doubt, from the information at my disposal, including complaints which I have received from members of the organisation itself, that, far from making the slightest effort to preserve the character which a body of this kind should have if it is to be of any public service, the Irish Institute has become a focus of propaganda devoted entirely to furthering and encouraging a particular point of view in relation to the present war. One would think that, however they might feel individually, those holding office in the institute would refrain, out of simple patriotism and regard for the democratically expressed wishes of our own people, from attacking this country's position in relation to the war in the presence of foreigners. There is enough misrepresentation of the policy of the Irish people in relation to the present conflict without vice-presidents of a body masquerading under a title which suggests that it is concerned with the objective and fact-finding study of international affairs, getting up in front of foreigners and providing ammunition for people abroad who wish to say that neutrality is a policy forced by the Irish Government on an unwilling people. If you have a body genuinely concerned with the study of international affairs, it is natural that from time to time it will wish to invite foreigners—members of foreign governments and foreign diplomats—to speak at its meetings. Now, I am not arguing that an institute of that kind—provided always, of course, that it was properly organised—should be actually associated with the Foreign Office in the conduct of its work in peace time. The arrangement in England at the moment is a temporary one and will hardly continue after the war. But it is quite a different question to have, in a war situation, a body using a title which gives a wholly misleading idea as to its status and the nature of its activities, going over the head of its own Government in

a time of danger and without their knowledge or without any prior notification to them, issuing invitations to members of foreign governments and foreign officials asking them to come to this country and attend meetings at which speeches attacking the Government of this country and the policy adopted by the Irish people as a whole are made. That is precisely what this institute has made a practice of doing, and it is a practice which no Government worthy of the name would tolerate.”

What, then, should we make of the Irish government’s November 1944 refusal to permit the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister in London Exile, Jan Masaryk, address a meeting of the “Irish Institute of International Affairs” in Dublin? An “emergency czechmate” is how that decision might be caricatured by today’s revisionist historians who pretend that the Irish government sought to deny the World War’s existence by calling it the Emergency, when in fact the latter term was only used by the government to characterise the domestic measures required in the context of that war. See the *Church and State* editorial in its first quarter 2013 issue for a refutation of Professor Brian Girvin’s 2006 book—entitled *The Emergency*—in that regard. Not alone did the Irish government unequivocally characterise the World War as such, de Valera himself publicly sympathised, as we shall see, with the Czechs as a victim nation in that war. But it was quite another matter to try and manipulate public sympathy for the Czech predicament in order to undermine this Republic’s neutrality and its firm determination to avoid being dragged into that war. In his 1996 book, *Censorship in Ireland, 1939-1945: Neutrality, Politics and Society*, Dónal Ó Drisceoil provided some, if limited, context:

“The propaganda activities of the various legations were constantly monitored. A Czech propaganda bulletin, issued periodically, was allowed so long as ‘discretion’ was used in its circulation... The putting over of British propaganda themes in neutral countries was principally the task of the press attachés... Visiting lecturers were ‘always considered to be an important propaganda channel’; the most useful medium for the British in that regard was the Irish Institute of International Affairs. While its lectures and meetings were not given wide coverage in the press, the propagandist intention was to appeal to the ‘influential few’ who would attend. Among those who lectured to members of the Institute [was]... Professor Henry Steele Commager, an American historian who lectured in Cambridge during the war [and who] took the opportunity of his visit to Dublin to write a long indictment of Irish neutrality for the *New York Times* magazine. G2 (Irish military intelligence) monitored the activities of the institute; one report noted that ‘while Neutrality is paid lip service as being Government policy, the bulk of the audience at these meetings were pro-British in sentiment’... By 1943 the government’s tolerance of the institute’s activities began to diminish... On 15 June ... External Affairs informed the institute that: “*There are difficulties about bringing foreigners into this country for the purpose of giving lectures, and it would perhaps be better to consult the Department before issuing invitations in future*”. The failure to follow this procedure was used to justify the controversial banning of a lecture to the institute by Dr Jan Masaryk, deputy prime minister and foreign minister of the Czech government in exile, in October [sic] 1944. As Masaryk was already in the country and had shared a platform with de Valera at a meeting of the Trinity College Historical Society a few days previously, the case inevitably generated controversy. In his reply to charges made by Patrick McGilligan (Fine Gael) in the Dáil (9 November), de Valera made clear that the target of the government’s action was the institute and not Masaryk. He took the opportunity to declare it ‘*a focus of propaganda*

devoted entirely to furthering and encouraging a particular point of view in relation to the present war”. He further accused the institute of creating “*a succession of difficulties and embarrassment, positively harmful to our relations with other Governments and to the impression of this country which we would wish them to have*”. As an example he cited a meeting held arising out of the Masaryk ban to which the diplomatic corps were invited, only to find themselves “*attending an organised protest against the action of the Government*”, thus bringing the latter into disrepute and creating embarrassment for it in its external relations. The Censorship played its part in the episode by suppressing all press notices announcing the avoidance of the meeting. The *Irish Times* was stopped on three successive days from drawing attention to ‘*l’affaire Masaryk*’ ...” (pp 146-149).

Ó Drisceoil was being far too kind to the *Irish Times* and its Empire Loyalist editor, R. M. Smyllie. Masaryk had shared that platform with de Valera in Trinity College on November 1st. The next day’s *Irish Times* report of their respective addresses, which will be reprinted in the next issue of IFA, was published free of any censorship of the speakers’ references either to the World War or to Czech wartime suffering. But when the ‘Institute’ tried to stage its own Masaryk event two days later, it did so without the slightest reference to the Irish government. In the aforementioned Dáil debate, de Valera further explained how this ‘Institute’ behaviour was of a pattern—and showed such wartime contempt for Irish neutrality—that it could not be tolerated by any self-respecting government:

“It is an obvious and well-recognised principle that when a Minister of the Government of one State is invited to address a group of citizens within the territory of another, the Government of the latter State should be informed beforehand and afforded an opportunity of expressing its assent. The principle applies even in time of peace, not merely as a matter of courtesy, but for the good reason that it makes for the avoidance of possible domestic incidents in which a Minister of another country would naturally wish not to be involved and which might conceivably embarrass the external relations of the State. In time of war, there are obviously still stronger reasons for the principle being adhered to with scrupulous care. It could never be said that the delivery of a lecture by a Minister of one State to a group of citizens in the territory of another is so much a matter of indifference to those responsible for the conduct of the foreign relations of the latter State as to make it immaterial whether they are informed or consulted. It is a question for the Government of the country concerned, acting on behalf of the Parliament and people, to say whether it is wise that such a lecture should be given. In the case referred to in these questions, no notice or request was received from the group of citizens that issued the invitation. They were a group which could scarcely have been ignorant of the correct procedure, but they proposed to ignore the Government. The position was explained to the Czech Consul [Karel Kostal – MO’R], to whom it was officially intimated that, in the circumstances, the Government did not wish the lecture to be given. The Consul understood the position and took the appropriate action. Three Press notices, apparently supplied by the group in question, were received by the Censor from the *Irish Times* newspaper for insertion in its issues of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th November. They were deleted by the Censor, because they contained half-truths and other matter calculated to create misunderstanding between this country and a friendly State... The fact was that Dr. Masaryk, being a man of experience, knew what would be proper in a case like this. When coming into a neutral State as the representative of a belligerent State, he knew what would

be proper, and did not go beyond the bounds of what would be proper.”

De Valera appreciated Masaryk’s statesmanship in that regard and he chose to draw a line under the fact that he had good cause for complaint regarding the mischievous activities towards Ireland that had been indulged in by Masaryk’s subordinate in Dublin some years previously. At the close of the War, the British espionage agency MI5, in its own *Note on the Work of the Irish Section of the Security Service 1939-1945*, recorded:

“A report dated 20th July (1939) was received through the (UK) Foreign Office which came from the Czech Consul in Dublin [Karel Kostal – MO’R] that, on that date, the German Minister [Eduard Hempel – MO’R] with three members of the Nazi Party had left Dublin for a personal meeting with the leaders of the IRA at Inver, Co Donegal. ... and further that General O’Duffy, former leader of the Blue Shirts, a para-Fascist organisation in Ireland, had also been responsible for the arrangements... This information was passed on to the Dublin link, who confirmed that the Drombeg Hotel at Inver was owned by an old German national ... and that two of the German officials mentioned in the report ... had been staying there. It was thought unlikely that the IRA would attend such a large meeting in an out of the way place where it would certainly attract attention, and though O’Duffy was known to be pro-German and pro-Fascist, it was considered unlikely that the IRA would cooperate with him. In August a report was received from the same source that Dr Hempel was in touch with Henry Francis Stuart and his brother-in-law, Sean MacBride, on the question of organising an Irish legion to fight for Germany against Britain. [See *Irish Political Review*, May 2013, for my refutation of the “pro-Nazi” allegations levelled against MacBride by Trinity College Professor Eunan O’Halpin – MO’R]. This information was passed to the Dublin link, and they were informed that the source was a Czech servant in the German Legation. This information reached (Ireland’s) Secretary of External Affairs, Joe Walshe, who informed the (UK) Dominions Office that the source was utterly unreliable. Later, a report was received from the Dublin link saying he thought the information was poor and that Walshe spoke of the informant as a ‘villainous type’. He added that the Eire police had received their information about the Inver meeting between the Germans and the IRA from a newspaper editor in Dublin [Was it Smyllie of the *Irish Times*? – MO’R] who was known to be a friend of the Czech Consul, Dublin... There is little doubt that Joe Walshe feared that the Czech informant in the German Legation might prove embarrassing to the Eire Government, and though, in this case, it is doubtful whether the information of the meeting with the IRA at Inver was correct, he did his best to discredit the informant in the eyes of the British, and it is believed, later informed the German Minister, who sacked him.” (*MI5 and Ireland 1939-1945 – The Official History*, edited and introduced by Professor Eunan O’Halpin, 2003, pp 43-44).

If de Valera had grounds for complaint about Masaryk’s subordinate in Dublin, Karel Kostal, he had more substantial grounds for contempt regarding his superior, Edvard Beneš. In 1935, two years prior to his death, the first President of Czechoslovakia, Jan’s father Thomas Masaryk, retired on grounds of ill-health. Beneš, who had been Masaryk’s right-hand man and served as his Foreign Minister 1918-35, now went on to serve as Czechoslovakia’s second President 1935-38, President of its Government-in-Exile in London 1940-45, and once again state President during the all-Party Czechoslovak government of the immediate post-war years 1945-48. Jan

Masaryk, in turn, served under Beneš as Ambassador to the UK 1925-38 and Foreign Minister 1940-48. De Valera had found the foreign policy activities pursued by Beneš in 1935 to be particularly reprehensible. On 23 July 1935 Ireland’s Permanent Representative to the League of Nations, Francis T Cremins, reported from Geneva on the Italo-Abyssinia dispute to the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, Joseph P Walshe:

“Here, feeling appears to be almost wholly against the Italian adventure, both from the point of view of the injustice of the thing itself and its effects on the League, as well as its disastrous possibilities on the general European situation. It is feared, for example, that Italian difficulties and new interests may result in Germany having a free hand in Austria, notwithstanding the present Italian assertions in this matter, and it is even considered possible that Japan may take advantage of troubled conditions in Europe to proceed with her designs against China, or even against Russia... There is a good deal of criticism at Geneva of those States which have bowed to Italy’s demand for an embargo on the supplies of arms to Abyssinia. Belgium, **Czechoslovakia**, Denmark and **France**, for example, are stated to have prohibited the export of arms to that country.” [My emphases – MO’R. See www.difp.ie to download this and the other documents quoted below].

De Valera held the offices of both President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State (pre-1937 Constitution) and Minister for External Affairs, and in the course of contemporary Irish diplomatic correspondence he could be referred to either as the President or the Minister. On 22 August 1935 Cremins further informed Walshe of Geneva press coverage of Dev’s stated intention to get the League of Nations to take a firm stand against Fascist Italy’s aggression against Ethiopia (aka Abyssinia):

“The note which appeared in the *Irish Press* of the 19th August as to the Minister’s attitude towards the dispute has been sent to some of the Geneva papers by the Havas agency and reproduced under the title ‘L’Attitude de l’Irlande’. The note indicates that the Minister has decided to attend the Assembly in order to state there the Irish point of view in regard to the dispute, and that he will indicate that his Government is disposed to cooperate entirely with the League in the efforts which the latter will make in order to safeguard peace and the independence of Ethiopia.” [My emphases – MO’R].

There was widespread expectation that de Valera would be elected to the office of President of the League of Nations Assembly at that session, and through that office, be all the better positioned to pursue Ireland’s foreign policy of opposition to such Fascist aggression. The France of Pierre Laval, however, was conniving at Italy’s imperialist ambitions to conquer Abyssinia, and countered Dev by advancing the ambitions of Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Beneš, who was more than willing to play the French imperialist game in that regard, and a few other imperialist games to boot. On 10 September 1935 the Head of the League of Nations Section of the Department of External Affairs, Frederick H Boland, reported to Walshe:

“The principal matter which confronted us on arrival was the question of the presidency of the Assembly. The President’s name had been freely mentioned during the previous four or five days, but the day before our arrival Mr. Cremins had been informed by a member of the Australian Delegation that there was some talk of electing Dr Beneš, on the ground that as President Masaryk was likely to die during the year, and as Beneš would probably succeed him, this was likely to be Beneš’s last time at the Assembly. It soon became apparent, however, that there were more concrete reasons for Beneš’s candidature. It became obvious, in fact, that certain interests

were anxious to have in the presidential chair a man who could be relied upon to suppress discussion in the Assembly if that course became necessary in the interests of what certain delegations conceived to be the proper conduct of the current Italo-Abyssinian negotiations. The interests behind Beneš were principally the Secretariat and the French Delegation... The extent to which the British supported Beneš and opposed the President is not yet clear... We have more than a suspicion that whether or not the British were actively (as opposed to passively) working against us, the Czechoslovak Delegation exploited existing Anglo-Irish differences with a view to leading other delegations to believe that by voting for the President they would be committing an unfriendly act against Britain... The position on Saturday was therefore that the spontaneous movement which had got up in favour of the President was momentarily checked by the appearance of a new candidate, namely Dr Beneš, backed by the big Powers and the League Secretariat... We found that a rumour was being systematically circulated in the Assembly to the effect that the President had retired and that Beneš was therefore the only candidate. It seemed impossible to overtake this rumour which was calculated to have a most deleterious effect on the President's poll. In these circumstances, the President decided that he would not allow his name to go forward. Accordingly, he went over to Beneš and told him that he was not a candidate, taking advantage of the opportunity to give Dr Beneš some straight talking on the subject of the manner in which elections of this kind are managed here at Geneva. The election then took place, Beneš receiving all but four votes... I am afraid it would extend this report unduly if I were to attempt to describe the present position with regard to the Italo-Abyssinian dispute... A powerful effort is being made by what I may call the French block to keep the matter outside the Assembly entirely."

In the person of Beneš as the newly installed President of the League of Nations Assembly, Masaryk's Czechoslovak state connived at smoothing the path for Fascist Italy's war of aggression against—and its subsequent subjugation of—Ethiopia, all at the behest of Czechoslovakia's most long-standing ally, France. If de Valera had given Beneš a piece of his mind as to how he had "won" the job of League of Nations President, a week later, on 16 September 1935, in his address to the League of Nations Assembly, de Valera went on to as good as tell Beneš to his face that, by giving the green light to such fascist aggression, he was presiding over the League's own self-destruction:

"Mr. President, I come to this Tribune with a feeling of deep sadness... for no one can avoid being affected by the contrast between the high ideals and lofty purposes enunciated from this platform in former years and the atmosphere of despair which surrounds it today... The final test of the League and all that it stands for has come. Our conduct in this crisis will determine whether the League of Nations is worthy to survive, or whether it is better to let it lapse and disappear and be forgotten. Make no mistake, if on any pretext whatever we were to permit the sovereignty of even the weakest State amongst us to be unjustly taken away, the whole foundation of the League would crumble into dust. If the pledge of security is not universal, if it is not to apply to all impartially, if there be picking and choosing, and jockeying and favouritism, if one aggressor is to be given a free hand while another is restrained, then it is far better that the old system of alliances should return and that each nation should do what it can to prepare for its own defence. Without universality, the League can be only a snare. If the Covenant is not observed as a whole for all and by all, then there is no Covenant."

In 1944 de Valera was to publish this and other of his League of Nations addresses over the years, under the heading of *Peace and the Emergency*. I jest. The title of this wartime book issued by the Irish Government was, in fact, *Peace and War – Speeches by Mr de Valera on International Affairs*. I don't know if, in his heart of hearts, de Valera ever forgave Beneš for such a slide towards the Second World War, but he did forgive Beneš's resident foot-soldier in Dublin, Karel Kostal. Under the heading of "DR. MASARYK LUNCHESES WITH MR. DE VALERA", the *Irish Times* reported on 3 November 1944: "At Iveagh House, Dublin, yesterday, the Taoiseach, Mr. de Valera, entertained to lunch Dr. Jan Masaryk, Foreign Minister in the Czechoslovak Government in London. Those present included the Tanaiste, Mr. Sean T. O'Kelly; Mr. Sean Lemass, Minister for Supplies and Industry and Commerce and Dr. Karel Kostal, the Czechoslovak Consul in Dublin."

De Valera was to publicly express a very benign attitude, not only towards Jan Masaryk himself, but also towards his father, Thomas Masaryk, founder-President of Czechoslovakia from 1918 to 1935. The inter-war Czechoslovak state had been a construct of the World War One victors, Britain and France, in the construction of which Masaryk and the other Czech nationalist leaders were to break their promise to the Slovaks that they would have autonomy therein. But Masaryk had also bitten off more than he could chew for, quite apart from the Slovaks, other national minorities (Germans, Hungarians, Ukrainians, Poles and Jews) constituted as much as 34.3 percent of the population of inter-war Czechoslovakia, with the Sudeten Germans alone constituting 23.4 percent. Yet Dev, in his own way, continued to profess admiration for what Masaryk had won for the Czechs, by hook or by crook. On 23 May 1947, in welcoming back Karel Kostal as the post-war Czechoslovak Minister to Ireland, on the occasion of the latter presenting his diplomatic credentials, the *Irish Times* quoted de Valera as saying:

"We, on our side, remember the part which the **peoples** [my emphasis – MO'R] of Czechoslovakia played throughout the centuries in upholding and vindicating the ideal of national independence. We drew inspiration and courage from their example in the dark hours of our own struggle, and the name of Masaryk, which will always have so honourable a place in the history of your country, is for us also a symbol of the ideal of political and cultural freedom."

Note, however, Dev's usage of the "two nations" plural in order to highlight his recognition of Slovaks as well as Czechs, at variance with the "one nation" Czechoslovak dogmatism of the Masaryks. Note also, from the 1944 Trinity College dialogue, how Jan Masaryk referred only to Czechs but not Slovaks. If Dev was not therefore a Masarykist regarding the national question within Czechoslovakia, still less was he a Marxist. The following example of contempt for both Czechs and Slovaks, as expressed by Friedrich Engels in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of 15 February 1849, would, in turn, have merited Dev's own contempt:

"The Czechs, amongst whom we ourselves should like to count the Moravians and the Slovaks, although they are linguistically and historically distinct, never had a history. Since Charlemagne, Bohemia has been bound to Germany. The Czech nation emancipated itself for one moment and formed the Great Moravian Empire, but was immediately subjugated again and tossed back and forth like a football for five hundred years between Germany, Hungary and Poland. Then Bohemia and Moravia became definitively attached to Germany, and the Slovak areas remained with Hungary. Is this 'nation', with absolutely no historical existence, actually making a claim for independence?"

But de Valera was being far too kind towards the memory of Thomas Masaryk himself, for, as Dev knew all too well, the Masaryk of 1916 had been anything but kind as he sneered at the fate of Dev's own close friend and comrade-in-arms, Roger Casement. As W. J. Maloney had brought to public attention in his 1936 comparative study, *Traitor-Patriots in the Great War: Casement and Masaryk*:

“The tale of the lionising by the British Empire of Masaryk the traitor to the Austrian Empire runs happily on until August 1916, when Masaryk records: ‘*The pitiable Sir Roger Casement was, at that moment, about to meet his fate.*’ ...” (The Belfast Magazine edition, 2004, with a preface by Brendan Clifford, p 7).

It can, however, be argued that de Valera's May 1947 expression of admiration for the name of Masaryk, and past Czechoslovak struggles for independence from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, should really be seen as a coded expression of solidarity with Jan Masaryk's post-war attempts to maintain a Czechoslovak state somewhat independent of the Soviet Empire, a doomed Masaryk project which would end in such ignominious failure nine months later. In much the same way, when Jan Masaryk had shared that Dublin platform with de Valera in November 1944, his own reference to “*the nineteenth century Germanising drive of the Austro-Hungarian Empire*” can also be taken as a coded reference to the then current Czech resistance to the Nazi German Third Reich. But on that occasion de Valera did not employ any code at all, but explicitly referred to Masaryk as “*a distinguished representative of another small nation, which had suffered so cruelly in the war. He hoped that that country's agonies would soon be ended.*” So much for the make-belief of Irish academic revisionist history that Dev's Emergency measures were an attempt to pretend that the War did not exist! The *Irish Times* and its Empire loyalist editor, R. M. Smyllie, had little to complain of in terms of Irish wartime censorship of the activities of Jan Masaryk. Ó Drisceoil's expressed concerns for that paper's protests were quite misplaced. Dev's censors gave *de facto* recognition to the full reality of Belfast being a wartime UK city—and consequently part of the Allied war effort—when, under the heading of “**FUTURE OF SMALL NATIONS: CZECH DEPUTY PREMIER IN BELFAST**”, it permitted the *Irish Times* of 12 December 1942 to publish the following front page report:

“Mr. Jan Masaryk, Deputy Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Law at Queen's University, Belfast, yesterday and afterwards said: ‘... *Anglo-American cooperation, together with the collaboration of the Western democracies with Russia, are, to my mind, the most important guarantees of a decent future for all of us. If the British Commonwealth of Nations and the United States of America will lead, we shall follow... Nations who, in the hour of danger, preserve intact their people's freedom are those who shall dictate the peace of tomorrow.*’ Earlier at a Press conference, M. Masaryk said that ... whoever expected Germany to collapse without military defeat was an optimist... The more ultra-nationalist separatism there was, the more difficult a final peace settlement would be. Sovereignty had become a very flexible entity.”

While Dev's censor might permit the reporting of such a Masaryk speech delivered in belligerent Belfast, the repeat of such a speech from a platform in neutral Dublin could not be facilitated. Yet that is precisely what the pro-British “Irish Institute of International Affairs” had hoped to accomplish when advertising that Masaryk would deliver a lecture

entitled “Czechoslovakia During and After the War”. But when permission for such a lecture was refused, the censor nonetheless allowed the *Irish Times* to publish, on 14 November 1942, a lengthy, front page criticism of Dev's action under the heading of “Charges Against Institute ‘Unfounded’”. Furthermore, under the heading of “Small Nations”, the following *Irish Times* editorial from Smyllie had been previously given the go-ahead on 3 November 1944, notwithstanding the fact that it commenced with a self-serving British misrepresentation that sought to establish an equivalence of German responsibility for **both** World Wars:

“The immediate reason for the entry of Great Britain into the last World War was Germany's invasion of Belgium. From that moment on, and particularly after the adherence of the United States to the cause of the *Entente*, the rights of small nations became the most widely-advertised of the Allies' war aims. During the present struggle less has been heard about the rights of small nations. This time it was the invasion of Poland that caused the British—and, incidentally, the French—to declare war against the German Reich; and Poland, with her considerable population and substantial resources, hardly could be classified among the “small” Powers. Nevertheless, from the very outset it has been obvious that this war will have been waged in vain if the resultant settlement does not provide in some way for the indefeasible right of the small nations, numerically weak and lacking industrial strength, to carry on their individual ways of life without fear of aggression from their more powerful neighbours. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the touchstone of the winning Powers' sincerity will be the way in which they deal with small countries when the war is over. The subject was discussed on Wednesday night at the opening meeting of the Historical Society in Trinity College, Dublin. The Auditor was fortunate, inasmuch as his ‘platform’ included Mr. Eamon de Valera and Dr. Jan Masaryk, son of the founder of the Czechoslovak State, who also was one of the greatest democrats of modern times. The Taoiseach did not seem to be very hopeful about the future. In his view, there can be no real guarantee of world peace in the absence of a ‘World State’, which would include every nation, great and small. Such a State would be served by an international police force which would deal with potential aggressors as a civil police force deals with the man who breaks a shop window. It is a grandiose concept, reminiscent of Tennyson's ‘Federation of the world’; but Mr. de Valera is sufficiently realistic in his outlook to recognise its utter impracticability. Dr. Masaryk was not so gloomy as the Taoiseach. He holds that the small nations have much to contribute to the common cause of civilisation, but that they must depend still more upon spiritual, rather than upon material, values. Small nations, in his opinion, can survive and add their quotas to the sum of human happiness. Dr. Masaryk believes, however, that for practical purposes they must, in the nature of things, attach themselves to larger units. Mr. de Valera argued that the original idea of the League of Nations was preferable to the scheme that was been worked out at present, inasmuch as the latter, in effect, implied a form of dictatorship by the Great Powers. Dr. Masaryk said that the preponderant strength of the Great Powers, who were bearing the main brunt of the present struggle, need not cause any concern to the small nations.”

“The future of the small nations is a matter of the greatest interest to every good European. It is a problem complicated by all sorts of racial, national, economic and religious difficulties; but if it is not solved, the outbreak of another World War will be merely a matter of time. There are many small nations in Europe—for the moment we will ignore our own. Some of

them—such, for example, Sweden and Norway—present no particular problem. They are homogeneous in respect of race, and largely in respect of religion. Their national independence virtually will guarantee itself in any reorganisation of European society. Others are altogether different; and Czechoslovakia is a case in point. Here, as in all the Balkan countries, the ugly business of racial minorities continues to raise its head. The State that was founded—or rather resurrected—by Thomas Garrigue Masaryk had an extraordinarily mixed population. Apart from the Czechs, who formed the bulk of the people, and were in the ancient Hussite tradition, there were Slovaks, Ruthenians, Magyars, and above all, a large proportion of Germans who lived in what was known as the Sudeten territory. The main difference between the Czechs and the Slovaks was a matter of religion. The Slovaks are Catholics; just as devout as the Poles. This difference also exists in Yugo-Slavia, where the Serbs belong to the Orthodox Church, while the Croats are staunchly attached to Rome. Between the two wars all these small nations with minority problems suffered as a result of what might be described as over-centralisation. Everywhere the minorities had grievances, real or alleged, which were exploited to the utmost by rival groups of Great Powers. The Rumanians were accused of tyranny against the Magyars of Transylvania. The Czechs were branded as persecutors not only of the Sudeten Germans, but also of the Hungarians in Slovakia, and even of the Slovaks themselves. In Yugo-Slavia, where the minority problem has fantastic dimensions, the Serbs were alleged to have deprived the Croats, Slovenes, Greeks, Bulgars, Macedonians, and the rest of their inalienable rights; and generally it was made painfully clear that the efforts of the peace-makers after the last war to start the small nations upon a career of guaranteed independence had been a dismal failure. What will happen after this war? Now that the Red Army is campaigning in the Balkans, as well as in Hungary and Ruthenia, Russian influence in South-Eastern Europe may be greater than ever it has been previously. Dr. Benes, on behalf of the Czechoslovak Republic, has made a Treaty with the Soviets, and, when Dr. Masaryk spoke of the support of large units, he manifestly was thinking of this instrument in relation to his own country. Much may depend everywhere upon Russia's attitude. The Atlantic Charter sounds almost as well as President Wilson's Fourteen Points sounded twenty-six years ago; but it must be remembered that the Russians are not bound by its terms. Actually, they are bound by nothing."

Why, given the fact that Smyllie had commenced that editorial with such blatant pro-British war propaganda, was it passed for publication by the censors of a neutral Ireland? Perhaps because de Valera appreciated its publication as useful, in being an otherwise thoughtful, analytical editorial on the Dev-Masaryk dialogue, and the key issues raised by it. It portrayed de Valera's pessimism as being grounded in realism when speaking of war and peace—a realism very firmly grounded, indeed, on the cruel lessons Dev had absorbed from the League of Nations' self-destruction. Notwithstanding the revisionist caricatures we are incessantly fed in respect of Dev, Smyllie recognised that Masaryk was the one who had delivered the airy fairy speech in Trinity. Smyllie's concluding remarks regarding Russia were also made in the light of the *Irish Times* previously reporting on 23 October 1943: "Russia will be the greatest continental Power after the war, according to Mr. Jan Masaryk." The Beneš/Masaryk objective of remaining half in the Western camp and half in the Soviet bloc was pure self-delusion, in more ways than one. In contrast to the other Eastern European countries through which the Red Army had pursued the USSR's final defeat of Nazi Germany, the immediate post-war elections in Czechoslovakia had been freely conducted

and had produced an absolute parliamentary majority for the Communist Party and its Social Democratic allies. The attempt by the anti-Communist political parties to collapse the Government in February 1948 came a cropper and resulted in what is commonly referred to as the Communist coup, albeit a coup popularly supported at the time. That was the end of Jan Masaryk's grand strategy. Whether or not he then committed suicide, or was helped on his way out the window by either Soviet or Czechoslovak secret police, the hard fact is that Jan Masaryk had already committed political suicide.

But let us now return to Masaryk's Dublin visit, and the pro-British attempt to hijack it. In the Dáil debate of 9 November 1944, de Valera concluded:

"I am charged with the responsibility for the conduct of the foreign relations of this State. I find a body of this kind carrying on propaganda against the declared policy of the country in a time like this by using a self-assumed title, suggesting that it has a status which it does not possess at all, inviting members of foreign Governments and foreign diplomats over here without the slightest reference to their own Government, thereby creating difficulties and most regrettable incidents between ourselves and other countries—it becomes my duty in such circumstances to make as plain as I possibly can the standing and character of this institute and the views which the Government here has formed of its activities. That is precisely what was done when the Institute's invitation to Dr. Masaryk was made known to me some days before the proposed meeting. The Deputy (McGilligan, FG) has tried to institute a contrast with Trinity College meeting. There is a contrast: that all the proper formalities were taken in the case of Trinity College. These four or five gentlemen want to put themselves above the Government. They think that they are the Government, notwithstanding the decision of the people. As far as we are concerned, that is not a situation that is going to be calmly submitted to. We made clear our official view of this organisation and expressed the wish that Dr. Masaryk should not accept the invitation to address it. Dr. Masaryk adopted the course which I or any other member of the Irish Government would naturally have adopted if the positions had been interchanged and we were visiting Czechoslovakia. I need hardly say that we have the greatest possible respect for Dr. Masaryk in this country. It was a great pleasure to us to welcome him here, and I regret exceedingly that his visit should have been marred by this matter, which, but for the unfortunate course of conduct which the group controlling this institute have persistently chosen to pursue, need never have arisen at all."

The *Irish Times* report of the speeches by Dev and Masaryk, will be reproduced in the next issue of *Irish Foreign Affairs*. □

Part 2 of:

Social Democracy and the Shaping of Germany, 1945-49 by Philip O'Connor is held over for the next issue

A DANGEROUS DELUSION



WHY THE WEST IS WRONG ABOUT NUCLEAR IRAN

Peter Osborne & David Morrison

Published by Elliott and Thompson, 18 Apr 2013.

Publishers' Description:

In 2013 it is possible that Israel, backed by the United States, will launch an attack on Iran. This would be a catastrophic event, risking war, bloodshed and global economic collapse.

In this passionate, but rationally argued essay, the authors attempt to avert a potential global catastrophe by showing that the grounds for war do not exist, that there are no Iranian nuclear weapons, and that Iran would happily come to the table

and strike a deal. They argue that the military threats aimed by the West against Iran contravene international law, and argue that Iran is a civilised country and a legitimate power across the Middle East.

For years Peter Osborne and David Morrison have, in their respective fields, examined the actions of our political classes and found them wanting. Now they have joined forces to make a powerful case against military action. In the wake of the Iraq war, will the politicians listen?

A Dangerous Delusion: Why The West Got It Wrong about Nuclear Iran

by Peter Osborne and David Morrison

Interviews with David Morrison

Sunday Sequence, 21 April 2013, Radio Foyle and BBC Radio NI

“William Crawley and guests debate the week's religious and ethical news and explore the world of culture and ideas.”

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01s0zdv>

William Crawley:

Just what is a rogue state? One that invades other countries with noted regularity, claiming that it is for the greater good, one that has large stocks of nuclear weapons, and repeatedly makes noises that another intervention is imminent. Then, by that criteria, wouldn't this be an apt description for both the United States and Britain? And yet it is Iran that has been in the verbal firing line for quite some time, despite not having invaded anywhere in the past two hundred years. So is Iran really a risk, or is it a smoke screen, an excuse to exercise control, and power, and implement regime change. I've been speaking to David Morrison.

David Morrison:

I think the notion that Iran is an extremely aggressive state is almost entirely a myth. Iran hasn't attacked another state in something like 200 years, and in November 2007 the US Intelligence Agencies came to the consensus opinion that Iran had not had a nuclear weapons programme since 2003, and every year since then the US Director of National Intelligence has reported to the US Congress that the situation hasn't changed.

WC:

Yet we hear constantly across the media and across political commentary about Iran's nuclear weapons programme?

DM:

Well, certainly, it is never said that the US Intelligences Services believe that Iran hasn't got a nuclear weapons programme. In addition, Obama has gone out of his way to emphasise that Israel and the United States are close in terms of military and intelligence co-operation, and he said that there is little or no daylight between them in terms of the Iranian issue, and we can reasonably conclude from this that Israel also knows that Iran hasn't got an active nuclear weapons programme.

WC:

We do know of course that Iran has a uranium enrichment programme, because it has an ambition to develop nuclear energy for civil use.

DM:

Yes. And that is its right under the NPT, the Non-proliferation Treaty, under which states agreed not to develop nuclear weapons, in exchange for which they would get assistance with the development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

WC:

One would get the impression from media presentations and from political commentary that Iran is driving towards a nuclear weapons programme, and indeed it is not prepared to do business with the rest of the world, it has got its eyes fixed on that. If someone reads your book they will learn that Iran has offered a deal that would allow it to develop its atomic energy potential, but which would possibly even put all of that within an international consortium, so that there are checks and balances, and so that there is clarity and transparency about the fact that it is NOT developing a nuclear weapons programme. That's quite a proposal from Iran. Why was it turned down?

DM:

It was turned down because the United States does not want Iran to have uranium enrichment.

WC:

Is that because the United States doesn't trust President Ahmadinejad, does not think he's an honest broker, and is concerned that if he gets any kind of enrichment for civil purposes he will drive this in another direction and threaten the world?

DM:

That may well be so, but it is Iran's right under the NPT to have enrichment, and what the United States is trying to do is change the terms of an international treaty that both the United States and Iran signed a long time ago.

WC:

We also learn from your book that the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, has described it as a great sin, an unforgivable sin, for a country to own, to possess, nuclear weapons.

DM:

That's correct.

WC:

Which I thought was a remarkable statement to be made within the context of the Iranian leadership.

DM:

Yes, that's another matter that's just not reported at all; I've been aware of that since 2005.

WC:

They have a theological objection to nuclear weapons?

DM:

Yes. And in making that pronouncement he was following the line of the founder of the Islamic republic, the Ayatollah Khomeini. You've got to remember that Iran was subject to chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq war in the 80's, and even though it was in possession of materials that would have enabled it to respond in kind, it chose not to. At the end of the day, if Iran ever decides to get nuclear weapons, it will be the Supreme Leader who takes that decision, and it seems to me extremely unlikely that he will take that decision if he is, at the same time, continually declaring that nuclear weapons are un-Islamic. And indeed the only way that the Ayatollah could be seen to change his mind on this is if something very bad happened to the Islamic republic. For instance, if it was severely attacked by the West; in which case he could reasonably argue that he had changed his mind because that was the only way to deter repetition. Those people who think that by bombing Iran's nuclear facilities they are going to stop Iran, it's very likely it will have the opposite effect, and will provoke them into getting a nuclear weapon as soon as possible. Just like North Korea has. The big lesson at the moment is that you don't get threatened with attack if you have even the most rudimentary nuclear weapon. The United States does not talk about attacking North Korea. And you know why – everybody knows why.

WC:

There are lots of ironies in this book, and a number of examples of hypocrisy. Iran is signed up to the Non-proliferation Treaty. Israel is not. Israel has, as far as we can tell, about 400 warheads of nuclear capability, and you describe in the book a deal done between the United States and Israel, a deal simply to not talk about that. Tell me more about that deal.

DM:

In the late 60's, when the NPT came up for signature, first of all the United States did its best to persuade Israel to sign up to it. But Israel refused. And eventually Nixon came to an arrangement with Israel and Golda Meir that Israel would not reveal to the world that it HAD got nuclear weapons. And as a result the United States would not EVER refer to them. The United States today goes on interminably about Iran's nuclear weapons, and never mentions the fact that Israel has got lots of them.

WC:

John Kerry, who is now the U.S. Secretary of State, is quoted in your book as a critic of United States inflexibility.

DM:

I have not been able to detect any difference between the Bush administration and the Obama administration, in either his first or his second term, in regard to this. The central point is this. If the West is prepared to accept that Iran has a right to uranium enrichment for peaceful purposes, then a deal is easy. It is not obvious that they are prepared to accept that. What we show in our book is that, way back in 2005, Iran was prepared to take extraordinary steps to reassure the world that its nuclear programme was not for military purposes. It was turned down then, and it's a great pity indeed.

WC:

One of the problems – I'll return to this – is the perception that people have – the American leadership have – about Ahmadinejad, is that he's a madman. He cannot be trusted.

DM:

The thing is that clearly everybody who deals with Iran knows that the person who makes major decisions on foreign policy is the Supreme Leader. Furthermore, Ahmadinejad is about to leave office, and elections are about to be held for the Presidency. And there's ample reason for believing that Iran is prepared to do a reasonable deal about this issue. Back in 2005 they were prepared to go a great deal further. They were prepared to limit the amount of enrichment they would do. The level to which they were prepared to enrich – they were prepared to extend beyond probably any other state in the world. And they were kicked in the teeth.

WC:

Because they are not trusted? Or because of American power in the region? What do you think?

DM:

I think one of the really most interesting things in the book is that when President George Bush was told by his intelligence services that Iran HADN'T got a nuclear weapons programme, he says in his book he was angry, and he says it, quote, made it more difficult for him to deal with Iran.

WC:

Inconvenient truth?

DM:

Yes. He thought he could no longer whip up antagonism towards Iran and keep together a coalition that would keep pressure on Iran.

WC:

What is the myth, beyond all other myths, David, that you would love to crunch?

DM:

That Iran is an extremely aggressive state. Its historic record is quite the opposite, and the evidence that it is hell bent on getting nuclear weapons, it isn't there! The intelligence services of the West have been poring over Iran for 20 years, and they have found more or less nothing! And I just can't believe, that if there was something there that was of importance regarding the development of nuclear weapons, they would not have found it by now.

WC:

That's David Morrison, and he is co-author with Peter Osborne of a fascinating new book which we've just been talking about with him, *A Dangerous Delusion: Why the Iranian Nuclear Threat is a Myth*, is published by Elliott and Thompson. And what's interesting about that book from our point of view is that you don't often hear that argument being made. He's challenging – they're challenging – what is often seen as a kind of consensus position, that Iran has a nuclear capability, it wants it, it is a threat to the world, it is an aggressive nation. So if you want to hear a different perspective to that often-stated perspective, this new book offers a compelling and articulate form of that argument. Not everyone agrees with it, of course. Many of the American commentators claim that Iran is one of the world's most dangerous countries, if it's not dealt with it could take us into a third world war. Earlier this week the American Fox News presenter and syndicated columnist Cal Thomas who gave a lecture at Queen's University about American Power in the World, and afterwards I asked him just how dangerous HE believes Iran is. [Use link above to hear that part of the programme.]

**News at One, BBC Radio 4, Thursday 18 April 2013
Martha Carney (Presenter, News at One):**

Martha Carney:

[After playing an extract of an earlier interview with Benjamin Netanyahu.] But the co-author of a new book argues that Israel and the west have got it wrong about Iran. David Morrison's book is called *A Dangerous Delusion: Why the Iranian Nuclear Threat is a Myth*. When he joined me along with Tom Wilson from the Institute for the Middle Eastern Democracy a little earlier, I asked him what had prompted his book.

David Morrison:

It is possible, that before this year is out, we will have a situation where the US takes military action against Iran. Hopefully it will not. It would be an absolute disaster for the Middle East. We would have the situation where the United States has taken action against a second Middle East country to disarm it of weapons of mass destruction that it doesn't actually have!

MC:

There are strong views in the United States and Israel that Iran is continuing to produce enriched uranium in order to develop enriched uranium for nuclear weapons. Why do you think that is not the case?

DM:

Well, US intelligence has said, since 2007, that Iran hasn't got an active nuclear weapons programme. A year ago the Chief of the Israeli Defence Forces said, in an interview with Ha'aretz, that in his opinion Iran hadn't decided to make a bomb. He went even further than that, he said he didn't think they WOULD decide to make a bomb.

MC:

What are your thoughts about that, Tom Wilson? A clear view has been expressed that that Iran isn't intending to make nuclear weapons.

Tom Wilson:

I just find it so implausible that the United States, and Israel, and the European Union believe that Iran doesn't have a nuclear weapons programme, and yet, at the same time, would be imposing sanctions economically detrimental to themselves, and if they were listening to their own intelligence agencies and if their intelligence agencies really believe this. I just think there are so many unanswered questions that the International Atomic

Energy Agency itself has flagged up. There are questions as to why Iran as a state itself with rich reserves of natural gas and oil, why in the world they would need a nuclear energy project, and indeed, what Iranian personnel were doing at nuclear testing in North Korea.

MC:

Specifically on the point as why does it NEED to develop a civil nuclear energy programme.

DM:

It's very strange why this question wasn't asked whenever America and Western Europe were supplying all sorts of nuclear technology to the Shah, and were planning along with the Shah for about 20 nuclear power stations. We should be applauding them for not using up their carbon based energy. It is also about Iran, to a certain extent, wishing to come into the modern world and show that it has the capability to do other things that people in the modern world do. By the way, it's absolutely on the record, in the public domain, that the US Intelligence Agency doesn't believe that Iran has a nuclear weapons programme. There's absolutely no doubt about this.

MC:

Tom Wilson.

TW:

That's fine, but the UN Security Council must have its concerns that it has these sanctions in place. When agents of the International Atomic Energy Agency found that evidence of uranium enriched up to 27 per cent in Iran, which is far above the 20 per cent needed for civilian purposes, that has to raise questions. Indeed, when Iran has tested ballistic missiles with a long range capacity that would reach mainland Europe, I think things like this are incredibly concerning. This is a hostile regime which funds various proxies such as Hamas and Hesbollah, sailed warships into the Mediterranean, it has captured British naval personnel in 2007.

MC:

David Morrison

DM:

(Laughs) It's very amusing to think that, apparently, Iran is not allowed to sail ships on the high seas. This is ridiculous nonsense. Surely every state in this world is allowed to have a defence budget. And it's a very small defence budget of about 10 billion dollars. It's about a fiftieth of the United States', it's about a quarter of Saudi Arabia's just across the Gulf, it's about a quarter of Israel's, and far from being this aggressive state it has not attacked another state in 200 years!

TW:

I'm sure that people in this area would argue differently about Iranian aggression given that it's Iranian money that's funding Assad's attacks on his own people, as indeed Iran has done the same in shooting democratic protestors in its own country. I'm surprised that David seems so flippant about this whole issue, given Iran's crimes against its own people.

MC:

On the specific issue of the nuclear programme, doesn't it seem suspicious to you, David Morrison, that Iran kept its uranium enrichment plant at Natanz secret?

DM:

In fact Iran did not break any rules by not revealing that it had a uranium enrichment plant at Natanz.

MC:

It might not have broken an rules, but it seems suspicious.

DM:

Look, the situation was, during the Shah's time, the United States and states of Western Europe were happily in negotiations with Iran about supplying nuclear technology. When the Islamic revolution happened, that was all cut off. The United

States ensured that, for the next twenty years or more, that Iran couldn't get access to nuclear technology. That is of course breaking the NPT, because the great bargain in the NPT was that those states that ...

MC:

This is the Non-proliferation Treaty ...

DM:

Yes, the Non-proliferation Treaty. Those states that gave up making nuclear weapons, that, in exchange, they would get nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Now, for twenty years and more, Iran struggled to get any nuclear technology, for instance even to re-fuel its research reactor in Teheran. The United States stopped this happening all over the place. That is, of course, why Iran went off to other places to buy technology on the black market.

MC:

And, Tom Wilson, one of the arguments that is made in the book is that the West got it wrong about weapons of mass destruction when it came to Iraq, and isn't it in danger of falling into that trap again?

TW:

Well, I think that we should be very grateful in the Iraqi case that Israel took out the nuclear reactor in Iraq so that we were not facing a nuclear Iraq today and I think the situation we're facing in North Korea today – which of course is a nuclear state – once the genie is out of the bottle it doesn't go back again – and we would be in a very much better situation today if we weren't facing a nuclear North Korea, and I very much hope we won't be facing the same situation with Iran.

MC:

Tom Wilson and David Morrison.

Reviews of the book can be found at:

Review: Peter Osborne is almost right about Iran's non-existent nukes (Jonathan Rugman, Spectator, 11 May 2013)

Review: Myths and missteps , Norman Lamont, New Statesman, 10-16 May 2013. "I wonder if Peter Osborne and David Morrison know what is about to hit them. I fear that the wrath of the neocons is about to descend upon them."

Review, Daily Telegraph 27 April 2013. "The way to prevent a nuclear Iran is by talking, argues Michael Axworthy. This is a small book, but written with Peter Osborne's characteristic brutal clarity, it roars like the proverbial mouse."

Plus a Tweet by **Jon Snow** @jonsnowC4

Why The West is Wrong About Iran: Have just read this excellent and persuasive little book from Peter Osborne & David Morrison

Site for Athol Books Sales:

<https://www.atholbooks-sales.org>

Find out what's new at:

<http://www.atholbooks.org/whatsnew.php>

A Pardon for Deserters - Letters

We publish a selection of letters putting the record straight, as well as De Valera's 1945 speech in reply to Churchill's accusations concerning Irish neutrality. The Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence responsible for the pardon, Alan Shatter, repeats Churchill's accusations, and there is no better answer to those accusations than the one that was given at the time by De Valera.

Irish Times 14 May 2013

Sir, – For the generations born in Ireland since the end of the second World War it is understandably difficult to envisage the state of public opinion on the issue of Irish second World War neutrality. To comment critically, as Minister for Justice, Alan Shatter does (Home News, May 8th) on the morality of our policy of neutrality during the war from the perspective of the 21st century is reading history backwards.

During the war years, the fallout from partition following the Anglo-Irish conflict was still vivid in the public mind, and it was just 17 years since the guns of the Civil War had fallen silent and for both sides in the bitter internecine bloodbath the British were still the common enemy. The decision of Dáil Éireann to remain neutral in all probability avoided an outbreak of a second civil conflict here. Mr Shatter seems to ignore the fact that all political parties in the Dáil, and public opinion outside, all favoured the policy of neutrality. Indeed just one TD, James Dillon, voiced disapproval at our neutrality.

Even those Dáil members who were strong supporters of the Allied cause, and there were many, voted to remain neutral. Furthermore, proposals from prime minister Churchill in 1940 for the offer of a united Ireland as a quid pro quo for Irish entry into the war was rejected by Éamon de Valera. Our sovereignty and independence were not for sale.

With Irish soldiers now serving under British command in Mali and some in Government calling for debate on Ireland's "moral imperative" to participate more fully in EU battle groups, Irish neutrality is once again under attack. This time from within. – Yours, etc,

TOM COOPER

Examiner. 9 May 2013

Dear Sir,

What a nation of self-loathers we have become. The Minister for Justice and Defence Alan Shatter has issued a pardon, amnesty and an apology for those Irish soldiers who deserted their posts and enlisted with the Allied Forces during the Second World (Irish WW II troops set for pardons, Irish Examiner, May 7th). These soldiers were not free agents to make that choice, they had given a legal and moral commitment to defend Ireland and betrayed that commitment. By sanctioning this pardon minister Shatter has rendered the Irish Defence Forces a joke.

As a non-belligerent neutral state during World War Two, Ireland did not introduce a prohibition on her citizens opting for foreign enlistment before or during the war, nor did

Ireland introduce conscription into her armed forces. Those who joined the Irish Army had free choices before enlisting. If these men had a conscientious objection to Irish neutrality other options were open to them. The fact that they fought against Nazism did not confer legitimacy on their actions. Most of the Irish deserters joined the British army which itself had executed in excess of 300 deserters during and following the Great War and pursued relentlessly for decades those who had deserted during the Second World War. There was no British pardon for those deserters who betrayed the British parliament and people.

The actions of the Irish deserters imperiled Irish sovereignty. British prime minister Winston Churchill had threatened to "come to close quarters with Mr de Valera" over the Treaty Ports and the Irish Army was duty bound to uphold and defend the neutrality of this State, a neutrality endorsed not just by government but by Dáil Éireann. The British War Cabinet had considered violating Ireland's neutrality and seizing Irish ports if it was perceived to be in Britain's interests. With a threat of British or German invasion looming, for Irish soldiers to abandon their sworn duty by desertion and enlistment in the British army is, in my opinion, unpardonable and unforgivable.

Yours sincerely
Tom Cooper

• In the 1980s I did my inadequate best to defend a soldier facing a court martial for desertion. The soldier (now deceased) was convicted and dismissed "with ignominy". This precluded him from any state employment. I will supply the particulars to the minister on request.

This man surely deserves a pardon too, at least he did not desert in wartime and enlist in an army that might very easily have invaded his country.

Captain Padraig Lenihan (retired)

Dangan Upper, Galway

Letter in Irish Independent 10.5.13

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/opinion/letters/irish-neutrality-was-noble-not-all-our-soldiers-were-230936.html>

Irish neutrality was noble; not all our soldiers were
Saturday, May 11, 2013

Minister for Defence Alan Shatter said Irish war-time neutrality was a "statement of moral bankruptcy".

That is a precondition for the State to pardon deserters. Most countries in Europe in 1939-45 declared neutrality (as did the US) and only became involved in the conflict when they were attacked.

De Valera's achievement — supported by all parties, the trade unions and the majority of the population — was to maintain neutrality, despite invasion threats. This was noble. Minister Shatter said these men deserted "to fight Hitler". But many were sent to the fight the Japanese. Others were sent to the colony garrisons, including India, where Ghandi and independence leaders were jailed. Others deserted and never joined any army.

Many 'served' with the British beyond 1945 and participated in their brutal operations in Greece, Burma, Kenya, Malaya, Palestine and elsewhere. Is the pardon condoning those imperial operations?

Philip O'Connor

Opinion pieces.

Independent.ie, Opinion

Gerard O'Regan: Dev was right to stay neutral and demand loyalty from troops

11 May 2013 in the Independent Gerard O'Regan wrote an opinion piece entitled "Dev was right to stay neutral and demand loyalty from troops." in which he says:

"There is a context to what happened back in those times, and this should have been acknowledged by the minister in much more clearly worded language; such clarity and context would help explain the attitude of the government in 1945 to those who abandoned the Irish Army. Attitudes on topics such as this

are influenced most of all by the great divide between those who believe Ireland was correct to remain neutral during World War Two, and those who are convinced the country should have fought with Britain and the allies.

Eamon de Valera had many flaws, most of all a dogged insularity, but he was absolutely correct to maintain the neutrality of the new Irish state, just 17 years old at the outbreak of the war."

Sat, May 11, 2013, Diarmaid Ferriter wrote a piece in the Irish Times that began

"Denigrating neutrality during second World War has become fashionable

Historical understanding of the Emergency has diminished

There has been much recent comment in relation to Ireland's controversial neutrality during the second World War that suggests a diminishing rather than a deepening of historical understanding."

THE NIGHT MR. DE VALERA REPLIED TO CHURCHILL

All over Ireland on the night of 16 May 1945, people waited expectantly beside their radios. In the streets traffic halted and a strange quietness descended. All Ireland was waiting to hear Taoiseach Eamon de Valera reply to the bitter attack on Ireland's wartime policy of neutrality made by the British Premier Winston Churchill in his Victory Speech following the defeat of Germany.

After a short preamble in Irish and English, Mr. De Valera spoke to and for his many thousands of listeners as follows:

"I have here before me the pencilled notes from which I broadcast to you on 3 September 1939. I had so many other things to do on that day that I could not find time to piece them together into a connected statement. From these notes I see that I said that noting the march of events your Government had decided its policy the previous spring, and had announced its decision to the world.

The aim of our policy, I said, would be to keep our people out of the war. I reminded you of what I had said in the Dail that in our circumstances, with our history and our experience after the last war and with a part of our country still unjustly severed from us; no other policy was possible.

Certain newspapers have been very persistent in looking for my answer to Mr. Churchill's recent broadcast. I know the kind of answer I am expected to make. I know the answer that first springs to the lips of every man of Irish blood who heard or read that speech, no matter in what circumstances or in what part of the world he found himself.

I know the reply I would have given a quarter of a century ago. But I have deliberately decided that that is not the reply I shall make tonight. I shall strive not to be guilty of adding any fuel to the flames of hatred and passion which, if continued to be fed, promise to burn up whatever is left by the war of decent human feeling in Europe.

Allowances can be made for Mr. Churchill's statement, however unworthy, in the first flush of his victory. No such excuse could be found for me in this quieter atmosphere. There are, however some things which it is my duty to say, some things which it is essential to say. I shall try to say them as dispassionately as I can.

Mr. Churchill makes it clear that, in certain circumstances, he would have violated our neutrality and that he would justify his action by Britain's necessity. It seems strange to me that Mr. Churchill does not see that this, if accepted, would mean Britain's necessity would become a moral code and that when this necessity became sufficiently great, other people's rights were not to count.

It is quite true that other great Powers believe in this same code-in their own regard-and have behaved in accordance with it. That is precisely why we have the disastrous succession of wars-World War No. 1 and World War No. 2 and shall it be World War No. 3?

Surely Mr. Churchill must see that if his contention be admitted in our regard, a like justification can be framed for similar acts of aggression elsewhere and no small nation adjoining a great Power could ever hope to be permitted to go its own way in peace.

It is indeed fortunate that Britain's necessity did not reach the point when Mr. Churchill would have acted. All credit to him that he successfully resisted the temptation which, I have no doubt, may times assailed him in his difficulties and to which I freely admit many leaders might have easily succumbed. It is indeed; hard for the strong to be just to the weak, but acting justly always has its rewards.

By resisting his temptation in this instance, Mr. Churchill, instead of adding another horrid chapter to the already bloodstained record of the relations between England and this

country, has advanced the cause of international morality an important step-one of the most important, indeed, that can be taken on the road to the establishment of any sure basis for peace.

As far as the peoples of these two islands are concerned, it may, perhaps, mark a fresh beginning towards the realisation of that mutual comprehension to which Mr. Churchill has referred for which, I hope, he will not merely pray but work also, as did his predecessor who will yet, I believe, find the honoured place in British history which is due to him, as certainly he will find it in any fair record of the relations between Britain and ourselves.

That Mr. Churchill should be irritated when our neutrality stood in the way of what he thought he vitally needed, I understand, but that he or any thinking person in Britain or elsewhere should fail to see the reason for our neutrality, I find it hard to conceive.

I would like to put a hypothetical question-it is a question I have put to many Englishmen since the last war. Suppose Germany had won the war, had invaded and occupied England, and that after a long lapse of time and many bitter struggles, she was finally brought to acquiesce in admitting England's right to freedom, and let England go, but not the whole of England, all but, let us say, the six southern counties.

These six southern counties, those, let us suppose, commanding the entrance to the narrow seas, Germany had singled out and insisted on holding herself with a view to weakening England as a whole, and maintaining the securing of her own communications through the Straits of Dover.

Let us suppose further, that after all this had happened, Germany was engaged in a great war in which she could show that she was on the side of freedom of a number of small nations, would Mr. Churchill as an Englishman who believed that his own nation had as good a right to freedom as any other, not freedom for a part merely, but freedom for the whole-would he, whilst Germany still maintained the partition of his country and occupied six counties of it, would he lead this partitioned England to join with Germany in a crusade? I do not think Mr. Churchill would.

Would he think the people of partitioned England an object of shame if they stood neutral in such circumstances? I do not think Mr. Churchill would.

Mr. Churchill is proud of Britain's stand alone, after France had fallen and before America entered the War.

Could he not find in his heart the generosity to acknowledge that there is a small nation that stood alone not for one year or two, but for several hundred years against aggression; that endured spoliation's, famines, massacres in endless succession; that was clubbed many times into insensibility, but that each time on returning consciousness took up the fight anew; a small nation that could never be got to accept defeat and has never surrendered her soul?

Mr. Churchill is justly proud of his nation's perseverance against heavy odds. But we in this island are still prouder of our people's perseverance for freedom through all the centuries.

We, of our time, have played our part in the perseverance, and we have pledged our selves to the dead generations who have preserved intact for us this glorious heritage, that we, too, will strive to be faithful to the end, and pass on this tradition unblemished.

Many a time in the past there appeared little hope except that hope to which Mr. Churchill referred, that by standing fast a time would come when, to quote his own words: "...the tyrant would make some ghastly mistake which would alter the whole balance of the struggle."

I sincerely trust, however, that it is not thus our ultimate unity and freedom will be achieved, though as a younger man I confess I prayed even for that, and indeed at times saw not other.

In latter years, I have had a vision of a nobler and better ending, better for both our people and for the future of mankind. For that I have now been long working. I regret that it is not to this nobler purpose that Mr. Churchill is lending his hand rather than, by the abuse of a people who have done him no wrong, trying to find in a crisis like the present excuse for continuing the injustice of the mutilation of our country.

I sincerely hope that Mr. Churchill has not deliberately chosen the latter course but, if he has, however regretfully we may say it, we can only say, be it so.

Meanwhile, even as a partitioned small nation, we shall go on and strive to play our part in the world continuing unswervingly to work for the cause of true freedom and for peace and understanding." □

From Athol Books

Alsace-Lorraine & The Great Irredentist War

by *Brendan Clifford, Roger Casement, Rene Bazin, Coleman Phillipson, Nicholas Mansergh*. 48pp. ISBN 978-1-903497-42-5. ABM No. 34, 2009.

€6, £5

Arms Crisis Series by *Angela Clifford*

The Arms Conspiracy Trial. Ireland 1970: the Prosecution of Charles Haughey, Capt. Kelly and Others. 720pp. Index. ISBN 978-1-874157-20-8. A Belfast Magazine No. 33, 2009. **€42, £35**

The Arms Crisis: What Was It About? 40 pp. ISBN 978-1-874157-22-6. ABM No. 35. May 2009. **€6, £5**

Military Aspects Of Ireland's Arms Crisis Of 1969-70. Arms Crisis Series, No. 2. Index. 164pp. ISBN 1 874 157 16 2. A Belfast Magazine No.29. 2006. **€14, £11.50**

August 1969: Ireland's Only Appeal To The United Nations: a cautionary tale of humiliation and moral collapse. Captain Kelly/Arms Trial Series, No. 1. ISBN 1 874157 13 8. Index. 96pp. ABM No. 26, March 2006. **€8, £6**

Speech by Brendan Halligan on Europe (extract)

To celebrate Europe Day on 9 May 2013, the IIEA held the first lecture in a series to honour the memory of Dr. Garret FitzGerald, the first President of the Institute, former Taoiseach and Minister for Foreign Affairs. The theme of this year's event was 'Strategies for a Small State in a Large Union'.

The inaugural lecture in the series was given by Brendan Halligan, Chairman of the Institute.

B. Halligan explained Ireland's desire to join Europe and described the initial difficulties:

"... The obstacles were formidable.

Culturally, politically and economically, Ireland had been separated from continental Europe for over a century and a half. Ireland belonged to the anglophone world and had little contact with the countries conventionally described as "the continent". There was little experience of European politics and in a sense we were the forgotten people of Europe.

But, the problem, as an American diplomat observed at the time, was that membership of the European Community was teaching Europeans how to talk to each other. This meant a country had to know what to say and to have people to say it. Ireland was ill equipped for this state of constant conversation. In terms of diplomatic resources, Ireland had a tiny foreign service, with only twenty-one embassies abroad, Denmark having twice that number. The Oireachtas had no foreign affairs committee and little or no expertise in European affairs, apart from a desultory relationship with the Council of Europe. Linguistic skills were in short supply for conversing in what was then a francophone world.

But the most deep seated obstacles arose from the nature of Ireland itself and consisted of the size, poverty and peripherality of the country. By any criterion, Ireland was a small country and if statecraft is the projection of power in international affairs it is far more difficult if there is little power to project, either economic or military; more difficult still if the country is demonstrably poor and geographically peripheral, as Ireland was.

The intellectual challenge posed by these realities was to work out a strategy enabling Ireland to overcome its fundamental weaknesses. Faced with the absence of any vestige of hard power in terms of population size, economic strength or military capability, Garret FitzGerald sought to offset that disadvantage by developing soft power, essentially by making Ireland politically central, a strategy which also compensated for being geographically peripheral, and by making it a player in the big ideas, which compensated for being small. That meant being relevant to the enterprise as a whole and engaged in its all its affairs, as well as making a political contribution that was unique to Ireland but valuable to the Union. It also meant being willing, and having the capacity, to play on the large stage.

The Foundation

The foundation on which everything rested was Garret FitzGerald's recognition from the outset that the new Europe was a joint enterprise by France and Germany intended to effect permanent reconciliation between them by replacing a century and a half of repeated warfare with a permanent peace. The project was, after all, the brainchild of a Frenchman, Jean Monnet, and had been publicly launched by another Frenchman, France's Foreign Minister, Maurice Schuman, and immediately accepted by a German Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer. In a sense, all other European countries in the European Union are guests of the French and Germans. At the time of its formation there

was no compulsion on any country to join the Community and none now to join the Union.

But if a country elects to join then it does so in the full knowledge that France and Germany are at the core of the project and largely determine the pace and direction of its progress, as well as the manner of its responses to political and economic challenges as they emerge. The first tenets of sound statecraft are to recognise the obvious and accept the inevitable, more difficult that it seems for politicians. Garret FitzGerald complied with both in recognizing and accepting France and Germany as the cornerstone of Europe, and did so without complaint and without trying to undermine their joint achievements or frustrate their ambitions.

For the Ireland of Garret FitzGerald this meant replacing London with Paris and Bonn as the centre of Irish foreign policy.

First Task

In these circumstances, he saw that his immediate task was "to convince the Germans of our commitment to European integration and the French of our independence of British influence". This was more difficult than it seems in retrospect as, at the time, very little was known of Ireland in Germany, apart from Heinrich Boll's romantic account on his stay in Achill and John Ford's film, "The Quiet Man", while the French suspected us of being a British satellite, not least because we spoke English.

Thus, among the many tasks to be accomplished in the first years of membership, rebranding Ireland was one of the most urgent because a small state has to establish itself as an independent actor and positive participant if it is to have any influence on the policies of a large union. Within the special world of European diplomacy the rebranding was achieved almost immediately due largely to Garret FitzGerald's capacity to project himself on his interlocutors.

The Germans were impressed with his grasp of economics and his commitment to removing trade barriers while the French were enchanted by what he himself called his idiomatic but ungrammatical command of their language.

On a continuous basis it meant Ireland investing disproportionate resources in the study of French and German politics, policy formation, economics, political parties and personalities so as to have an informed understanding of how each state functioned and, of vital importance, how the Franco German alliance worked.

Britain

So, if getting out from under the shadow of Britain was an immediate task then re-engineering the relationship with that large neighbour was equally urgent. The relationship had always been tricky due to the disparity in population and economic strength and, of course, due to the legacy of history whereby one party in the relationship felt itself superior to the other, and behaved accordingly.

But the challenge facing Ireland was managing the shift in the relationship from the exclusively bi-lateral, and claustrophobic, to the multi-lateral, and expansive. The character of the relationship was now changed by virtue of the two countries sitting as formal equals at the Council table in Brussels but while it would be absurd to claim it had been turned overnight into one of political equals a subtle psychological change had nevertheless taken place. Irish economic prospects were no longer solely dependent on the goodwill of Whitehall."

□

— Paul Craig Roberts

Paul Craig Roberts was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy and associate editor of the Wall Street Journal. He was columnist for Business Week, Scripps Howard News Service, and Creators Syndicate. He has had many university appointments. He is frequently to be read on Information Clearing House. His latest book is *The Failure of Laissez Faire Capitalism and Economic Dissolution of the West*.

February 21, 2013

“What If?” histories are a good read. They are entertaining, and they provoke thought and encourage the imagination. How different the world would be if different judgments, decisions, and circumstances had prevailed at history’s turning points. Certainly English history would have been different if King Harold’s soldiers had obeyed his order not to pursue the defeated fleeing Normans down the hill. This broke the impenetrable Saxon shield wall and exposed King Harold to Norman cavalry. http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Battle_of_Hastings

Would there ever have been a Soviet Union if the Czar had stayed out of World War I?

Would there have been a World War II if British, French, and American politicians had listened to John Maynard Keynes’ warning that the Treaty of Versailles would result in a second world war? Germany had been promised a different outcome—no reparations and no territorial loss—in exchange for an armistice. As Keynes realized, the betrayal of the peace led to another great war.

There are a couple of what ifs that I have been waiting for historians to explore. As no historians have risen to the challenge, I will have a go. Keep in mind that a what if outcome is not necessarily a better outcome. It might be a worse outcome. As ‘what if’ did not happen and there is no ‘what if’ history, there is no way of making a judgment.

Suppose Churchill had not succeeded in pressuring Chamberlain to interfere with Hitler’s negotiations with the Polish colonels by issuing a British guarantee to Poland in the event of German aggression. Would World War II have resulted or would it have been a different war?

The British guarantee emboldened the colonels and frustrated Hitler’s attempt to restore a Germany dismantled by the Versailles Treaty. The result was Hitler’s secret pact with Stalin to divide up Poland, technically known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Having given the guarantee, Britain was honor-bound to declare war on Germany (fortunately not also on the Soviet Union), which pulled in France because of the British-French alliance against Germany.

Without Britain’s guarantee, the German (September 1, 1939) and Soviet (September 17, 1939) invasions of Poland would have been prevented by the Polish colonels’ acquiescence to Hitler’s demands and would not have resulted in Britain and France starting World War II by declaring war on Germany, resulting in the fall of France, the British driven off the continent, and Roosevelt’s determination to involve the US in a foreign war unrelated in any significant way to Americans’ interests.

Historians write that Hitler’s ambitions were in the East, not the West. Without the British and French declaration of war, the war might have been contained, with the two totalitarian powers fighting it out.

Alternatively, Hitler and Stalin might have continued their cooperation and together seized the oil rich Middle East. The British, French, and Americans would have been a poor match for the German and Soviet militaries. General Patton, the best American commander, thought he could take on the Red Army that had crushed the Wehrmacht, but his hubris did not worry Red Army commanders, who defeated the bulk of the German Army, which was deployed on the Eastern Front, while the Americans, aided by German motorized units running out of fuel, struggled to contain a small part of German forces in the Battle of the Bulge. Today we would be buying our oil from a German/Soviet consortium.

This outcome implies a different history for the Middle East, and so does another what if. What if the 9/11 Commission consisted of experts instead of politicians with their fingers in the wind, and what if the commissioners had too much integrity to write a report dictated by the executive branch? The unlikely and untenable failure of every institution of the American national security state would have been investigated, and the collapse of WTC 7 at free fall speed would have had to have been acknowledged in the report and explained. A totally different story would have emerged, a story unlikely to have locked Americans into permanent war in an expanding number of countries and into a domestic police state.

Americans might still be a free people. And American liberty might still be a beacon to the world.

On the other hand, a finding of government complicity in 9/11 could have threatened powerful interests and resulted in violent conflict and martial law.

What ifs are provocative, and that is what makes them fun. Thinking is America’s national disability. I’m all for anything that provokes Americans to think.

<http://www.paulcraigroberts.org/2013/02/21/what-if-paul-craig-roberts/>

□

Irish soldiers Deployed Abroad Today –

This is a list of places where Irish soldiers are deployed today; further information can be obtained from the Irish Defence Forces website <http://www.military.ie/overseas/current-missions>.

Edward Horgan writes:

These missions can be UN, EU or NATO; the Mali mission will be an EU mission. Irish troops previously served in a mission to Chad which began as an EU Mission and then ended as a UN mission. Any mission involving France in Africa will most likely be a neo-colonial mission in French national interests rather than a genuine peacekeeping mission.

Current Missions

Currently the Defence Forces are involved in a number of missions throughout the world involving approximately one hundred Personnel from all branches. This number will change to include the 440 personnel who will be involved with the new mission to Lebanon which was confirmed at that time by Minister for Defence.

Africa

MINURSO - September 1991 - to date, UN Mission

The deployment of MINURSO stems from a dispute over the former Spanish Sahara, situated on the north-west African coast, between Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the Atlantic Ocean.

MONUC - June 2001 to date UN Mission

The Democratic Republic of Congo and five regional states signed the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in July 1999. In response the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1279, which included the establishment of United Nations Observer Mission in Congo (MONUC).

EUTM - April 2010 to date

On 25 January 2010, the Council agreed to set up a military mission, European Union Training Mission Somalia (EUTM), to contribute to training of Somali security forces.

Asia

ISAF - December 2001 to date, NATO Mission

On December 5th, 2001 the Bonn Agreement was signed by leading Afghan political figures and representatives of the leading world powers. Resulting from this agreement an international force, ISAF, was established to secure peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Europe

EUFOR/SFOR - May 1997 - to date;
EUFOR IS EU Mission and SFOR is NATO Mission

Under UNSCR 1031 NATO was given the mandate to implement the military aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreements following the end of the war in Bosnia Herzegovina in 1995. As a result IFOR (Implementation Force) was deployed and completed its mission by December 1996 and was subsequently replaced by SFOR.

KFOR - August 1999 to date, NATO Mission

In September 1997 a UNSC Resolution 1199 highlighted an impending human catastrophe in Kosovo and demanded a ceasefire. In June 1999 Serbia agreed to the G8 Peace Principles and began to withdraw its forces. NATO ended its air strikes and KFOR, which was authorised by UNSCR 1244, entered Kosovo.

Middle East

UNTSO - 18 December 1958 to date UN Mission

UNTSO, established in 1948, is the oldest ongoing United Nations peacekeeping operation. It operates in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Israel - the parties to the Truce Agreements that followed the fighting in Palestine in 1948.

UNIFIL - May 1978 - to date UN Mission

Following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1978, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was established to supervise the withdrawal of Israeli forces and restore peace and security to the area. In June 2011 an infantry battalion was deployed back to Lebanon.

UNNY 27 - November 1978 - to date UN Mission

Since 1978, a number of Defence Forces officers have served in different positions at United Nations Headquarters New York (UNNY). At present the Defence Forces provide two officers to the UN's Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO).

Visit the official DPKO site <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/about/dpko/>

Mali and Afghanistan.

Since Irish soldiers are deployed in Mali, it is interesting to compare the Malian situation regarding mining resources with that of Afghanistan. Both have an abundance of natural resources:

“ The UK is to fund a £10m programme to help Afghanistan exploit its huge natural resources, the prime minister has revealed.

Estimates of what lies underground in Afghanistan range from \$1-3tn worth of gold, gems, iron ore, and oil and gas.

David Cameron announced the three-year funding to support the Afghan Ministry of Mines at an event at Downing Street.

There have been claims that the award of mining contracts after the fall of the Taliban was affected by corruption.

The award of a 30-year contract to a Chinese consortium to exploit the Aynak copper mine in Logar province came under particular criticism.

The Afghan Minister of Mines, Wahidullah Shahrani, who has been in his post for three years, has criticised the way things were done in the past.

He welcomed the new support, saying what Afghanistan needed was “sustainable development for its people in the long term.”

He said Afghanistan would not want to repeat the experience of many other post-conflict countries, particularly in Africa, where large resources proved to be a curse.” BBC 13.3.13.



Who exploits Mali's resources?

E. Horgan says that when the French are involved militarily in an African country it is for selfish interested motives; nevertheless, the resources of Mali are exploited by a variety of rich countries rather than France.

Gold concessions are as follows: (the name of the place where the mine is situated is in bold; these mines are nearly all situated on the Southern border of Mali)

Goukoto and Loulo, Rand Gold Resources, United Kingdom;

Kalana, Avnel Gold Mining, Guernsey; [mine previously exploited by Mali with Russian help; see firm's website: "The Kalana Mine and Permit was historically owned by a Malian State company (Sogemork) with exploration and mine construction supported by Russian financial and technical aid. The mine operated for a few years until it was put on care and maintenance on the break up of the Soviet Union in 1991. The Kalana Mine and Permit was privatized by international tender and awarded to Avnel in December 2002."]

Kodiéran, Wassoul'or (Mali) 55% and Pearl Gold AG (Germany) 25%), (Wassoul'or is mainly capital from UAE and Qatar according to Prospective Africaine)

Morila, AngloGold Ashanti, South Africa (40%) and Randgold Resources, United Kingdom (40%) ;

Sadiola, AngloGold Ashanti (41%) and IAM Gold, Canada (41%);

Segala Tabakoto, Endeavour Mining, Canada;

Syama, Resolute Mining, Australia;

Yatela, AngloGold Ashanti, South Africa (40%) and IAM Gold, Canada (40%).

The Malian state owns a 20% share in each mine (except in **Sadiola** where its share is limited to 18%).

Oil is exploited by

- in the North: Australia, Mauritania, Italy, Algeria, Mali, Angola, Angola with China, India/Mauritius, Maliasia, USA, Nigeria.

- in the South: France and UK (under cover of Bermuda and Switzerland), Canada with Mali, China with Macau.

Total is not present in Mali as an exploiter of oil, only as a distributor; it is present in the Mauritanian side of the oil field.

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www.prospectiveafricaine.com/abo (French and English versions available.)