

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

Editorial: The Passing of Ireland as the Anti-Darwinian Power p. 2

Sovereignty and Foreignness *Brendan Clifford* p. 4

May 28 - Centenary of Azerbaijan *Pat Walsh* p. 9

Documents

In Year Zero, A Contribution to the History of the German Press, Part IV

by Hans Habe, p. 22

Translated by Angela Stone

Editorial

The passing of Ireland as the anti-Darwinian power

Ireland once mattered in world affairs, from the moment the First Dáil issued its *Declaration to the Free Nations of the World* in January 1919. De Valera acted on the basis of that Declaration in his role as President of the General Assembly of the League of Nations in the 1930s, where he advocated for orderly decolonisation, fair treatment for the Arab peoples, and also active intervention, under the League's commitment to "collective security", to reverse Japan's invasion of Manchuria and Italy's of Abyssinia. In all of these matters he faced the determined opposition of Britain, the champion of Darwinian relations in international affairs. In 1919 Britain found itself saddled with the embarrassing League of Nations, that unwanted child of Woodrow Wilson's WW1 propaganda "idealism" that had been quickly abandoned by the brutally realist USA itself. The hollowness of that idealistic liberalism was revealed for all to see when Wilson refused to countenance a hearing for Ireland's case for independent statehood at Versailles. It was also the Wilsonian US, in tandem with Darwinian Britain, that rejected Japan's proposal that the League adopt the principle of racial equality. The cynicism of today's "liberal interventionism" has deep, consistent roots.

De Valera of course also faced virulent opposition at home from Fine Gael, then in its holy fascist phase, from Alfie Byrne's fanatical "Irish Christian Front" and from the stridently pro-Franco, pro-Mussolini and pro-Treaty *Irish Independent*. Having won the civil war militarily but squandered the Collins strategy of using the Treaty to dismantle the Treaty in the 1920s, the party of the Free State had made itself, and the state, an anti-Republican entity. After 1932 de Valera resumed the interrupted march of the 1919 Republic, though could never wholly shake off the institutions with which the Free State era had encumbered it. In the 1950s-60s, Irish internationalism was again brought to the fore by Frank Aiken at the new international organisation, the UN – against the strident disapproval of the British-oriented *Irish Times* – in opposing the Franco-British-Zionist invasion of Egypt in 1956, pioneering the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, supporting decolonisation and standing up for the victims of the renewed Zionist expansionism in 1967-68. But in both the 1930s and 1950s these anti-Republican agitations were mere froth, the flappings of defeated forces, at a time when an independent public mind had been comprehensively forged by de Valera and the *Irish Press*.

The internationalist engagement of de Valeraite Ireland occurred during what the currently dominant fashionable "narrative" describes as Ireland's period of "narrow nationalism" and "introspection", when it "cut itself off from the world", most immorally – allegedly – in WW2.

Irish foreign policy in the "narrow nationalist", "isolationist" era was not internationalist only in an idealist sense, though it was that too, as that idealism was itself in conformity with Ireland's immediate existential interests. Ireland represented the simple anti-Darwinian proposition that the world required a governance system that enabled "free nations" to survive and develop. The brutalist winner-take-all philosophy of Darwinian imperialism must give way to credible mechanisms for the "peaceable resolution of international disputes" if small nation states were to have a future. The

Constitution of 1937 firmly committed the Irish state to a foreign policy based on that precise principle. Dev's foreign policy doctrine arose from the writings of modern Republicanism's two great internationalists, Connolly and Casement. Their insights into world affairs informed de Valera's thinking as well as the geopolitical commentaries of the *Catholic Bulletin*, a rounded world policy approach popularised by the *Irish Press*. De Valera expended great effort in taking the League at its word in the 1930s, though always suspected its purely propagandist function and after the British veto on action over Abyssinia concluded that Darwinism remained firmly in the saddle after all. He then turned to try to ensure that Ireland vindicated its sovereignty by remaining neutral and surviving the looming second Great Darwinian War. In 1939-41 that policy, endorsed by all parties in the Dáil, proved a close call.

The revisionist thesis of a post-1932 "narrow nationalist" "isolationist" Ireland contends that this state of woe lasted until Lemass "opened" the economy to international free trade bliss and reason from the late 1950s, leading to integration into the EU, in which foreign policy is taken care of by others. The emergence of the EEC from the 1950s certainly provided a new context in which the Irish state could flourish economically and politically. But as with the "British Commonwealth" – as the Empire rebranded itself in a moment of weakness in the 1920s – the EEC was never the sole point of departure for Republican Ireland in its interactions with the wider world.

The reality of Irish economic "isolationism" in the 1932-58 period is that there was no "world market" into which Ireland could have "integrated" on other than servile terms. This was not for want of trying. As soon as the second war ended, in 1945, as something other than the Darwinian conflict it had started as, de Valera, the "isolationist" and "narrow nationalist", immediately sought Irish membership in the new "United Nations", along with its economic institutions (Bretton Woods and the IMF), though retaining his scepticism of what world powers might be intending to do with it. Addressing the Dáil on the application, he described the UN, with its politburo of veto-wielding WW2 victor powers, as an even less democratic framework for small states than the defunct League had been, but it was available and therefore worth a try. It was the Allied powers, now again at each other's throats, who, in a Cold War stand-off, excluded Ireland from the UN until 1955. When membership of a few other international organisations became an option – such as the Council of Europe and the European Recovery Programme in 1948, both during de Valera's premiership – not alone did "isolationist" Ireland leap at these opportunities at "international engagement", with all major parties in fundamental support but, in the case of the Council of Europe, went on, through the Republican, Seán MacBride, to play a leading role in framing its covenant, the European Declaration of Human Rights.

But, it will be argued, these are now purely historical matters, of little relevance in an era of EU integration and its peaceable "common foreign and security policy". But EU policy coordination does not stop Britain or France acting as they wish in the world, often demanding, and receiving, retrospective EU

blessing for violent escapades launched ostensibly in the cause of the “Enlightenment”. The Enlightenment banner of today is no less fraudulent than the covenant of the League had proved to be in its day, or the “white man’s burden” before that.

The exceptional Haughey interlude in Irish politics proved that not just Britain and France but Ireland too could pursue independent foreign policy in the world if it was of a mind to do so. In the Middle East he married instinctive Republican views of the world with Ireland’s national economic interest by forcing Europe to accept the principle of Palestinian national rights, and opening up a profitable Irish trade in healthcare, engineer training and beef exports with Iraq, Libya and other states of the region. This went hand in hand with the development needs of those states at the time, before their subsequent destruction at the hands of the Enlightenment powers.

The current leaderships of Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil, who have formed a governing arrangement to keep the all-Ireland party, Sinn Féin, at bay, have pioneered a revision of Irish foreign policy. This revisionism incorporates a belief that a corollary to completing Ireland’s liberal make-over requires an end to its embarrassing exceptionalism in foreign policy. Recognition of the Palestinian State - included in both their election manifestos - has been definitively shelved. In the recent Skripal “poisoning” for which Britain demanded European “solidarity”, Varadkar not alone joined in the expulsion of Russian diplomats, but made a virtue, in tandem with the strange President of France, of demanding that Europe take this radical UK-pleasing course of action without the need for a shred of evidence of Russian culpability. Solidarity, he indicated, like love, is unconditional. The Irish-French initiative hustled the EU into a course of action it initially had had no intention of undertaking. Within weeks, the Irish government again jumped in to express its “understanding” for the entirely illegal US-UK-French bombing of non-existent “chemical weapons facilities” in Syria. Again evidence was deemed to be superfluous to the case. The path to this government position had conveniently been prepared a few days previously by an *Irish Times* editorial (10 April) demanding that the “world” not

“shirk its responsibility” “in the face of the Douma atrocity”, and agitating for a robust “response” from the West. The ink was hardly dry on that Coveney statement of “understanding” when the government again found itself having to find weasel words to justify doing nothing in response to the latest Israeli administrative massacre in Gaza (for which, unlike the Skripal/Douma cases, copious evidence was available), pleading the importance of maintaining “diplomatic” relations and acting only in unison with “our EU partners”. In each and every one of these cases of foreign policy revision, Fianna Fáil sat silently on its hands.

The popularity of Senator Frances Black’s bill to outlaw Irish trade in Israeli settlement goods – as testified to by motions adopted in its support by various city and county councils - indicates that traditional Ireland remains deeply sceptical of Darwinism in international relations, and of the government’s abandonment of that traditional scepticism. It is a scepticism well articulated in Brendan Behan’s enduringly popular anti-Darwinian anthem, “The Captains and the Kings”. Even Michael McDowell, in his column in the *Sunday Business Post* (13/05/18), found the dishonesty and duplicity over Skripal, Syria and EU “solidarity” with fraudulent Anglo-French military adventures in the name of the Enlightenment contemptible. The foreign policy revisionism being determinedly implemented by Varadkar has reduced Irish foreign policy to a farce. The collaboration of Fianna Fáil in this farce, in defiance of its own history, augurs badly for that party’s future as a distinct force in Irish politics. □

(Continued from p. 22)

Thomas Beecham (Nos. 23 and 27); *Ananda Coomaraswamy* (No. 28); *Lord Eversley* (No. 44); *Arnold Bennett* (No. 47); *Jerome K. Jerome* (Nos. 50 & 52); *Hilaire Belloc* (No. 41); *H.W. Massingham* (No. 55); and *William Archer* (Nos. 55 & 56). *Lloyd George* appears in Item 57.

An entirely new element in British warmongering in 1914 was the Irish Nationalist contribution to it, in the form of *T. M. Kettle* and *Robert Lynd* (Nos. 40 and 53).

The *Manchester Guardian* (which is now called *The Guardian*) was the classical newspaper of Manchester capitalism. Its editor for a generation before the War was *C.P. Scott*, who was an intellectual of substance in the pre-war culture of Liberalism. He found the transition to mindless warmongering personally difficult, and so he delegated the task of leader writing to his son-in-law, *C.E. Montague*, who was the son of an unfrocked Irish priest and an Irish Nationalist of the Kettle/Lynd variety.

The *Daily News* was the general newspaper of Home Counties Liberalism. It was owned by George Cadbury, of the Quaker family of chocolate makers, and was edited from 1902 to 1919 by *A.G. Gardiner*.

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By Brendan Clifford

(A response to a letter from Martin Mansergh – see Annex I.)

Nation-states, whether friendly or hostile to each other are foreign to each other. The distinction between ‘separate’ and ‘foreign’ is merely the case of two words which say the same thing. They cannot be foreign without being separate, and if they are separate they are foreign. It is the matter of distinct sovereignties.

Britain was determined from the moment it seized Ireland that Ireland should not again become separate, independent or foreign. In 1914 there was British consensus—That is, consensus between the Unionist and Liberal Parties—that Irish independence was out of the question. What brought it into the question was the severe damage Britain suffered at the hands of the states on which it made war—the German and Turkish states. It would have been defeated by Germany—i.e. the German state on which it had made war would have survived, intact, though Britain, with its world-dominating Navy would not have been occupied—if the United States had not for three years supplied it with armaments and the money to buy them, and had not in the final year put its own Army in the field against Germany. And, four years after the War, the War Coalition was given the *coup de grace* by the resurgent Turkish nationalism, which rejected the Treaty Britain imposed on it, and defeated the Greek Army of conquest which Britain had sent against it. (Britain, having breached Greek neutrality two years after making war in support of Belgium neutrality, set up a puppet Government in Athens and gave it delusions of a restoration of Greek Imperial grandeur.)

It had in 1914 expected a quick defeat of Germany and a quicker defeat of Turkey, leading to an expansion and consolidation of the Empire. What happened was that it got the stuffing knocked out of it by the intended victims, and it gained a nominal victory only because the USA interfered militarily, helping Britain to remain viable as its debtor state. And victory achieved at the hands of the United States brought into being a force of public opinion that Britain had to take account of—Irish-American opinion.

Poor Britain! Had any other Imperial Power in recorded history ever lost so much power so quickly, and so frivolously?

In these greatly altered circumstances, it conceded something resembling statehood to the IRB group within Sinn Fein organised by Collins, under an imposed ‘Treaty’. Then it recovered ground by prohibiting Collins from bringing in a Constitution under this ‘Treaty’ which might have reconciled the bulk of the Republican Army to the Free State, and gave Collins an ultimatum requiring him to make war on his Republican opponents—with whom he was collaborating to make war in Northern Ireland—or else the British Army (which had not gone away) would take over again.

The *Irish Times* and the *Church of Ireland Gazette*, shocked by the British Truce with the Irish Murder Gang in June 1921, had their faith in Britain restored by the ‘Treaty’. They became ‘Treaty’ patriots, and demanded that it be implemented strictly. But, as the Free State was coming into being in 1922, the Turks beat Britain’s proxy Greek Army off the Turkish mainland, and the attempt to raise an Imperial Army to subdue the resurgent Turks and make them obedient to their Treaty, led instead to the fall of the War Coalition and the emergence of ineffectual

party-politics at Westminster—what Churchill called “*The second eleven*”.

The meaning of the ‘Treaty’ was determined by events in the Imperial power-structure rather than by racking one’s brains over verbal formulas.

The Treatyite Government might have acted in 1923 as Collins had tried to act in 1922 but it chose not to. It preferred to continue doing freely what it had done under British compulsion in the Summer of 1922. It committed itself to the destruction of Republicanism, and contemplated excluding from the electoral process all who would not take the Treaty Oath. Then in 1932 De Valera came in and abolished the Oath, and the floundering British Government did not act against him, leaving the Irish Treatyites at a loss about what to do. (When Dev won the 1933 Election outright, they became Fascist.)

The subordinate political structure established in the 26 Counties by means of the ‘Treaty’ and the ‘Civil War’ was freed from the ‘Treaty’ restrictions after the fall of the British War Coalition in October 1922, but chose not to avail of this freedom. When elected De Valera discarded the Treaty Oath, which had been used to bring about the ‘Civil War’. He achieved the substance of separation or independence in 1938 with control of the Ports, but left in place a formal connection with the Crown and the Commonwealth. The King continued to sign Irish passports and appoint Irish Ambassadors on the advice of the Irish Government.

It might be said that this diplomatic connection was an empty form, without reality. That is because the British Government did not avail of it to over-rule Irish neutrality in 1939. These things are determined pragmatically—which means by action.

Churchill denied that the Irish Government had the right to be neutral when the King went to war. But the Prime Minister at the time was Chamberlain. And Chamberlain was an ‘appeaser’, and he allowed British sovereign right in Eire to lapse. (Appeasement in Churchill’s usage in the 1930s had nothing particularly to do with Fascism. It meant failing to uphold British Imperial right against any force that was trying to erode it, as Fianna Fail in those days undoubtedly was.)

After the War Churchill made a point of saying that, if he had over-ridden Dublin’s assertion of neutrality in the War, he would have acted within his rights in doing so. But he did not confine his case to a right that might be held to be implicit in the diplomatic formalities of the Irish connection with the Crown. He also said in effect that, if Britain had felt the possession of the whole of Ireland was necessary to it for the prosecution of its War, it would have had the right to take it.

De Valera responded in terms that echoed the 1914 British case against Germany. Germany, caught in war between two powerful Empires, sought advantage against one of them by marching an Army through neutral Belgium, defending its action on the ground of necessity. The British propaganda declared that, if a state was allowed to do such a thing, merely because it was necessary in order to ward off its destruction, international law would be at an end. Therefore, in order to uphold international law, it declared war on Germany. (And we recall that Martin Mansergh upheld this view in an *Irish Times* column.) And yet Churchill in 1945, under no pressure

of necessity, declared that the safety of the state is the supreme law for Britain.

And during the War he had invaded two neutral states, Iraq and Iran—asking in irritation why they had changed their British names, Mesopotamia and Persia, so that one could no longer remember which was which—overthrown their Governments, and set up puppet Governments in them, because they had declared neutrality and, as neutrals, kept up normal relations with Britain’s enemy.

(There are moments when Martin Mansergh seems to have a realistic understanding of the British state. We recall a radio discussion he had with Brian Girvin, who had become a Professor in some British University, about Irish neutrality in the War. Girvin, an adolescent Anglophile, was taken aback when Mansergh doubted that Irish neutrality would have been safe from Britain without Dev’s political skills.)

Ireland escaped the British embrace during the War. After the War it was formally removed from the British “*family of nations*” by the Treaty Party, which had reverted to a kind of republicanism under the influence of the Neutrality. Ireland became diplomatically foreign to Britain in 1948. The British diplomatic response was to reinforce the undemocratic system of government it had established in the Six Counties.

British Import Of Populace

With regard to the indisputably foreign 26 County state of 1948, Britain decided that Irish immigrants should continue in fact to have the status of British subjects which they held formally in Britain until 1948. That is what Mansergh bases his contention that the Irish state is not foreign to the British state on.

There is a very obvious economic reason why Britain left its Irish border open after 1948. Because of American funding of a capitalist revival in Europe, out of the ruins brought about by Britain’s second Great War in half a century, there was a British labour shortage after 1945, instead of the mass unemployment is followed 1918. Vast quantities of unskilled labour were required. They were available from Ireland. And Irish immigration had the great virtue of being *white*. English society was white racist from top to bottom. English culture also included a stereotyped anti-Irishism, of course, but that was familiar, long-established and routine. It was in a way part of the culture. And the Irish presence, extensive though it was numerically, did not accumulate but got absorbed over the generations into English whiteness.

Irish immigration into England was in substance a free import of necessary population, of the kind that did not disturb English routine. And some people of a reflective disposition saw it in those terms and suggested that Britain should be charged for its Irish population imports. It was a joke, but it is expressed a socio-economic reality.

But the large-scale population imports from Ireland were not enough. The labour shortage was so desperate that in the 1950s the Tory Government went on a recruiting drive in its Caribbean processions and brought in shiploads of West Indians. (The great racist, Enoch Powell, was the Government Minister responsible for this.) By the late 1950s there were areas where the workforce consisted largely of Irish and West Indians. And the Irish functioned as a buffer, and intermediary, between the West Indians and the native English.

The West Indian presence was more distinctive and forceful than the Irish. West Indians came to Britain thinking they were British and feeling entitled, which was not the case with the Irish. And they were Protestant in large part, and were addicted to cricket. And their rate of erosion through intermarriage with minimal. So they lived their own life, and lived it vigorously.

The situation was altered greatly by the influx of a middle-class non-white population that was cleared out of Uganda by Idi Amin. The British Empire colonised Uganda with a population from India. That British/Indian colony (which might be loosely compared with the Anglo-Irish colony in 18th century Ireland), adopted English attitudes towards the African population, and therefore fell victim to the African national development. They came to England in large numbers as the “*Ugandan Asians*” and had to be accommodated within the middle to upper class.

Some laws about race had been brought in a little while earlier, after the Notting Hill riots, but now they began to be enforced in earnest. The State, for reasons of state, decided that it must break the colour bar on which it had prided itself for so long. The state-oriented British populace gradually submitted to this as a necessity of state. And history began to be re-written (especially in the entertainment industry) for purpose of blurring the racist past. The filmed version of Jane Austen novel might have injected into it a concern about the Caribbean Slave Labour camps on which so much of English prosperity dependent.)

A Naval exhibition at Greenwich in the millennium year gave a pretty fair account of the part played by slavery in the British development. (The Royal Navy was for a couple of centuries the basic institution of the state and it liked to keep things factual.) The matter was indignantly raised in Parliament. Didn’t the organisers of the Exhibition know that what England did with slavery was abolish it? (Well, it won a monopoly of the Slave Trade in its first Great War in the early 18th century, and gave production by industrial slave labour its highest development in the modern world for over a hundred years, before abolishing it in the 19th century in favour of the more economic wage labour capitalism. And it compensated the Caribbean slave-owners for the loss of their slave properties, but just cut the slaves loose to fend for themselves.)

Virtuous Falsifiers Of History

Is it right to falsify history in support of current policy? That is a question that somehow comes to mind in connection with the way Martin Mansergh deals with things.

The answer given by English practice is that it is right. England bends history one way with regard to its own affairs. And, having been given the power to do so by the default of Irish academia, it bends Irish history very much the other way.

The Destruction Of Iraq

When the US and the UK invaded Iraq in 2003 for the purpose of destroying its system of state (i.e., *regime change*) Martin Mansergh was a Fianna Fail Senator. He had been on the staff of a number of Fianna Fail Taoiseachs what was then making a career for himself as a Fianna Fail representative in the Oireachtas. He had been appointed to the Senate and aspired to be in the Dail. An aspiring politician in an effectively conducted political party does not step out of line when an awkward issue arises for the party. He put the Party/ Government line in a number of media encounters with opponents of the Government decision to let Shannon airport be used minute by the United States to the extent that the United States required.

The Government argument, as we recall it, was that allowing Shannon to be used by American warplanes for this act of war, as they had previously used it when they were not engage in acts of war, did not amount to supporting the war, and, to have stopped American use of it just because it was now to be used in an act of war, would be a hostile act against Washington which would be construed as support for the evil tyrant in Baghdad.

Washington would undoubtedly have treated the closing of Shannon to it as being at least an act of disobedience and would in due course have awarded it an appropriate punishment.

So it was not a case of negligently letting an existing arrangement run on in greatly changed circumstances. The change of circumstances had to be noticed because Ireland was inconveniently represented on the Security Council around that time. And, despite the ending of the Cold War by the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Security Council found itself unable to authorise the action against Iraq which Washington was determined to take. The stinking cheese-eating surrender monkeys, the French, would not agree to an invasion unless the UN Inspectors in Iraq reported that there were some grounds for supposing that Saddam Hussein had, despite ten years of close supervision and continuous bombing of his state infrastructure, got concealed Weapons of Mass Destruction at his disposal and was therefore a danger to the world. Washington would not wait for a final report by the Inspectors because it had good reasons for knowing that Saddam Hussein had no WMD, and it would not allow Saddam's list of the weapons he held, drawn up at the request of the Security Council, to be circulated to the members of the Security Council.

The issue was whether the US might assemble a "*Coalition of the willing*" to save the world from Saddam Hussein, and act without UN authority when UN action was being obstructed by the French. The established Irish position was that it could support no act of war that was not authorised by the UN. But the most powerful state in the world, which was also its best friend, was intent on engaging in an act of war without UN authority and it wanted the use of Shannon airport. What was the ultra-conciliatory Taoiseach to do?

He agreed to let Shannon be used in the war but hoped it would not be noticed. Or he did not agree, but only did not disagree. And the Iraqi state would be destroyed in any case. So what did it matter?

We recall Bertie Ahern squirming with embarrassment when it was put to him that Washington was treating him as a member of the "*Coalition of the willing*". It was unfair. Ireland was only a little state, and what it did was only a little thing.

Mansergh says now that, "*While this certainly stretched neutrality to breaking point, it was done in the belief that to do the opposite risked serious damage to our economic and employment interests... The Government made it clear that it did not support the war*".

It did not support the war. It's only facilitated it to the extent that the aggressor required of it! (The US was an aggressor, wasn't it?)

Saying that it does not support a war which it facilitated only makes sense if the meaning is that it did not advocate war. We never suggested that it did. It wished the US would not make war without the fig-leaf of a UN Resolution, but when it did it was given such tangible support as it required.

"Once the war was over, the UN passed a resolution calling on all member States to give every assistance to the peaceful reconstruction of Iraq, fully justifying from then on the continued use of Shannon..."

So it did. But by then the damage was done. A functional state was reduced to a murderous shambles. Anarchy and religious feuding were deliberately incited by the invaders from the outset.

It was clear enough before the invasion, and should be indisputably obvious in hindsight, that the elements suppressed by the Baath regime would not, if freed from the restrictions of that regime, cohere into a liberal democracy. The Baath regime (the Dictatorship, the Tyranny) was liberal and secular. It was not democratic, in that it did not operate by means of a free conflict of parties regular elections, but the possibility of liberal-democratic development lay entirely with it. It was progressively drawing support from the fundamentalist

elements into the functioning of the state. In the test of war—the war against the Islamic revolution in Iran, in which it was supported by the democratic West—the Baath regime held firm internally, demonstrating that it was adequately representative of Iraqi society to direct it increasingly towards what Europe and America considered to be normal. There was an expanding sector of Western-style bourgeois life within it (in which personnel from Ireland played some part), and the fundamentalist religious forces were not creating mayhem against it.

The mayhem began when the invasion force called on the suppressed elements to assert themselves against the regime and take over from it.

The embers of Shia resentment against the Sunni core of the regime were fanned into flame by the revolutionary propaganda that accompanied the invasion.

The two most powerful states in the world—the Superpower and its side-kick—invaded with the overwhelming power. They made war on a state whose military power could never have had a chance against them, and which they had been shredding by systematic bombing and draconian sanctions for ten years previously with United Nations approval (killing, it was estimated, 10,000 Iraqi civilians). These irresistible states, the pioneers of liberal democracy, called on the remnants of religious fundamentalism to rise up and take over. And the UN called on Ireland to give every assistance to this peaceful reconstruction of Iraq, thus obliging it to continue fuelling American war planes.

All States suppress something. Suppression of some things, and development of other things, are a large part of what the State does. If one supports—or even takes part in—the overthrow of a State, then one supports what the State has been suppressing.

If Martin Mansergh spoke against "*hubristic attempts to impose democracy from outside on countries like Iraq*", we must apologise for failing to notice it, and for only having noticed his defence of Government action in supporting the invasion to the extent required of it by Washington, and his post-invasion characterisation of the destroyed state, which suggested that the world was well rid of it.

When speaking against the imposition of democracy on Iraq by the Democratic Super-Power, did he also speak in support of the Iraqi state, which was doing wonders with the construction left behind by the British after decades of Imperialist rule through the medium of a concocted "*nation-state*" whose Governments it overthrew at will? If he did, then we must apologise most sincerely for failing to notice.

Shia and Sunni and Christians and others lived together, peacefully, cheek by jowl, for centuries under the Ottoman Empire. Britain declared war on the Ottoman state in November 1914, for the purpose of incorporating Arabia into the British Empire and connecting India with Egypt. It had already connected India with the Gulf, having partitioned Persia (Iran), taking the Southern strip for itself giving the Northern strip to Russia, and leaving a strip in the middle to be a buffer zone. And it had made a secret Treaty across the Gulf with the local leader of Kuwait. It invaded Basra in December 1914 from India expecting to roll up the Middle East for itself. In the first instance it governed conquered territory as an expansion of the Indian Empire, but when the Turkish resistance proved to be strong it decided to sponsor the development of Arab nationalism against Ottoman rule as an ally, offering to recognise an Arab State when the war was won, and it procured a declaration of Jihad against Turkey.

Transfer of the Middle East from the Ottoman Empire to the British, with continuing Imperial government, would probably

have been workable. When that had to be abandoned in order to stir up an Arab nationalism, a general Arab State might have been workable. But France, which was bearing the main cost of the War on Germany, insisted on having a piece of the Middle East, so it was divided. And then in 1917 a Jewish colonisation of Palestine was set in motion.

After the War the Arab State was proclaimed in Damascus, and was suppressed by France.

Britain divided its share of the Middle East into three states, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine, and in the League of Nations gave it itself Mandates to govern them and prepare them to be nation-states. The various peoples in the territory called Iraq had no traditional sense of unity amongst themselves and of separation from the peoples of Syria. It seemed possible that Britain could manipulate a spurious nation-state of Iraq into long-term subordination to its interests, nipping authentic national developments in the bud, as it had been done in Ireland. It exerted control by means of a combination of fraud and coercion.

But its handling of world affairs after 1919 was so incompetent that only twenty years later it saw advantage in making war on Germany again—a Germany to which it had given active support for five years after it became Nazi, though it had kept its wings clipped until 1933 when it was a democracy—and on fighting that war as a World War. The Iraqi Government availed of the situation to assert its independence by declaring itself neutral in Britain's war—Just as the Irish Government did.

Churchill responded as he said he would have had the right to respond against Ireland: he invaded and brought Iraq into the War. Iraq had a 'Treaty', you see, just like Ireland—a unique kind of Treaty in the diplomatic world: a Treaty of subordination.

The Iraqi Government did not revoke its Treaty. The issue was that it asserted the right to supervise the passage of a British Army through its territory for an invasion of Iran. Churchill denied that it had any such right. He invaded Iraq, overthrew its Government, and established a puppet Government which lasted for a generation.

The national development of the peoples in the territory of Iraq into the body-politic of an Iraqi nation-state began with the establishment of the Baath regime. And that national development was going strong when the US and UK decided to destroy it and raise up antagonistic religious fundamentalisms in its place.

The political killing involved in the operation of the Baath regime is put in perspective by what immediately followed its overthrow by the Democratic superpowers. I am grateful to David Morrison for the following assessment:

"So, on 19 March 2003, how many innocent Iraqis would one expect Saddam Hussein to kill in the next twelve months, if he were left alone? Presumably, the Prime Minister had a figure in his head when he spoke. Scores would seem to be a reasonable guess: Amnesty International estimated that "scores of people, including possible prisoners of conscience, were executed" in 2002 [1], a similar number in 2001 [2] and "hundreds" in 2000 [3] – and nobody can accuse Amnesty International of being soft on Saddam Hussein. So, had Saddam Hussein been left alone, a reasonable guess is that a thousand people would have been killed by his regime over the next decade.

In fact, the US/UK invasion of Iraq and the destruction of the Ba'athist state that followed may have cost the lives of a million Iraqis, certainly the lives of hundreds of thousands. The precise number will never be known. In March 2015, *Physicians for Social Responsibility* published a review of the various estimates of deaths in Iraq [4] and concluded that, from the invasion in March 2003 until December 2011 when US troops were withdrawn, "the war has, directly or indirectly,

killed around 1 million people in Iraq" (p15). So, it would have taken Saddam Hussein's regime hundreds of years to match the carnage produced by Bush and Blair.

[1] www.refworld.org/docid/3edb47d84.html

[2] www.refworld.org/docid/3cf4bc140.html

[3] www.atour.com/news/international/200107101.html

[4] www.psr.org/assets/pdfs/body-count.pdf "

(See Annex II)

Ireland

The British Government treated Ireland as a Dominion after 1933 though it repealed the 'Treaty' Oath, ceased to take part in Commonwealth affairs, and regarded itself as a *de facto* republic. De Valera found it convenient to leave in place a formal connection with the Crown that he considered to be of no practical consequence. When questioned about whether he had made the Free State a republic, he suggested that the questioners should look up '*Republic*' in the dictionary and decide for themselves.

This echoed what Tom Paine, the ideologist of republicanism, had said about Britain itself. He said in effect that England was a republic under the form of a Monarchy.

The ruling class that took over during the generation following the Anti-Catholic *coup d'état* of 1688 decided that this should be the case. The matter was in some doubt under William of Orange and Queen Anne. But became a fact when a German-speaking King was adopted in 1714, and was put beyond doubt when the first English-speaking George was prevented from treating Parliament as a pool from which he might choose the Ministers of his Government and was obliged to accept the political party that won an election as the governing party.

The eleven years of the Republic (1649-1660) had been problematical and some of these problems were warded off after 1714 by preserving the form of the monarchy but having its powers exercised by a Prime Minister who was the leader of the majority party in Parliament.

The arrangement was not clear-cut and it required confidence on the part of Parliament that it could master its ambiguities. But the Whigs and Tories were nothing if not a self-confident ruling class once they settled down after the *contretemps* of 1714.

De Valera was confident that he could master the ambiguities of the vestigial relationship with the Crown and saw some advantage in letting it be. But the Irish body-politic was not as secure in itself as the English became under Walpole's Prime Ministership. The Whigs carried out a couple of executions in 1714 and allowed a few exiles, but the exiles, the chief of which was Bolingbroke, soon returned and began to play their part as Tories within Walpole's accomplished facts. But in the Free State there had been a bitter war between the parties, miscalled a Civil War. It had no 'civil' content. It was not a case of a national movement achieving independent statehood and then falling into conflict with itself over how the state should be governed. That is how it has been represented by academic historians in the deluge of academic publishing that followed Professor Crotty's appeal to Oxbridge in the 1970s to take a Irish affairs in hand again. It is how England wanted to be seen. But it is not how was. The 'Treatyites' did not find that—having played a part in making Ireland an independent state, a Republic in fact—they wanted to restore a connection with the Crown for which they had fought in 1922.

If the Treatyites were Royalists and Imperialists, they would have had an ideal to realise when they defeated the Republicans, and as decisive military victors would have realised it. But

in fact most Treatyites wanted the same kind of state as the Republicans that they made war on: an independent Republic. Other elements—represented by the Church of Ireland and the *Irish Times*—attached themselves to the Treatyites, but those elements were in no way responsible for the Treaty split. They did not have the power or influence to cause it. They were outsiders in the War of Independence—let's say that they were a foreign element in the country because the source meaning of 'foreign' is 'outside'—and only the insiders could have caused the Treaty split and brought about the semblance of Civil War.

Most Treatyites accepted the Crown, and fought for it, because the Minister of the Crown had got them to believe that the alternative was not a continuation of the Republic established in 1919, but a comprehensive Imperial reconquest with the gloves off.

The Plantation poet, Spenser—who has been much in favour in Irish academic literary circles in recent times—proposed that the Irish should be put down once and for all by means of Concentration Camps and a connected chain of military blockhouses around the country. That is how the British conquest of the Boer Republics was achieved only 20 years before the Treaty. Nationalist Ireland had sympathised with the Boers and knew how their spirit had been broken. What Lloyd George's threat of immediate and terrible war was taken to mean was the application South African methods to Ireland. And it was to ward off that prospect that people became Treatyites. Something would be saved by submission to the Treaty—Otherwise all would be lost. The Treaty was accepted for fear of something worse.

Collins denied that he acted under the duress of this prospect. Most Treatyites did act under it. If Collins did not, that suggests that there must have been some sinister motive behind his actions.

The Treaty War was not fought for an ideal of state by the Treatyites. IRA members in the Free State Army fought against the idea for which they had joined the Volunteers. That is presumably why the Free State victory was not followed by the establishment of a secure Free State regime. Fear of Britain gave them electoral victory in 1923, but as the fact of the collapse of Imperial morale in Britain began to be seen in Ireland, the electorate began to revert to voting Republican. And the Treatyite intransigence of the Free State leaders, and their determination to keep on rubbing the noses of Republicans in the fact of their military defeat, kept the IRA in being as a necessary component of an essentially unstable situation.

Why did the Treatyites make it difficult for Republicans, following their defeat in war, to slip into the political life of the triumphant Free State, instead of encouraging them to do so and thus consolidating the Free State? And why were they blind to the sickness that overtook British Imperial morale when the War Coalition fell in 1922 following its misadventure in Turkey? The reason would seem to be connected with the fact that they had launched the Civil War under British duress, that what they fought for was not what they wanted, and that therefore when they won the war they were unable to make rational purposeful use of their victory in statecraft.

And then when, after fifteen years of electoral defeats by Fianna Fail, they returned to Office, apparently having recovered their Republican spirit when they supported De Valera's refusal to make the state available to Britain for its second World War on Germany, they could not let the ineffective vestige of the Treaty, which he had seen no purpose and abolishing, remain in place. They needed to assert their recovered faith by abolishing that harmless vestige.

Erskine Childers had tried to get it understood in 1921-2 that nationalist Ireland could not in fact be a Dominion because it was not a colony. He pointed out that Dominion status

for Ireland could never be more than a deceptive democratic makeshift because the Irish national development was not the development of a colony.

The meaning of the word colony has been changed in recent decades to mean an Imperial possession, but for a long period the term in use was "*the Empire and Colonies*". The colonies in that sense, which is the original sense of the word, were pieces of English society that was hived off to develop societies of the English kind in some of the conquered territories.

The American colonies were mishandled. They rebelled and asserted themselves as a sovereign state against England. A period of antagonism followed the establishment of the United States. But President Jefferson, who asserted Washington sovereignty over the territories to the West that were still inhabited by other peoples, also set in motion with relation to England a strategy of hegemonising it. And that is how the relationship has worked out.

Whitehall was more careful in its handling of the English Colonies in Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. The native populations of these territories were exterminated and the English colonisers filled themselves out, under English protection, to fill the entire space and become the Australians, New Zealanders and Canadians. And these were the Dominions at the time of the Great War and the Irish War of Independence.

Those Dominions/Colonies were at the core of what in those days was called Greater Britain, and they were members of what might be considered the ruling group within the Empire. They were independent insofar as they wanted to be. There was no contingency military planning for action against them. They were themselves part of the military resources of the Empire, in which they were active militarily.

The Dominions were colonies that had become nations in the English family of nations. In Ireland National development had been anti-colonial in the strict sense.

The Williamite colony put in place after the military defeat of the Irish in 1690, protected by Penal Laws against the Irish, and given a Parliament to exercise their dominance in (which was accorded legislative independence in 1782) failed entirely to acquire the substance of a nation—even though under the Penal Laws they called themselves the Protestant nation.

The Irish national development occurred in conflict with the colonial stratum. It first asserted itself purposefully after the Colonial Parliament was abolished in 1800 and in the course of four generations it eroded the substance of the colony.

It took back possession of the country not just in conflict with the English State but in conflict with the English colony that had been imposed for the purpose of displacing it. It was therefore inherently unsuited to playing the part of a Dominion in the Empire. And it was only under coercion that it signed up to play the nominal part of a Dominion.

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The colony that was inserted into Ireland after the defeat of the Irish in 1690 came to be called the Anglo-Irish. There is a suggestion in the words that they were a mixture of English and Irish, but that is what they never were. They were an English colony in Ireland—and as such, perhaps, were a mixture of peoples, but their purpose in Ireland required them to remain aloof from the Irish, which they did to the bitter end—i.e., until the Irish formed a government of their own and, by military action in defence of it, obliged a British Government to make terms with it. □

May 28 - Centenary of Azerbaijan

By Pat Walsh

Azerbaijan celebrated its centenary on May 28th, 2018. That is the founding date of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic in 1918.

During the couple of years of its initial existence the state proclaimed by the Azerbaijani Government struggled to exercise territorial integrity and independence in the conditions of the Great War that engulfed it. However, it was also born as a result of that War, out of the sheer necessity of organising a people into nationhood to ensure their survival, as killing and destruction raged all around them.

That is how nations often come about - in adversity, in now or never moments of decision. And nations often are made not fully formed, with much to be done to ensure their survival and development. It is not a process that can be systemised.

All nations search for their foundations. It should never be assumed, however, that one nation is superior to another because it has an older narrative or is more ethnically pure. Such beliefs are characteristic of aggressive nationalism and the worst type of nations.

The area that forms the modern nation of Azerbaijan was invaded many times over the previous two millennia and had a number of rulers including the Persians, Macedonians, Romans, Seljuk Turks, Ottoman Turks and Russians. It is thought that the people who became the Azerbaijani nation had their origins in Caucasian Albania, a pre-Christian and early Christian people who were Islamized in the 7th Century. It is likely that those who remained Christian were absorbed by the Gregorian Church and became Armenians.

Clearly the people who became Azerbaijanis were exposed to a number of influences which had an impact on their character. The area in which these people lived was subject to western migrations by Turkic speaking peoples from the 6th Century onwards. The Oghuz Turks who came from the east inter-married with local people resulting in a rich mixture of Turkic culture, Zoroastrian and then Islamic values.

Persian rule from the 16th to the 18th Century and acceptance of Shia Islam marked the Azerbaijani Turks out from the Ottoman Turks with whom they shared a language and identified ethnically - although some remained Sunni Moslem. The Ottoman Turks themselves ruled Azerbaijan during a period toward the end of the 16th Century.

If the Ottomans had never come or had remained longer or the Russians had not taken control of the Southern Caucasus from the Persians, the Azerbaijanis would no doubt have been different than they are now. But that is history - and it is history that makes nations, not races.

It is sometimes suggested that Azerbaijan is a recent, twentieth century, artificial creation. The inference is that the Azerbaijanis are newcomers to the region and don't deserve to be there or to be called a nation. Of course, the prime propagators of this narrative are the Armenian writers/propagandists who like to portray Azerbaijanis as mere products of the Ottoman Turks.

It should be first noted that whilst the Azerbaijani Turks are the dominant ethnic group in Azerbaijan, Azerbaijanis have consisted of a range of peoples, including Armenians, Russians, Jews, Talysh and Lezgins. Whilst Armenian nationalism has demonstrated in historical experience to be essentially a project aimed at building a pure homogeneous Armenian nation

composed entirely of Armenians, Azerbaijani nationalism has, in contrast, been an inclusive and heterogeneous development aimed at blending a number of peoples into a nation.

As Ernest Renan (What is a Nation?) and later, Joseph Stalin, said a nation is a historically evolved mixture of things like race, religion, language, geography, economic interest and dynastic influence. These things are blended in various proportion to make up the nation through a historical process that gives a sense of communal affinity between a large number of people to form a nationality. The historically evolved blend is what becomes the nation.

Nations are not imagined or invented. They are generated by real historical events. They are not eternal either. They come about gradually and then emerge suddenly and may fall apart or become something different later.

The Azerbaijani nation emerged unexpectedly in 1917-18 as a result of a unique set of events. It had the pre-requisites of nationhood in a common possession of a rich heritage of memories and a desire of its people to live as a common community. In 1917-18 they were forced to stand together to ensure their survival as a people in the situation of extreme flux that had developed in the Caucasus out of the Russian collapse in the Great War. It was not a case of improvisation by the Ottomans or the small Azerbaijani national intelligence. The material was there and it began to coalesce in the fire raging across the Caucasus.

In the case of Azerbaijan the blend making up the nation involved the inclusion of as many elements as possible in a rich, complex mix of peoples making up a common community. That made nation building more difficult in that cohesion was more difficult to achieve.

In the case of Armenia, on the other hand, the nation-building process involved securing the maximum amount of territory for a state whilst reducing the non-Armenian elements as much as possible within that territory.

Perhaps it is the case that Armenian nationalism got its narrow racialist conception of nationhood from the Anglosphere which began promoting Armenians to a higher status than other peoples of the region, insisting that this special people become a nation among the less favoured parts of the majority of humanity. In the 19th Century Britain and its Anglo-Saxon offshoot across the Atlantic were saturated by racialist conceptions of the world. Such notions did not start to die until the admiring Hitler acted upon them with purpose in Europe and brought them into disrepute.

Armenian nationalism probably believed that in advancing the notions of 'Magna Armenia' that were expressed by the Anglosphere, as a civilised Christian Island in a sea of lesser humanity, they would gain an advantage among the other peoples of the region in which they lived. They, as a special people, would be resurrected and take their place among the nations of the world whilst others carried on in their mundane traditional existences, somewhere else.

The Armenian nationalists fully absorbed the ideas of their western patrons and they attempted a realisation of them through their project of Greater Armenia, with disastrous results for both their own people and those who lived around them.

It is natural to feel sympathy for the Armenians for what they ultimately suffered. They suffered catastrophe through

the pursuit of Magna Armenia by their armed nationalists, the Dashnaks. Many innocents perished in the pursuit of the insane project of establishing a Great Armenia in a cataclysmic Great War out of a territory in which the Armenians constituted only a small minority. However, how Armenian nationalism has acted before and since 1915, and particularly in relation to their Azerbaijani neighbours, suggests that their nationalism is poisonous.

It is undoubtedly the case that nations which form themselves into homogeneous cores based on racial principles, using every opportunity to expel any elements that do not satisfy their requirements as pure breeds, should be confined to the minimum possible territory for the good of humanity around them.

I The Tsarist Period

Tsar Peter the Great conquered the Caspian coastal territories in 1723. The following year he issued an edict for the resettlement of Armenians on these lands to bolster the defences of his frontiers.

At that point, under Safavid rule, Azerbaijan was divided into a series of independent khanates who engaged in shifting local alliances and were often in conflict with each other. The peoples of these khanates were multi-ethnic and practiced a number of religions. The largest component, however, were a number of Turcoman tribes.

The Armenians in 1787 petitioned Catherine the Great to get rid of the Persians and establish a territory for Christian Armenians under Russian suzerainty. They placed their military forces at the Empress's disposal but were disappointed when the Russians were more inclined just to conquer the area and Russify it.

Russia concluded treaties with the Tartar khanates in 1805 and 1828. Nicholas I then signed an edict on the establishment of Armenian colonies on the Erivan and Nakhchivan khanates. There is little doubt from Russian sources that the Azerbaijani Turks were the recognised possessors of these territories, rather than Armenians, and represented around three quarters of the population in the early nineteenth century in the area. However, the scattered Armenians were used to form a colony by the Tsar. When the Russians established an Armenian *oblaston* the territory of the Erivan and Nakhjivan khanates Armenian majorities began to be constructed - as tends to be the pattern with successful colonies.

The Tsarist policy of creating a buffer plantation of Armenians by drawing them in from Persia and Ottoman territories began to alter the population balance in the region.

Azerbaijanis undoubtedly regarded the Russians as foreigners and saw their policy as generally anti-Moslem and more favourable to Christians in the region. There was a long and bloody conflict at the start of the 19th Century between Russia and Iran over the khanates of the Southern Caucasus before the Tsarist State finally drove the Persians south of the Araz River. The Treaty of Turkmenchai transferred sovereignty over the khanates of Erivan, Nakhichevan and Ordubad to Russia, leaving about two thirds of Azerbaijanis and their territories with Iran, which is the situation up to the present day with the 20 million Azerbaijanis constituting about a third of Iran's population.

So, the modern state of Azerbaijan is Russian Azerbaijan and its people.

Over the early decades of the 19th Century, up until the 1840s, what became Azerbaijan was under Tsarist military rule. It then came under Russian civil imperial administration until 1918. During this period Armenians tended to move North from Persia into the Russian Azerbaijani territory creating some

local Armenian majorities. In most of the *gubernia*/provinces the Azerbaijani Turks constituted the majority of the populace, except in Erivan, which by 1900 had developed a two-thirds Armenian population. Erivan later became the Armenian state.

Whilst traditional life went on in most areas Tsarist rule Baku became an industrialised town in the 19th Century, arising from the oil industry. This produced a commercial bourgeoisie and proletariat and an influx of Russian and other settlers. Armenians also began to move into Shemakhi, Ganje and Karabakh from the mid-19th Century. Armenians in Baku were often the most wealthy merchants and oilmen and prominent in the professions. Armenians were favoured by the Russian administration over the local Moslems who were barred from a number of professions and limited to a minority of political posts.

Baku became a distinctive place as a result of the industrialising process with a high proportion of migrants and a cosmopolitan character. Whilst some migrants began to see Baku as an island, in the ocean around it were Azerbaijani Turks and to these natives the ocean was the hinterland of the town.

In the late 19th Century Azerbaijan and Baku in particular were affected by a Turkish cultural renaissance centred on Turkic language development and education. The intellectual elite that developed was also Western-orientated, secular, reformist and nationalist with many socialist ideals. At this point a distinct Azerbaijani self-perception began to develop on top of the previous general Turkic or Moslem identity.

Azerbaijani nationalism had its own distinct character. It had nothing to do with the Pan-Islamic or Pan-Turanian obsessions of British Imperial writers. These notions were advanced on both British and Russian sides of the 'Great Game' as phantom menaces. The idea of Turks forming a common race from the Bosphorus to the Chinese Wall was invented in the 1860s by a Hungarian Orientalist, Arminius Vambery, who worked for British Intelligence. Enver Pasha of the Young Turks later flirted with it as a potential idea for mobilising people against the Imperialists to the West and North but it had few advocates in Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijani Turks had a Caucasian and Persian character that made them complex and quite distinct from their Turkish brothers and sisters to the West. They had many divisions within themselves too: Northern Azerbaijanis were more affected by the Russian influence than their southern counterparts, who were more Iranian influenced.

Stalin once asked what "*national character*" was? He answered the question himself by stating that it was "*the sum total of characteristics which distinguish the people of one nationality from the people of another nationality - the complex of physical and spiritual characteristics which distinguish one nation from another.*" (Marxism and the National Question)

The Azerbaijanis had no desire to be Ottoman Turks, Iranians, Russians or Georgians and they certainly were not Armenians.

The Azerbaijani national forces that began taking shape coalesced into the Musavat (Equality) Party around 1911/12 but the Musavats only really came to political significance during the cataclysmic events of 1917-18.

Armenian Dashnaksutiu activity, aimed at carving out an Armenian state in the region was the main instigator of conflict between the different communities, particularly in 1905 when it set off inter-communal violence in many areas. This set the pattern for later trouble. It was nearly always Armenian aggression over the possession of territory that provoked reprisals that took place against Armenians from the Azerbaijani Turks. Garegin Pasdermajian, the Dashnak leader, boasts that the Armenians managed to kill 5 times as

many of the Tartars than the Azerbaijanis managed to kill of the Armenians (Armenia and her claim to Freedom and National Independence) despite claiming self-defence!

The Dashnak activity had two major effects: Firstly, it led to a new sorting of populations in which majorities got larger and minorities declined. Secondly, it generated Azerbaijani nationalism beyond the intellectual elite as ordinary Moslems had to become a more coherent body to defend their existence and territory.

II The Great War

When Russia went to War on Austro-Hungary and Germany the Tsar exempted the Azerbaijan Turks from the general mobilisation for War in July 1914. Tatars had been traditionally distrusted by the Tsar and as a consequence had remained a largely unmilitarised people. On the other hand, the Armenians joined the Russian forces in large numbers (180,000 according to Pasdermajian) as well as forming irregular forces to harass the Ottomans behind the lines in Anatolia. The Armenians went with the Tsar's armies with the hope of inheriting a territory, or at least achieving the expulsion of the Moslems to make Armenia possible.

While the Armenians actively participated in the Great War to gain a territory the Azerbaijanis got on with their lives as best they could behind the front line. They remained loyal to Tsarist Russia despite being passed over for war service. In 1916 Azerbaijani leaders in Ganje offered their population for active military service to the Tsar but their offers were turned down and the Azerbaijani Turks were only admitted to labour battalions. Ganje was always the centre of the national movement and it was much more representative of Azerbaijanis than Baku.

The Musavat Party expressed support for the Russian Empire even when the Ottomans joined the conflict in November 1914 but there was little interest in the Great War until it came to Azerbaijan in 1917. The Azerbaijani population in the Western Caucasus seem to have suffered from some elements in the Tsarist army who rampaged behind the battle lines, but the Musavat Party continued its support of Russia.

The Azerbaijanis were essentially a quiescent people who still had to develop a national will, political program or direction. That was hardly surprising: Russia not only discouraged Azerbaijani military expressions but also political activity of any kind. In Baku all political tendencies from Liberals, to Left SRs, to Mensheviks and Bolsheviks excluded the Azerbaijanis, expecting them to stay as passive observers of political events. When the Musavat Party actually won the election to the Baku Soviet in October 1917 it came as a great shock and the Bolsheviks nullified the result and excluded them. Baku showed itself to be a Russian colonial outpost assembling all elements, including the Russian garrison and Armenians together to overcome the Moslem masses. Bolsheviks, Left SRs and Dashnaks combined to keep out the Musavat Party and "reactionary" forces from political influence.

In Ganje things were different and a national movement began to emerge. An Azerbaijani military expression, denied participation in the Russian army, also started to take shape. However, the Azerbaijanis were the least armed, organised and militarily experienced element in the region. And in the situation that was developing in 1917/18 that was a serious handicap.

The first Congress of Caucasian Moslems met in Baku in April 1917, in the aftermath of the February Revolution in Russia, and stood on a position of a democratic, federal new Russia. The Musavat Party which represented the main body of Azerbaijanis had a programme of national autonomy for an

Azerbaijani state within a federal Russia. The Musavats sought to realise it at a Constituent Assembly, which was supported by the Mensheviks, Cadets and Social Revolutionaries. The Bolsheviks, whilst determined to repress the Musavat, encouraged this development and similar ones elsewhere with the various decrees they issued encouraging national self-determination.

In November 1917 the main political forces in the South Caucasus, including the Georgians, Armenians and Azerbaijanis held a meeting in Tiflis, and refused to recognise the new Bolshevik government in Russia and set up the Transcaucasian Commissariat. However, this provisional government had no army to enforce its authority. The Armenians and Georgians began forming military forces but it was more difficult for the Azerbaijanis, who had no military traditions in the Tsar's army.

At this point the Russian lines were collapsing upon Lenin's Land for the people Decrees and the Ottoman army, which had been under serious pressure up until that point, saw an opportunity to advance eastwards. The Transcaucasian Commissariat signed an armistice with the Ottomans in Erzincan and then convened in Tiflis, Georgia, in February 1918 to announce the establishment of the Transcaucasian Seim, which claimed authority over the South Caucasus (Georgia/ Armenia/ Azerbaijan).

On March 3 1918 the Bolsheviks conceded to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and the German demands. Along with territorial concessions in Ukraine and Belarus the Bolsheviks handed over Kars, Ardahan and Batum to the Ottomans. Lenin's Degree of January 1918, *On Armenia*, which declared in favour of an Armenian state, was nullified *de facto* by the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.

However, both the Georgian and Armenian deputies in the Seim wished to continue the war with the Ottomans and declared a state of war with Istanbul, against the wishes of the Azerbaijanis. They tried to hold Batum against the Ottomans in defiance of the Treaty signed by the Bolsheviks. On the Turkish side Enver Pasha offered to recognise the Seim and the establishment of an Armenian state on the condition all hostilities against the Turks were ended.

At the end of March Ottoman forces reached the pre-War Turkish-Russian border and captured Batum on 14 April. On 22 April the Seim proclaimed the independent Transcaucasian Federative Republic. It entered into negotiations with the Ottomans at Batum.

At this point the Seim began to fall apart. The Georgians withdrew and declared independence under German protection on May 26. The Azeris concluded that they would have to do the same with the withdrawal of the Georgians and established a government on 28 May. The Armenians followed suit at the same time.

On 3 June the Batum Treaty was signed between the Ottomans, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. This settled the boundaries of the region including the recognition of the Armenian Republic by the Ottomans. However, the Armenians were very disappointed with the size of their Armenian state and had no intention to abide by the Treaty they had signed. Given the chance they would return to the Greater Armenia project and already there were defections.

III Massacres of Azerbaijani Turks

The fluid situation provoked a series of atrocities conducted against Azerbaijanis by the Armenian Dashnaks. The main reason for these massacres was the Dashnak attempt to carve out Magna Armenia - a great Armenian state - out of territory that was overwhelmingly Moslem. To accomplish such a thing what are today called Genocide and ethnic cleansing were

essential. Terror was therefore brought to peaceful Moslem villages by roving heavily armed Armenian bands who would suddenly arrive, set fire to the settlements, steal all possessions, and kill the inhabitants, regardless of sex or age. Very few were spared. Those who escaped often perished in the open countryside through cold, starvation or disease. Prominent among the perpetrators were Generals Andranik and Dro.

The Dashnaks were let loose by the collapse of Russian control of them. Previously the Tsarist State had curbed the Armenians and prevented most excesses, which would have been against the Russian interest in their relations with Moslems. The Armenians were always resentful of Russian control of them, wanting the Russians to provide them with backing, but at the same time wanting to do what they thought fit with the Moslems. With the dissolving of the Tsarist command the Armenians found themselves the best armed and most militarised force in the region, being effectively able to do what they pleased to unarmed, defenceless Moslem populations who they wished to annihilate or drive out.

It should be stressed that this was a very different situation to that in Ottoman Turkey. Eastern Anatolia was part of the warzone in which the Armenians were in active insurrection against the Ottoman State. Dashnak forces harassed the Turks behind the lines and hundreds of thousands of Armenians served in the invading Tsarist armies.

In the Caucasus there were just peaceful Moslem villages, not involved in the Great War and not in insurrection against any state. The Azerbaijanis had never used the Russian difficulty to advance their national objectives, unlike the Armenians who sought to use any chance to further their Greater Armenia project. The Moslem population had never been militarised and just wanted to live in peace and stability with its neighbours. There were no Azeri Turk irregulars engaged in guerrilla warfare, like the Dashnaks for generations. There was no literary tradition for armed insurrection like the Armenian *Raffi*. There was no desire to provoke atrocities and sacrifice their own people to secure outside intervention. Nobody had told the Azerbaijani Turks or "*Tatars*" as the Russians called them, that they were a nation and deserved to have a state. The Azerbaijanis were forced into nationhood by what was being done to them.

Another element in the massacres that were taking place was Britain. The British seeing their Russian ally collapse needed a new army forming a new front to keep the Ottomans from transferring troops to the defence of Mesopotamia and Palestine, where British forces were advancing. The heavily armed, trained and experienced Armenians were the obvious choice. They had cause to fight for a homeland and had always been encouraged to do so by the Liberal Anglosphere. Britain hinted that the Dashnak project would be supported by whatever means necessary and went into alliance with General Andranik and his Dashnak bands. Anything to win the War it had staked so much on.

The problem, however, lay in the baggage the Dashnaks brought to the battlefield. They were not content to be mere instruments of Britain. They wished to carve out as big a territory as they could for an Armenian State and extreme measures in the hinterland of war were essential to this. The fact that they were a highly militarised minority among an unmilitarised majority meant they had great power over the local inhabitants despite being fairly small in number. Britain decided to turn a blind eye to their ethnic cleansing activities and suppress reports of it in the United States. Without the Armenians there would be no Allied front.

Through 1918 and 1919 the massacres of Azerbaijanis took place to clear the area for Greater Armenia.

Firstly, there were mass killings of Azerbaijani Turks in and around 7 villages of the Shimakh when around 3,000

heavily armed Armenians arrived from Baku. They proceeded to murder around 4,000 men, women and children, claiming that they had British support for their operations. Andranik had indeed been assured of it.

Then there was the terrible massacre in Baku at the end of March 1918. This began as a Bolshevik assault on the Musavat Party ordered by the Armenian Bolshevik Stepan Shaumyan. However, the heavily armed Dashnak forces of up to 20,000 men, upon whom the Bolsheviks depended for their power in the city, availed of the Bolshevik attack to massacre around 11,000 Azeri civilians over the course of just a few days. There was a mass exodus of Azerbaijanis to the countryside to escape the days of killing.

In Quba more than 16,000 civilians were massacred by Armenian forces in 3 separate assaults on villages in early 1918. 35 villages were raised to the ground in the general area. Not only Moslems were killed as the Dashnaks also slaughtered the local Jewish community and other minorities. Two Thousand were also put to death in the Lankaran area.

In Zangezur province forces under the command of General Andranik surrounded the Moslem population in a large sweep and proceed to destroy 115 villages. Nearly 8,000 people were slaughtered, including 2,000 children.

The ethnic cleansing operations continued through 1919 and was aimed at extending the land of 'Armenia' for the purposes of staking a claim to greater territory at the Paris Peace Conference. General Dro, the feared Dashnak leader, was involved in devastating 60 villages in the Igdir and Echmiedzin *uyezds*. He later fought for Hitler and was taken into SS confidence in being allowed to witness *einsatzgruppen* operations. Those who Dro's men did not kill often perished in thousands on the mountains, fleeing their devastated homes without food or shelter.

Between 1918 and 1920 tens of thousands of Azerbaijanis were expelled from Zangezur. It then became part of the Soviet Republic of Armenia cutting off the Nakhjivan region from the rest of Azerbaijan. In the 1940s there was another substantial deportation of Moslems from the area and the remaining non-Armenians were driven out in 1988-89 as Greater Armenia went on.

Hundreds of Moslem villages in Erivan *uyezds* were also destroyed by Dashnak forces in 1918/19. The Azerbaijani population of roughly 565,000 people were either killed or cleared from the territory that became the Armenian Republic. Probably something around 132,000 perished in all.

Andranik was also involved in massacres in Maku, Khoy and Urmia. Azerbaijani and Turkish resistance prevented these killings from being even greater but thousands still perished from the assaults of the Armenian Dashnak forces.

IV Establishment of Azerbaijani Democratic Republic

On 28 May 1918 the Moslem National Council issued a Declaration of Independence (*Misagi-Milli*) and proclaimed the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic. The Declaration invested authority in the all people regardless of race, religion, class or gender. Separation of Powers and the rule of law were fundamental principles of the new state that was being born.

The following day in Tiflis at a second sitting of the Council the relationship with Armenians was discussed. It was decided to support the ceding of traditional Azerbaijani lands in Erivan to the Armenians so they could establish their own state in peace. This was a very difficult decision and was opposed by the Erivan delegates. It was, however, recognised that the Armenians needed a national centre and a proposal to establish a confederation between the new states of Azerbaijan and Armenia was passed by the Council.

It should be recognised that this was a really generous position, given that Dashnak forces continued their ethnic cleansing activities at this time in pursuit of Magna Armenia. The Azeri intention was to put an end to historic disputes and establish good relations with the Armenians, despite the latter's belligerent attitude and thirst for territory. The Azerbaijani attitude was precisely the opposite to that of the Armenian Dashnaks.

The growing power in the region at this time, with the collapse of the Russian lines, however, were the Ottoman forces. The Azerbaijani Government signed a friendship treaty with Istanbul. The Ottomans promised to drive out the Armenian bands terrorising the territory of Azerbaijan and then take Baku off the Bolsheviks/Dashnaks.

On June 4 delegates from the newly independent states of the South Caucasus - Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia - signed the Treaty of Batum with the Ottomans. The Ottomans promised to give protection to the Azerbaijanis and military assistance to them to establish their state territory.

At this time the Azerbaijani national government had to function from Tiflis in Georgia due to the presence of foreign forces on Azerbaijani lands. It then relocated to Ganje province as a temporary capital in preparation for establishing itself in the desired capital of Baku, which had been the scene of the March massacres and was still under Bolshevik/Dashnak control, and occupied by an army of 20,000 Armenians.

The occupation of Baku by the Bolsheviks was much to do with the importance of its oil for the Soviet economy. Lenin struggled to maintain the state and knew it was vital to its defence. The problem lay in the alliance of convenience with the Dashnaks and the relegation of socialist principles to mere sloganising. This associated the Soviets with Armenian nationalism and its ethnic violence aimed at established a Greater Armenia at the expense of the Moslem population of the Caucasus. So, the Baku Soviet dismissed the Duma in the city and declared all opposition counter-revolutionary.

Stepan Shaumyan, the Armenian Bolshevik who was leader-in-waiting of the Armenia Lenin had declared support for, formed an alliance with General Andranik and pretended that the Dashnak commander was a Bolshevik. Andranik went along with the pretence as long as it suited his Greater Armenia programme. Far from being a Bolshevik, Andranik appeared on a platform with Lord Bryce and T.P. O'Connor and English Liberals in London shortly afterwards in support of an ethnic Magna Armenia.

It should be noted at this point that much of the reason for British arming and training of the Armenians was fear of pan-Turanianism and the obsession with a new German Railway through the Caucasus that would replace the Berlin-Baghdad proposal that Britain had frustrated by invading Mesopotamia. Actually there was very little support either among the Turks or Azerbaijanis for any unified state. The Azerbaijanis saw themselves as Caucasian as well as Turkic and Moslem. They were much more inclined to engage in confederation with the other peoples of the Caucasus and remain part of the Russian sphere of influence than become part of the Ottoman Empire or any Pan-Turanian project.

The Turkish advance into the Caucasus was not fundamentally based on Pan-Turanianism. It had some strategic and economic aspects and Enver Pasha had some dreams of linking up the Ottoman Empire with the Caucasian Moslems, but it was primarily about protecting fellow Moslems from massacre.

V The Battle for Baku

At this point the Bolshevik/Dashnak forces led by the Armenian Bolshevik Shaumyan launched an offensive against

the Azerbaijanis of Ganje Province. At the same time the Armenians began massacring and ethnically cleansing their new state at Erivan of Moslems, despite the reconciliation efforts of the Azerbaijani Government. Having no military capacity to defend its interests Ottoman assistance had to be utilised by the Azerbaijan Government to save its population as best it could.

As has been noted, the Azerbaijanis were a peaceful, unmilitarised people, unlike the heavily armed Armenians who had years of experience of both regular and irregular warfare in the Tsarist armies and behind the lines as *francs tireurs*. So the Ottomans, who were themselves sorely pressed by the British Invasion of Palestine and Mesopotamia, began to assist the training and organisation of Azerbaijani forces alongside their small army in the Caucasus. At the start only around 1000 men were available to them. The Caucasus Army of Islam began to be established to liberate Azerbaijan and it came to have around 18,000 in its ranks. Only the Ottoman third of this army was trained and battle-experienced.

In May 1918 the Ottomans began to liberate the Zangezur Province, encountering the scenes of Dashnak massacre of Moslems as they advanced. The Ottoman force was led by Nuri Pasha, Enver Pasha's brother, and Ganje was captured on 12 June. A Dashnak/Bolshevik counter-attack in Ganje was initially successful against the new Azerbaijani forces but the Army of Islam held its ground and the victory at Goychay had a great moral effect. In July further victories at Aghsu and Kurdemir against numerically superior forces of Dashnaks and Bolsheviks gave the momentum to the liberation army. The capture of Shamakhi from the Bolsheviks was another important milestone and when Lenin sent reinforcements from Ukraine they were defeated. The Army of Islam headed for Baku.

Enver Pasha provided corridors for Armenians to evacuate Baku and guaranteed safe passage for them to leave the city for Armenia. However, the Armenian will to fight was bolstered by the arrival of the British expeditionary force under General Dunsterville. This was a bad decision on the part of the Armenians. Given the experience of massacre of the Moslem population in March and the decision to resist the Ottoman forces there was very likely to be a retaliatory event when the city was taken. And so it proved.

General Dunsterville's force had the objectives of leading the Dashnak forces in Baku against the Ottomans, winning control of the oil fields or destroying them, if necessary.

Meanwhile, the Bolsheviks in Baku were overthrown by an alliance of Dashnaks, the British and SR/Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks, including Shaumyan, were allowed to leave the city and cross the Caspian. They were subsequently murdered by non-Bolshevik Soviets after capture. The Bolsheviks claimed that British officers organised the killings of the 26 in the Karakum desert.

The battle of Baku was the most important event for the Azerbaijani people. If Baku was not captured their survival was problematic and their state would be stillborn. Attempts to liberate the city in August were unsuccessful as at first stern resistance was mounted by the Dashnak/British/Soviet army. However, the Armenians began to give up the fight, the British evacuated and on September 15 the city fell with an unconditional surrender to the Army of Islam.

At this point the Ottomans controlled not only Russian Azerbaijan and Dagestan but Persian Azerbaijan, which had been a Russian zone of influence as part of the British/Russian carve up of Iran in 1907.

The Ottoman victory was short lived, however. The Ottomans conceded to the British at Mudros in October 1918. The Mudros Armistice, which fast became a defeat, obliged Ottoman forces to evacuate Baku. Britain refused to recognise the Azerbaijan

Democratic Republic and said all such matters needed to be brought to the Paris Peace Conference for settlement. When the Azerbaijani Government requested British forces leave General Thompson asked them where their army was, to compel him. Being reliant on the Ottoman Army, which had now conceded to Britain, nothing could be done.

General Thompson became Governor General of Baku. Britain, whilst refusing to recognise the Azerbaijani State, was content to let Azerbaijanis run it outside Baku on the understanding that the oil fields and infrastructure were under Thompson's control. Britain used Baku as a base to support the Russian White armies of Denikin, Kolchak and Yudenich against the Bolsheviks. The Azerbaijanis were reluctant to support Denikin because the Russian General intended to reincorporate the Caucasus in the Russian State once the Bolsheviks were defeated. They attempted to preserve neutrality in the Russian civil war that was raging.

At this point Britain decided to withdraw its military forces from the Caucasus and hand military responsibility for the area over to the Italians - whilst keeping the oil fields. Due to financial problems caused by fighting the Great War for so long beyond expectation and having to bail out their failing allies, Lloyd George's decision to demobilise his Great War army and the fact that Britain's military forces were becoming overstretched governing the additions to its Empire, the Caucasus had to be abandoned. Britain began withdrawing its forces from mid-May 1919 and completed its evacuation by August.

VI The Paris Peace Conference and after

The Azerbaijani Democratic Republic took their case for recognition to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. The French, under Armenian influence, and White Russians obstructed the Azerbaijani delegations efforts for a number of months. The Peace Conference sent an investigatory mission headed by an American, Benjamin Moore, to the Caucasus to examine the situation there.

In a Memo to President Wilson the Azerbaijani delegation put forward their claims to nationhood, including in it the sacrifices their people had made in the previous few years. The Memo stated that along with the destruction of 2 large towns, 500 villages had been razed and around 150,000 Moslem civilians had perished. President Wilson was requested to apply his Principles of Self Determination to the Azerbaijani people.

President Wilson was in favour of a confederation being established in the South Caucasus. Whilst the Georgians and Azerbaijanis found this acceptable the Armenians did not. They were out for a Greater Armenia composed of 6 and a half Vilayets of Turkey plus large areas of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Persia. They had many supporters in the Anglosphere but were, by now, militarily incapable of imposing their authority on the Moslem population of eastern Anatolia.

Britain's position on Azerbaijan was based on events in Russia and on the fortunes of the Bolsheviks. Lord Curzon sent a telegram to the Foreign Office in London reporting that on his initiative, the Entente Supreme Council had decided to recognize Azerbaijan and Georgia as independent states. The Supreme Council recognised the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan on January 11, 1920. In doing so they committed themselves to defending the 3 newly established national entities in the Caucasus against all foreign aggression.

The state of Azerbaijan had a population of just under 3 million in 1920, 70 per cent of whom were Moslem.

One of the first actions of the Azerbaijan Government was to establish an Extraordinary Investigation Commission, in June 1918, to investigate the activities of the Dashnak murder gangs and collect a large volume of evidence from survivors.

It was not content, like the Armenians to issue great claims of sacrifice without documented evidence. The Azerbaijanis did not have sponsors and propagandists in the West willing to tell exaggerated and misleading tales about their experiences. They had to provide hard facts if they were to receive any audience at all.

The Azerbaijani Government had no experience in statecraft and in many ways the Azerbaijani people had been forced into nationhood in order to preserve their continued existence to a great extent. However, the new state made a good start in establishing democratic institutions and became one of only a handful of states in the world to enfranchise women, and the first in the region. Functional institutions of state were founded, foreign relations established and an embryonic army began to be organised.

However, greater events were about to engulf Azerbaijan again. Britain had sought to do business with the Bolsheviks through Bruce Lockhart. Halford Mackinder, the founding father of geopolitics, was sent through Eastern Europe and appointed as High Commissioner to Southern Russia. When the Bolsheviks refused to fight Britain's Great War Mackinder gave support to General Denikin. From this experience Mackinder wrote his famous book *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, in 1919, which recommended the construction of a new giant buffer zone to constrict Russia, Britain's traditional geopolitical enemy. This was meant as a *cordon sanitaire* composed of Poland, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Dagestan and Azerbaijan stretching from the Baltic to the Caspian Sea, in order to ring the Russian heartland.

Mackinder, analysing things in a geopolitical manner argued that Russia needed to be dismembered or the Bolsheviks would be capable of rejuvenating the Heartland as a powerful *tellurocratic* force. However, The Lloyd George Government decided not to give the Whites enough support in 1920, believing that the Bolsheviks would not last. This proved mistaken, along with the belief that the Turks were beaten and would not be capable of a resurgence.

With the withdrawal of Entente anti-Bolshevik forces from the Russian Civil War the Bolsheviks began to get the upper hand and the conflict moved toward the outskirts of Russia, to the Caucasus.

Both sides in the Russian civil war raging to the North sought alliances with the Azerbaijan Government. The Azerbaijanis replied that the political destiny of Russia was a matter for the Russian people alone. Chicherin, the Bolshevik Commissar for Foreign Affairs, exerted particular pressure on the Azerbaijani Government. And in March 1920 Lenin ordered the capture of Baku at all costs after the Red Army had defeated Denikin and the Whites.

The young Azerbaijani army was engaged in suppressing an Armenian insurrection in Karabakh when the Soviet army invaded in April 1920. The Paris Peace Conference had maintained Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan, finding the mountainous region having little connection with Erivan, despite the Armenian claims over the mixed region in which they now formed a majority.

No aid was forthcoming from the Powers who had guaranteed the sovereignty of the Caucasus Republics at Paris the year before. A two front war was impossible for the Azerbaijanis and the Armenians represented the greater threat to the people of the nation's territory. There was a pro-Bolshevik faction within the Musavat and it was decided to concede to the Red Army.

With the Bolshevik Navy outside Baku on the Caspian Sea the Azerbaijani Parliament voted to hand over power to the newly formed Azeri Communist Party on a number of conditions. Firstly, in order to facilitate Bolshevik aid to the

Turkish nationalists under Ataturk fighting the Imperialist Powers to the West. Secondly, on the promise that the Bolsheviks would respect the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, particularly against the Armenian claims. Thirdly, that the Bolsheviks would allow the continuation of political activity by non-Bolsheviks.

Whilst the Bolsheviks honoured the first two of these conditions the third was not respected. There was little surprise in that.

The Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan lasted less than 2 years, before it was abolished by the Bolshevik Invasion of April 1920. The Commissar for Nationalities, Josef Stalin, who had taken charge of political affairs on Russia's southern front, engineered the conquest of Azerbaijan. The Bolshevik army that conquered the Caucasus in 1920 was a very different beast than the forces commanded by Shaumyan a couple of years previously.

The handover of Baku did not completely end Azerbaijani resistance to Bolshevik occupation. Much of the resistance occurred in Ganje but there were battles in most towns and surrounding countryside. Thousands were killed and fighting continued for nearly 4 years before the Azerbaijanis were finally subdued by the new Red Army.

VII Red Nation

On 28 April 1920 the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan was established. If Azerbaijan was cut off as an independent national entity in 1920, how did it emerge as a fully-fledged nation in 1991, when that which cut it down dissolved itself?

The Azerbaijani nation was not aborted by the Bolsheviks. Nation building now took place over the following decades under Soviet auspices. From the start Stalin pointed to the difference between the Azerbaijanis under Tsarist rule and within Soviet authority. Tsarist Russia did nothing to help the Azerbaijanis to nationhood but Stalin's intentions were very different:

“Under the old regime, the tsarist government did not strive, and could not strive, to develop the political life of the Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Turkestan, and other border regions, just as it resisted their cultural development and endeavoured to assimilate the native population forcibly.”(Report on the Immediate tasks of the Party in connection with the National Problem. X Congress of Russian Communist Party)

Stalin's intention was not to Russify the border regions but to develop national culture and regenerate and develop nations within the Soviet system. He did this through empowering native cadres, instituting national education programmes and stabilising and consolidating territories based on national principles.

The Soviet period may have restricted some aspects of Azerbaijani historical development in the overall interest of the Union. However, Azerbaijan undoubtedly functioned effectively as a national unit within the federal state of the Soviet Union. The historical narrative was researched, constructed and tended to in the Stalin period and the national identity of the Azerbaijani people was developed, albeit within the confines of the Union.

In his Report on National Factors in Party and State Development (1923) Stalin gave his reasons for preserving the Transcaucasian Federation of Socialist Republics between Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia as *“an organ of national peace”* “to foster *“genuine fruits of mutual amity”*. In his Report he suggested that it was important to preserve the mixed nationalities nature of each nation and prevent population removal. The reason he gave for this was to prevent one

Caucasian nationality manoeuvring against another directly with Moscow rather than resolving an issue first, locally.

The TSFSR held most of the important powers - military, foreign affairs, trade, finance and economic policy - rather than the 3 countries making it up. However, in 1936 the TSFSR was dissolved under the Stalin Constitution because it was felt that the old problem of national animosities had been solved. Karabakh remained a part of Azerbaijan under the 1937 Constitution of Azerbaijan.

The hope for the end of territorial disputes proved to be optimistic because Stalin underestimated the fundamentalist impulse of Armenian nationalism which the Soviet system never managed to eradicate. The Armenians waited, preserving their essential nature beneath the Soviet imposition and maintained themselves to apply their influence directly in Moscow to strengthen their nationalist agenda, particularly in relation to the disputed territories of Karabakh.

The national history of the Azerbaijanis developed in Soviet times encouraged them to believe they were a people who had long inhabited the region and had every right to remain there. A cultural revival under the chairmanship of Heidar Aliev, the Azerbaijani ex-KGB boss, promoted history investigation and the writing of national narratives. Aliev was an important figure in the Union and was elevated to the Politburo in 1982.

Armenian nationalist histories, however, which were often produced in the Anglosphere, argued that the Turkic people (Azerbaijanis included) were nomadic invaders who merely destroyed civilisations. This version of history was advanced in 19th Century England, but its racist impulses are characteristic of Armenian writings today. The Soviet authorities failed to suppress Armenian nationalism from the Khrushchev era and US Armenians were later astonished at what Armenian writers were getting away with. In contrast, the Azerbaijani historians remained much more firmly within the confines of Marxist-Leninist national principles, right up to the final collapse of the Union around 1992.

VIII The Karabakh Problem

Azerbaijan was one of the nationalities which were recognised as a reality and organised into component Republics of the Soviet Union and which became independent nation-states when the USSR was finally dissolved.

However, one problem that persisted was that of Karabakh, in Western Azerbaijan.

Josef Stalin reduced the original territory claimed by the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, giving areas of it that had been depopulated of Azerbaijanis to Armenia. However, he also insisted that Karabakh remain part of Azerbaijan, with extensive autonomy, despite Armenian pressure to turn it over to them and an earlier Bolshevik decision to do so.

Armenians and Western sources have condemned Stalin for a *“divide and conquer”* approach but there was certainly an attempt to solve the national question in the Caucasus by the Commissar of nationalities. Karabakh was much more economically part of Azerbaijan than Armenia and had had an Azerbaijani majority before its Moslem depopulation. In some senses the decision balanced out the ceding of Zangazur to Armenia.

The head of the Communist Party in Armenia asked in 1945 for Karabakh to be attached to Armenia but Stalin always resisted Armenian attempts to hand it over to them. When Stalin died the Armenians sensed a weakening of Soviet resolve and the coaxing of Moscow increased. The Communist Revisionists permitted a nationalist upsurge in Yerevan with a replacing of Stalin's statue with one of 'Mother Armenia'. Moscow seemed to be taking the view that Armenian nationalism was not a threat

to the Union, as it repressed the same thing elsewhere by tanks. How mistaken this judgement was only became apparent later.

The Armenians claimed Karabakh on the basis that it was “*historic Armenian territory*” and they were there first, before the time of Christ. They claimed it had been part of an Armenian Kingdom in the early centuries A.D. However, for most of the next millennium it was under Moslem control. In 1823, when the Karabakh Khanate was dissolved, and the area became part of the Elizabetpol Governate within the Russian Empire only 9 per cent of the population of Karabakh was Armenian. After the transfer of the Karabakh Khanate to the Tsar, many Muslims left for Persia and Armenians were induced by the Russian government to emigrate from Persia to Karabakh. More than 200,000 Armenians were resettled to the mountainous part of Karabakh in the 1830s. The Tsar’s population policy changed the population balance in the province. The Armenian population formed 35 per cent of the population in 1832, and 53% by 1880.

Travellers who came to Karabakh reported a mixed population with the mountainous part often having an Armenian majority only in winter when the more nomadic Moslems migrated to the Karabakh plains.

In 1917, the “Caucasian Calendar” reported that Karabakh was home to 199,000 Azerbaijanis (58 per cent of the province) and 142,000 Armenians (42 per cent). Despite the patronage of Tsarist Russia in settling Armenians over the century in Karabakh, the Azerbaijanis probably still formed the majority.

Karabakh was ravaged by Andranik’s Dashnaks in mid-1918 and the Armenian attempt to remove the Moslem population was only been ended by the Ottoman advance. With the removal of Ottoman forces after the Mudros Armistice the Armenians advanced their efforts to further reduce the non-Armenian population. The result of this was that the Azerbaijani population of the region declined to maybe as low as 10 per cent, according to Soviet statistics.

By the 1980s, after a half century of Soviet rule it had recovered to around 25 per cent. This was entirely a result of natural increase of the Moslem population. At that point there were serious concerns among the Armenians that the Azerbaijanis, under conditions of peace and stability, would once more become the majority. It was then that a new campaign of expulsion was organised in 1988.

The problem with the autonomy decision is that it enabled a strengthening of the Armenian grip over the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast, which was carved out to ensure an Armenian majority by including Armenian villages and excluding Azerbaijani ones. Nagorno means mountain and there had been an Armenian majority in the *mountainous* region of Karabakh for about half a century. The addition of the Nagorno tag legitimised the autonomy. The Communist Party there, the sole source of power, became overwhelmingly Armenian and the language of the administration was Armenian. Azerbaijanis began to migrate in the face of de facto Armenian cultural control despite the natural increase in their population. This all went to tighten Armenian control of the *oblast*.

All this would not have been so serious if the Soviets had managed to change the nature of Armenian nationalism, or if the Union had survived in a purposeful way. However, from the death of Stalin the Union began to lose purpose and it was increasingly reluctant to suppress the Armenian irredentism that had laid dormant in the Stalin era but which was about to erupt with the dissolving of the Union.

IX The Karabakh War

Anticipating the collapsing of the Soviet Union the Armenians seized Karabakh and other areas of Azerbaijan gradually driving out, or killing, the entire non-Armenian

population. That really is a shocking fact, largely ignored by the international community that makes tremendous noise about much less serious breaches of standards in the world. Despite 28 years of warfare in the North of Ireland such a thing would be almost inconceivable on all sides in Ulster.

The fact that Karabakh was not adjoined to Armenia but had a strip of Azerbaijan to its West meant that the Armenians seized that too to connect up the area occupied with Armenia proper.

About 18 per cent of Azerbaijan, including Karabakh and surrounding areas is today under illegal and internationally unrecognised Armenian occupation. Around 800,000 Azerbaijanis became displaced persons as a result of the ensuing conflict and about 300,000 Armenians have left Azerbaijan after the seizure of Karabakh polarised communities and produced ethnic violence.

The death toll in the war over Karabakh which raged from 1988 to 1994 was at least 17,000 - 11,000 Azerbaijanis and 6,000 Armenians. Some estimates put it much higher, up to 30,000. In 1980 the population of Karabakh was 162,000, with about three quarters being Armenian and one quarter Azerbaijani. Now it is around 60,000 Armenians and no Azerbaijanis. An Armenian army of 20,000 is necessary to defend its conquest.

The conflict began in late 1987 when the Armenians began demanding the transfer of Karabakh from the Azerbaijani Socialist Republic to Armenia from President Gorbachev. The Armenians sensed weakness of resolve in Moscow and took to the streets in Yerevan and began attacking Moslems in Armenia and Karabakh. Behind it was the Karabakh Committee, the inspirers of the ‘Armenian Genocide’ campaign that began in Yerevan in 1965-7 and which promoted ‘April 24 Genocide Day’ and began to mobilise the *Hai Dat*- the worldwide Armenian race against Turkey. There is certainly a connection between the development of the Armenian lobby with its promotion of Turk hatred and the seizure of Karabakh.

The Armenian offensive within Karabakh that began the ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijanis from Armenian areas sparked off ethnic violence in Azerbaijan in early 1988. A couple of dozen Armenians and some Azerbaijanis were victims of inter-communal violence in Sumgait, just north of Baku, a city mainly made up of Azerbaijani refugees forced out of Armenia in the 1940s and joined by a new influx in 1988 by those fleeing from Karabakh. 75,000 Azerbaijani refugees had left Armenia and Karabakh in the first half of 1988.

The incident in Sumgait was an obscure event in which there were strong suspicions of *agent provocateur* involvement. Thomas DeWaal comments in his book *Black Gardenthat* the only surprise was there were so few attacks on Armenians in Azerbaijan given what was starting to take place in Karabakh. Whatever the case serious attacks on Armenians in Azerbaijan were almost always carried out by those who had been driven out of Armenia previously. At the crux of it all was the Armenian drive to take over territory in Karabakh and elsewhere.

The main murdering and ethnic cleansing of Moslems occurred in the latter part of 1988 when hundreds were killed and villages entirely emptied of their inhabitants by Armenian paramilitaries.

On 12 July 1988 the Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh declared U.D.I. and seceded from the Azerbaijani SSR. The irredentist campaign was prompted mostly by Armenian nationalists outside Karabakh, sparking off a chain of inter-ethnic violence which have severely damaged relations in the region and re-opened the old wounds. One of the prime movers was Igor Muradian, an economist who worked for Gosplan in Erivan. He spent a decade lobbying senior Soviets against Azerbaijanis to get Moscow to hand over Karabakh to Armenia.

He organised discrediting campaigns against senior Azerbaijani Communists, including Heidar Aliev. From the Summer of 1986 Muradian began working with the terrorist nationalist group, the Dashnaksution, importing weapons into Karabakh for the upcoming assault on the Moslem populace.

The Dashnaks reasserted their traditional demand for a Greater Armenia again in 1988, in anticipation of the region going into flux when the Soviet Union fell. This Greater Armenia was declared to include eastern Turkey, Georgia, Karabakh and Nakhichevan. Terrorist Bombings began to take place in Azerbaijan. In the decade previous there had been a campaign of assassination which resulted in the deaths of dozens of Turkish diplomats and civilians across the world. The Armenians availed of their terrorist cells across the world and their experienced fighters in the Lebanese civil war.

The Armenian land-grab in Karabakh put paid to the mixed populations of Azerbaijan, where formerly 350,000 Armenians had resided and Armenia, where 200,000 Azerbaijanis had lived. These populations were different: The Armenians in Azerbaijan had been scattered communities who had remained when Azerbaijan came into existence as components of a diverse mix of people. The Azerbaijanis had been people in formally Azerbaijani lands taken by the Armenians in 1918-20 which the Soviets then oversaw. When the Soviet presence began to dissolve Armenian nationalism set about purifying the populace. This process then influenced the population balance in Azerbaijan. There are, at least, 30,000 Armenians still present in Azerbaijan.

Armenian nationalism has produced the only mono-ethnic state in the region by both design and action.

A number of factors conspired for the Azerbaijanis to lose hold of Karabakh quite apart from the majority status that the Armenians had developed there. The Armenians were long prepared for the opportunity to seize the territory and their aggressive nationalism and irredentism took the Azerbaijanis completely by surprise. Armenian paramilitaries quickly took control of Karabakh and exerted their will. This was demonstrated by the incapability of the Azerbaijanis to prevent their people being driven out and Armenians being resettled in their villages during 1988.

The Azerbaijanis showed themselves to be a well-intentioned people in their history and regarded the Karabakh issue as having been settled with the grant of autonomy. The long-held understanding was that Azerbaijan had given Zangezur to Armenia in return for Karabakh, as part of the solution to the national question in the region which Stalin presided over. However, the Armenians just claimed that Stalin had given Karabakh to the Azerbaijanis.

As the Soviet Union began to collapse the Azerbaijanis continued to base their arguments on Leninist/Stalinist principles of nationality and cited Article 78 of the USSR Constitution which barred territorial changes without the consent of Republics concerned. The Armenians simply asserted pure irredentist nationalism.

While the Armenians were in the forefront of bringing down the Soviet system with their protests and demonstrations in 1987-90 the Azerbaijanis remained loyal to Moscow much longer and became reliant on the Union to uphold the settlement of 1920.

The demonstrations in Lenin Square in Baku that began in 1988 were motivated primarily by what was happening to Azerbaijanis in Armenia and Karabakh, the Soviet authorities failure to stop it and what was thought to be the one-sided approach of Moscow to events. It was felt that Azerbaijanis were being judged against strict Soviet standards while the

Armenians were pursuing nationalist aggression with seeming impunity.

It was a great shock in 1990 when Soviet troops entered Baku and killed 200 protesters after a few days of communal conflict in the city (Black January). Russian assault on Baku seemed a completely one-sided response given the violence against Moslems in Karabakh that the Soviets were failing to stamp out. As the Armenians began to fight the Azerbaijanis continued to put their trust in Gorbachev, who began to lose control under the welter of problems he had made for himself.

The senseless massacre of Black January undermined the Azerbaijan Communist Party. Azerbaijan was subject to military repression and occupation by the Red Army while Armenia was not. The view that Russia fundamentally favoured Christians rather than Moslems was bolstered by this new uneven treatment.

A few months later Boris Yeltsin made his statement at Ufa on August 6 1990 to the national republics: "*Take as much sovereignty as you can swallow!*" This signalled a gradual transition from a federal union to a confederation and then complete independence of the national republics than the centre would respect.

The Azerbaijanis throughout the periods of Russian rule proved remarkably loyal to both the Tsar and the Soviet Union, despite the discriminatory treatment they often suffered. It seems that their good faith disabled them with regard to their own interests. The Azerbaijani Communist Party chose to suppress the extent of ethnic cleansing conducted against Azerbaijanis to assist Moscow in dealing with the crisis. Even the Azerbaijani opposition supported Gorbachev and his *perestroika* and saw the solution to the Karabakh issue as resting within the Union.

When the Armenians reverted to type at the first opportunity the Azerbaijanis were inclined to continue to support the Union as the existing legitimate order of things. Only when the Armenians decisively demonstrated that the Union would not uphold the existing order and nationalism was the new form of effective politics in the region did the Azerbaijanis respond in kind with their own movement, the Azerbaijan Popular Front which began to carry the flag of independent Azerbaijan (1918-20).

Armenian nationalism had retained its devious and manipulative character throughout the Soviet period, always striving for its own narrow interest and against the overall good of the peoples of the region and the Union. Petitions to Moscow demanding the transferring of Karabakh to Armenia started during the Khrushchev period, after the Armenians sensed a weakening of things with the death of Stalin and the emergence of the Revisionists. The petitions gathered momentum when Gorbachev signalled a relaxing of things with his *Glasnost* and *Peristroika*.

Stalin in his objective of building nations as part of a wider fraternal union was remarkably successful in relation to the Azerbaijanis but ultimately failed in relation to the persistent and pernicious nature of Armenian nationalism.

The Armenians began to put together a national army in preparation for the break-up of the Soviet Union in mid-1990, a year and a half before the Azerbaijanis put any real effort into preparing a defence force of their own. The Azerbaijan National Army was only formed in November 1991, 3 months after the Putsch in Moscow which marked the end of the Soviet Union.

The Armenians proved very adept at irregular warfare in the opening phase of the Karabakh war and this enabled them to quickly terrorise the Azerbaijani population into flight. *Fedayeen* fighters from Armenia met no equivalent from Azerbaijan. The Armenians had a much greater military tradition than the Azerbaijanis both in the Tsarist armies and

the Dashnak irregular forces. There was stubborn resistance by Azerbaijanis in defensible places but the situation of many Azerbaijani settlements made them vulnerable to attack by bands of guerrillas in the mountainous terrain, particularly at night. Azerbaijani civilians had to withdraw from their villages into larger places of Moslem habitation, like Shusha, for protection.

The massacre at Khojaly in February 1992 in which around 600 innocents were done to death in brutal fashion by the Armenians was the most devastating of the operations conducted by the Armenian paramilitaries against the Moslem population.

The brutal massacre at Khojaly had important political implications. It further undermined the Azerbaijani Communist leadership, which attempted to cover up the act. President Mutalibov, who had delayed forming an Azerbaijani army and had continued to rely on Moscow to uphold peace and security was forced to resign when news started to get out of the extent of the Armenian atrocity. It also undermined the more moderate Armenians in Yerevan who inclined toward a negotiated settlement. Khojaly paid dividends by producing a great flight of Moslems from Karabakh and strengthened the hands of the Armenians who wanted to pursue an extermination policy, which was increasingly seen as effective.

In early 1992 the course of the war nearly took a decisive turn in favour of the Azerbaijanis, who produced a meaningful offensive which recaptured half of Karabakh from the insurgents through regular warfare. Soviet units played a significant part in this success. After the Soviet units departed Azerbaijan the Armenian paramilitaries had free rein to empty the Moslem villages of Karabakh and the Azerbaijanis began suffering heavy defeats.

In early 1992 the future survival of Armenia was actually in doubt. However, Boris Yeltsin, who was favourable to the Armenians and who did not want the Armenian state itself to collapse, presented them with large quantities of Soviet hardware and weaponry. Soviet attack helicopters were used to scatter the advancing Azerbaijanis. This coincided with internal dissensions within the Azerbaijani leadership which at a crucial moment led to the withdrawal of some forces, and weakened the offensive. On May 8 1992 the Armenians captured the main Azerbaijani town in Karabakh, Shusha, the great cultural centre of Azerbaijani life. This was a devastating blow to the Azerbaijanis in Karabakh.

The new Azerbaijani Popular Front Government in Baku under Abulfaz Elchibey, which had come to power in June 1992, after the undermining of the Communist/Coalition government was a disaster. Elchibey refused to join the CIS while Armenia took the opportunity to outflank the Azerbaijanis. Yeltsin stopped military supplies to Azerbaijan whilst it was trying to construct an army and dramatically increased them to Armenia. Armenian victories increased. Only later did Azerbaijan join the CIS.

The Azerbaijanis had to improvise an army in the face of the Karabakh conflict which they were totally unprepared for. When it took the field late in the war it was made up of large numbers of inexperienced recruits and it was thrown into the conflict in a hurry. Azerbaijanis are by and large a plains people and the mountainous terrain of Karabakh also suited the Armenians. While the Azerbaijani army offensive initially made gains in the North of Karabakh when it came up against experienced and battle hardened Armenian units the young conscripts were driven back and surrounded in deep snows in the mountainous passes. Thousands perished when the Armenians devastated the Azerbaijani ranks with Soviet heavy weaponry.

In April 1993 the Armenians invaded Kelbejar, situated outside Karabakh, between it and Armenia. Its inhabitants,

around 50,000 Azerbaijani Turks and Kurds were driven out or killed. President Elchibey was toppled by a military coup after the fall of Kelbejar.

In late 1993-94 Azerbaijani resistance totally collapsed and the Armenians cut a large chunk of Azerbaijan from the state which had counted it in its national territory for three quarters of a century. Most of the areas surrounding Karabakh were captured and depopulated of Moslems.

As well as holding the vast majority of the territory of Karabakh the Armenians currently hold seven occupied territories outside the province. They are Kelbajar (1,936 sq. km), Lachin (1,835 sq. km), Kubatly (802 sq. km), Jibrail (1,050 sq. km), and Zengelan (707 sq. km). They also occupy nearly 80 per cent (842 sq. km) of Aghdam region and approximately 30 per cent (462 sq. km) of the Fizuli region along with two enclaves of approximately (75 sq. km) in the Nakhichevan and Kazakh regions. This means that the combined area of Azerbaijan under Armenian control is approximately 12,000 sq. km, amounting to around 18 per cent of the territory.

The Armenian seizure of Karabakh has been disastrous for good relations in the region. It has created an issue that if it is not solved through a diplomatic settlement will in all probability lead to another war.

There was an opportunity to resolve the Karabakh issue peacefully through an honourable accommodation between 1988 and 1992, with the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from the region. The two communities had lived in relative peace for 60 years within Karabakh. The Armenians had substantial autonomy and the Azerbaijanis had to take account of the long standing historic presence of the Armenian community and its majority status in those 60 years. However, the worst possible action was taken by Armenian nationalism in seizing the territory and ethnically cleansing the Azerbaijani community *en masse*. Such events and their memory cannot be undone.

The Armenians gained territory to sate the long-standing appetite for expansion - territory that they will hardly give up easily, lest it add to their series of historic disasters. Any Armenian leader who has become open to compromise has been quickly removed from power. And yet the Armenian population declines, both in Armenia proper and Karabakh itself. And their economy is into meltdown as the price of their success.

Azerbaijan, which is recognised by the world as the *de jure* authority in Karabakh, will hardly let the issue be for any length of time. It has a large population of refugees demanding the right to return to their homes. And Azerbaijan grows stronger, population and economically wise, as Armenia weakens.

Until this issue is resolved peacefully there is tremendous potential for another, even greater, future catastrophe. □

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Annex 1

The Editor,
Irish Foreign Affairs
Sir,

To begin on a positive note, the outcome of the first phase of the Brexit negotiations and the arrangements for the second, including specific reference to Ireland and the border as an area requiring agreement, clearly vindicate the view expressed in your columns with which I fully concur that Ireland has to work as part of the remaining EU 27. In the *Guardian* (20 December), Rafael Behr states: 'It is true that the EU empowers smaller countries. Witness the clout Ireland has had in Brexit talks'.

With respect, the issue of how Ireland handles Brexit has nothing to do with the question whether the State regards Britain as a foreign country (as opposed to a separate country). In the early decades of independence, political rhetoric describing Britain as a foreign country and British people (especially monarchs) as foreigners was liberally deployed, often at the highest political level. All the while, the British Government and its lawyers chose, even after the 1937 Constitution was promulgated, to regard Ireland as a dominion and to continue to treat its citizens enjoying rights of residence and employment in the UK (barring wartime restrictions and State employment in Northern Ireland) as British subjects. When it was announced in 1948 that the Republic would be declared and leave the Commonwealth, which took effect in April 1949, some consideration was given in Britain to retaliating by treating Irish citizens as aliens, but this was not pursued, both because it would have been very disruptive and because other Commonwealth countries with significant Irish populations of their own were strongly opposed. The Taoiseach John A. Costello made a declaration in the Dáil on 24 November 1948, which stated that Ireland, following repeal of the 1936 External Relations Act, did not intend to regard British or Commonwealth citizens 'as foreigners or their countries as foreign countries', and more importantly that 'accordingly, the factual exchange of rights will continue unimpaired'. In the course of his speech, he made all the points about the intimate interrelationship between the people of the two islands which has become commonplace since. Section 2.1 of the UK's Ireland Act, 1949, declares 'that the Republic of Ireland is not a foreign country for the purpose of any law in force in any part of the United Kingdom'. Most unionists in Northern Ireland who refer to the Republic as a foreign country are totally unaware of the joint British and Irish position on this nearly 70 years ago, but I am surprised if that is also true of your publication.

While Commonwealth citizens' rights were changed as it expanded, these reciprocal British and Irish declarations are the basis of the Common Travel Area formalised subsequently and of the rights, later including reciprocal general election voting rights, enjoyed by Irish citizens in Britain and British citizens in Ireland that both countries are most anxious to preserve in the context of Brexit. It was acknowledged by Prime Minister Attlee that these were novel but practical arrangements, what Haughey and Thatcher acknowledged in 1980 as a 'unique relationship'. I am not aware of any serving President, Taoiseach or Irish Government Minister who has referred to Britain specifically as a foreign country in the past 20 years, and it would cause considerable controversy if they were to do so. When I made reference to this in the past, I was simply articulating what is the position of both countries since 1949, even if not widely known, discussed or understood, not expressing some ideological deviancy of my own.

The editorial on democracy in your December issue, inspired in part by the autumn issue of *Studies* devoted to the topic, to

which I was invited to contribute, makes the claim, not for the first time, but more carefully worded, that I am or was a supporter of Irish involvement in the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq for the purpose of introducing democracy there. To avoid any misapprehension arising from this as to my attitude, I stated as an ordinary member in the Seanad on 21 March 2003, a few days after the war started: 'As far as support for war is concerned, we made clear that a second UN resolution was imperative from our point of view - that remains our position and we do not support war'. In my *Studies* article on democracy, I had a strongly critical paragraph on hubristic attempts to impose democracy from outside on countries like Iraq, which 'often leave a trail of destruction' and 'can have a very high and prolonged human cost' (*Studies*, vol.106, no.425, pp.290-1). Though presumably read, this critique was ignored/dismissed by your editorial writer. It is of course easy to denounce anyone, if you turn their position around 180 degrees.

The claim, though not explained, may rely on the fact that the Government of the time, with the support of the vast majority of Oireachtas members including myself, made the difficult and borderline decision not to suspend relatively longstanding transit arrangements at Shannon Airport to unarmed US military transport planes, following outbreak of the war. While this certainly stretched neutrality to breaking point, it was done in the belief that to do the opposite risked serious damage to our economic and employment interests and multinational investment, as well as being poorly received by a country that had given such strong support to the Irish peace process. It was immaterial to either the course or the outcome of the war. The Government at the time made it clear that it did not support the war, and I am sure would have argued strenuously that allowing the facilities at Shannon to continue did not constitute involvement in it. Once the war was over, the UN passed a resolution calling on all member States to give every assistance to the peaceful reconstruction of Iraq, fully justifying from then on the continued use of Shannon. It should also be recalled that Shannon airport was previously an important re-fuelling base for Aeroflot civilian aircraft flying to Latin America during the 1980s, something the Americans did not like and which may have contributed to the establishment of US pre-clearance facilities there.

Yours sincerely,
Martin Mansergh
Thu., Dec. 21, 2017

Annex II

The Irish Political Review on the Invasion of Iraq Iraq: *And So To War* . . .

The Irish Foreign Minister briefly held the semblance of power in the international arena when he did his stint as President of the United Nations' Security Council. He threw his influence on the side of the United States in a disagreement between the White House and Whitehall about whether the USA was entitled under existing UN Resolutions to proceed to an invasion of Iraq after destroying the State in Afghanistan and returning that country to tribalism. Brian Cowen said an invasion of Iraq would be OK.

It would appear that Whitehall subsequently had second thoughts in the matter, and came around to Brian Cowen's view. It became America's only staunch ally for an invasion of Iraq, with or without further UN resolutions. Brian Cowen, on the other hand, seems to have stopped thinking since making Ireland's only significant foreign policy gesture in conflict with British foreign policy in recent times, and making it in the wrong direction.

The British Prime Minister told his constituents at the end of August that he is not positively against involving the United Nations in the war to destroy the Iraqi state—i.e., “regime change”—but that it should only be consulted if it becomes clear that “it means business”. In other words, the UN may be allowed to facilitate the Ameranglian war on Iraq, but will not be allowed to obstruct it.

Meanwhile the British Foreign Secretary, who does not feel as much at home in Ameranglia as his Prime Minister does, tries to establish an element of independent British policy by proposing that Iraq be given an ultimatum to admit the UN military inspectors unconditionally—or else. Iraq points out that the Inspectors have become a non-issue because the White House has said so, the only issue being “regime change”—in which case the Inspectors would be an advance guard of the invasion force.

Professor Eliot Cohen, author of *Supreme Command*, said to be President Bush’s favourite reading just now, gave an interview to BBC’s *Newsnight* on 29th August. He was asked his opinion of this Iraqi view of the matter. He replied that he thought it was accurate, that weapons’ inspection was an irrelevance, and that the British Foreign Secretary was only playing a game: “If you listen carefully to what he says, it is clear that it is that we need a pretext”. The White House, on the other hand, didn’t want a pretext. Saddam Hussein was an evil dictator. President Bush rightly compared Saddam to Hitler, though the rhetoric of the comparison was sometimes overheated, and he was rightly determined to attack him as such, without subterfuge, and regardless of whether any state besides Britain supported an attack.

On this view of things the United Nations is relevant and useful insofar as it serves the interests of the United States as the sole world power, but it is subordinate to the United States and should be ignored if it attempts to obstruct the US in its role of world hegemon. And that is a realistic view of the way things are now.

The US is acting toward the UN just as Britain, when it was the major world power, acted towards the League of Nations—using it when it was compliant, disabling it when it was not, and acting without reference to it when, having supported Nazi Germany for six years, it suddenly decided to make war on it in 1939.

In 1939 Britain declared a war which it had no earnest intention of waging with the means necessary to win it. It started a war with the intention of getting others to fight it, and that proved to be its undoing as a world state. And there was no serious discussion of the realities of the situation within British ruling circles, including Parliament, in the period leading up to the declaration of war—nothing like what is going on in the USA at present.

Irish Political Review, Editorial, September 2002

Cowen’s Foreign Policy—Wilful Ignorance

As Britain gears up for yet another war, the various strands of mainstream politics in Ireland are regressing towards the Redmondite glory of 1914, when Redmond subordinated Home Rule Ireland to unquestioning support of British Imperial policy. The affairs of the world are now being decided by the Security Council of the United Nations, of which Ireland is a member. The decision on whether there is to be war on Iraq is supposed to rest on whether Iraq has supplied a complete list of its arms capacity in certain categories. The United States, on security grounds, has prevented that list from being circulated to the members of the Security Council, who are to decide whether it complies with the requirements of Resolution 1414. Some members objected to being required to pass judgment on a list which they have not seen. But the Irish Government has said

it doesn’t want the list: “Irish diplomats at the UN mission... headed... by Ambassador Ryan are now arguing in favour of being denied access to the full report”.

The fig-leaf is that “countries that do not hold nuclear weapons are not supposed to seek or obtain such information”. Ireland, being non-nuclear, should not be put in possession of the information relevant to the making of nuclear weapons, on which the Security Council decision is to be based. “Irish diplomatic sources said Ireland trusted the five [Permanent Members] and the UN bodies and was content to receive a censored version of the report” (*Sunday Business Post* 15.12.2002)..

Ireland wants to be a second-class member of the UN, hanging around where decisions are made, but having no real part in decision-making. We can see good practical grounds for that. The Yemen—the only democracy in the Middle East at the time—had the misfortune to be a member of the Security Council twelve years ago, and in accordance with the will of its democracy voted against that Gulf War, and was subsequently punished for it by the United States. So it’s wiser not to know and let the Great Powers get on with it. But it really isn’t playing the game to make this so obvious. The role of small states is to uphold the pretences that the UN is an association of equals, while understanding that it isn’t.

Ireland has now torn away that pretence—the “decent drapery” of the thing—by openly asserting second-class membership. It might still have saved itself from contempt by declaring itself unfit, by virtue of its weakness, for membership of the Security Council and ruling itself out for the future. Such a declaration would in fact be an immensely useful contribution to world affairs.

It will do no such thing, of course. *Cowen Says Iraq Must End Its Defiance*: that’s an *Irish Times* headline of 28th December. Having chosen a condition of wilful ignorance with regard to the weapons’ list, and having no grounds for knowing whether or not there is ‘defiance’, the Foreign Minister chooses to play the part of a lickspittle.

Of course Saddam is still defiant, though the UN Inspectors have as yet not found him to be so on the weapons list. As we understand it, his weapons list was to be given to the Weapons Inspection Team, which was to report on it to the Security Council. But he made two copies of it and gave one to the President of the Security Council, who happened to be the Columbian representative. This made it necessary for President Bush to take it away from Columbia, which was in no position to argue, and tell all the other minnows they couldn’t have it. But that act of disruption by Saddam is not easy to make an issue of amidst all the ideological rhetoric about democracy and equality.

Editorial, *Irish Political Review*, January 2013 The Thinking Behind Fianna Fail’s Fudge

What is the Fianna Fail position on the war? Officially it runs something like this: Ireland refuses to support the invasion of Iraq because it has not been sanctioned by the United Nations, but the United States should be allowed to continue using Shannon for re-fuelling because Ireland has provided this facility for the best part of fifty years; a typical Bertie Ahern fudge. The fudge is essentially a sop to public opinion in circumstances where a large majority of the Irish electorate is against the war but, behind the scenes, how can Government thinking be characterised?

Clearly the Progressive Democrat end of the Cabinet favours all out identification with the US/UK side. The Fianna Fail position is more difficult to pin down. A statement by Brian Lenihan on the *Saturday View* programme on RTE radio

on March 22nd provides evidence that Fianna Fail has been disorientated by the rift between the US/UK on one side and France and Germany on the other. Lenihan asserted that it was misleading to talk about a rift between the UK and the rest of Europe. The Blair Government was not isolated in Europe he said. The Mediterranean countries and many of the new East European democracies were supporting the British. He was quite adamant on the point.

Europe is split down the middle and Ireland has a role to play in mending this damaging rift. That is the way that Brian Lenihan as a junior Minister and loyal supporter of the Taoiseach would like things to be. And that is the line taken by the Irish representatives at an EU summit some weeks ago. If only the vicissitudes of international affairs would comply with the imperatives of Irish Government strategy!

Immediately following Lenihan's contribution, the presenter (Rodney Rice), asked a question of John Palmer, a veteran European correspondent with the *Guardian* newspaper who is regularly consulted on RTE discussion programmes relating to European affairs. Palmer ignored the question and instead questioned Lenihan's analysis. He said that the Spanish Prime Minister, Asnar, would be leaving politics in a matter of months and his policy was unlikely to be continued; and that Italian support for the war had all but vanished. Tony Blair had no supporters where it mattered in Europe he said.

This intervention knocked the wind out of Lenihan's sails and he made no reply. Even if the Spanish and Italians were solid in their support of Bush and Blair, it would be unwise to attach much significance to it: for all intents and purposes Europe is France and Germany and it beggars belief that a thoughtful up-and-coming Fianna Fail Minister should have illusions on that score.

Under Charles Haughey's leadership Irish interests in Europe were closely aligned with those of France and Germany. That strategy paid handsome dividends which came into play during Albert Reynolds tenure as Taoiseach. European funds helped to stoke up the fire that was the Irish economic boom of the nineties. It must have been galling for the British to watch the tiny Irish state wield such influence in Europe and it was not surprising that, once the Good Friday negotiations commenced, Tony Blair sought a closer British-Irish relationship in wider European politics. Ahern, anxious to make a success of the Peace Process, played along, and the advantage garnered by Haughey's careful cultivation of European links was jettisoned.

If Fianna Fail had held to the De Valera-Lemass-Haughey tradition in foreign policy, the party would now be in a good position to support Chirac's courageous defiance of Anglo-Saxon war mongering, and to salvage something from the destruction wrought by Britain and America to the European Union. At the very least it could play a useful role in defending the UN from American unilateralists. But it has sold the nation's soul for US investment and been seen to do so by the international community. Behind the scenes the Government supported the US position when Ireland held a place on the Security Council during 2002, and US officials have been very public about praising the Irish for their helpful contribution. On the international stage, the inheritors of the Irish national tradition have become, like their leader, Bertie Ahern, verbalisers who are all things to all men. In a time of conflict and flux such politics are a liability.

Brian Lenihan is the son of Brian Lenihan who acted as an able lieutenant to Haughey. His aunt is Mary O'Rourke and his cousin is Conor Lenihan, also a Fianna Fail TD. He showed political ability in the way he chaired the all-Party Committee on the Constitution (1997-2002). Ahern made him a junior Minister at the Department of Health in June of last year. At the

recent anniversary celebrations of the founding of Fianna Fail, it was Brian Lenihan who made the speech about continuing the tradition of De Valera and Lemass and even of Thomas Davis and Wolfe Tone. If he was in earnest about keeping alive that tradition he would have sided with those states who have risked American displeasure and the loss of US financial support (e.g. France, Germany, Russia, China, Turkey, Syria, Chile and Pakistan) by backing negotiation, rather than military action, in the resolution of international disputes.

The logic of Brian Lenihan's position is the logic of the Irish Government's position on the future of the EU. At this critical time when the issues are becoming increasingly clear-cut, the Irish Government is trying to hide its support for Britain and the US by masquerading as a bridge between Britain and France. No one, not the French, not the British, not even the media will be fooled by such contortions. Ireland will sooner or later have to decide. Is it with a re-orientated and re-invigorated Europe which is not afraid to face down American and British aggression, or not?

Dave Alvey, *Irish Political Review*, April 2013

Martin Mansergh And The War On Iraq

Why did Ireland take part in the war to destroy the Iraqi state? Because it is a small weak state, without the will to conduct an independent foreign policy which would jeopardise American investment.

If the Government said that straight out, we at least would not condemn it. De Valera's Fianna Fail, which conducted an independent foreign policy under much more difficult circumstances, is now only a distant memory. The moral capital accumulated by Fianna Fail in those days was squandered by Jack Lynch a generation ago. We are now governed by Pearse's wise men in their counting houses, whose only ability is the calculation of commercial advantage and whose substance lies in the making of money. De Valera is incomprehensible to them, and they have transmuted Pearse into a sublimating paedophile. And their notion of honour is an OBE.

That being how it is, and that being what they are, they act according to the only light they can see by. We do not condemn them for not being something they cannot envisage. They are the Last Men at the end of history hailed by Fukuyama ten years ago as the only true inheritors of all the human adventure that has preceded them. But why do they not take their stand on what they actually are. We do they not just say that it would have been commercially senseless to deny America the use of Shannon for the war?

Martin Mansergh is their intellectual. We once thought he was going to be the Maurice Hankey of the Irish state—the background adviser to a long series of Governments of different parties. Hankey played that part from the Great War to the Second World War. Mansergh served Haughey, Reynolds and Bertie (*-serving* Haughey, but *advising* the others). Then Bruton became Taoiseach unexpectedly, and was badly in need of Mansergh to give continuity to Northern policy at a delicate moment. But, when Bruton asked him to stay on as adviser he refused. He desired political power in government, rather than influence as an adviser of Governments. He has thus far failed to make it into the Dail. We hope he continues to fail. The Mansergh role in Irish affairs over sixty years is something that needs clarification.

We will return to this in future issues. Meanwhile, here is Martin on the *Vincent Browne Show* on Radio Eireann on 7th April.

Browne: Martin Mansergh, in the Senate a few months ago you expressed reservations about the War., saying that it didn't

seem to you to be the last option, the last resort. Do you still have reservations about it?

Mansergh: Well, I suppose one has reservations about war being used, you know, at this stage in mankind's development, to solve any problems. But I also said in the Senate recently that I didn't think that Saddam Hussein's Iraq provided enough help to those that wanted to avert war.

Browne: Do you think the war was justified?

Mansergh: I'm not prepared to say that. I mean I've reservations about the war, but now that it has broken out, I would like to see it be finished quickly with the minimum number of casualties.

Browne: You can tell us whether you think the war was justified or not.

Mansergh: Well, I mean, it wasn't our decision to take, whether to go to war.

Browne: No, just your opinion, was the war justified?

Mansergh: My position is that I have reservations about going to war. I don't want to state further than that. I mean I would much prefer that other methods would be used to solve these problems. But, as I say, we didn't get enough response from Iraq to give us a good chance of averting war.

[*Liz Walsh*, says it wasn't even a war, but a filthy invasion. It made her ashamed to be a Western woman. Ashamed of this Government. The Dail debate a sham by comparison with Westminster. Women and children were slaughtered. Public opinion was against the war. Not one of the 77 on Government benches voted against. 100,000 came on the streets, but Government wasn't listening.]

Mansergh: Well, I think you oversimplify it. [I don't, I don't.] Well, all I can say is that most TDs and Senators of my party, we have not been besieged in our clinics. I mean I have had one representation on the war from inside the Constituency. I have had a few from outside the Constituency. The people I talk to— —I mean there is no sympathy with Saddam Hussein. And I mean, frankly, I am delighted that a tyrannical regime like that is going. I mean a lot of children were dying all the time over the last ten years. Now I'm not saying that war was necessarily the right way to deal with this. The Irish Government did its best in the Security Council to try and avert that and to get a UN approach. But, at the same time, I mean, you are talking about a particularly obnoxious regime that I think did prove itself to be some considerable danger to its neighbours. Now, I mean, one could of course adopt a pacifist position that war is unjustified in any circumstances. I mean the Normandy Invasion resulted [*Liz Walsh:* Nobody has said that, Martin] in thousands of civilians killed. I mean the Americans and the British have killed a lot of their own people during this war. I mean war is not a civilised or human way of solving any problem. I agree with that.

Liz: Martin, nobody is saying that. And I have to say I am sick and tired of this argument coming from people who support this shabby invasion. Because none, as far as I'm concerned, none or very few of the people who are against this war were in support of Saddam Hussein. We knew he was a tyrant. We knew he was a tyrant, Martin, when the people who're now [*Mansergh* tries to interrupt, not fully intelligible, appears to be about two wrongs not making a right] invading Iraq actually armed him. They know what he has because they have the receipts. Why did you, why did we, feed the Iraqi army? Why did Britain and America constantly arm him when he was a tyrant then?

Mansergh: I would agree with you on one point. I think with the benefit of hindsight our relations with Iraq—I'm talking about Ireland now—were too cosy prior to 1990. I

would be inclined to agree with you on that point... [*Browne* refers to national interest in selling beef.] No, I don't agree with you. Foreign policy for Ireland, and indeed any country, has to be a marriage of principles and ideals and interests. I mean, it can't be, unless you've no interests involved, purely principled, without regard to interest. But, equally, I don't think it is satisfactory to any one for it to be purely interest without regard to principle.

Editorial, *Irish Political Review*, January 2013

(Continued from p. 28)

population was many times too large for the kind of decision-making by which the old ruling class had constructed the Empire over hundreds of years.

A hundred thousand gentry and merchants, grouped for the most part in large family units, might have independent knowledge of the world and informal means of discussing what should be done in it. The millions of the middle classes and upper working classes in the limited democracy of 1914 had no means of independent knowledge through personal experience in the world at large, and no informal Clubs or discussion forums of any political influence. The possibility of continuing, on a mass scale, the informed discussion of world affairs and the realistic decision-making through which the Empire had been built up by the oligarchy in the 18th and 19th centuries, lay entirely in the operation of party-politics, and particularly of the party press. But the party press, which was flourishing on 4th August 1914, collapsed into a war consensus on 5th August. From that point onwards the only rivalry was in the production of shibboleths of mindless warmongering. The masses were energised for war by being fed with delusions which inflamed simple passions and made realistic thought impossible. And thus, when Britain emerged triumphant after four and a quarter years—having in the meantime extended the franchise to the great majority of the adult population—it was in no fit condition to make a peace settlement that would last. The Versailles Conference of 1919 was conducted in the same medium of primitive passion and insatiable greed that had been generated for the conduct of the war.

John Buchan (author of the 'Richard Hannay' novels (*39 Steps* etc.), which formed a central part of English middle class culture until around 1960 was the semi-official historian of the War as it was happening. He described it frankly enough as England's first middle-class war, but attempted to weave it into a continuum of English Imperial history by projecting an aristocratic veneer onto it. But the veneer didn't take. The sow's ear could not be conjured into the silk purse. English middle class Imperialism made a settlement of the world in 1919 which in some of its parts lasted two or three years, and which led to a general war in twenty years. The English aristocracy in 1814 made a settlement that lasted, by and large, until 1914.

Middle-class Imperialism is not a pretty sight. It had been generating for twenty years before 1914—its generation will be shown in a future issue—but it was not until 5th August, 1914 that it took the centre of the stage in foreign policy and exposed its delusions and inadequacies.

The years between the Boer War and the World War was the great era of the middle class intellectual. *H.G. Wells* (Item Nos. 42 & 46) and *G.B. Shaw* (No. 41) had a political standing which no mere writer could hold today. Both of them appear in these pages, as does *Thomas Hardy* (Nos. 20 & 25). Others are less well remembered today, but were very important in their time:

In Year Zero A Contribution to the History of the German Press (Part 4) By Hans Habe

1966

(Orig.: Hans Habe: *Im Jahre Null. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutschen Presse. Verlag Kurt Desch, München 1966*)

[This remarkable memoir is one of the few books by Hans Habe which has not been translated into English. In 1944 Hans Habe was sent to Europe to 'mould German public opinion' by radio broadcasts and newspapers. He said: 'We (the US) are planning to re-establish the destroyed water pipes, I believe, and newspapers are just as important as water.']

Translated for IFA by Angela Stone.

I still commanded a staff of twelve or thirteen colleagues. The other 'Ritchie Boys' had all either been killed in action, were lying wounded in various European military hospitals or at home in American hospitals, had drifted off to the radio, or had beat it altogether, like the gossip columnist Igor Cassini. How was I to establish a dozen newspapers or more with a staff themselves barely a dozen?

My plan was to establish a central editorial department in Germany from where I would travel to various cities where there was a chance of setting up a newspaper. I intended bringing a colleague along to each city whom, after fleshing out the newspaper with them, I would leave behind with it. The manuscripts would be crafted and copied in the central editorial department and brought by Jeeps or Piper Cub planes to the 'newspaper towns'. The resident editors would then organise the printing of the manuscripts, supplemented with local news and material from regional Military Government headquarters. It seemed obvious to me that the local 'editor-in-chief' should act as both local reporter and layout editor.

Here an authentic relevant anecdote from the world of Hungarian theatre comes to mind. Around the turn of the century the Hungarian writer Sándor Brody wrote a brilliant one-man-play. A single actor plays seven different parts, representing seven sides of the human character. Following its success in Budapest the play toured the provinces. What a shock it must have been for the author to discover when the programme for one provincial showing fluttered onto his table that the director in Debrecen had cast the play with seven actors. The director replied to an indignant telegram from the author demanding with equal outrage whether he, in that audacious city, really believed there were not enough actors in the province worthy of being cast in such a play? The poet, 'bereft of help or advice', could do little other than telegraph to Debrecen: "Wrote play for poor director, only has one actor." The same feeling captures the situation that faced me and the German press in "year zero". I had only one editor for each German city we established a newspaper, for each German newspaper.

And zero hour was nigh: Cologne had been but a prelude. In April 1945 Colonel Powell admitted me to his office. "Frankfurt," he said, "is firmly in our hands. We want to bring the first major newspaper to life there. You'll arrive at your headquarters in Bad Nauheim tomorrow, just outside Frankfurt." "I know," I said, "the Bristol Hotel." The colonel looked at me quizzically. "General Banfill told me," I explained, "in Camp Ritchie, Maryland, fourteen months ago."

On a warm summer April afternoon I arrived in Bad Nauheim with three officers, eleven non-commissioned officers,

six jeeps and three trucks. The trees were in bloom in the spa gardens. Cardiac patients there for a cure strolled leisurely across the grounds of the spa. The town was untouched. In the Bristol Hotel the beds were freshly changed.

Bad Nauheim: Newspaper Metropolis

We moved to Bad Nauheim, a spa town in the district of Hesse, which became my headquarters for half a year. The time we spent here was a great adventure like I had never known.

My first, and perhaps most interesting, encounter was with General Kurt Dittmar. The general had been arrested shortly before my relocation to Nauheim and I had asked the American headquarters to send him on there.

I had my reasons for this. Lieutenant General Kurt Dittmar was the official radio commentator of the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (OKW). I had listened regularly to his explanations of affairs and was impressed by his astonishing level of objectivity (at least under the circumstances). And so it came to pass that General Dittmar could be faithfully solicited as a public relations expert - you really could learn something from this man.

There was a bright side to the days the General spent in Bad Nauheim, but there was also an extremely serious, emblematic side.

The bright side of his stay was of an extraordinary nature. I had not thought it appropriate to subject the General to the usual prisoner interrogation measures so I proposed that we should take an hour's walk every morning in the Kurpark and chat aimlessly. This did bring certain ceremonial difficulties, however, which were revealed on the first walk. We were both in uniform, of course, and as I was a captain - soon to be promoted to major - I should obviously have walked on the left side of the General. But, on the other hand, I was also American, and the General was my prisoner, so it was also the custom that he should walk on *my* left side. We discussed the 'problem' and came to a compromise. For several days, the inhabitants of Nauheim were witness to a most comic occurrence: an American captain strolled on the left of a German general from one end of the park to the other, then at the end of the path there was a change of position, and the German general walked back through the park on the left of the American captain.

Walks with a General

I learnt about many interesting things from General Dittmar - a lean, handsome, highly educated officer of the old school - but it is our conversation about concentration camps in particular that will stay in my mind forever. Through this conversation

with Dittmar, I wanted to learn whether, and to what extent, the high officers of the *Wehrmacht* had been informed about the existence and methods of the concentration camps.

The general froze. His lips were pale as he said:

“We did not hear about this scandal until approximately one year before... before the end. Rather...” - he corrected himself, obviously in an effort to tell the truth - “rather, it was not until a year ago that the rumours about the scandalous atrocity in these camps reached our ears.”

“And what did the generals do?”

“We demanded that Hitler justify himself to us.”

“And did he?”

“Yes”

“And you were satisfied by his answer, General?”

“Indeed.” Dittmar then began to walk again on my right, or my left, I don't remember. “There were about thirty of us high ranking officers. They explained to us that the concentration camps were purely working camps; anything else we heard was enemy and atrocity propaganda.”

This time I stopped still. “Did you believe this?”

“Of course. We had to believe it. Hitler sent Reichsführer-SS Himmler to us personally. He supplied us with the most reassuring information.”

I considered it futile to ask further questions. Here I was confronted with a facet of German nature that was not unknown to me, but was equally unbelievable. Not that I would have given credit to all of the generals that Dittmar spoke of. But doubtlessly, men like Dittmar who stood under the generals, were so absolutely overwhelmed by the authority of the state leadership that, still in 1944, they took the word of the authority as gospel truth. Imagine taking Himmler as the last word on humane treatment in the concentration camps! Talk about putting the fox in charge of the henhouse. “Himmler himself told us” - Himmler himself! And I was supposed to open the doors of truth to the German people.

In the meantime, I had been working so that the first large newspaper on German ground, the *Frankfurter Presse*, could be plunged into being – quite literally. I ‘made up’ (to use the technical term) the first issue of the newspaper in burned out printing houses, half of which now stood in a large part under water. The German print workers and I, as well as my Frankfurt editor Peter Wyden, had to take off our shoes and socks before we set to work. We stood up to the middle of our shins in water. I am hardly exaggerating here when I speak of spadework.

The *Frankfurter Presse*, which followed the licensing of the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, was indeed spadework, but not just in that sense. With the *Frankfurter Presse*, my small team dispelled all of the army's concerns in general, and General McClure's in particular. It's true that the permission to create real newspapers instead of cold newsletters was never officially granted, but as the newspaper was dependent on the German speaking ‘boys’ I had trained in Camp Sharpe, they had to accept our visions of a German press in year zero without protest.

What's more, the response that the *Frankfurter Presse* was met with was also important. The half a million copies that we printed were out of print in a heartbeat, and the readers' reactions were consistently favourable- the Germans had expected worse. But the Americans, even the military officers, could not deny their inherent feeling for publicity. They forgot for one historical moment, that we had aimed for the success against the enemy - and when they remembered the original

policy of a pure instructional press, it was too late to stop the wheel of development.

When I now think back to the first rendezvous with the German public, a chill for the missed opportunities catches hold of me. There has seldom been a public so chaste, receptive, ‘enamoured’ even. Later, people mocked that the Germans bought ‘the lot’ at that time because they needed paper to pack their vegetables. But this is not only an injustice against the press of the year 1945 but also against the German public.

I do not want to suggest that the majority of Germans welcomed the victors. Even so, the German public possessed a quality that is not to be underestimated: they were curious. The shock of the defeat had still not been overcome: the Germans wanted to know what had led to this defeat. At the time I wrote the following in an editorial:

“Today thousands of Germans stand on the streets of Germany, wide-eyed over the indescribable masses of allied war material rolling in. Simply seeing these masses is not difficult, and neither is it important. What is important is to try to see behind these things. To recognise that it was inevitable that National Socialism would mobilise all of these powers against Germany. To recognise that the workers of the ‘rotten’ and ‘decadent’ democracies created all of this - created, after the Allies were attacked - and with the firm resolve to forever put an end to that criminal thing which called itself National Socialism. To recognise that Germany was not defeated today because the Allies happened to be stronger, but because the evil in National Socialism was so strong that it melded and merged together all of the forces of good. Cannons, tanks and trucks are nothing by themselves. They are only the means which the free people of the 20th century use to oppose the dark age.”

Although the Germans starved, hundreds of readers' letters praised these thoughts. The hunger for truth was not any less pressing than the hunger for bread. Indeed, by superficial observation it was irritating that in 84 per cent of the letters - an assessment proven statistically by our opinion researcher- the apologetic domestic phrase came up: ‘Indeed, I am only an unimportant man...’ - but did they not have just as much willingness, to listen attentively, to supply themselves to the service of reason? On 7 February 1944, in the ‘*Reports from the Reich*’ from SD, which were in any case coloured in the most favourable sense for the National Socialist state, one could read the following: “*Even in confessional circles there is no unifying leading opinion. Where in West Germany, the badly afflicted Catholic and Evangelical population demanded a hard retribution, the Christian population in other areas shared opinions such as the following: have we even got the right at all to hate and exterminate our enemy? Loving the enemy is the biggest thing that one has to bring oneself to do... Altogether, the fact appears from the reports that feelings of hate against our enemy only exist rudimentarily...*” This ground would be built upon. Certainly, a good part of the readiness for cooperation was based on opportunism, but who's to say that a healthy opportunism could not also be made into good? On 16 April 1945 I wrote a letter to General McClure which contained the following:

“I respectfully add to consideration that we should not simply dismiss the opportunism which is prevalent everywhere as abomination. Plato visualised the meaning of the institution for us. If we create moral institutions with the help of ‘good Germans’, the German people will become used to these things and, in fact, in Plato's meaning, become part of their character. To make the good profitable: our re-education should exist in that respect.”

William S. Paley, one of the deputies of the generals, told me regretfully that the letter was dismissed as ‘cynical’. People

believed the re-education could be managed with regulations. Firstly, with regulations against the military. Later with regulations which forced a new uniform onto the Germans.

The Prisoner at the Rotary Press

I must confess, however, that I had relatively little to do with politics in these days; I had my hands full just getting the newspapers published. I found myself thinking again and again of a school film that I saw during my childhood at the Viennese Urania, the title of which I have never forgotten. The film was called *'From Tree to Newspaper'* and now I was experiencing the film first hand. Before we could go about founding a newspaper, we had to run practically the whole process 'from tree to newspaper.' Most of the printing houses were destroyed or in a wretched condition, the paper reserves were exhausted, the paper factories bombed out or closed, the printing house directors were killed in action, had fled, were injured or imprisoned. Before I could publish the first issue of a newspaper, I always sent a small group to the town concerned under the leadership of my printing expert Max Klieber (originally from Bavaria, and the son of the former musical director of the *Simplicissimus Cabaret* in Munich, now at *Radio Liberty*). Only when the technical requirements had been found or created could the journalistic work begin.

The foundation of the first newspaper in Bavarian Bamberg is probably the best example for how this pioneering work played out.

After Klieber communicated that everything was 'O.K.', I arrived on a rainy spring day in the magical baroque town of Bamberg, where 500 years before, the first book in the German language had been printed.

As usual my first contact was with the American military governor. But amongst what were otherwise visits purely out of politeness, the major, a small, nervous man with keen dark eyes, showed an interest in the foundation of the newspaper which was in no way welcome.

"The newspaper," he said, "will be called *Die Welt*."

"Oh no", I opposed, "it will not."

"It will - *Die Welt*"

The military governor claimed to have a completely convincing reason to christen the newspaper from his region with such an ambitious name. He was not, he insisted, merely a dilettante, as I had apparently assumed him to be, but rather he was a newspaper man and newspaper publisher. There was a weekly paper in the small Californian town where he came from, which was called *The World* and so this is why the Bamberg newspaper should be called *Die Welt* - so that the 'homefolks' should see that it was 'his' newspaper.

My completely useless argument that Bamberg - although one of the most beautiful German baroque towns- was not, in fact, the centre of the world, fell on deaf ears. The stupidity had an amazing quality of perseverance. It was not until the major 'ordered' that the Bamberg newspaper be called *Die Welt* that I lost my patience. I got in touch with Paris - an undertaking that took several hours and ran into many almost insurmountable obstacles - from where General McClure gave the major the instruction to care solely for his own affairs in future. I called the newspaper *Bayerischer Tag*.

As usual, I began my work in the late evening; the next morning the first issue emerged. It came about under unusual circumstances.

I had two hours sleep fully clothed, informing Klieber that he should wake me as soon as the rotary machine started running. That happened at about three in the morning. How great was my astonishment then, when I set foot in the rotary room to discover a shaven, apparently red-haired man in prison uniform on the highest platform of the well-preserved printing press.

"What is he doing here?", I whispered to Klieber.

"He's the machine foreman," answered Klieber evasively.

"I can see that", I indicated to the prisoner's clothing.

"There was no other machine foreman to be found in the whole area."

"Do you mean to say that you got this man out of prison?"

"Provisionally, yes." Klieber averted his eyes. "There's a men's prison nearby. The man is not 'political'". He turned away from the machine. "He beat his wife a couple of years ago. With an iron. I 'released' him. Naturally only for as long as it takes for us to find a suitable professional."

So I brought the *Bayerischer Tag* into the world with a wife-murderer as its midwife. The iron-murderer undertook his work excellently: it came down to his work alone. I do not know what happened to him afterwards but I doubt that he ever saw inside the walls of the Bavarian prison ever again.

It would not be correct to only speak of the technical difficulties that we encountered. How it was with towns like Bamberg - later the *Fränkischer Tag* also came into being in the baroque town - and where people searched for the germs of later disasters, is shown in a publication of *Die Neue Zeitung* from 28 January 1946. The title of the article was called: *A German City Seeks Atonement* and the subheading was: *Bamberg wants to put the destroyers of their synagogue in court*. What a telling picture of Bamberg, indeed, what a picture of Germany! It became apparent what sort of people those who had destroyed the Synagogue of Bamberg really were. The results from 1965 leave us to assume that the spiritual sons of the then arrested ringleader, Zahneisen, and National Socialist Motor Corps squadron leader, Klug, were at work again. It also became apparent that there were other Germans- such as the jeweller's wife, Betty Wagner - who had received the command from the leaders of the Third Reich to melt down the silver objects robbed from the synagogue fire. While I was busy founding the *Bayerischer Tag* with the help of a prisoner, Mrs Wagner turned up at the military government with the objects she had saved and buried - among which was a silver crown - in order to restore them to the surviving Jews of Bamberg. The Bamberg Solicitor General who dealt with the case against the synagogue desecrators was to go on to play an important role in German politics. His name was Dr. Thomas Dehler.

I could not see my whole task as being to politically enlighten the German people. It is true that I was now an American soldier, and had been entrusted with a journalistic-political assignment, but I was ultimately a writer, and a German-speaking novelist: my concerns applied to German literature if nothing else. For twelve years, the German people had been cut off from any German literature worth being classed as such; their liaison with the German language was solely an illegal relationship. If the *Lorelei* was quoted on a Rhineland postcard, then in parentheses this meant that it was a 'folk song'. The best living authors in Germany were hardly allowed to publish anything under their name, the newer works by Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Stefan Zweig, Erich Maria Remarque, Hermann Kesten, Alfred Neumann, Franz Werfel were unknown to readers; the books by Carl Zuckmayer, Fritz von Unruh, Kurt Tucholsky, Joachim Maass, Franz Kafka, Lion Feuchtwanger and Max Brod were banned or burnt. Walter Mehring had sung during emigration: "*The whole home/ and the bit of Vaterland/ The emigrant carries it/ From person to person - from place to place/ On their soles, in their sackcloth, away with them.*" But now almost the whole of Germany was free, at least in spirit, and it seemed to me to be the time to open the sackcloth once again.

How should I undertake this? The army had refused to import German books from abroad into Germany, the civil post did not work, the idea of allowing just one box of works of

the 'exiled literature' to be brought from England or America was too absurd, as I had proposed to the generals. After long consideration I did the only thing possible: I searched for anti-Nazi intellectuals who I hoped would have hidden some of the forbidden books. This is how I found the books that had escaped the flames. For the first time - if somewhat randomly - the names of the best, the taboo, the burnt and the forbidden emerged once again.

Protest from Montagnola

Not everyone who I opened up, blissfully unaware, in copyright and authors' rights as well as in the international copyright law of the German tribune, was happy about it.

When I founded the first newspaper in Bremen - it was called *Weser Bote*; later it was licenced here as the *Weser Kurier* - I printed a poem by Herman Hesse that I had found in one of the saved books in one of the first issues. I would not have done this had I been better informed - but who was well informed in those days? To me, the Nobel Prize winner was an 'emigrant' - a term which only partly applied to Herman Hesse, who was not allowed in the Third Reich, but who was also not banned.

As ill luck would have it, the hermit of Montagnola caught sight of the *Weser Boten*. As there is nothing impossible for an indignant poet, shortly afterwards I received a sharply-worded letter from Hesse, in which he threatened to go to the president of the United States if I did not immediately make amends for my terrible damage. It was not a message from Montagnola but from Mars.

Hesse terrified me. I was indifferent at that time to the authors' rights lawyers and demands for payments, but it did occur to me that 'my' newspapers were clinging to something of an intellectual black market. I was seen to be releasing communications and instruction sheets - and now I even published verses from Herman Hesse! If the army had heard about it - I had wagered on their lack of knowledge of the language - it would have all been over for the new German press.

I wrote Herman Hesse a contrite letter where I indulged myself in alluding to how I had found it more important to provide the German people with the reading matter on Herman Hesse than providing the due remuneration to Herman Hesse. Hesse did not turn to the president of the United States but he did publish one of his few newspaper articles in the *Neuen Zürcher Zeitung*, in which I was strongly attacked. And so - and I say this without remorse, for all of the reservations towards Herman Hesse's ideological behaviour - I indirectly contributed to the complete works of the great old man.

All of this played out during the war, we must not forget; there was still fighting on the front, the Wehrmacht still had not laid down their arms, Adolf Hitler was still issuing ghost-like commands to his ghost armies from the Führer's bunker in Berlin.

I experienced the big day of capitulation in Essen where I was at the point of founding the *Ruhr Zeitung*. I had chosen Essen for this region, not only because it was the most important town of the German industrial centre, but also because Göring's personal newspaper, the *National-Zeitung*, had originated here. Essen was the only town - other than Augsburg, but that came later - that led to the gracious coincidence of crossing paths with the man who would later become the first 'licensee' in Essen. This man is called Dietrich Oppenberg and still today publishes one of the most important and, at the same time, politically clean, daily newspapers, the *Neue Ruhr Zeitung*, which is edited brilliantly by Jens Feddersen.

The first issue of the *Ruhr Zeitung* was an absolute dream for journalists! The headlines read: '*The arms have been laid down. Germany has capitulated unconditionally- On 8 May 1945, at*

midnight, the command rang out: "cease fire!" - signed off by Keitel and Jodl.' The main news story read:

"Paris. - The war in Europe has ended. On Monday 7 May at 2:41 in the morning, Germany surrendered unconditionally. On 8 May, 1 minute after midnight, all the armies received the command to cease fire. The powers of the German Supreme Command agreed and signed the unconditional surrender in Reims, in the headquarters of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces, General Dwight D. Eisenhower."

After my return to Essen, a message was waiting for me: good news that I had been awaiting for months. My friend from Camp Ritchie, Captain (later Major) Hans Wallenberg, who had taken part in the invasion of St. Tropez with the 7th Army, was finally being assigned to me. Now there was a 'professional', a through-and-through journalist standing by my side.

The presence of Berlin-American Hans Wallenberg was even more reassuring as I faced the most difficult task of all: the founding of the first 'American' newspaper in Berlin.

The first newspaper in the capital of the Reich could not be founded in an 'ad hoc' way, as was the case with other newspapers such as the *Hessischen Post* (Kassel), the *Stuttgarter Stimme* and the *Braunschweiger Boten*. In any case, I still think this 'ad hoc' method deserves mentioning one way or another.

During the founding of the *Hessischen Post* I almost died a highly ignoble death. The printing house in the destroyed town of Kassel was in a particularly bad condition. I had arrived in the evening and had not had an opportunity to look around the building. In the middle of the upheaval I asked a printer for the toilet. The building did not have electric lights apart from in the machine rooms. I fumbled my way to the toilet. Suddenly, whilst I stood at the toilet, I realised that it could not be quite so cold in a closed room. I looked for a wall. There was not one to hand. The toilets only had three walls; I stood at the edge of a two-floor deep abyss. Twenty years later, Germany owned newspaper palaces which were in no way inferior to those of England and America.

In contrast, the episode I experienced in Braunschweig was harrowing. My driver Whitey was ill so I travelled with another army driver - who happened to be a German refugee - to Braunschweig. We had been allocated a confiscated house near the printing house. Shortly afterwards I noticed a perturbed expression on my driver's features. Confused, dismayed even, as if he was looking for something, he wandered around the rooms of the half empty, inhospitable house. "What's on your mind, Bob?" I asked. "I don't know," he replied. "I have the feeling that I know this house from somewhere." - "That is not impossible," I remarked. "You were born in Braunschweig, isn't that right?" He nodded. The next day Bob - who was not yet eight years old when he was taken by his parents on their escape from Braunschweig - gathered some information. We had stayed the night in his father's home. It was stolen from its owners after the 'seizure of power' by a Nazi bigwig.

More cheerful, was an experience in Stuttgart, which I will tell despite the fact that it can only fully be understood by journalists. I was preparing the *Stuttgarter Stimme* when a lieutenant-colonel appeared who otherwise worked in the headquarters of the intelligence department. He told me that he had become a journalist in America and was skilled at '*mise en page*.' As usual I was suffering from a shortage of manpower so from my perspective he was very welcome to take over the page layout. However, when I entered the layout room just to make sure, I was met with the sound of suppressed laughter. The *metteur* had delivered a fresh page to my 'colleagues' of the proof with the remark: "there are eight lines too many" as an abridgement. With a grandiose gesture the lieutenant colonel called out: "never mind - the page is working!" Apparently the

'journalist' believed that one could also use commands to skip over one of the iron laws of printing technique.

Global politics in the film settlement

Now the Berlin adventure stood ahead of me. With a 'large' team of five men, Wallenberg included, I resettled in Berlin for a short time.

The preparations for the publication of the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, as I called it (its successor was the Berlin *Tagesspiegel*), were interrupted by a historical 'incident.'

On the morning of 17 July, I sat in my room in the half-destroyed Ullsteinhaus in Berlin-Tempelhof. At about 11 in the morning an American frigate lieutenant turned up, who had the assignment of bringing me promptly to a 'not otherwise identified' location. The mysterious command was followed by an equally mysterious drive through the burning hot destroyed town. As we approached Neubabelsberg, the road was closed with a roadblock. My mute guide had to show all manner of papers so that we could pass through the checks.

Now I found myself in the film colony, which had survived relatively well. This is where the film studios were and where many celebrities of the screen had built their villas. In front of one of these villas, my father-in-law at the time, the American ambassador Joseph E. Davies, came towards me. I could not have been more surprised. I thought he was in Washington. He explained to me that according to his wish, I had been assigned as an adjutant 'for the duration of the Potsdam conference.'

This was the first time I had heard of the Potsdam Conference; I did not know that it would become a historical landmark. Even less had I known that the three victorious powers were preparing to determine the Oder-Neisse line and to split up the defeated Germany into occupation zones. Furthermore, I was the only outsider who knew that the conference between the 'big three' – Truman, Churchill and Stalin – was even taking place in Potsdam. It was true that the Germans had heard that the 'big three' would be discussing the fate of the country 'somewhere in Germany' but the fact that it was taking place in the Cecilienhof Palace in Potsdam – a country residence of the crown prince Wilhelm, and later a German and Russian hospital – was not even known by the generals of the occupation powers.

Even then I had the feeling that while the three powers were agreed on dividing Germany, and on preventing Germany from resurrecting its desire for war, they were suspicious of each other, all the same. During all of the discussions, which took place in the villas of the American delegation, it seemed to be mainly a question of dispersing the suspicion of the Russians. My father-in-law, who became the ambassador in Moscow, spent the whole day travelling back and forth between Truman's office in Kaiserstraße and Stalin's house. The main aim of his mission was to convince Stalin that England and America would not conspire against the Soviet Union and that they were serious about the annihilation of a bellicose Germany.

One matter I found extremely interesting was the conference members' attitude towards the absent country, France. Indeed, the highest policies were being made, but they were still completely dominated by military thinking. So as not to distort the truth, I must say that neither the Americans, the English nor the Russians considered France as a victorious power. "The French", my father-in-law said to me one evening, "won the war 1914/1918, but lost the peace straight afterwards. This time they wanted to do it the other way round: they lost the war in 1940 and wanted to win the peace in 1945." At a cocktail party at Stalin's house, I was speaking with a Russian general about France – he had read my book on France, *A Thousand Shall Fall*, compulsory reading for the Soviet Army. He spoke with overt contempt about the military achievements of the French and scoffed at the 'courtesy' with which the Americans had ceded their French allies with their conquest of Paris. This all came

very close to the truth, perhaps – but it was peculiar all the same, in that that no one seemed to think of the role that France would play in a liberated Europe.

For me, during this opportunity to experience something about the atmosphere of Germany and the future of German politics, it all came down to the obvious absence of a considered German policy. It was highly flattering for me that one evening, as we dined at Truman's residence, the President of the United States listened eagerly to me for half an hour – I say eagerly because he seemed highly surprised by everything I had to say about Germany. He looked at me as if I came from Africa and was reporting about big-game hunting. For this sympathetic and, as I perceive him, important man, Germany was an amorphous mass: out of a "Volk ohne Raum" (people without space), it had become a space without people. One of his advisers said reassuringly that Germany would "need fifty years in order to even halfway recover." Who would seriously want to concern themselves with the possibilities of a democratic development, with the danger of a relapse into blind nationalism? Ultimately, I ask myself whether the cynical quote from the writer Anton Kuh applies here? "However the little Maurice imagines the history of the world to be – that is how it is."

But as to what the Russians were thinking, I think my guess would have been as good as even an insider's. Stalin's personality, however, did make a considerable impression on me. He was a lot smaller than I had imagined, and loved to pose. With his white uniform, he reminded me of the old pictures of tsars. Although he himself had suggested having President Truman as the Chairman of the Conference, he acted as if he was the host of Potsdam. I must say that he was suited to this role, not only because he gave the impression of a big personality, but because he could also be immensely charming. No socialite could have been more gracious than the Soviet dictator during his reception for the delegations.

Every time we travelled the road through the beautiful forests to Potsdam, I realised that we were dealing with the most feared dictator of the world, and also with a man who himself was afraid. While Truman and Churchill were hardly watched whilst inside the barrier, hundreds of Russian soldiers were taking care of Stalin's safety. From Stalin's villa onwards – it was half way between the film colony and Hohenzollernsitz – the Russians lined the narrow forest path in thick rows. They stood so close together that their weapons touched each other in salute. It is perhaps symbolic that between their living place and the conference location both of the victors from the West would come across Russian soldiers almost exclusively.

First edition: the atom bomb

I experienced another great event on 28 July. Churchill was overthrown in the English election and had to give up his place to the new Prime Minister, Clement Attlee. With other officers, I watched from the window of the Cecilienhof Palace that looked over the palace courtyard as the new Prime Minister entered and was received by the ceding delegation. It played out just as nobly, as *gentlemanlike*, as the changing of the guards at Buckingham Palace. One hour later, I had to bring a telegram for ambassador Davies and enter the conference hall where the greats of the world sat at a round table. The advisors were in full swing, as the new delegation under Attlee had taken up the exact thread as Churchill had left it. Democracy still functioned without fault.

The day before the last meeting, on 1 August, I travelled back to Berlin. Indeed, a tragically disabled journalist, who I had allowed in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, soon to be published, did not breathe a word of the Potsdam conference. Later, I described the fateful gathering in a supplement, but I was silent on the fact that it took place in front of the gates of the martyred town in a Hohenzollern-palace and a film studio.

The 7th August approached, which was the date when the *Allgemeine Zeitung* was due to make its debut. And what a day we had unwittingly chosen for our Berlin premiere!

On the afternoon of 6 August I sat bent over the manuscript of the first issue, when a sergeant announced the arrival of “ten or twelve American war correspondents.”

I assumed that the gentlemen wanted to visit me to hear the particulars of the first Berlin newspaper. Moments later, it became apparent that they hadn't the slightest interest in the *Allgemeine*. They occupied my room, made themselves comfortable on the chairs and table and assailed me with questions like: “What do the Germans say about it?” - “What do the Berliners think now?” - “What impression has the matter made on the German population?”

What matter? I kept my head above water, as seemed necessary in such an instance. My only thought was to escape the inquisitors as quickly as possible and to take myself to the monitor room where my ‘eavesdropper’ listened in to foreign radio stations.

When I entered the room, I immediately became aware of the excited gestures which Ernest L. Wynder, headphones over his ears, used to receive me. (There is still something to say of ‘Erni’ Wynder. The medical student, who came from the

Rhineland, and who I included in my unit on account of his language skills, is the man who first found the pathogen of lung cancer in tobacco. Today he is a university professor in America and candidate for the Nobel Prize.)

I gave Wynder a sign to take off his headphones.

“The news has just been announced,” he said, “that our air force has dropped the atom bomb over Hiroshima in Japan. Apparently the bomb is thousands of times stronger than any previously known bombs. We're talking fifty to seventy thousand dead.”

I hurried back to my room in order to brief the American correspondents on the ‘reaction’ of the German people.

As soon as I had managed to get rid of the Americans, I sent my reporter out to learn Berlin's true reaction to the atom bomb. One of them got the task of finding the university professor, Dr. Otto Hahn, at all costs.

Then I sat silently opposite Wallenburg.

After a while, Wallenberg said:

“I don't believe any newspaper has ever had such a sensation for its first issue. I'm not sure whether I would have preferred to go without it.”

(To be continued)

The Moral Collapse Of The British Liberal Party Press in August 1914 With an Introduction by Brendan Clifford

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Articles from Manchester Guardian July 30th 1914 to October 1914
Articles from Daily News July 27th 1914 to September 21st 1914

Introduction

The *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily News* were the major party newspapers of the Liberal Party when Britain declared war on Germany in August 1914. The Government which declared war was a Liberal Government. The Liberal Party had been in office since 1906. It was a radical reforming Government which had conducted a populist agitation against the aristocracy on the issue of a Budget and had broken the power of the House of Lords by means of the Parliament Act of 1911. And it was in the process of devolving a measure of Executive and Legislative power to Ireland by means of a Home Rule Bill, when the issue of whether to avail of a European war as an apparently favourable opportunity to make war on Germany arose in late July 1914.

Both of the major Liberal Party newspapers saw the possibility of war on Germany approaching, and both were vehemently opposed to British participation in the European war. Nevertheless the Liberal Government declared war. And the moment it did so both of the party newspapers declared their support for the war.

That was the great era of newspapers. They were the only general means of information about the world at large for the members of a body politic which was being gradually democratised, and, by their party orientation, they made possible a reasonably structured discussion of what Britain should be doing in the world.

Britain was then the major state in the world. It was saturated with a sense that it was its destiny to rule the world. It

dominated the seas and the tentacles of its Empire were feeling out opportunities for advancement on every Continent. What it chose to do in the world was therefore a matter of great consequence throughout the world.

What it chose to do in 1914 was to intervene in a European war, in which it had nothing at stake, and enhance it into a World War. In the outcome, German commercial rivalry was destroyed in the short term; the Empire was greatly expanded in the short term; three other Empires were destroyed, giving rise to national antagonisms which have grown worse with time; and the internal political life of Britain as the directing centre of a state with ramifications into all Continents was fundamentally damaged.

From the moment of victory in 1918, it was evident that Britain was floundering amidst its expanded possessions, acting at certain times with a purposeless brutality and at other times with an equally purposeless sentimentality. Neither was ever seen through to a durable conclusion. Both lacked the dimension of realism that would have made it possible for them to be taken to a durable conclusion.

This floundering by the most powerful state in the world, which was still in the grip of a sense of destiny despite its floundering, led on very quickly to the Second World War.

But, although the loss of internal coherence only became plainly evident after the defeat of Germany in 1918, it had its source the collapse of the Liberal Party press in the face of arbitrary action by an inner group in the Liberal Government on 5th August, 1914.

The electoral franchise in Britain was very far short of being democratic in 1914, but it had become far too extensive for oligarchy. It was not democratic because the electorate was only a third of the adult population: but a third of the adult (continued p. 22)