

Irish Foreign Affairs

Volume 13, Number 2

June 2020

“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

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By John Minahane

There's a joke going round currently:

First time ever: the original comes from China and the copy from Milan!

Bad history, maybe, but we needn't be too hard on the joker. Obviously what he or she has in mind is the last few decades, when Milan was a major centre of original fashion design and China was the leading manufacturer of copies. Now something has happened which turns that on its head. Not in fashion design but in the art of government, a major new item was produced and displayed first in China, and then copied in Milan and subsequently all over Europe and elsewhere: the lockdown.

But even this doesn't capture the peculiarity of what has happened. It seems that the Milan copy was botched, and that the European lockdowns are imitations or variants of the reworked edition of the botched copy of a masterly original.

The Chinese authorities (whatever the initial confusion) formed a definite purpose and pursued it with immense resolution. Their aim was to isolate the disease. To achieve this, it seemed to them that nothing less would do than a strict lockdown of the big city at the centre of the infection, Wuhan, and in large measure of the whole surrounding province of Hubei. There were "mini-lockdowns" elsewhere, in particular cities and districts and in the province of Jingxi; and everywhere, of course, infected people and immediate surroundings were strictly quarantined, the public was warned, and there were various restrictive measures outlawing gatherings etc. But the measures were graduated. There was no attempt to lock down the whole country.

The Chinese experiment has ended in spectacular success. To appearances, the disease has been smothered. New facts may emerge to complicate the picture, but they would need to be big facts indeed to make this something other than a triumph.

In late February the Italian government imposed a quarantine on some fairly small communities in northern Italy, totalling about 50,000 people, where the infection was marked. This proved ineffective, and on March 9 the government decided to quarantine Lombardy, including Milan. But no sooner had they done so than they realised, apparently, that the balance of Lombardy in Italy was not like the balance of Hubei in China. The attempt to enforce a special regime in Lombardy could end in political catastrophe. So as not to go backwards while going forwards, the government immediately extended the lockdown to the whole country.

And this triggered something in Europe. Until then, in several countries (not all) the public and the regime had been insouciant. On March 8, International Women's Day, there were huge marches in Spain. Three days later, the Champions League match between Atletico Madrid and Liverpool brought a crowd of about 70,000 to Anfield, including 3,000 Spanish fans. For good measure, 70,000 came to Cheltenham Races two days after that.

But by then Spain had been caught up in the great lockdown wave (how can one help using absurd images?) that was starting to sweep Europe. And within a couple of weeks even the British, who had been drawing on their deep-rooted Malthusian/Darwinian traditions of thinking and were envisaging "herd immunity" as the product of a laissez-faire policy (to be distinguished, although this conflation is constantly made, from

the Swedish policy)— even the British joined in. The Deserter-state came back to Europe, at least for this experience.

As for the Slovaks (always alert, with the holy horror they have of being left out of the future) – two days after the first case of infection was recorded in the country, schools were closed down in the main Slovak cities. Not long afterwards the entire Slovak government appeared on television in masks, looking like a delegation of extraterrestrials. The country was, I think, the pioneer of obligatory mask-wearing. Slovakia's version of lockdown was in operation before the first recorded case of death from Coronavirus.

What's the Point of Quarantine?

What's the point of quarantine? To stop the disease from spreading. And if you quarantine the whole country? Well, of course, if you can keep it up until the disease dies down, that will be good for your neighbours... provided you've closed your borders. But actually, closing the borders was just what these quarantined states were slowest and most reluctant to do, even though what they were facing was a globalist virus that loved travelling. Close the churches, the schools, the pubs? No problem! Close the airports? Well... big problem.

However reluctantly, in the end most states imposed severe restrictions on access and required incoming travellers to do 14 days quarantine. In some states this has to be done partly or wholly in state institutions. Elsewhere the traveller is required to do home quarantine, which may be more or less strictly policed (I don't get the feeling that Ireland, for example, is too energetic). But in Britain, as I write, at the end of April, about 10,000 people come into the country every day. Britain is four weeks into the lockdown, but the incoming traveller is not required to do quarantine, nor is he/she tested for health. (In fairness, each one receives a piece of paper that says be good.)

Another odd feature of the European lockdowns is the trajectory. The chief epidemiologist of Sweden, which has refused to go along with the fashion, said some time ago: "You can't keep a lockdown going for months, it's impossible!" I think he was making two assumptions: firstly, that this was to be a whole-nation lockdown, of the kind currently in vogue; and secondly, that as a quarantine measure one would wish to sustain it until the infection was suppressed, as in Wuhan. Anyhow, he's being proved right.

Spain and Italy were forced to start relaxing their lockdowns when there were still four or five hundred deaths a day. Of course, they had other statistics showing that "the curve is flattening", meaning that now they could safely go easier (generally speaking, this is not the time to forget what Mark Twain said about statistics). The truth is that they would have liked to continue their experiment in its strictest form for months, until the infections died away, but they understood that the social damage incurred by doing so would outweigh whatever else they were achieving.

And just as earlier we had a Europe-wide movement of lockdown, so now we have a movement of lockdown-release. Every country has to be either doing it or planning it. (The Czechs, who often think for themselves, decided that all this was out of scale with the real situation and quietly began relaxing things even before Easter.) However, the mainstream view seems to be that relaxation must be done in a staged and

highly disciplined way, and that new protective restrictions should be brought in even as others are loosened.

Recently, when Slovakia allowed some categories of shops to reopen (with strict conditions of mask-wearing, disinfecting customers' hands, and customer distancing), as a tightening counter-measure the government proposed to restrict over-65s to shopping between the hours of 9 a.m. and 11a.m. and only from Monday to Friday. Shops that served such people at other times would be subject to severe fines. As a result, long queues of pensioners formed in front of the supermarket entrances in the mornings. Security men controlled the numbers and ages of those entering, sometimes asking them to show their identity cards (which was illegal, since only the police are empowered to do that, but the new law implied its necessity).

But Slovakia's pensioners were saved from this compassionate measure, intended to protect them from the danger of dying as a result of too freely living. What saved them was doubtless the fact that so many of them are still working: the number is reckoned at 150,000, not insignificant in a population of five million. Some of those are doctors and dentists. Anyhow, the pariahs made their views known to press, radio and television, and they didn't mince words. Their fury was unmistakable. Among other things, they pointed out that for this measure to operate smoothly it would be necessary for all pensioners to wear yellow stars (or blue triangles, or whatever). A few days later the government completely backed down.

This is one of the very few cases of resistance I'm aware of, in what has been a remarkable Europe-wide exhibition of state power. And it's significant that it came from the old, not from the young. The techie young is immensely obedient and malleable. Some Slovak commentators are wondering just now: if the schools are reopened in June, will the children obey the rules on wearing masks, disinfecting hands, keeping social distance, and so on? These concerns are misplaced. There may be some fraying at the edges, there may have to be *ad hoc* exemptions and exceptions (though certainly not many, as the principle of discipline must be maintained), but the children will do what the government says they must do

Looking Forward to non-Christmas?

I would think that social regimentation will be with us for a long time yet. It is not too much to say that the administering minds, having magnificently extinguished Easter, are eagerly looking forward to the prospect of at least severely policing Christmas. – And will it all be worth while? Will it bring society more benefits than harm? We can expect to be deluged with propaganda saying that the answer is yes, of course, obviously, self-evidently so; the more enthusiastic will question the mental capacity of anyone who suggests the opposite. At any rate, one thing is clear already beyond all reasonable doubt: this has been a splendidly successful experiment in the exercise of state power.

Greta Thunberg has noticed. "This is what we can do when we listen to scientists," she says. Greta is right. Admittedly, history isn't really her strong suit, and she doesn't know that we have been listening avidly to scientists for more than two hundred years. What we now call technology could perfectly well be called "listening to scientists". It's the application of the findings of science for purposes that are thought to be economically or socially useful, and this has produced the state of the world which Greta so deplors.

Doctors, of course, are a cut above the vulgar technologists, but they too have been listened to before now, with socially transforming consequences. Michel Foucault's magnificent *History of Madness* relates how, through the agency of pioneering doctors, an entire category of people who had previously moved in society was excluded from society: placed in total and permanent lockdown, under meticulous care.

But Greta is absolutely right to think that the lockdown movement opens vast new prospects for our possible response to the next big surprise that wounded Nature springs on us. Or simply, right now, to climate change. I used to think that governments could do nothing with the low-cost airlines, however they may damage the environment: they just bulk too large in the economy. Now I understand that I was wrong. Acting as a body, the governments of Europe (ideally with the Deserter-state on board, but even without it) could kill holiday air travel stone dead, if they came to a firm conclusion, backed by doctors and scientists, that this was essential. It could be done. They have the power.

At this point, I think, there's a question-mark over the European Union. But the question is genuine, not rhetorical: there might be a positive answer. From one aspect, of course, the lockdown movement was disorganised, unsynchronised, incoherent. Individual countries were looking across at their neighbours as well as over to China, but they made a lot of it up as they went along. Some governments took a while to realise elementary things: for example, when you're in doubt whether people are taking things as seriously as they should, that's the time to put soldiers behind the police on the roads and streets. The Chinese, who with well-merited confidence were giving friendly advice (in Ireland in early March, when the government was still committed to holding St. Patrick's Day, the Ambassador came out with a statement that "hard decisions will have to be taken"), must have been amused.

People have said over and over again: European democracy does not have its *demos*, the coherent people that gives it meaning. This crisis might be taken as proving the point conclusively. Everything was done by the individual nation states acting separately, and the EU as such was nowhere. But looking at things more closely, one sees that, firstly, the nation states have the *demos* eating out of their hands, and secondly, even though acting separately, maybe they weren't all that far from a co-ordinated movement.

Irish Foreign Affairs is a publication of
the *Irish Political Review* Group.
55 St Peter's Tce., Howth, Dublin 13

Editor: Philip O'Connor
ISSN 2009-132X

Printers: Athol Books, Belfast
www.atholbooks.org
Price per issue: €4 (Sterling £3)
Annual postal subscription €16 (£14)
Annual electronic subscription €4 (£3)

All correspondence:
Philip@atholbooks.org
Orders to:
atholbooks-sales.org

It might be that this crisis was still too early, and that even if the Commission was led by a visionary like, say, Macron, rather than a lady who seems to be challenged, he wouldn't have managed to co-ordinate things much better. But in the next great crisis, which cannot be far off, some person with hegemonic talents might have a splendid chance. The prospect cannot be ruled out.

Engagement of Europe and China

I suppose I look at all this rather bleakly. I have come in for some ridicule because of my liking for the way things are done in Sweden. But I cannot help feeling that the Swedes may be able to see things a little beyond their noses. This maverick in Europe's herd has refused to go with the others. The Swedes do not understand why they have to go on a war footing against a virus. *Salus populi suprema lex*, "The People's Safety is the Highest Law": they have qualms about rushing down that road. They feel some old-fashioned, maybe sentimental, attachment to rights and liberties. Seemingly they're worried that, if they go the way of the herd, some things that they value will be compromised, and probably permanently.

Critics have pointed out that the Swedes were sterilising so-called "social defectives" right down to the 1970s, so their notions of rights and liberties may be hypocritical and false. Perhaps. And even if they're not hypocrites, maybe they're sentimentalists, and they need to think with more realism. For my part, I think a time will come soon when the lockdowns are thought about with realism. Currently, people who are in them and part of them may feel that such an intense national commitment must at all costs be praised. But even later, it may be that the lockdowns will be praised, as a kind of groping towards an effective solution to their problem. If that is the judgment, it will imply that there should be a more Chinese mode of relation between state and society.

But in any case, one can agree fully that there must now be a deeper engagement between Europe and China. Many things favour it, including the evolution of the younger generations. Friedrich Nietzsche once, complaining about public discussion of the conditions of the working class, said something along these lines (I quote from memory): "I cannot see what the nations of Europe intend to do with the working man, now that they have made a question of him. The possibility of developing a different type of worker, a Chinese type of man, has been completely ruined." It may be that, taking a long perspective, we can say that the great philosopher was wrong, and that the present generation of young Europeans is such as he might have approved.

Constructive engagement with China is already happening, in the course of these current lockdowns. Nor do I think that, given Europe's new statist enthusiasm, this need always simply be China interacting with China-lite. (If I understand things rightly, Beijing is currently less medicalised than Berlin. In Beijing the municipality recently issued an instruction that people in public, if they cough or sneeze, must do so into their hand or sleeve. In Berlin they will be made wear a face mask to guard against any possibility that they might cough or splutter.)

Furthermore, one must ask whether it is possible that Chinese influence could act as a corrective force against that mighty power which unbalanced Europe, actually pointed Europe towards its ruin, in the time of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, and can still to this day destroy the balance in a state like the Ukraine?

(Just now, though, one pities the Americans: poor devils! Thomas Jefferson made things hard for them. Their current president will be blamed for problems that he didn't cause and

cannot do much about. Injecting bleach, of course, was a bad idea; on that, I'm at one with the extraterrestrials who write for *The Guardian*. It's not prudent for a man in his position, at a time like this, to carry on thinking out loud, doing his best with his own mind and giving just half an ear to "the scientists". (Greta would never do a thing like that.) But Trump can't help it, he's too old to change now.

As a matter of fact, he did come up with one notion of genius, though the extraterrestrials gave him no credit: the idea of quarantining New York. Now, this would not be like Lombardy vis-à-vis Italy-minus-Lombardy. In the American case the preponderance would be very much greater, with proportions more like what they were in China. New York City and New York State/New Jersey, compared to Wuhan and Hubei? The parallel isn't ridiculous, and in terms of a socio-medical measure the idea made all kinds of sense. Unfortunately, here Donald Trump came up against Jefferson and the other Founding Fathers. States Rights come before all medicine: no one may quarantine New York!)

Additional to all the above, we must not forget what Brendan Clifford argued in a memorable article published over forty years ago, which has never ceased to intrigue me: that Chairman Mao, through the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, infused a freedom-loving strain in the Chinese. Was he right? And what does this mean or imply? The question will be of importance.

The sense I have is that what's coming will have features I won't much fancy. I quite liked the old slovenly, lackadaisical life where, if I wasn't advertising myself too much, I felt that Big Brother didn't really see me. Now... During Easter, I am told, the Guards took a helicopter from Rath, near Baltimore, to Cape Clear and carefully checked all the pubs on the island, sending out the message: wherever you are, we're watching...

I acknowledge that the new turn in Europe is inspired by China and not significantly coerced by China, and I cannot blame China for that. It's impossible not to be interested in the source of inspiration. Like everyone else, these days I read more Chinese books in translation. Luo Guangzhong, *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*—absolutely magnificent! *Tao Te Ching*—whatever it means, everyone should read it! I haven't yet got round to Yan Xuetong, *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power* (there are interesting details in the China chapter of Perry Anderson's *The H-Word: the Peripeteia of Hegemony*). And my *Little Red Book* from fifty years ago, I still have it somewhere and must dig it out for re-reading. I expect it to shed much light...

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China

There is no way of avoiding China these days. And there is no way of avoiding the fact that the US is developing a new Cold War against it. It is timely therefore to provide some perspective on what and how China has become what it is. To help with this we are presenting some items that lays out a few basic facts about the country and what it has achieved so far as an independent state.

a) Could China have become such a powerful country without Mao? **By Godfree Roberts, Ed.D. Education & Geopolitics, University of Massachusetts**

“The simple facts of Mao’s career seem incredible: in a vast land of 400 million people, at age 28, with a dozen others, to found a party and in the next fifty years to win power, organize, and remould the people and reshape the land—history records no greater achievement. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, all the kings of Europe, Napoleon, Bismarck, Lenin—no predecessor can equal Mao Tse-tung’s scope of accomplishment, for no other country was ever so ancient and so big as China. Indeed Mao’s achievement is almost beyond our comprehension.” – The United States and China: John King Fairbank.

Mao was one of history’s greatest military commanders and his writings are studied today in all military academies. Without his military genius there would be no modern China. But his military victories pale compared to his contributions to China’s prosperity:

Mao knew that Britain’s agrarian revolution in the sixteenth century and her Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth had miraculously improved food and goods production—but that they lasted two hundred years and brought misery, bloodshed and catastrophic dislocation for the common people.

With China under constant threat of attack and with little bloodshed, Mao accomplished both revolutions (and one of his own) in a single generation, retained the trust of the people, improved the lives of those he dislocated, liberated more peasants and more women than all other liberators in history and briefly established a primitive *dàtóng* [2] society. Here are some details:

1. Starting with an industrial base smaller than that of Belgium’s in the 50s, the China that for so long was ridiculed as “the sick man of Asia” emerged at the end of the Mao period as one of the six largest industrial producers in the world.
2. National income grew five-fold over the 25-year period 1952-78, increasing from 60 billion to over 300 billion yuan, with industry accounting for most of the growth. On a per capita basis, the index of national income (at constant prices) increased from 100 in 1949 (and 160 in 1952) to 217 in 1957 and 440 in 1978.
3. Over the last two decades of the Maoist era, from 1957 to 1975, China’s national income increased by 63 percent on a per capita basis during this period of rapid population growth, more than doubling overall and the basic foundations for modern industrialism were laid and outpacing every other development takeoff in history.
4. In Germany the rate of economic growth 1880-1914 was 33 percent per decade. In Japan from 1874-1929 the rate was 43 percent. The Soviet Union over the period 1928-58 the rate was 54 percent.

5. Under Mao, between 1952-72 the decadal rate was 64 percent.
6. Apart from some limited Soviet aid in the 1950s, which he repaid in full and with interest by 1966, Mao’s industrialization proceeded without benefit of foreign loans or investments.
7. Mao worked his entire tenure under punitive embargoes on food, agricultural equipment, finance and international recognition.
8. When he stepped down he was the only developing country leader to leave an economy burdened by neither foreign debt, internal inflation or rampant corruption.
9. Without Mao’s industrial revolution, the economic reformers of the post-Mao era would have had little to reform because the higher yields obtained on individual family farms during later years would not have been possible without the vast irrigation and flood-control projects—dams, irrigation works and river dikes—constructed by collectivized peasants in the 1950s and 1960s.
10. By key social and demographic indicators, China compared favourably even with middle income countries whose per capita GDP was five times greater.
11. By 1974 China was producing jet aircraft, locomotives, oceangoing ships, ICBMs, hydrogen bombs and satellites and Mao had reunited, reimagined, reformed and revitalized the largest, oldest civilization on earth, modernized it after a century of failed modernizations, liberated more women than anyone in history and ended thousands of years of famine.

Despite the West’s crushing, twenty-five year embargo on food, finance, technology, medical and agricultural equipment and exclusion from the family of nations, Mao banished the invaders, bandits and warlords, eliminated serious crime and drug addiction, doubled the population and its life expectancy, raised literacy to eighty-four percent, liberated China’s women, educated its girls, erased wealth disparity, restored the infrastructure, kept China debt-free, grew the economy twice as fast as America’s—and started two revolutions of his own choosing.

“The higher yields obtained on individual family farms during later years would not have been possible without the vast irrigation and flood-control projects—dams, irrigation works and river dikes—constructed by collectivized peasants in the 1950s and 1960s.. By some key social and demographic indicators, China compared favourably even with middle income countries whose per capita GDP was five times

greater.” Mao Zedong: A Political and Intellectual Portrait, Maurice Meisner.

[1] “On the People’s Democratic Dictatorship”

[2] In the early twentieth century, the great Chinese thinker and reformer Kang Youwei wrote a book entitled *dàtóng shu* (Book on the Great Community) in which advanced an original and radical interpretation of *dàtóng*, drawing mainly on the Confucian classics that propound a theory of progress in human history from the Age of Disorder to the Age of Ascending Peace and finally to the Age of Universal Peace *dàtóng*, the idea of the common good in traditional Chinese social and political philosophy. The Chinese Communist Party’s current ideology, including the “preliminary stage of socialism” and the “*xiaokang* society,” are best understood in light of the concept of “*dàtóng*”. Mao set *dàtóng* as the nation’s goal and constantly advocated it.

b) The winners in the Cultural Revolution by Godfree Roberts, Ed.D. Education & Geopolitics, University of Massachusetts

The CCP isn’t hiding anything and doesn’t *admit* the Cultural Revolution was a mistake. 5,000,000 officials and intellectuals who had lived through the revolution talked to each other and told each other how awful the Cultural Revolution was. They all agreed (and you and I would agree with them) that it *was* awful for officials and intellectuals! A dozen officials and intellectuals even died during the Revolution. Deng Xiaoping’s son became crippled when he fell from a window trying to escape from a mob of Red Guards. Xi Jinping’s big sister committed suicide because Red Guards persecuted her. Xi had to get out of town because, he told his mother, “If I don’t go I’m not sure I’ll survive here in Beijing.” Every official and intellectual who had experienced the Cultural Revolution and the CCP at the time said that, in their experience, it was a mistake.

But they did not ask the people who *benefited* from the Cultural Revolution: China’s 400,000,000 peasants, who would *never* call the Cultural Revolution a mistake.

It was the most wonderful ten years of their lives. Never have so many people learned and accomplished so much so quickly. When it was over, those 400,000,000 peasants were free for the first time in thousands of years. The culture of social stratification had been upended and their class had overthrown the other’s tyranny. That’s why 10,000,000 of them visit Mao’s birthplace each year—to thank him for the Cultural Revolution (which, he said, was the proudest achievement of his life).

When President Xi was asked about the Cultural Revolution his answer was quiet, thoughtful and—in my opinion—correct, “It was a dream (of perfect equality of opportunity) and when it was realized that we could not fulfil it, we abandoned it.” Since then the CCP has been revising its opinion of the Cultural Revolution.

The old edition of eighth grade history textbooks from the People’s Education Press read, “In the 1960s, Mao Zedong *erroneously* believed that there was Revisionism in the party’s Central Committee and that the party and the country were facing the danger of capitalist restoration. In order to prevent the restoration of capitalism, he decided to launch the ‘Cultural Revolution.’”

The 2018 textbook says, “*In the mid-1960s, Mao Zedong believed that the party and the country were facing the danger of capitalist restoration. To this end, he emphasized ‘taking class struggle as the key’ and trying to prevent it by launching the ‘Cultural Revolution.’ By the summer of 1966, the ‘Cultural Revolution’ was in full play.*” [Central News Agency, Sep. 10, 2018].

We now know that Mao was right: there were many people in the Politburo attracted to capitalism and implemented it as soon as Mao was dead. We cannot blame Mao or his successors, however, since they all wanted what was best for China and both have helped make the country the most successful on earth.

Here is a memoir of a peasant boy who grew up during the Cultural Revolution, Dongping Han:

“There were 1,050 villages in my home town, Jimo county, Shandong Province. During the Cultural Revolution years, every village set up a primary school. All the rural children were able to go to school free. Before the Cultural Revolution, there were only seven middle schools in Jimo county, which had a population of 750,000.

During the ten years of the Cultural Revolution, the number of middle schools increased to 249. Every four villages shared one middle school. All primary school graduates were able to go to these middle schools free of charge, without needing to pass any tests.

Before the Cultural Revolution, there was only one high school in Jimo county. For seventeen years before the Cultural Revolution, only 1,500 people graduated from that high school and more than half of them went to college and never came back. For 17 years, Jimo high school was not able to train a single high school graduate for each village in Jimo County. Most villages did not have even a single high school graduate before the Cultural Revolution.

During the Cultural Revolution, the number of high schools in Jimo increased to 89. Almost every commune had three high schools. When I graduated from middle school in 1972, only 70 per cent of my classmates were able to enter high school. By the time my younger sister graduated from middle school in 1973, all of her classmates were able to go to high school.

By the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, there were more than 100 high school graduates in my village and there were more than 12,000 high school graduates in my commune. The expansion of education during the Cultural Revolution years was unprecedented in Chinese history. It profoundly transformed the Chinese people and society.

As the people became more educated, they became more empowered in both political and economic activities. The Cultural Revolution and the democratization of Chinese society One of the most important accomplishments of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was the empowerment of ordinary people and the democratization of Chinese society.

Most people who talk about democracy in this world tend to make the concept of democracy very complicated. Democracy is a very simple and straightforward concept. It means that, contrary to the old system which allowed the elite to run the political affairs, the ordinary people participate in decision making. It means that ordinary people are part of the governance of their society. In order for democracy to work, ordinary people have to be empowered and made equal to the government officials, the old elite. In a democratic society, there should be no privileged classes and there should be no elite.

Everybody should be equal politically and economically. That is a prerequisite of democracy. In the so-called western democracies, one per cent of the people own most of wealth.

Because of this gap in wealth, the small rich minority can buy power, influence, and control. They literally have a monopoly over power. That is not a real democracy at all. Democracy like that is in name only. It is fake. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution tried to build a real democracy. It empowered the ordinary Chinese people to write big character posters to criticize their leaders, and required their leaders to participate in manual labour like everybody else. It was a big step forward in the progress of Chinese society.

During the Cultural Revolution, most Chinese officials had lifestyles similar to those of ordinary people. They lived in houses similar to those of ordinary people. Their children went to the same schools as other Chinese people. They went to work on bicycles like everybody else. Production team leaders were elected by peasants and worked with peasants in the field every day. Village leaders worked with peasants 300 days a year in the fields because they had to attend meetings and make plans for the community. Commune leaders were required to work 250 days a year with peasants in the fields and county government leaders had to work with peasants for two hundred days a year.

Chen Yonggui worked as a peasant all his life. After the Communist Party came to power, he became the party secretary of Dazhai Village in Xiyang County, Shanxi Province. He did a good job leading the people in his village to build a better future. During the Cultural Revolution he was promoted to be vice premier of the People's Republic of China, and member of Political Bureau of Chinese Communist Party Central Committee in charge of China's agriculture. But he continued to devote one-third of his time working with peasants in the fields, and continued to dress and live like a peasant even when he met foreign dignitaries. He was an example of the peasant, worker, and soldier officials that emerged during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. They continued to live like peasants, workers, and soldiers even though they were also government officials. That was the democracy, the proletarian democracy that Chairman Mao tried to build during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, a democracy that empowered the 99 per cent at the expense of the one per cent.

There were many other national leaders like Chen Yonggui. Wang Jinxi, an ordinary worker in the petroleum industry, Ni Zhifu, a mechanist who invented the most efficient drill bits, and Hao Jianxi, an efficient textile worker from Qingdao, Shandong, continued to work in their respective fields after becoming national leaders. Many more workers and peasants served in local government. These workers and peasants served in the government while continuing to work among the working class and peasants. This created a strong egalitarian social climate in China that promoted a strong work ethic and led to an economic performance outstanding in world history.

During the Cultural Revolution years, Chinese management personnel were required to participate in manual labour and workers participated in management's decision-making process. Workers, engineers, and management cooperated to solve technical, and managerial problems. Unreasonable rules and regulations were reformed with workers' input. This revolutionary management philosophy and style empowered the workers, engineers, and management personnel to work together. (Such pooling was formulated as a capitalist management concept and dubbed 'post-Fordism' in the West, or 'team spirit' in Japan.) It led to a great burst of productivity during the Mao era.

The Cultural Revolution's impact on industry and agriculture When the People's Republic was founded, its industrial base was smaller than that of Belgium, a very small country. Its per capita industrial output was less than one-fifteenth that of Belgium. But during the Mao Era, China's industrial output increased 38 times and the heavy industrial portion increased 90 times. From

1950 to 1977, China's industrial output increased at an average rate of 13.5 per cent annually. This speed of industrialization was faster than any country in a comparable period.

It surpassed the performance of Germany, Japan, and the Soviet Union over comparable periods of their development. From 1880 to 1914, Germany's industrial output increased by 33 per cent every ten years and its per capita increase was 17 per cent. From 1874 to 1929, Japan's industrial output increased by 43 per cent every ten years and its per capita increase was 28 per cent. Between 1928 and 1958, Soviet industrial output increased by 54 per cent every ten years and its per capita increase was 44 per cent. By comparison, between 1952 and 1972, China's industrial output increased 64.5 per cent every ten years and its per capita increase was 34 per cent. During the third and fourth five year plans, China invested 316,642 billion yuan in infrastructure, and increased its industrial assets by 215,740 billion yuan.

By 1979, there were 355,000 enterprises, 2.25 times the number in 1965. The size of these State-owned enterprises expanded across the board. Among these enterprises, the big and medium-sized enterprises amounted to 4,500. In the field of energy, between 1967 and 1976, China's petroleum output increased by an average of 18.6 per cent annually. By 1978, its annual output of petroleum reached 100 million tonnes, a five-fold increase over 1965.

During the 10 years of the Cultural Revolution, China maintained an annual growth rate of 9.2 per cent in the output of coal, chemicals, and electricity. Between 1965 and the mid-1970s, China invested 205 billion yuan in third line industrial projects. A group of steel plants, machine tool plants, airplane plants, space programs, and electronic plants were built in the central and western regions. By late 1970s, the industrial assets in the third line region accounted for one-third of the total industrial assets in China. China's industrial output increased 3.92 times. The industrial development of the central and western regions improved the overall picture of China's industrial development, with profound strategic significance for China's national security and development as a nation.

While stressing self-reliance, Chairman Mao approved of importing technology when necessary. In 1972, Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou Enlai approved the plan of importing 26 foreign industrial plants with a total investment of \$5 billion. A big group of petroleum and chemical plants were constructed, which increased China's output of fertilizer, chemical products, and artificial fabrics. The thirteen big fertilizer plants built during this time accounted for one-fifth of China's chemical fertilizer output. During the 1970s, China also built many small-scale chemical fertilizer plants.

By 1978, there were 1,534 small chemical fertilizer plants in China. The emergence of these small fertilizer plants in China played an important role in the country's agricultural development. In the 1960s and 1970s, the US and other western nations spread the Green Revolution technology to Third World countries like India, Mexico, Brazil, Philippines, and so on. The spread of Green Revolution technology in Third World countries had some devastating effects on the agriculture of the third world countries. The use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and big machineries increased the input of agriculture. But the increase of yield also caused grain prices to decline. Moreover, input costs went up over time. Many small peasants were not able to deal with the challenges caused by market fluctuations. A large number of small peasants became bankrupt, and lost their land. They had to migrate to urban areas in order to survive. The emergence of large shanty towns and homeless populations in the Third World countries was one of the direct results of the spread of western Green Revolution technology. It

led to a three-fold crisis of agriculture, rural areas, and peasants. The long-term impact of this crisis is difficult to fathom today.

China was the only country that was able to successfully escape this three-fold crisis of agriculture, rural areas, and peasants, because of its collective farming practices. The organized Chinese peasants developed their own home-made Green Revolution. Because Chinese peasants owned the land collectively, and shared the benefit of the Green Revolution technology more equally, they enjoyed the benefits while avoiding the devastating negative effects. The homegrown Green Revolution technology reduced the intensity of farm labour, and also gave rise to many rural industrial enterprises.

Because of the rise of these rural industrial enterprises, peasants were able to leave the fields, but not the village, to engage in industrial work. With the development of local Green Revolution technology, the use of locally-made farm machines, and the rise of rural industrial enterprises, Chinese peasants' living standards improved significantly during the Cultural Revolution years." The Socialist Legacy Underlies the Rise of Today's China in the World— by Dongping Han.

Take it from someone who benefited from it: the Cultural Revolution was the only successful revolution of the 1960s.

c) What kind of leader is Xi Jinping?

By Robin Daverma

He's somebody who will deal with shit. I mean it literally. In 1974, Xi volunteered to go to Liangjiahe, a dirt-poor village in Northwestern China. His dad was getting the rough treatment during the Cultural Revolution, so he probably felt that getting out of Beijing was a safer move. So he volunteered.

China's GDP per capita in the 70's was around \$100 per year, which is obviously not great. But Liangjiahe was a totally different ball game. It was a famously poor place. I would guess the GDP per capita was maybe \$20 a year....

China's GDP per capita in the 70's was around \$100 per year, which is obviously not great. But Liangjia he was a totally different ball game. It was a famously poor place. I would guess the GDP per capita was maybe \$20 a year. No, I didn't miss any zeros. It was really that poor. There was no electricity, no indoor plumbing, no toilet, no heat, no rice or flour. Corn was a luxury, millet and wild grass were the normal diet. and people just dug dirt caves out of mountains to live. This was the cave Xi lived in at that time:

The villagers that Xi lived with - were mostly illiterate and covered in fleas. So Xi looked around, and was like, fleas, oh well, I just have to get used to it. Food? That's OK, I'll take a hoe and go farm with the villagers. We can feed ourselves. Electricity? Water? Nah, nothing can be done about that. So what do we have? Poop! OK, so we have poop. We can make something with that, maybe.

So he read about fermenting poop to make methane gas, and tried to build a poop-fermenter in his village, so that people can use it for light and cooking at night. He was only 16 or 17 at that time, so he wasn't very good and got the pipe stuck, so he had to jump into the cesspool to clear the pipe, and got poop all over himself, but he got it working. The next year he traded his motorbike for a water pump and some other tools for the village, and pretty soon his village was getting more prosperous.

He stayed and worked in that village for 7 years, applied to join the CCP 10 times, got rejected 9 times, and finally got admitted on the 10th time. The villagers promptly elected him the Party Secretary of the village. That was how he started his political career in China.

He's not unique. Actually, all of China's leaders have been through absolute hell to get to where they are. CCP tradition is that unless you start from the very bottom, you'll never get to the very top. I mean, you are selecting 7 out of 80 million, once every 10 years, so the CCP traditionally has been absolutely ruthless in terms of discipline and promotion. Election bribery? Expel 70. Industrial accident? Send 25 to jail. Corruption? Punish 100,000 in one year. Get GDP to grow at 10%+, while keep your nose clean? OK, you get a one step promotion. A small purge once every 2 years. A big purge once every 5 years. You've got to beat out 80 million people to get there, and everybody is swimming as hard as you are. The ones who pop out at the end, after 35 years, are all NOT your normal people!

When Beijing announced the plan to eliminate extreme poverty in 2015, most foreign observers were dubious. Can China Wipe Out Poverty By 2020? Since the announcement, People Daily, the top Chinese newspaper, has been literally reporting on poverty reduction DAILY - success, failure, method, strategy, recidivism, lessons learned, statistics, etc. Everyday! I suspect the guy is actually serious about it.

d) The links between the 1920 Cork hunger strikes and China by Francis Kane

Terence MacSwiney and his colleagues made global news and had a huge impact on an idealistic young Chinese poet

In 1920, events in Ireland became global news. One story above all gripped the attention of the world's journalists, intensifying as it unfolded: the hunger strike of [Terence James MacSwiney](#). The Lord Mayor of Cork's fast to the death with two of his comrades was reported widely in realtime by wire and had huge impact.

The struggle in Ireland and its implications became, briefly, one of the most widely discussed topics on earth. MacSwiney inspired notions of liberty in a crumbling imperial world, destabilised by the horrors of the First World War. His words and actions famously resonated with Nehru and Gandhi. Less well known than the connection to India, but no less significant, is MacSwiney's link to China

In 1920, China was in chaos, a divided country dominated by foreigners and warlords, its ancient empire having finally collapsed in 1911. In his idealistic youth, the poet [Guo Moruo](#) cannot have known that one day he would become a man of enormous power and prestige. He would be the longstanding Chairman of both the [Chinese Academy of Sciences](#) and the [China Federation of Literary and Art Circles](#), from the inception of the People's Republic of China in 1949 until his death in 1978. He died not long after his comrade and friend [Chairman Mao](#), whom he praised relentlessly.

Moruo wrote an astonishing poem, an emotional "in real time" commemoration of fellow writer MacSwiney in 1920, usually translated as "Victorious in Death". Unusually passionate in tone, the young Chinese intellectual produced it through October 1920, as Irish news came into Japan, where Guo was living at the time.

His subjects are alive as he begins writing, the stanzas dated as they were composed, but the poem ends with news of their deaths. Guo also commemorates volunteer Michael Fitzgerald, whose death in Cork Gaol on October 17th came after 67 days on hunger strike. A week later on October 25th saw the deaths, within hours of each other, of his two comrades, Joseph Murphy (after 76 days, also in Cork Gaol) and MacSwiney, (after 74 days in Brixton Jail).

In the middle of the poem, Guo compares MacSwiney and Fitzgerald to the legendary hunger protesters of ancient Chinese heritage, Bo Yi and Shu Qi:

Terence MacSwiney, Irish patriot! Today is the 22nd of October! (Never has the calendar on the wall so fixed my attention!) Are you still alive, locked in your prison cell? Came a cable of the 17th from London: It was sixty-six days since your fast began, and yet you bear yourself as well as ever. You talked for a while with your dear ones on the afternoon of the 17th, and your face was even more radiant than before. Your strength was fading daily... and today is the 22nd of October. Irish patriot, Terence MacSwiney! Can you still be counted among living creature? A cable of the 17th from your native Cork told than a Sinn Feiner, a comrade of yours, Fitzgerald, fasted for sixty-eight days in Cork City Gaol, and suddenly died at sundown on the 17th. Cruel deaths there are in history, but few so tragic. The Shouyang Mountain of Ireland! The Po-yi and Shu-chi of Ireland! The next cable I dread to read...
October 22

Who were the Chinese brothers in Guo's poem? [Bo Yi and Shu Qi](#) lived at the time of the transition from the [Shang dynasty](#) to the [Zhou](#), at the very beginning of Chinese recorded

history (over 3,000 years ago). War against the Shang by the Zhou king, [Zhou Wen Wang](#), was morally unacceptable to them and they refused to eat, dying on the Shouyang Mountain (首阳山, in Shanxi). They are commemorated in Chinese literary culture for their personal and moral virtue, loyalty, and pacifist idealism, occupying a longstanding cultural position as exemplars of high moral principles and integrity. For Guo to compare MacSwiney and Fitzgerald with Bo Yi and Shu Qi is praise of an interculturally profound order.

However, the American-born Murphy, one of the three Irish patriots to die in the Cork hunger strike campaign, is not mentioned in Guo's poem. That there were three, not two, Irish hunger strikers, may have been inconvenient for the smooth working of Guo's cultural analogy. The poem ends thus:

The mighty ocean is sobbing its sad lament, the boundless abyss of the sky is red with weeping, far, far away the sun has sunk in the west. Brave, tragic death! Death in a blaze of glory! Triumphant death!

Victorious death! Impartial God of Death! I am grateful to you!

You have saved MacSwiney, for whom my love and reverence know no bounds! MacSwiney, fighter for freedom, you have shown how great can be the power of the human will! I am grateful to you! I extol you! Freedom can henceforth never die! The night has closed down on us, but how bright is the moon...
October 27

Guo's poem is a window on a liminal moment in world history.

The London Times On Russia, Ireland And Palestine, Easter 1920

Introduction by Manus O'Riordan

Each issue of *The Times* (UK) has an "on this day" feature where an editorial or a report from that paper on the same day 100 years previously is reproduced. In 1920 Easter fell on the weekend of April 4. Five days beforehand there had been a confession of defeat in - and retreat from - Russia, summed up in the very heading of the *Times* editorial, "Triumph Of Lenin." Its Easter Weekend report from a militarised Dublin, confronting a British determination to prevent any commemoration of the Easter Rising of four years previously, vividly portrayed the relationship between the oppressed and their oppressors. What was particularly notable about the report from Washington, ten days later again, was just how determined the *Times* was to ensure that there would be no slippage in Britain's commitment to Zionist rule over the indigenous population of Palestine, that it actually appended the full text of the Balfour Declaration at the end of that report.

(1) Triumph Of Lenin

From The Times archive, March 31, 1920

Novorossisk fell and Denikin was forced to flee on Saturday, just in time for Lenin's opening address to the ninth All-Russian Bolshevik Congress on Monday. We cannot question the right of the Bolshevik tyrant to triumph. For a time it seemed as if Denikin's troops would sweep all before them to Moscow. They were within two hundred miles of the capital when they were checked; then, slowly, they were driven back to the port which they have just lost. Their leader has borne himself without

reproach. Even at the last he refused to accept the hospitality of a foreign battleship. He quitted Russian soil in a Russian destroyer when the evacuation was complete, and has gone with a faithful band of Volunteers to the Crimea. Like his gallant comrade Koltchak, he has nobly maintained the historic honour of the Russian arms, and, like Koltchak, he was a pure and upright patriot.

Both men, unhappily, were soldiers without statesmanship. They were surrounded by representatives of the old Tsarist system, too stupid to apprehend the transformation which had taken place, but astute enough to mislead the military chiefs. The result was that the soldiers failed to organize and win support behind their lines. When the Bolsheviks broke through, the people showed no fight. They hated the Bolsheviks, but they had no faith in the politicians. Towards the end, the Cossacks deserted in masses. Had the Allies warned Koltchak and Denikin of the political mistakes into which they were being led they might have established popular governments in their rear. Now all the Allies have been able to do is to safeguard the evacuation and to carry the penniless fugitives to places of asylum.

The Prime Minister has been hiding from Parliament and the nation the true nature of his dealings with Russia. There is a strong contrast between his stealthy advances and the open and arrogant defiance of Lenin. Lenin is the victor and he is determined that the Entente he has baffled shall drink to the dregs the humiliation of their defeat. "The entire policy of the Entente towards us," he boasted to the Bolshevik Congress,

“presents a picture of complete failure.” The statement is unanswerable.

(2) Dublin A Beleaguered City

From The Times archive April 4, 1920

A cordon of troops has been drawn around Dublin. Early yesterday there was in the streets a constant rumble of motor lorries, laden with troops in full battle equipment. A system of toll gates was established in the outer districts, and all traffic was stopped by soldiers. Passengers and vehicles are being searched for arms. In some places barbed wire entanglements have been erected and tanks and armoured cars are being employed. Numbers of private houses have been searched by police and soldiers. All citizens who are known to be active Sinn Feiners are “on the run”; they sleep in different places each night to avoid arrest and deportation to England.

The newspapers are marvellous in their enterprise. By half-past 6 this morning bare-footed boys were shouting stop press editions in the streets announcing the shooting of a man at Howth. These newspapers are equally marvellous in another aspect. They devote more space to sport than to the alarming state of the country; they contain almost nothing but accounts of the military operations and results and forecasts and programmes of race meetings and football matches. Nowhere but in Ireland could one find a people enjoying themselves to the full, as it were at the cannon mouth. Everyone asks what is to be the end of the present regime and no one can supply an answer.

Meanwhile the customary Irish joie de vivre continues without abatement in spite of an atmosphere of political discontent and violence. On visiting military outposts at Finglas I found that a group of soldiers with steel helmets and fixed bayonets had placed planks across the road and were stopping every vehicle. They removed the rugs from the knees of passengers in dog-carts and pony traps, and peered beneath the seats lest rifles should be concealed. Barricades have also been erected at Rathfarnham, Dundrum, and Lucan, and yesterday loads of hay were prodded with bayonets and the lids of churns were removed lest ammunition should be disguised as milk. On the whole the military restrictions were looked on with no ostensible irritation. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that behind what appears to be a purely Celtic ridicule there lurks the dark irritation which is responsible for terrible reprisals.

3) Mandate For Jewish Homeland

From The Times archive, April 14, 1920

Washington. Reports are current here that the British Government is in danger of making another mistake in regard to the Middle East settlement. In November 1917, the Foreign Office promised to include in the Peace Treaty a clause for the establishment of a “Jewish homeland” in Palestine. The promise obtained the support of France and Italy, and was made the basis by the Peace Conference for an arrangement whereby the Zionists should get Palestine under a British protectorate. It is now stated that we have been trying to break the agreement, and to substitute an arrangement giving the Emir Feisal a mandate for Palestine under which Jewish minority rights should be guaranteed. From the point of view of Anglo-American relations this is explosive. The Jews are very powerful here. The Zionists among them have paid us the compliment of desiring from the first British protection for Palestine, and since last summer of taking it for granted that, having promised to assume responsibility, we should stick to our word. The idea that the Arabs should be put over Palestine would produce an agitation of the same type as the agitation about Ireland.

The Constantinople settlement has done us enough harm. It is widely regarded as cynically opportunist. To turn Palestine over to the Arabs would be regarded as considerably worse — as the sort of thing which justifies those who are trying to turn into a policy of permanent aloofness the temporary refusal of Washington to have anything to do with the League of Nations. It would disgust our friends and encourage our enemies as much as any minor muddle still open to us over world reconstruction.

In November 1917, a letter was published in which Mr Balfour, on behalf of the Government, made the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish aspirations: “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

Father Alexander McCabe and His Spanish Civil War Diaries

By Manus O’Riordan

[The following review of Tim Fanning, *The Salamanca Diaries - Father McCabe and the Spanish Civil War*, 2019, was first published in *Saothar 45*, Journal of the Irish Labour History Society, 2020]

Cavan born Alexander McCabe (1900-1988) had his first encounter with Spain when a student for the priesthood at the Irish College in Salamanca from 1919 to 1925. He would return to that College as vice-rector in 1930, was promoted to rector in 1935, and remained there until the College was handed over to the Spanish Catholic Church in 1950. McCabe was an incessant diarist, writing every day, and often several times a day, and author Tim Fanning has constructed a fascinating narrative from the material to hand. His is a book that leaves one hungry

for more, but it is a hunger that cannot be assuaged. At the very outset, Fanning reproduces a July 1946 diary entry, where McCabe related that, while his diaries for the years 1938-45 had been the best kept, he had decided to burn all of them! So, for the missing years, the author was reliant on McCabe’s reports to the Irish Catholic Hierarchy, and other correspondence.

McCabe was no supporter of the Spanish Republic. He was not even an Irish Republican, and was filled with admiration for “the reverence that the English people feel for the person and sacred office of the King”. One high point of his, tragically alcoholic, final decades in Ireland, was when he was invited to address the King and Queen of Spain at Maynooth College

during their 1986 state visit to Ireland, concluding with the salutation: “Long live for many years the great King Juan Carlos, successor of so many distinguished monarchs.”

When it came to the Spanish Civil War, then, McCabe was far from neutral. Once it erupted, this churchman was very much a partisan against the Republic. And yet, since he was such an acute observer of both societal realities as a well as personalities, his diaries contribute to a deeper understanding of what had been unfolding in Spain. McCabe recognised that social fissures and religious fissures went hand in hand in Salamanca. He had observed the inauguration of the Second Republic in 1931 and how assiduously working class republicans had campaigned in that year’s elections, and how even their children loudly sang the most extreme of anti-clerical of songs on a daily basis, “as sweetly and as fervently as if they were hymns to Our Lady”. Some chickens were coming home to roost, as McCabe noted how the Spanish Church had disregarded the everyday concerns of the working class, preferring instead to intrigue with aristocrats, officers and industrialists: “Irish priests played a big part in the land agitation of the century. Of course, the Irish landlords were Protestants, which isn’t true in Spain”, where its Church “wraps itself in the liturgical dignity” and “remains as tranquil and lifeless as a mummy and does nothing”.

In the Asturian village of Pendueles, where the Irish College maintained a summer villa, he also observed that, whereas the villagers would work hard, the “leisured aristocrats and middle classes idled away their time, and did nothing... Rich and poor tend to keep apart and be naturally hostile”. He was alarmed at the fact that, by 1933, illiterate men in the Asturian mountains were now listening to the radio and talking about foreign politics: “The workmen here are evidently following what is happening in Germany, and it shows the spirit of class solidarity and international sympathy that European workmen everywhere have today.”

McCabe was actually on vacation in Ireland when the Fascist revolt against the Spanish Republic commenced in July 1936, and he did not return to Salamanca until November. As he listened to radio back home in Cavan, McCabe recorded an October evening when he heard “the Socialist lady deputy, Margaret Necker, make a very bitter appeal to the peasants and workers of Badajoz, her constituency ... in a venomous style, like a serpent”. It is here that Tim Fanning had an uncharacteristic lapse from his otherwise meticulously high standards, as he established no context for Necker’s address. It is only 50 pages later that there is a passing, disconnected, reference to the Badajoz massacre of that July. But even here, the author failed to note that as many as 1,500 of Necker’s constituents had been summarily shot down in that town’s bullring.

In another October 1936 diary entry, McCabe did, however, provide sharp insights into some differences between Irish and Spanish society. On the eve of the Consecration of Mullingar Cathedral, he had overheard a conversation where one young man “said to another, *‘The Spanish workers are putting up a great fight’*. I heard a man repairing the road make a similar remark. But the workmen in Mullingar were all staunch Catholics. They were all talking about ‘the big day tomorrow, the Consecration’. He ruminated that this showed a “spirit

of compromise between religious and political views” sorely lacking in Spain.

On the outbreak of the Civil War, the Irish College’s students had been evacuated back to Ireland from its Asturian summer villa, and would never again return to Spain. As Salamanca became Franco’s temporary capital, McCabe would preside over an empty Irish College, until it became the seat of Nazi Germany’s mission to Franco from July 1937 to April 1938. It would continue to house the Nazi press and propaganda department until the Spanish War ended in April 1939, a more long lasting war than many had anticipated. But in a November 1936 conversation with a Franco officer McCabe himself had opined: “In 1935, the Socialists staged a big concentration in Madrid, in which 100,000 took part. If these men are willing to fight, the taking of Madrid won’t be an easy affair.”

It is the McCabe diary entries on the 1937 visits to Salamanca of Irish Christian Front leader Paddy Belton and General Eoin O’Duffy that are most scathing in their pen portraits. McCabe served as the intermediary for their audiences with Franco and other luminaries. He would record: “Franco asked O’Duffy if he had any experience of military command. O’Duffy replied that he had commanded a million men on one occasion ... *‘At the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin’* ... Franco merely smiled.” But it did not remain a smiling matter for long. Fanning has chronicled McCabe’s devastating commentary on how the sheer military ineptitude of O’Duffy’s Brigade, and his reluctance to commit it to battle, rendered it a liability for Franco. Yet in May 1937, when O’Duffy announced his decision to bring the Brigade home after such a short sojourn, McCabe unsuccessfully sought to persuade him to soldier on in Spain, but with the Brigade professionalised with Spanish officers.

McCabe himself had been very much sympathetic to the Franco cause, while abhorring what he would describe as a “spirit of revenge” that had become “a physical lust”. On first returning to Civil War Spain in mid-November 1936, McCabe estimated that to date, in Salamanca itself, 1,300 individuals had been “shot by lorryfuls” by Franco’s forces. And in mid-July 1937 he went on to record as a “diabolical mystery” how, from the windows of the College itself, he could hear executions continuing at a frequency of once or twice a week, with a savagery that initially shocked “even the Germans” who were now beginning to take up occupancy at the College.

All the more reason, then, to lament McCabe’s 1946 decision to burn all his 1938 to 1945 diaries, which had contained, in his own words, “crudely bitter pages, especially about the cruelty of the Spanish Civil War”, while also expressing “a fierce hatred of the German Nazis”. But to have so thoroughly mined the McCabe diaries for the years beforehand, and to have constructed such a readable and informative book therefrom, is indeed a considerable achievement on the part of author Tim Fanning.

Britain versus Russia – Battle for the Caucasus (Part 6)

By Pat Walsh

Lloyd George gave the *coup de grâce* to the Russian Whites in his infamous Guildhall speech of 8 November 1919.

He made the speech without consulting his Cabinet colleagues and it had the effect of a bombshell. As Harold Nicolson wrote the diplomacy of Lloyd George was most of all characterised by its privacy – not only in method but also in aim (*Curzon: The Last Phase, 1919-1925, p.56*).

In his Guildhall speech Lloyd George said that: “*I do not like the outlook in Russia.*” Denikin’s march on Moscow had been “*checked*” and the indication was one of “*prolonged and sanguinary struggle*” – a phrase which must have recalled the terrible attritional slaughter that had been recently experienced in France among his audience.

Lloyd George: *Je ne regrette rien*

The Prime Minister stated that he had no regrets for what Britain had done in Russia and insisted that it had “*discharged*” its “*debt of honour... to the gallant men in Russia who helped us to fight the Germans when the Bolshevik leaders were betraying the Allies.*”

He went on:

“We have sent a hundred million worth of material, and of support in every form... We have given them the opportunity, if Russia wished to be liberated, of equipping her sons in order to free themselves. If the Russian people wish for freedom, we can always say that we have gave them the chance... We have held positions of danger in that country until the Russians were prepared to hold them themselves. We cannot, of course, afford to continue so costly an intervention in an interminable civil war. Our troops are out of Russia – frankly I am glad. Russia is a quicksand. Victories are easily won in Russia but you sink in victories. Russia is a dangerous land to intervene in. We discovered it in the Crimea, but true to the instinct which has always saved us, we never went very far from the sea.”

The Prime Minister’s reference to having “*never went very far from the sea*” was a reminder to his audience that Britain had always primarily been a maritime power and had sensibly got others to her fighting for her in the interior where armies were easily swallowed up.

Lloyd George dismissed the fear “*that the Bolshevik Armies are going to conquer the whole of Russia*” on the basis that “*the free peasantry of the South have in their hearts a detestation of Bolshevism, and I do not believe that the Bolsheviks will conquer that aversion.*”

It was true that during the Civil War the Soviet State had directly requisitioned food from the peasantry – War Communism. The peasantry had tolerated this, presumably because the White enemy of the Bolsheviks in the Civil War had the purpose of restoring the Tsarist system, including landlordism. Russia, far from being proletarianized, was still a pre-capitalist economy, overwhelmingly peasant, two years after the Bolshevik takeover. Peasant farms had been increased from about 16 million to about 25 million by the division of the great landed estates. There was no class war, as yet. The general socialist revolution only began in 1928, after the ending of the NEP, with a new revolution against the bourgeois revolution in landownership Lenin had fostered. In 1919 the peasants had a simple choice between the Bolsheviks, who had given them the land and increased their number, and the Whites, who wished to take away their land.

Was the British Prime Minister so ignorant of the facts or was he just spinning a yarn to support his policy?

Having failed in military intervention Lloyd George said that “*other methods must finally be resorted to for restoring peace and good government in that distressed land.*” (*The Times* 10.11.1919)

In this phrase he signalled he had returned to the idea he had entertained originally, of negotiating with the Bolsheviks and hinted at a return to the Prinkipo peace conference he initiated earlier in the year. Indeed, his whole speech had the air of an “*I told you so*” about it.

News of the new line in British policy led to a collapse in morale and panic among the Whites in South Russia when Lloyd George’s Guildhall speech was published in the local newspapers. The British government seemed to be deserting the common struggle against the Bolsheviks and leaving the White Russians to their fate. As one British observer on the spot wrote:

“The effect of Mr. George’s speech was electrical. Until that moment the Volunteers and their supporters had confronted themselves with the idea that they were fighting one of the final phases of the Great War, with England still the first of their Allies. Now they suddenly realised with horror that England considered the War as over and the fighting in Russia merely as a civil conflict. In a couple of days the whole atmosphere in South Russia was changed. Whatever firmness of purposes there had previously been, was now so undermined that the worst became possible. Mr. George’s opinion that the Volunteer cause was doomed helped to make that doom almost certain. I read the Russian newspapers carefully every day, and saw how even the most pro-British of them shook at Mr. George’s blows.” (C.E. Bechhofer, *In Denikin’s Russia and the Caucasus*, p.129)

The attitude among the Whites towards the British turned sour and became openly hostile. White officers began to say that the British Government’s fundamental intention was to dismember and weaken Russia □ not to overcome her Bolshevik enemies. The sapping of morale and spread of defeatism accelerated the decline of the White Russian command and its supply network. (Lauri Kopisto, *The British Intervention in South Russia, 1918-20*, p.161)

The Guildhall speech also outraged British officers serving in Russia and the Caucasus.

During the following weeks the Prime Minister continued on the same lines in Parliament, in a bid to soften opposition to his policy. He argued that Russia was a danger to its neighbours in its present state of “*unrest and disturbance*” and peace would result in less chance of Bolshevik propaganda gaining leverage in the West (*Hansard*, Col. 471-5, 13.11.1919)

There was opposition in England to the new policy. *The Times* noted that earlier peace proposals with the Bolsheviks had been conceived by “*prominent Jewish financiers in New York whose interest in Trotsky is of old standing*” and concluded that the Prime Minister’s speech “*makes British policy stink in the nostrils of all patriotic Russians.*” *The Daily Mail* accused Lloyd George of “*Shaking hands with murder.*” (10.11.1919)

The Times editorial referred to “*Lenin’s Proposals for Peace – Texts of the Offers made by the Soviet Government to the Allies*” which it printed in the same edition. It laid out both offers – those made to the Bullitt Mission in the Spring and a

recent one made to Colonel Malone – which had been revealed to the Daily Herald, a few days before (8.11.19) to show the similarity and constancy of the Soviet proposals. It noted how the Prime Minister had denied knowledge of the offer made to Bullitt but seemed to be gravitating toward them and a new Prinkipo, which *The Times* vigorously opposed.

The Times showed how the text of the offer made to the Bullitt Mission in the Spring was the same as that made now to Colonel Malone:

“All existing de facto governments on the territory of the former Russian Empire and Finland would remain in full control of the territories they occupied at the moment of the Armistice, the revision of frontiers to take place only by the self-determination of the inhabitants. Each government would agree not to use force against any of the others.”

But the Soviets had even added a section, emphasising and clarifying their concession, so there could be no mistaking the proposal on the part of the Allies:

“The Russian Soviet Government... and all other Governments that have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire, the Allied and Associated Governments... to agree not to upset by force the existing de facto Governments which have been set up on the territory of the former Russian Empire.” (The Times 10.11.1919)

Both “Azerbaijan” and “Armenia” – which the Soviets had refused to recognise – were specifically mentioned as part of the Soviet offer (but not Menshevik Georgia).

Presumably, Lenin, at this moment of the turning of the tide in favour of the Soviets, in November 1919, was still offering to stay out of Azerbaijan and Armenia, in return for an end of war on Bolshevik Russia and its existing territory. The Allies were given a week to reply.

But whilst Lloyd George had become interested in capitalist trading with the Bolsheviks, instead of undermining them in a Civil War, he could not bring himself to make a formal peace with them. Less than a year later in the summer of 1920 the Soviet Government made a very generous offer to the Poles – more generous than the Allies were contemplating – which was never tested because of the unexpected success of the Polish army. It was probable that Lenin aimed to settle boundaries to consolidate the Soviet state and let Communist propaganda do its work within the states he settled accounts with.

It might be that the Lloyd George did not trust Lenin and anticipated that he would not honour any settlement made – that he had acquired a British attitude to treaty making. However, Britain never put the Bolsheviks to the test so we will never know. All we do know is that Lloyd George did not engage with the Bolsheviks and the territories under question were lost to them anyway for 70 years.

A week after his Guildhall bombshell, on 17 November 1919, the Prime Minister gave a statement to Parliament on policy with regard to Russia. It identified the contradictions in the situation that prevented unity against the Bolsheviks:

“Let us really face the difficulties... There is Finland, there is Poland, there is the Caucasus, Georgia, Daghestan, Azerbaijan, the Russian Armenians; then you have Koltchak and Petlura, all those forces anti-Bolshevist. Why are they not united, why cannot you get them united? Because their objects in one fundamental respect are incompatible. Denikin and Koltchak are fighting for two great main objects. The first is the destruction of Bolshevism and the restoration of good government in Russia. Upon that he could get complete unanimity amongst all the forces, but the second is that he is fighting for a reunited Russia. Well, it is not for me to say whether that is a policy which suits the British Empire. There was a very great Statesman, a man of great imagination... Lord Beaconsfield, who regarded

a great, gigantic, colossal, growing Russia rolling onwards, like a glacier towards Persia and the borders of Afghanistan and India as the greatest menace the British Empire could be confronted with. I am not on that now, except that it has perhaps great relevance to... the consolidation of these nationalities on their own ground... Georgia, General Denikin says, is part of Russia; it is an essential part of his policy to re-incorporate Azerbaijan, Daghestan, Russian Armenia in Russia, but they do not want it. They are fighting for independence, and one of the conditions they make... is that it is a condition of their uniting in any attack on the Bolsheviks that we should guarantee their independence, and not merely that, but that we should guarantee them supplies and cash enabling them to pay their Armies.

What I want to point out is how complicated the whole Russian situation is. It is not a plain, straightforward fight between two rival ideals or two rival systems... The first difficulty is that two rival systems are fighting one another. The second is that one set of anti-Bolshevist forces are fighting for consolidating, reuniting, reknitting together the old powerful Russia that overlay two continents; the other great anti-Bolshevist forces are fighting for local independence, for their nationality.” (Hansard, col 723-5, 17.11.1919)

However, the Prime Minister gave no answers to the problems he described to Parliament. His speech was purely impression with no actual conclusion drawn about what was to be actually done. He just relied on the fact that no one else (aside from Churchill) had any alternative policy, for a general acquiescence to his own.

Churchill's Last Hurrah

Churchill later gave the following explanation for the inaction of Lloyd George in relation to the Bolsheviks – that he underestimated them:

“The Prime Minister argued that revolutions like diseases run a regular course, that the worst was already over in Russia, that the Bolshevik leaders confronted with the responsibilities of actual government would quit their Communistic theories or that they would quarrel among themselves and fall like Robespierre and St. Just, that others weaker or more moderate would succeed them, and that by successive convulsions a more tolerable regime would be established.” (Winston S. Churchill, *Great Contemporaries*, p.132)

The Prime Minister held the view (or at least asserted it, since sincerity is a thing no one could be sure of with regard to Lloyd George) that Britain, by making war on the French Revolution had actually consolidated and strengthened it. If war had not been waged in 1793 the *Jacobin* and *Girondin* would have fallen out among themselves.

But, of course, Britain had already helped strengthen the Russian Revolution by waging a proxy war on it and the Russian people.

Lloyd George now hoped that the West could turn the tables on Bolshevik Russia asserting to his Allies: “*The Bolsheviks had talked much of propaganda*” but “*civilisation might also undertake its peaceful penetration.*” (Richard Ullman, *Britain and the Russian Civil War*, p.318)

However, the Bolsheviks were to be much more successful with regard to the West than the West was in Bolshevik Russia.

The Allied Powers met in December 1919 to attempt to come to a common policy on Russia. The end result of these discussions was the decision to wind up assistance for the remaining White forces and “*to leave Bolshevik Russia, as it were, within a ring fence.*” (Richard Ullman, *Britain and the Russian Civil War*, p.315) Churchill, in opposing this line, concluded to the British Cabinet that the new policy signified “*the abandonment of the*

anti-Bolshevist forces in Russia which we had supported up to now." (CAB 23/18, 12.12.1919)

Churchill was not finished, however. On 3 January 1920 at Sunderland, in a speech made to Coalition supporters, he warned of "the ghost of the Russian Bear" which "ranges widely over the enormous countries which lead us to the frontiers of India, disturbing Afghanistan, distracting Persia, and creating far to the Southward great agitation and unrest among the millions of our Indian population who have hitherto dwelt in peace and tranquillity under British rule."

Churchill then condemned the "thin-blooded defeatists" who previously had "obstructed victory" in the Great War and now opposed the use of the full power of the British Empire against the "Bolshevists, fanatics who are avowed enemies of the existing civilisation of the world."

Rounding on the "defeatists" Churchill exclaimed: "Their ideas are essentially cosmopolitan... They consider that one race of men is as good as another" ("cosmopolitan" was code word for Jewish in those days) and "they believe in the international Soviet of the Russian and Polish Jew. We are still putting our confidence in the British Empire." (*The Times* 5.1.1920).

Following on this theme, *The Morning Post*, commenting on Churchill's speech, declared that "Lenin... is not, in fact, Lenin at all, but a secret organisation directed by Revolutionary Jews to the destruction of the world." (5.1.1920). It appears that the state that was establishing the Zionist entity in Palestine at that very moment was saturated with anti-Semitic understandings of the world.

Whilst the issue of continued formal intervention seemed to be settled, the question that was still unresolved was the position of the "ring fence" around Russia and whether it would be given sufficient reinforcement by the Allies to withstand the Bolsheviks.

The ever thoughtful Lord Esher wrote the following in his Diary on 19 November:

"What a black chapter in our history is all this Russian business. And we have the experience of the French Revolution behind us. In 1793 we went to war against the French Bolsheviks because they cut off Louis the Sixteenth's head. The war lasted twenty-one years and we restored the Bourbons. Where are they now? And the principles of the French Revolution minus its trimmings of atrocities spread over the civilised world! Probably this is precisely what will happen to the principles of Lenin and Co. L.G. divines this, being a prophet in his better moods. Cruelties and atrocities are relative things – unfortunately. (*Journals and Letters of Reginald Viscount Esher*, Vol. 4, 1916-1930, p.246)

The book on Britain's battle with Russia for the Caucasus was far from being closed at the end of 1919.

Lord Curzon's Special Preserve

The former Chairman of the Eastern Committee, Lord Curzon, became British Foreign Secretary in October 1919, at the height of the Denikin offensive against the Bolsheviks. It was an opportune moment since Curzon's policy of a *cordon sanitaire* boxing in Russia was an idea whose time had come upon the defeat of Churchill's war on the Bolsheviks.

Curzon, despite being a strong anti-Bolshevik, was reluctant to see any Russian government in the Caucasus and was determined that Britain should not finance General Denikin so that the Whites could walk back in when they had defeated the Bolsheviks.

Lord Curzon, as a past Viceroy of India, had the traditional geopolitical orientation of the Indian Office and Empire: Russia was England's main enemy in the world and its political character at any time was of secondary importance. The primary

consideration was Russia itself and how it could be bested by the British Empire in the control of Asia.

Curzon had actually taken charge of the Foreign Office from January 1919 when Balfour had gone to the Paris Conference. Balfour had been an indolent Foreign Secretary and, exhausted, wanted out of the position before a treaty was imposed on the Turks – he had a far-seeing mind. In October 1919 the Prime Minister finally obliged making Curzon Foreign Secretary (see David Gilmour, *Curzon*, pp.501-6.)

When he took the reins of the Foreign Office from Balfour, Curzon noted how obscure and shambolic British Foreign Policy on the Caucasus had become. In a Memorandum written on 1 October 1919 he went through the existing policy in a series of points to try to get a grip on it himself:

"a. We are pro-Denikin North of the Caucasus. b. We are anti-Denikin South of the Caucasus. c. We are pro-Georgia in so far as she is respectable and orderly. d. We are anti-Georgia in so far as she is Bolshevik and violent. e. We are pro-Armenia in so far as we do not want to see them exterminated. f. We are anti-Armenia in so far as we do not mean to assume the responsibility either with supplying them with arms or of guaranteeing an Armenian State or of repatriating them to a larger Armenia. g. Whether we are pro-Azerbaijan or anti-Azerbaijan I have not the least idea. h. As to the Hill State (Daghestan) I suppose it is little more than various groups of bandits who are smashed by Denikin when his troops are in the neighbourhood, and who smash him when he is elsewhere employed." (FO 112/3864, 1/10/1919)

The Caucasus was a secondary interest of the new Foreign Secretary. Lord Curzon's pet project was Persia, which he saw as his own special preserve. Curzon's biographer, the Earl of Ronaldshay, described Curzon's interest in the country in the following passage:

"On assuming the direction of affairs in London, he had at once turned his gaze eastwards to those lands where his heart always lay... And as he gazed curiously over the constantly changing kaleidoscope of the Near and Middle East, his eyes came to rest finally upon Persia – that magnetic land of mystery and romance whose dusty plateaux and through whose ancient cities, crumbling uncared-for into inert but picturesque decay, he had travelled all but thirty years before. Persia that had provided him with material for the most monumental of all his books; the decrepit descendent of a mighty nation into whose veins he had struggled so hard throughout the seven years of his Viceroyalty to infuse the blood of a new vitality. And, finding himself at last in a position not merely to formulate, but to enforce a policy, he was determined to make a supreme effort to drag her from the slough into which she had fallen, and to make of her what he had always dreamed that, with the benevolent co-operation of Great Britain, she might some day become – a worthy successor to the kingdom of Gyms and a strong link in a chain of friendly States, stretching from the confines of Europe to the frontier of the Indian Empire.

It was all part of a perfectly definite and logical policy which had taken shape with his first glance at the political map of Asia while still a boy at Eton, and had remained clear-cut in his mind ever since. It rested upon a single and quite simple conception – the creation of a chain of buffer states stretching from the northern confines of India to the Mediterranean sea, to serve as a screen, giving protection against attack to India and the great arterial line of communication between Great Britain at one end and Australia, New Zealand and the Far East at the other. That the source of possible attack had changed, made no difference to the policy; it remained valid whether the potential aggressor was Russia, as it had long been, or Germany, as it had more recently become. And, with this urgent necessity always in mind, he had laid constant stress throughout the war

upon the importance of the Eastern theatre.” (*Life of Lord Curzon*, Vol III, pp.208-9)

Persia had been a British buffer against the expansion of Russia into Central Asia and toward India. The Russians had reached Tashkent in 1865, Samarqand and Bokhara in 1868, Ashgahad in 1881 and Merv in 1884, taking the Tsar’s forces up to the Afghan frontier.

Curzon had been unhappy at Sir Edward Grey’s appeasement of the Tsar in the 1907 Convention that led to the concession of a large part of Persian territory to Russian penetration in the partition of it between the two Imperialisms. However, with the collapse of the Tsarist state Curzon saw no obligation to honour the pre-War Treaty, particularly since Britain now was the sole occupier of Persia.

Northern Persia – what is sometimes called “*Southern Azerbaijan*” because of its population – had been a killing ground in 1918. Iranian sources suggest that up to 190,000 Moslems were killed by various forces – Armenian Dashnaks trying to incorporate territory into a Great Armenia, attempting to clear the area south of the Aras River as well as British and Russian Imperialists (see Khagani Ismael, *The Armenian Question and Turkic-Muslim Genocide*, pp.110-8).

After the Great War Persia was prostrate, after being ravaged by war and famine over the previous 3 years and was in no state to dispute its occupation by British forces at that time. Britain occupied all the land and sea to the North, South, East and West of the country so there was little hope of escape from the British embrace in 1919.

A Persian delegation, armed with fantastic territorial claims, turned up at the doors of the Paris Peace Conference, but was refused entry to the proceedings. It was also not considered for Mandatory treatment, like other countries. Persia was earmarked for British “*protection*” within Lord Curzon’s designs.

So, providing an annual subvention of 30 million pounds and bribing the young Shah and his family with a handsome personal subsidy, Curzon secured the services of the Persian Court. He then gained the loyalty of the three main ministers of state with a generous provision of *baksheesh* through the British-run Bank of Persia, organised by Sir Percy Cox. That helped secure the Anglo-Persian Treaty of 9 August 1919 which put Persia, with its client regime, under British tutelage.

Lord Curzon believed that Persia should not be allowed “*to rot into picturesque decay*” and become “*a hotbed of misrule, enemy intrigue, financial chaos and political disorder*” (Curzon Papers, 112/253, August 1919). All Persia needed to do was “*play the game*” – by the British rules – to become a functional state, supplying oil to the Royal Navy and keeping out the Russian Bolsheviks. Britain provided financial, political and military advisers to guide the Persians toward “*civilization*” and in the required direction of travel.

Curzon, of all the British ruling elite, was the most open to officially recognising the Transcaucasian states. His motivation, however, was not that of a democrat or advocate of the rights of nations – which Curzon, being an old Indian Empire man was hardly an advocate of. Curzon’s interest was essentially geopolitical and Indian Empire. He wanted a chain of buffer states in front of the main buffer, in which he had a long term interest – his personal re-creation and fiefdom – Persia.

However, the Foreign Secretary was no match for his Prime Minister. As Churchill later wrote:

“We now come to the Armageddon. In this phase Curzon came into contact with a personality almost exactly the opposite of his own. You could hardly imagine two men so diverse as Curzon and Lloyd George. Temperament, prejudices, environment, upbringing, mental processes were utterly different and markedly antagonistic. There never of course

was any comparison in weight and force between the two. The offspring of the Welsh village... had a priceless gift. It was the very gift which the product of Eton and Balliol had always lacked – the one blessing denied him by his fairy godmothers, the one without which all other gifts are so frightfully cheapened. He had the ‘seeing eye.’ He had that deep original instinct which peers through the surfaces of words and things... which follows the hunt two fields before the throng... Put the two men together in any circumstances of equality and the one would eat the other. Lloyd George used Curzon for his purposes, rewarded him handsomely, but never admitted him to the inner chambers of his decision.” (Winston S. Churchill, *Great Contemporaries*, pp.279-80)

The Cordon Sanitaire

In July 1919 Curzon managed to secure the appointment of Oliver Wardrop, an expert on Georgia and the Caucasus, as Britain’s High Commissioner in Tiflis. Wardrop was a strong supporter of the independence of the Caucasian states. Colonel Stokes, another supporter of this policy, was appointed representative in Baku.

Up until October the pro-independence sentiments expressed by Wardrop and Stokes were ignored in London. Denikin’s forces were on the offensive and the British were uninterested in such proposals. However, with the turning of the tide and the Lloyd George speech at the Guildhall signalling the abandonment of the Whites the situation dramatically changed. Alimardan Topchubashi, the leader of the Azerbaijani delegation at Paris, noted the change in a report in early November. (Giorgi Mamulia and Ramiz Abutalibov, *History of Recognition of Azerbaijan’s De Facto State independence at the Paris Peace Conference*, IRS, Spring 2018, pp. 29-30)

Upon becoming Foreign Secretary in October 1919 Curzon appointed the famous writer on geopolitics at the London School of Economics, Sir Halford Mackinder, as British High Commissioner to South Russia. Mackinder gathered intelligence on the Bolsheviks for Curzon and assisted General Denikin and the White Russians forces. Mackinder’s observation of the situation led him to conclude that the military assistance Britain was supplying would not be enough to defeat Bolshevism.

Mackinder’s mission was inspired by an alteration in Allied policy at the end of 1919. The Allied representatives considered the reconciling of Denikin with Azerbaijan and Georgia and organising a joint defence against the Bolsheviks as a priority.

Mackinder met Denikin in January 1920, after his army was routed by the Soviets. He advised Denikin that he must establish a state in the area he still controlled in Southern Russia. This would involve instituting taxation on the populace, the development of financial institutions and an economy to supply Denikin’s military forces. Mackinder told Denikin that he could not indefinitely rely on the continued support of the British Government (*Report on the Situation in Southern Russia*, No. 656, *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-39*, HMSO, pp.775-86.)

On 29 January 1920, Mackinder presented the British Cabinet with a comprehensive strategy he had written up on H.M.S Centaur on his departure from the Caucasus. It advised refusal to make peace with the Bolsheviks and consistent military, economic and diplomatic support of the Whites, along with the immediate establishment of a ring of buffer states including a White Russian state, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Dagestan. Prof. Mackinder predicted that if the Bolsheviks gained control of the rim-states, the Russian State would acquire the means to return to the status of a Great Power (CAB 23/20, 29.1.1920).

In his famous 1919 book *Democratic Ideals and Reality* Mackinder wrote:

"It is a vital necessity that there should be a tier of independent States between Germany and Russia. The Russians are... hopelessly incapable of resisting German penetration on any basis." (p.118)

Just because Germany had been defeated it did not mean that many in England did not still fear a resurrection. And the fear of a German resurrection was always viewed as being likely through a combination between German Socialism and Russian Communism, which were seen as being one and the same thing, to a great extent.

Halford Mackinder did not just mean the Central/East European interface when he wrote about the necessity of building "a tier of independent States between Germany and Russia". He meant cordoning off the entire area from the Baltic to the Caspian Seas. And he famously insisted:

"Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland;
Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island;
Who rules the World-Island commands the World." (p.152)

Prof. 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.

When Mackinder received no definite support in the British Cabinet and it signalled that negotiations would now be undertaken with the Bolsheviks he resigned as High Commissioner. But his policy of a *cordon sanitaire* in the Caucasus, and across Europe, was all that was left for Lloyd George and the British Government. It now looked to take it up – although in the same piecemeal way it had waged war on the Bolsheviks.

Britain Swaps Denikin for a Caucasus Shield

On 22 December 1919 at a meeting in London between the British Foreign Minister and the Secretary General of the French Foreign Ministry it was noted that if Denikin suffered a catastrophic defeat the Allies could consider the recognition of Georgia and Azerbaijan in the Spring of 1920 (CAB 24/95, 22.12.1919).

Two days later Curzon recommended this course in a Memorandum advising the establishment of an anti-Bolshevik bloc of nations, within a federal Transcaucasia, under a British or American mandate. This, it was suggested, could then be extended to a series of states encompassing Transcaucasia, the Don region, Kuban, Terek and the Ukraine, until the region was formed into a great federal state (CAB 24/95, 24.12.1919). Denikin, however, was still seen as an obstacle to such a policy.

Curzon was of the belief that Georgia was more ready for independence than Azerbaijan but he also realised that if Azerbaijan was not given full support both countries would be doomed. Their fates were inextricably linked (It should be noted that Armenia was not included in discussions about independence because the Allies could not agree about the extent of its borders and kept putting a decision off. This issue will be dealt with in a later section).

A final suggestion Curzon made, which he seemed to favour above the others, should be noted for its duplicity. This was that Georgia and Azerbaijan should be recognised *de facto* temporarily, granting the United Nations the final say on *de jure* independence at a later date. This would have the advantage of keeping Denikin on board with British plans so that if Bolshevism was defeated within the following years a new Russia could reincorporate Georgia and Azerbaijan into a federal Russian state (CAB 24/95, 24.12.1919 and FO 371/6269).

Although we cannot be certain whether this was the policy that was ultimately intended it looks suspiciously like what was

actually done by Britain. And it shows that the Caucasian states were really just pawns in the renewed Great Game with Russia.

In January 1920 the British government wrestled with the issue of *de facto* recognition of Georgia and Azerbaijan. The issue of *de facto* versus *de jure* independence was dressed up in British diplomatic languages to soothe the sensitivity of not granting full, unqualified freedom:

"1. That in the case of a state such as Azerbaijan, which has had no previous independent existence, *de facto* recognition is a necessary step to *de jure* recognition, and 2. *de facto* recognition involves a qualification to the effect that it is only granted on a specified condition such as e.g. the maintenance of stable Government or the decision of a Conference." (FO 371/3666, 2.1.1920)

The explanation of Curzon's points by an official in the Foreign Office, Mr. Kidston, reveals that this was in essence a flexible policy designed to satisfy the Azerbaijanis, whilst providing Britain with the means of adjusting itself to any situation that might emerge – including a Bolshevik takeover. The immediate concession of *de jure* independence would have surrendered British leverage over the situation in relation to Russia, which was always Britain's main concern.

The point about Azerbaijan not being ready for *de jure* recognition because it had "*no previous independent existence*" was a *canard*. After all, hadn't Britain just established innovatory states called "Yugoslavia" and "Czechoslovakia" at the very same time, as part of their "*tier of independent states between Germany and Russia*"? Czechoslovakia was not only given *de facto* recognition it was granted the status of one of the founding members of the League of Nations on 10 January 1920, when Azerbaijan was conceded only *de facto* recognition.

Czechoslovakia was a fledgling state of very doubtful nationality with "*no previous independent existence*" in which large segments of different peoples were subject to the rule of a minority nationality with no experience of governing. It was, of course, primarily a buffer state. And it was sacrificed to Hitler in 1938, even though his position was militarily weak, when the state that the League had sanctioned was suddenly seen to be internally dysfunctional and deemed undefendable.

The Azerbaijani delegation had conducted itself with great dignity at Paris and presented the Peace Conference with moderate requests, upon being granted an audience with President Wilson. They were based on Wilsonian principles of self-determination and included requested admission to the League of Nations. Whilst other delegations – including the 2 Armenian delegations – advanced ridiculous territorial claims, the Azerbaijanis stuck closely to demographic and geographical reality. Wilson, however, was cold and unsympathetic to them, saying the Conference did not want to break the world into little pieces (despite the principle of self-determination) and the Azerbaijanis should wait for the resolution of the Russian question before they could get a full hearing from the Great War victors. (Firuz Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia, 1917-1921*, p.266)

The Azerbaijani National Council 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 had made a good start in establishing democratic institutions – with seats reserved for Armenians – and it became one of only a handful of states in the world to enfranchise women (the first in the region).

Functional institutions of state were founded, foreign relations established and an army began to be organised. The Republic maintained a strict policy of neutrality in the Russian Civil War to the North after British forces left at the end of

August 1919. The Azerbaijan Republic was in most respects a model state, fully deserving of independence and capable of making its way in the world (see Audrey L. Altstadt, *The Azerbaijani Turks*, pp.94-96 and Anar Isgenderli, *Realities of Azerbaijan: 1917-1920*, pp.174-200, for more details).

From all accounts available from the British military they left Baku and Azerbaijan with regret – it had been one of the most peaceful occupations the British had ever experienced as the Azerbaijanis took them at the word to develop themselves for nationhood.

The British, although having abandoned the Whites, were still sensitive to the charge of betrayal their allies and the effect a recognition of separatists would have on White resistance to the Bolsheviks to the North of the Caucasus. They maintained that although they were withdrawing military aid they were not withdrawing “*official support*”. That would be withdrawn if Denikin did not accept the *de facto* independence given to Georgia and Azerbaijan (CAB 24/96, 6.1.1920). Denikin, with little choice in the matter, except extermination and oblivion, duly obliged leaving open a future possibility – conveyed to him by Britain:

“I recognise the independent existence of the *de facto* governments of the border areas which struggle against Bolshevism. The establishment of mutual relations of these borderlands with Russia shall take place through treaties between the All-Russian Government and the governments of the borderlands. The mediation of the Allied Powers is admissible.” (Firuz Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia, 1917-1921*, p.249)

As Denikin’s armies began to crumble it became imperative to do something to construct a new defence against the Bolsheviks and time was running out if any new states were to be able to organise themselves for their own defence. Britain, therefore, acted at the last moment.

On January 7 Fatali Khoyski, Azerbaijan’s Foreign Minister, contacted the British, showing them a telegram from Commissar Chicherin demanding an alliance with the Georgians and Azerbaijanis against Denikin. Without British recognition and backing Khoyski told Colonel Stokes it might be better to make terms with the Bolsheviks. This message was communicated by High Commissioner Wardrop to the Foreign Office. (FO 608/271)

On January 10, 1920 Lord Curzon sent a telegram to the Foreign Office reporting that on his initiative the British Prime Minister and the Supreme Council of the Allied Powers had decided to recognise the *de facto* independence of Georgia and Azerbaijan (CAB 29/41, 10.1.1919 and FO 608/271, 10.1.1920).

The same telegram, however, warned both states that

“recognition of *de facto* independence of Georgian and Azerbaijan Governments does not of course involve any decision as to their present or future boundaries, and must not be held to prejudice that question in smallest degree.” (FO 608/271, 10.1.1920).

Territorial readjustment, in favour of a future presently undefined Armenia was held as a lever against the Georgians and Azerbaijanis until the end.

Having seen the Bolshevik breaking of its shield above the Caucasus – General Denikin’s forces – Britain began to finally accept the idea of the Georgian and Azerbaijani states constituting a new shield above Persia and Mesopotamia and the British Empire.

On 10 January Georgian and Azerbaijani delegations were summoned to the Allied Conference and faced hostile interrogations from Lloyd George, Curzon, Churchill and Clemenceau who did not conceal their displeasure at the view that they might come to terms with the Bolsheviks rather than fight for the British interest with their countries as battlegrounds (ibid, p.224).

Following the meeting of the Allied Supreme Council on 10 January in Paris the British Delegation explained in a logical sequence of points the reason for the new policy of *de facto* recognition of Georgia and Azerbaijan:

“Present situation caused by defeat of both Kolchak and Denikin. Bolsheviks, having failed to upset Europe, have made agreement with Mussulman to attack to the East. Owing to collapse of Denikin, Transcaucasia becomes bridge which must be defended by Allies to prevent union of these two hordes. It, including the Caspian and especially Georgia, is the natural barrier separating these two forces.” (DPFPC II, Doc. 77, Appendix 2, p.926)

The “*Mussulman hordes*” that were ominously assembling on the Anatolian steppe were the forces of the Turkish resurgence, centred around Mustapha Kemal, hero of Gallipoli. It was Britain’s worst nightmare that they would join the “*Bolshevik hordes*.” But more of that later.

When Denikin’s forces began to break up, Britain at last, through the League of Nations, decided to give *de facto* recognition to the Azerbaijani, Armenian and Georgian Governments on 12 January.

Pawns in a Losing Game

The British Section of the Allied Military Council immediately got to work concluding that:

“If it has not been possible to overcome Bolshevism on its own soil, it should be possible to arrest it on certain dangerous route, such as that of the Caucasus.” (DPFPC II, Doc. 77, Appendix 1, p.925)

It was recognised that due to “*the immature condition of their military forces*” the Georgians and Azerbaijanis would need to have at least 2 Divisions of European troops to form the core of the defence. It was also imperative to have command of the Caspian. Work needed to start immediately because such a defence would require at least 3 months to implement.

As the Supreme Council of the Allied Powers was conceding *de facto* recognition to Georgia and Azerbaijan the British Cabinet and an Interdepartmental Committee held a series of meetings concerned with what to do about the Bolshevik advance toward the Caucasus. Several possible defence lines were considered: A forward line of Constantinople/Batum/Baku/Merv was considered militarily impractical because it would require 7 British Divisions to man it; A more defensive Palestine/ Mosul line was favoured by the War Office. The CIGS, Sir Henry Wilson, insisted he did not have the army to defend the Caucasus line, although losing the Caspian to

the Bolsheviks would represent a “*first class disaster*” (FO 371/3980, 12.1.1920)

As Richard Ullman notes:

“To provide even... two divisions – much less seven – was out of the question, however. The British government’s campaign of repression in Ireland was demanding increasingly large forces... And from India, Mesopotamia (Iraq), and Egypt came insistent requests for military manpower... This meant giving up the Caucasus and even much of Persia, and concentrating on the defence of India and the oil fields of the Persian Gulf.” (*Britain and the Russian Civil War*, p. 325)

It seems that the British forces required to defend the Azerbaijani democracy were required instead to deal with the more important matter of repressing the Irish democracy and rising peoples elsewhere in Britain’s expanded Empire!

Sir Henry Wilson recorded his thoughts in his Diary that night, as to the military reality of the situation:

“Curzon, who with Lloyd George is in Paris, sends a ridiculous wire about Georgia and Azerbaijan and the necessity of supporting them... We had a meeting at the Foreign Office, and I gave a lecture on a map showing the impossibility of standing on the forward lines in defence of India. I showed that Palestine-Mosul-Khanikin-Burujird was the only possible line, and that we should adjust our policy to that line. It was quite true that Georgia and Azerbaijan would go Bolshevik, in spite of the fact that those fools in Paris only yesterday agreed to acknowledge the “*de facto governments*” of those countries. It was also true that we should clear out of Persia, in spite of the treaty Curzon had just made with Persia without consulting the War Office.” (Major-General Sir C.E. Callwell, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, His Life and Diaries, Vol. 2*, p.222)

In subsequent meetings no commitment to defending the Caucasus with British forces was made and the policy of getting the Georgians, Armenians, Azerbaijanis and Mountaineers to do it themselves had to be adopted.

On 14 January Georgian and Azerbaijani missions were assured by the Supreme Council in Paris that the Allied Powers were obligated to defend the states they had newly recognised from foreign i.e. Bolshevik aggression (Anar Isgenderli, *Realities of Azerbaijan: 1917-1920*, pp.192-3).

However, when Lloyd George made this pledge, he had not consulted with his Cabinet colleagues or military advisers. On 16 January he did and there was a clear division over the issue.

Lord Curzon called for the “*organisation of the excellent defensive line of the Caucasus*” and an Allied military effort to protect the Transcaucasian Republics and Persia from a Bolshevik invasion. Admiral Beatty, who was keen to retain the oil fields of Baku and Persia for the Royal Navy, supported the Foreign Secretary and demanded that Britain take back the ships given to Denikin, to re-establish direct British naval control of the Caspian from Baku.

Churchill made one last explosive plea for continued support of Denikin and war on the Bolsheviks. He vigorously attacked the current policy which he summarised as:

“to allow Denikin’s armies to be destroyed without making any further effort to help them in the field... to abandon to their fate all our present friends in Russia who have been fighting the Bolsheviks; to adopt two new proteges in the feeble and divided States of Georgia and Azerbaijan; to make new doles of arms, munitions and supplies to them... In other words, having refused to combine any of the large factors in the struggle against the enemy, having allowed them to be smashed up one by one on the grounds that we could not face the expense or run the risk, we are now to try to make a new front out of little weak pawns that are left to us and to lavish vainly on them resources which, applied in time and with a real “*will to win*” to Kolchak,

Denikin, Poland, the Baltic States and Finland, concerted and combined, might well have given us victory instead of the defeat which is now upon us...” (CAB 21/177, 17.1.1920. This paper, although in the Cabinet files, was prevented from being a Cabinet paper and circulation by the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Maurice Hankey, such was its straight talking.)

Churchill said that attempting to shore up Georgia and Azerbaijan against the Bolsheviks was “*like using a piece of putty to stop an earthquake.*”

Instead he proposed: “*a policy of making war on the Bolsheviks with every available resource and by every possible means*”. By this he meant attacking the Bolshevik state on all fronts through every available force.

“We left the problem unsolved in exactly the state we have always left it since last November (1918) ... LG is totally unable to offer a solution & simply drifts from one crisis to another.” (Major-General Sir C.E. Callwell, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, His Life and Diaries, Vol. 2*, p.224)

On 19 January 1920 the Allied Military Council members from Britain, France and Italy all declared they were unprepared to send any military forces to defend the Caucasus against the Bolsheviks.

The final decision made by the Allied Powers was to dispatch to Georgia and Azerbaijan unspecified quantities of food and munitions but no military forces. They also agreed to give *de facto* recognition to an Armenian state, without specifying its territory, which would not have encouraged Georgia or Azerbaijan, who were both victims of expansionary Armenian designs.

It is an inescapable fact that Britain delayed in recognising the independence of the Caucasus Republics until Denikin was effectively beaten. The only explanation for Britain’s belated recognition of Azerbaijan and Georgia is that with Denikin beaten it was necessary to motivate these people to defend themselves against the advance of the Red Army, in order to maintain British influence in Transcaucasia.

The British recognition of the Caucasian Republics was, therefore, not conceded as a recognition of self-determination. Both Curzon and Lloyd George made it clear to the Allied representatives that Britain was primarily in favour of it, in Lloyd George’s words “*on the express condition that the Caucasian States will resist the Bolsheviks and garrison Baku with all their strength.*” (HMSO, *Documents on British Foreign Policy, Vol II*, 19/1/1920)

Assistance to the Republics was, therefore, conditional on them resisting the Red Army. Britain hoped that a Bolshevik advance on Persia, a key location in the defence of the Indian Empire, would be stopped in the Caucasus. Also, they hoped to interpose the Caucasian Republics between the Bolsheviks and Turkey.

Britain had provided substantial and unconditional assistance to the Armenian Dashnaks, pro-Entente Russians and even the Soviets who blocked the way of the Ottoman army in mid-1918, during the Great War. This contrasted sharply with the minimal and conditional help it provided to the Caucasian states to defend themselves against Bolshevism in early 1920. Britain, in mealy-mouthed fashion, sent a token supply of some surplus and faulty weaponry to the Republics to defend themselves against the Bolsheviks, and Curzon refused them loans. The fear was that if they lost, which they expected was that they would, any munitions sent would simply fall into the hands of the Bolsheviks, as those supplied to Denikin’s army had.

The outcome of the Russian Civil War decided the fate of the Caucasus nation states rather than any British upholding of the principle of self-determination. British Foreign Policy, in hesitating until the final minute, demoralised the Caucasus

nation states and hastened their fall to the Bolsheviks. As a result of the indecision in London the Caucasian Republics were obstructed in their development into independent states and were told to wait on the decision of the Peace Conference at Paris through 1919. Although they were allowed to become nation states in embryo, managing much of their own affairs, they were denied *de jure* recognition and were unable to secure loans on the international money markets.

It was only when the anti-Bolshevik forces were seen as incapable of winning the Civil War that the British gave *de facto* recognition to the Republics of the Caucasus. This fact suggests that if Denikin had won the Civil War in Russia there would have been no British recognition for Georgia and Azerbaijan. As Winston Churchill noted, for Britain, they were merely the “*little weak pawns that are left to us*” in the losing game against Russia.

It was in the winning of the Civil War, rather than the Revolution itself, that the Bolsheviks achieved mastery of Russia.

Lloyd George could neither wage full-blooded war against the Bolsheviks or make peace with them. Instead, he tacked between the two policies as the wind blew one way and another. Britain slid from a half-hearted war with Soviet Russia, using the Whites, to a half-hearted support for self-determination of the anti-Bolshevik states in the Caucasus. Too little, too late.

Britain’s actions toward Russia were the first steps of a blundering giant in the world it predominated in – an Empire bloated by a Great War victory that could do no good, due to mental and physical incapacity within its impressive stature.

If Britain had not the will and the means, after its Great War, to destroy the Bolsheviks, it should have made peace with them and bottled them up – saving the states that lay outside Russia, in the Caucasus and Ukraine, for democracy. It was certainly, as the predominant Power in the world, capable of that, at least.

But the British Prime Minister, acting for the British democracy, took the pressure off the Leninist regime by preventing Churchill getting his way, and gave space for the Soviet Union to develop as a force in the world. This began the chain of events that led to a Second World War in the same generation.

New soil study confirms 1943 Bengal famine was caused by Winston Churchill’s policies, not drought.

A group of Indian and American researchers simulated soil moisture content during major Indian famines to come to the conclusion.

The 1943 Bengali famine was caused by then-British Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s policies and not drought, a group of Indian and American researchers have found in a study published in the journal, *Geophysical Research Letters*.

The researchers came to this conclusion by using weather data to simulate the amount of moisture present in the soil during six major Indian famines, those of 1873-’74, 1876, 1877, 1896-’97, 1899 and 1943. Deficit of soil moisture is a key indicator of poor rainfall and high temperatures.

According to the study, the first five famines were a result of drought, as concluded by the soil moisture study, but not the one that happened in 1943.

“There have been no major famines since independence,” Vimal Mishra told CNN, “And so we started our research thinking the famines would have been caused by drought due to factors such as lack of irrigation.”

Mishra, an associate professor of Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar, has co-authored the study, along with Amar Deep Tiwari, Saran Aadhar, Reepal Shah, Mu Xiao, DS Pai and Dennis Lettenmaier.

The 1943 Bengal famine led to the deaths of an estimated three million people, and is widely believed by several historians to have been caused or made worse by British policies of the time.

The study showed that though the eastern region of India experienced severe drought in the early-1940s, the amount of rainfall was above average in late-1943, a period considered to be the peak of the famine.

The British policies alleged to be the cause of the famine were the heavy distribution of food and vital necessities to the military during the second world war, halting import of rice, and the British government not declaring famine in India.

According to the study, another factor that exacerbated the mortality count of the 1943 famine was the Japanese capture of Burma (now Myanmar), which was a major source of rice imports in India. The study noted that in the past, famines, despite being deadly, could not cause much damage due to rice imports from Myanmar and the British government’s relief aid.

Speaking to CNN, Mishra said that during the 1873-’74 famine, the Bengal lieutenant governor, Richard Temple, saved many lives by importing and distributing food. But the British government criticized him and dropped his policies during the drought of 1943, leading to countless fatalities.

That the 1943 Bengal famine was a result of wilful negligence by the British government was accepted and believed strongly across India for quite a while. In 1981, Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen said that supplies should have been in abundance during 1943 to control the deaths brought about by the famine.

Madhushree Mukherjee’s 2011 book, *Churchill’s Secret War: The British Empire and the Ravaging of India during World War II*, notes that the famine was caused by heavy exports of food from India. As the famine got worse, she wrote, 70,000 tons of rice were exported from India between January and July, 1943.

Despite Churchill’s War Cabinet being warned about the famine at the time, Mukerjee wrote, the British Prime Minister was reluctant to devote time and resources to fix the Indian problem, and instead, strengthen his military operations and accumulate stocks at home.

“A concession to one country at once encourages demands from all the others,” Churchill commented in a memo on March 10, 1943, as quoted in Mukerjee’s book. “They must learn to look after themselves as we have done. The grave situation of the UK import program imperils the whole war effort and we cannot afford to send ships merely as a gesture of good will.”

In 2017, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor said about Churchill, “This is a man the British would have us hail as an apostle of freedom and democracy, when he has as much blood on his hands as some of the worst genocidal dictators of the 20th century.” He chronicled the havoc wreaked by the British empire on India in his book, *Inglorious Empire*.

Since independence, India’s population has increased manifold, but famine deaths have been brought under control. “Expansion of irrigation, better public distribution system, rural employment, and transportation reduced the impact of drought on the lives of people after the independence,” Mishra’s study said.

The revelations of Mishra and his fellow researchers’ study vindicated several Indians as well as others, as seen on Twitter. One user questioned the validity of a study complimenting Churchill as a human rights crusader.

Debate Between George Sylvester Viereck, Editor Of "*The Fatherland*" New York And Cecil Chesterton Editor Of "*The New Witness*" London, On "Whether The Cause Of Germany Or That Of The Allied Powers Is Just."

Chairmen: Professor William R. Shepherd Of Columbia University
And Louis H. Wetmore.

Cort Theatre, January 17th, 1915

Published by The Fatherland Corporation, 1123 Broadway, New York City

PART ONE

MR. Wetmore: Ladies and gentlemen: This debate has been arranged, because we are all very anxious to hear the views and opinions of the two representative gentlemen who will address you on the momentous question of "Whether the cause of Germany or that of the Allies is just." Mr. Chesterton who will open the discussion is an ardent advocate of the English side. He is the editor of the London Weekly, "*The New Witness*," and is in a position to speak with authority, reflecting the English opinion on the subject. Mr. Viereck represents the German side and is equally well known as a competent authority on the question which is under debate to-night. He is well known as an author and as the editor of "*The Fatherland*." The speakers will each occupy half an hour expounding their views and will then have an opportunity of refuting, if possible, each other's arguments.

Professor Shepherd will now address the meeting.

Professor Shepherd: Ladies and gentlemen: On a very dark and stormy night, an old Negro was riding through a forest trying to find his way by the flashes of lightning. Terrified by the peals of thunder, he cried out: "Oh, Lord, if it is all the same to you, let us have a little less noise and a little more light." We who desire to bring a fair mind to the discussion of the present war certainly wish to have as much light as possible: the light of truth, the light of accuracy, the light of honesty, and not the noise of accusations, of controversy. We want to know what is true, what is just and what is reasonable. We must be able to see all around the subject of inquiry. We must get our information from all sources, and not only from one. We must consider the weight of testimony. We must be in a position to ascertain that which is true, that which is reliable, that on which we can pin our faith. This evening we shall hear two champions, one for the larger number of allies, and one for the smaller. Of these two sets of allies events point toward one of each as representative of the rest.

Mr. Viereck, whose name is well known to you, is an author of great repute. He is to break a lance for Germany. Mr. Chesterton, whose name comes heralded to us across the seas, is the champion of the English side. Mr. Wetmore and I are the seconds in this international joust. In order to be perfectly fair in this matter, when the champion of the larger group of allies speaks the second for the smaller group will hold the chair, and when the champion for the latter speaks, the second for the former will hold the chair.

You may be sure, therefore, that there is enough hostile attention behind each of the speakers to keep him on his guard. (Applause.)

Mr. Chesterton: When I think of the considerable responsibility which I have taken upon myself in coming here

to plead before an American audience the cause of my country in this, perhaps, the greatest, and certainly the most momentous, struggle in which we have ever been engaged, I recognize that I suffer from the fairly legitimate disadvantage of being a member of another nation. And yet, in coming here, I am exercising a right which, I think, is international, the right of placing before the impartial tribunal of a neutral nation the case of my country.

The subject of the debate to-night, whether the cause of Germany — or, as Mr. Shepherd says, we ought to say the Germanic allies — or the cause of the Allied powers: England, France, Russia, Belgium and Servia is just — (Ironic cries of "Japan!") I am glad that Japan is so popular in this assembly! (Laughter). Well, the controversy is as to which cause is just, and in order to decide that it is necessary for us first of all to agree on a definition of justice, and I was not sure whether Mr. Viereck and I could come to an agreement of first principles as to the relation between men and men and between nations and nations. It is obviously not easy to come to such an agreement. This, then, was another difficulty from which, to some extent, I felt I should suffer, but which I think I have managed to overcome. It so happened that I was looking through a very valuable work of reference, "*The World Almanac*," and I found there exactly the thing I wanted.

I hold in my hand a "scrap of paper." Nevertheless, it is a very valuable scrap and expresses, in immeasurably lucid words those principles of public justice and public policy, which I am quite willing to accept as the basis of this discussion. The proclamation runs as follows: "We hold these truths to be self-evident — that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these there are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." (Applause.)

If Mr. Viereck will accept that as the basis of the discussion I will, and I am sure the audience will accept that basis because as you know, these words are taken from the Declaration of Independence. I may assume we may take that as the foundation. I now turn to the question before us, the question of the justice of the war.

As you know the very beginning of the controversy which led to this war, turned upon certain demands made by the Austrian Empire upon the Kingdom of Servia. Those demands were consequent upon the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria in the capital of the Austrian province of Bosnia. Bosnia was a part of the Turkish Empire up to about seven years ago. It was then in flagrant defiance of treaty and public faith annexed to the Austrian Empire. That pact caused great discontent in the Bosnian province, and there

was felt in Serbia a natural sympathy — for the Servians and Bosnians are mostly of the same race and religion — with the discontentedness of the Bosnian province.

The Austrian Archduke was murdered in Bosnia by Bosnians — that is, Austrian subjects. That murder, of course, nobody would wish to speak of but in terms of the strongest odium and reprobation. But Austria put this forward as a cause of war. Austria had stated in a note to the army and various publications to the Allies, and the German Government has stated in a White Paper and elsewhere, that Servian official persons connected with the Servian Government were in some way concerned in that assassination. The Austrian Government says it has in its possession evidence and proofs of that complicity. I want to ask you why that evidence is not published. If the Austrian Government has the proof in its possession, it should be published and put before the world.

The German Government shows no hesitation in publishing any documents which it thinks may be useful to it. I ask for those documents. Before that matter became acute, Sir Edward Grey made the very reasonable suggestion that these proofs should be produced, before Austria presented her ultimatum. That demand was refused. I say that, unless due evidence is produced; Austria stands merely in the position of the accuser. In that status, Austria sent the ultimatum to Serbia. Austria waited a month before doing so, and it is a notorious fact that during that month she replenished her arsenals and prepared for war. Her ultimatum was to be accepted within forty-eight hours, and certain concessions were to be made. Those concessions were on the face of them inconsistent with the existence of Serbia as an independent nation. The Servians should practically acknowledge its responsibility for a murder they repudiate all responsibility for. The Servian Government should suppress any papers which spoke in a hostile spirit of the Austrian Government, which the Servian Government, as constituted, had no power to do — no more power than your or my government. (Applause).

Another astounding demand could only have been meant to make it impossible for Serbia to accept it. It was that certain officers of the Servian army and government, whom Austria should subsequently name, should be dismissed from the public service. If the Austrian Government had proof of complicity of officers in the assassination, why did she not name them? What independent nation would exist for a moment, if another government thought itself entitled to tell them to dismiss this or that officer from its army? That was the demand made. Let me suggest to you something of a parallel case. I have acknowledged that there was great sympathy in Serbia for the grievances of the inhabitants of Bosnia. In the same way there has been in this country a very great sympathy indeed with the grievances of the Irish.

Now suppose that on the occurrence of the Phoenix Park murders the English Government had said without proof, on its own assertion, that Americans had been involved in the Irish plot and, on the strength of that unsupported assertion, England had asked America to put a Pro-English and Anti-Irish declaration in the public journals, to suppress all Irish patriotic societies and all Irish Nationalist papers, and to dismiss from the service of the United States certain men they would subsequently name, whom we suspected of feeling sympathy with the grievances of Ireland. What would you have said if we had asked you to accept in forty-eight hours, without remonstrance or modification, to accept every word of it? Of

course, in twenty-four hours the British Ambassador would receive his passport and the American fleet would have been ready for action. Of course, there is one distinction between the two cases. Yours is a great nation and Serbia is a small nation. You may think that makes a difference. That is the German view — expressly set forward in the German White Book — that a great power must not be asked to accept public arbitrament “as if it were a little Balkan state.”

You may, if you choose, say that there is a different justice for small and large powers. But if you do that, you will have to tear up this “scrap of paper,” according to which all men are created with equal rights. (Interruptions).

Chairman : This is a debate and not a discussion. The speaker has the right to make any remarks he chooses, and the audience has no right to answer him back.

Mr. Chesterton : I have dealt with the first incident which incensed the original cause of the war, and have shown that in that particular it was a case of brutal, indefensible aggression of a great nation against a small. I now come to the events. Austria, as I said, demanded acceptance of the ultimatum within forty-eight hours, and Serbia, under pressure from Russia, returned a conciliatory reply, accepted a great many proposals which, I think, must have been very humiliating to Serbia, offering to alter her press laws — so as to reduce her freedom to the German standard — and a number of other concessions, but pleading for a discussion on those questions to which she could not agree, without forfeiting her place as an independent nation. If anybody suggests that Russia desired war, my answer is that it is demonstrably not the case because, if so, she would have told Serbia to throw that insolent ultimatum into Austria's face.

If Mr. Viereck says Russia promoted that war, why did Russia not advise Serbia to reject all negotiations? But then came negotiations. As you probably know some of the outlines, I will not go into details. England made proposal after proposal for a peaceful settlement, that the dispute should be referred to a tribunal consisting of four nations : France, England, Germany and Italy. That was refused by the Germanic powers on the ground that Austria is a big power. That being refused, England suggested mediation. That was also refused.

At last there came direct communication between Russia and Austria. Russia had made up her mind she could not allow Serbia to be conquered and crushed by Austria, and I say that, if Russia had not taken up that attitude, she would have deserved the contempt of mankind. Russia was standing by the rights of a small nation, a kin to her in blood and faith. (Laughter). It is undeniable. (Laughter). She was standing out for those rights. Negotiations began between Austria and Russia. Those negotiations had actually almost succeeded, when Germany finally declared war on France and Russia. (Laughter).

She declared war on France and Russia before Austria. Austria did not declare war until nearly a week later. Therefore I say that it is clear that on the German Empire rests the responsibility of having forced this war, not only on the enemies, but on her deluded ally. Indeed I do not know that any nation has a better right to reproach the Prussian Government than its ally Austria, unless it be its ally Turkey.

Germany having decided on war with France and Russia, proceeded, as you know, to violate the neutrality of Belgium.

Belgium is a small nation whose security and peace had been deliberately placed under the protection of the powers of Europe. Every one of the great powers in Europe had solemnly pledged itself to respect the neutrality and integrity of Belgium. Prussia — or Germany, as you call it — (Laughter) — it is really Prussia — (Laughter) — determined to violate its neutrality, promising to indemnify her for anything she should suffer. I am proud that Belgian heroism refused that offer, and said it would stand by the promises given. Germany said to England : If you will break your promise to Belgium, so as to enable me to break my promises to Belgium, I will reward you with a whole lot of my promises.

I think that it was the amazing insolence and indecency of that proposal which probably determined England to go to war. (Prolonged jeers and laughter). I say at once that, in my judgment, England ought to have gone to war whether Belgium's neutrality was violated or not. But I say that it is quite doubtful whether we should have gone to war without this provocation. (Applause.) I need hardly trouble you with the excuses now offered. They were answered in advance. The German Chancellor himself said : We are violating Belgian neutrality. This is a breach of international law, and for this wrong we will pay compensation. Is there anybody who believes that a German statesman would make that speech, if he held any even presumptive evidence — if he thought it possible to persuade people to believe that he held any presumptive evidence — that Belgium had in any way violated her neutrality? But it was the Prussian theory that no one cared for public morals ; that the strong could do exactly what they liked. It was only whether the opinion of neutral countries, and especially of America, was outraged that these excuses were put forward — as a potent afterthought.

There was no military necessity for Germany to attack Belgium. There are 200 miles between France and Germany which Germany could have attacked. The sole reason for the violation of the neutrality of Belgium was that the attack on France might be treacherous instead of being honest. France, while fortifying her German frontier had left her Belgian frontier unfortified, because she trusted to the public faith of Europe which guaranteed Belgian neutrality. Germany shamefully violated that public faith, attacked France treacherously and now has the effrontery to plead her treachery as an excuse for her violation. It is as if I were to forge Prof. Shepherd's name, and when he complained excused myself by saying that if I had not forged his name I could not have got into Mr. Viereck's office and poisoned his coffee! (Applause.)

I will not dwell upon the abominable treatment of the Belgians after their rights had been violated, as you are all familiar with the facts. The Prussian record in this respect is of a kind with all her dealings. Her policy of disregarding the rights of other nations is a Prussian trait which has been in evidence since Frederick the Great's time to the present day. Frederick founded the greatness of Prussia by such a treacherous attack on Austria as Germany is now making on Belgium and France.

Bismarck in his reminiscences confesses that he told his master — it was at the time when the looting of Denmark was contemplated — that all his predecessors had stolen some territory from his neighbors. No wonder that we subsequently find him forging a public document for the purpose of robbery! The German Empire is dominated by Prussia, and her policy is based on the Prussian principle of denial of justice. You may object that it is not quite fair to drag in this argument, because it is talking about the past. Mr. Viereck can hardly take that

point. I am a student of his works, and I recall a poem addressed to the German Emperor in which he says, if I remember right, The Star of Frederick be thy guide. The God of Bismarck be thy shield!" I do not know what sort of God Bismarck had — I presume a God who was easy-going in the matter of forgery ! (Jeers). But we know all about the Star of Frederick. You will find it in the Book of Revelations. "And the nature of the Star was called Wormwood; and a third part of the waters became wormwood, and many died because of the waters, because they were made bitter!" (Applause.)

The Chairman then called on Mr. Viereck.

Mr. Viereck: When Mr. Chesterton challenged me to a debate on the topic of the justice of the war, I was both pleased and a little scared, because I knew that in him England would put forward her most able champion. Nevertheless I accepted his challenge because I believed that the justice of my cause would atone for the shortcomings of its spokesman. Mr. Chesterton has not disappointed us. His speech scintillates with epigram. He takes logic and tosses it up into the air like a juggler's ball. Facts appear and disappear in his arguments like rabbits out of a hat. I feel, however, that poor Mr. Chesterton labors under a serious disadvantage — the English censorship. "England has been left in possession of the world's ear. She may pour into it what tales she will." Thus wrote John Mitchel, the grandfather of the present mayor of New York, an Irish patriot, in an English jail. What was true then, is true to-day. Just as England has encircled Germany with an iron ring of foes, so she has attempted to encircle the world with an iron ring of falsehood. (Loud applause).

The English censor not merely suppresses the truth, but he actually forges the news. I make this statement on the authority of Mr. Herbert Corey, the correspondent of the pro-ally New York Globe. Mr. Corey says: "Some of the censors seem to have felt from time to time that America was not properly informed as to the conduct of the war. So they have not only struck words out of dispatches, but have stuck words in." (Applause).

Even to this day the English have not been officially informed of the sinking of the "Audacious." Who knows how many English dreadnoughts are slumbering at the bottom of the sea, where they dread naught, neither are they dreaded? The English policy of mystification has gone so far that Sir Edward Grey openly lied not only to the world, but to his own parliament and to the British people when he stated that there was no compact, formal or informal, of whatsoever nature, obligating England to come to the defence of France. So shocked were his colleagues in the Cabinet that two of its members, John Burns, the leader of the Labor Party, and Lord Morley, resigned rather than be participants in this fraud. A wave of hysteria has seized the English because they do not know the truth, because their minds have been poisoned. In some places the German wireless has smashed the iron ring of falsehood, just as German submarines have smashed English dreadnoughts. In England the ring still holds tight. England has always been able to hypnotize herself into the belief that her cause was righteous. England, no doubt, honestly feels that Germany and Austria are actually waging a war of aggression.

In this country this question has been threshed out so frequently that it hardly seems worthwhile to cover the ground again. There are people in England who know the truth. They are the people who know Germany and the Germans, and who can read Germany's diplomatic documents in the language in

which they were issued. I would like to ask Mr. Chesterton : “Have you ever read a book in the original German language? Have you ever been in Germany?” Or are you in the position of your colleague, H. G. Wells who, when asked by Mr. Frank Harris : “What do you know about Germany and the Germans?” replied: “Oh! You know, my son has a German tutor.”

Bernard Shaw, who has a touch of German idealism, is one of the few men in England who still dare to state the truth. He has stripped the mask from the face of the British Lion in his analysis of the French Yellow Book. His view is one which, I think, will be accepted by history. He tells us how the British Lion was prepared to pounce upon Germany ever since he realized that here was a new world power. The British Lion, he tells us, has made up his mind that no power shall be greater on land than England, nor as great on sea. When he heard the strains of “Deutschland, Deutschland Uber Alles,” his mind was made up. The British Lion is a cautious animal. He does not like to fight his own battles. Germany will fight to the last German. England, it has been said, will fight to the last Frenchman. She has already fought to the last Belgian. England knew that Germany would not accept a challenge from France and Russia in spite of their repeated insults, unless she was sure of British neutrality. Hence the lie of Sir Edward Grey. Hence England’s pretended friendship for Germany.

Germany believed that England would at least remain neutral in a war. So when Russia reached for her hip-pocket, Germany struck back in self-defense. She delivered her ultimatum, and then the English Lion, with one mighty roar, sprang upon Germany. This is the outstanding fact. Germany declared war, but she did so in self-defence, even if England hypocritically convinces herself that it was a war of aggression. Germany wages war in self-defense and in obedience to her plighted word to her ally and comrade-in-arms, Austria-Hungary. The German Empire has never been accused of breaking her word. Germany has never broken a treaty unless that treaty was indeed a mere scrap of paper. And even then she did not tear it up until she was forced to do so by others. The German Chancellor said that Germany was doing wrong by breaking an international law. This proves that Mr. Bethmann-Hollweg, at least, is not a Nietzschean. He places neither himself nor his country beyond good and evil. The German Chancellor has a sensitive conscience — too sensitive, I fear. The German Chancellor also said that he knew England and France were prepared to invade Belgium, if Germany did not. Mr. Chesterton has chosen not to dwell upon this portion of the Chancellor’s speech. Subsequent discoveries have fully verified the Chancellor’s opinion. You, yourself, Mr. Chesterton, have often dwelled upon the excellence of the German intelligence service. May we not assume that if the Chancellor said that France and England were prepared to invade Belgium that he did so on unimpeachable evidence! (Applause.)

Documents recently found prove that the mobilization plan of France included both Belgium and Holland. I have myself published the maps of the French General Staff, and if you want to see them come to my office and I will show them to you. England threatened to invade Belgium even against the will of Belgium in case of a European war.

In a conversation between General Jungbluth and Colonel Bridges, the former protested that for any invasion of Belgium by the English the permission of Belgium would be necessary. The curt reply of Colonel Bridges was that the English knew it,

but that, as Belgium was not strong enough to protect herself, England would land troops anyway.

Now let us consider more fully the case of Belgium. If ever a breach of treaty was justified, it was this one. Not only were the French and English prepared to invade Belgium : the Belgian Government conspired with France against England and Germany. Belgium, although a neutral state, had betrayed all her military secrets to England and France ; therefore, Belgium had violated her own neutrality. Germany was justified in her invasion of Belgium, in accordance with “the well recognized principle of the right and supreme duty to protect national safety.” For these words we are indebted to the English Embassy, which issued them in explanation of the seizure by England of two Turkish warships in process of construction in English harbors. Our Thomas Jefferson and your John Stuart Mill both agree that a nation under certain circumstances has the right to break a treaty. It is immoral for a nation, as well as for an individual, to keep a treaty that endangers its entire existence. The treaty with Belgium, if it had been kept, would have amounted to a suicide pact on the part of Germany. (Loud applause) .

Let me give you another quotation, taken not from the World Almanac, but from the records of the Supreme Court of the United States. Perhaps you do not think much of the Supreme Court of the United States, for you have assured us only a few minutes ago that the only difference between the United States of America and Servia is one of size. (Laughter).

In Volume 130, p. 601 of the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, you will find the statement: “Circumstances may arise which will not only justify the government in disregarding treaty stipulations, but demand in the interest of the country that it should do so.”

Justice Curtis of the Supreme Court confirms this opinion by stating that no State could be deprived of its right not to execute a treaty without surrendering its independence. Let me also read to you a passage from a speech of the German Chancellor. I am willing to say that the case of Germany, in so far as Belgium is concerned, stands or falls with this passage : “Germany’s position must be understood. She had fulfilled her treaty obligations in the past; her action now was not wanton. Belgium was of supreme military importance in a war with France; if such a war occurred it would be one of life and death. Germany feared that if she did not occupy Belgium, France might do so. In the face of this suspicion there was only one thing to do.”

This statement appears in the German White Book. (Pause). I beg your pardon, it does not. It is not a statement of the German Chancellor, but it emanates from the English Foreign Office. It was published in one of the early editions of the English Blue Book, but has never been republished since. Mr. Chesterton: “May I see the book.” Mr. Viereck turns the book over to Mr. Chesterton. (Applause.)

The English have suppressed this passage in all subsequent editions, and it has never been published in the American press. (The Diplomatic History of the War, by M. P. Price. Charles Scribner’s Sons, p. vii. Great Britain and the European Crisis).

Let me refer to another authority, one which perhaps even you will be willing to accept. My quotation is not from the World

Almanac, not even from the Declaration of Independence, but from Deuteronomy, Chapter 11, verse 26:

“And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth unto Sihon, king of Heshbon, with words of peace saying: let me pass through thy land ; I will go along by the highway, I will neither turn unto the right hand nor to the left. Thou shalt send me meat for money, that I may eat, and give me water for money, that I may drink : only I will pass through on my feet until I shall pass over Jordan into the land which the Lord our God giveth us. But Sihon of Heshbon would not let us pass him : for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit that he might deliver him unto thy hand, as appeareth this day. And the Lord said unto me: Behold I have begun to give Sihon and his land before thee ; begin to possess, that thou mayest possess his land. Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people. . . . And the Lord our God delivered him before us and we smote him and all his people. And we took all his cities at that time, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain. Only the cattle we took for prey unto ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we took.”

Moses acting on very high authority took far more drastic measures than Germany when he found himself in the same predicament as Bethmann-Hollweg. In fact it must be said that, compared with the action of Moses in Heshbon, the mailed fist of the Kaiser rests gently on Belgium. The Germans are a gentle people. In fact so peace-loving are the Germans that it is necessary from time to time for men like Treitschke and Bernhardt to remind them of their own unhappy history, of how for more than two thousand years from the days of the Romans to the days of the Huns, from the days of the Huns to the Thirty Years' War, from the Thirty Years' War to the Napoleonic invasions, Germany was the cockpit of nations, the Belgium of the world.

The Germans are not brutal. They are not a belligerent people. I contend that Germany is waging this war against militarism. She is waging war against the militarism of Russia, against the militarism of France and against the maritime militarism of Great Britain. It is always amusing when the pot calls the kettle black. But for an Englishman to accuse a German of militarism is to insult his intelligence. Do you or do you not know that England spends 60 per cent, more per capita on her army and navy than Germany. Do you know that France spends 38 per cent, more on her army and navy than Germany? Do you know that the peace strength of the Russian army is more than 1,290,000? Are you aware that the peace strength of France is over 700,000? Against these 2,000,000 soldiers threatening in times of peace her eastern and western border, Germany keeps an army force of only 870,000 men. If these eight or nine hundred thousand men are a match against two million, this is merely a proof of German efficiency. You are making war not against German militarism but against German efficiency. Conscription was forced upon Prussia by Napoleon, but it turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

Price Collier, surely an unprejudiced witness, says: “The German army protects Germany not only from external foes, but from internal disease. . . . It is the greatest school of hygiene in the world. Generations of Germans have been taught to take care of themselves without drawing a sword.”

German militarism is merely a part of her marvellous general efficiency. Every man in Germany is potentially a soldier, just as in Switzerland no man is permitted to vote who

does not bear arms. German militarism has taught the German people the virtue of thoroughness. Applying the methods thus acquired to industry they have conquered the markets of the world. (Applause). Germany realizes this fact and is grateful to her army. She is grateful to every soldier. That is the reason that she honors the men who fight for her. But what shall we say of England?

Mr. Chesterton, let me call your attention to an editorial in “The New Witness,” in which you criticize a war order issued through the Home Office which practically placed the defrauded wives of English soldiers under police surveillance — like prostitutes. This order was routed but, we are told, their position is still shameful. There are men at the front who have suffered, bled, risked everything for their country, whose wives have not received remittances for two, three or six weeks. “What” — I am now quoting literally — “is the reason? It either lies in that stereotyped carelessness, in that contemptuous disregard for the poor, which unfortunately marks many well paid [British] officials, or in an incompetency — a crass and inconceivable incompetency that is really staggering.” (Cheers.)

Here we get down to the roots of the war. It is a war between German efficiency and English inefficiency, between German Democracy and the Feudalism of Great Britain and Russia. Look at the lordlings and snobs who officer your armies. In Germany every man who has equipped himself mentally for the purpose may reach a commanding position in the ranks of his people's army. The German army is the most democratic institution in the world. General von Kluck is the son of a letter carrier, and Field Marshal Hindenburg is a poor country squire.

The reason for German efficiency is due, in a measure, to her geographical position. Pitched in between two hostile nations, as Bismarck has said, she cannot afford to be lazy or idle. Compared with the Germans the English are lazy and idle, some out of choice and others because they must. General Booth tells us that one-third of the English people is constantly on the verge of starvation. England grants her citizens the right to starve. Germany grants to her citizens no such right. That is the difference between the German and the English conception of liberty. It was Bismarck of whom you seem to think chiefly in the light of a forger, who violently opposed your inhuman Manchester School of Economics. “Let each man take care of himself and the devil take the hindmost.” It was Bismarck who said that a state may be responsible not only for the things it does, but also for the things it does not do. He further says : “A state composed very largely of Christians must be permeated by sympathy for the old and sick.” He urged Prussia to keep the sense of human dignity alive even in her poorest workingman.

Do you know, Mr. Chesterton, that Germany spends 50 per cent, more a year on social justice than she spends on her army? (Prolonged applause). You speak of Prussian autocracy. Do you know that there are three republics within the confines of Prussia: Hamburg, Bremen and Luebeck? Hamburg has been a republic since the Thirteenth Century, having lost her freedom temporarily only during the reign of Napoleon. Prussia could easily have starved Hamburg, destroyed her commerce and driven her sons into exile. She could have done to Hamburg what England did to Ireland. (Cheers). To-day Hamburg has one of the largest ports in the world, outstripping both London and Liverpool. Dock laborers work by the week in Hamburg, by the day in Antwerp, and by the hour in London. This throws a light on the difference of conditions between Germany and England.

I will not speak of Ireland. That would be a tale too pitiful to be told. England's policy toward Ireland illustrates her championship of the weaker nations. Let me read to you a passage from a recent book by Sir Roger Casement whose name, I am sure, is not unknown to you : “The rest of the

writer's task must be essayed, not with the author's pen, but with the rifles of the Irish volunteers. The crippling of the British fleet will mean a joint Irish- German invasion of Ireland, and every Irishman able to join such an army of deliverance must be ready to-day."

Germany will, if victorious, bring freedom to Ireland, for Germany is the country of freedom. The victory of Germany means a victory of the freedom of conscience and of religion. How are the Catholics treated in England? Compare the absolute liberty which the Catholic enjoys in Germany with the restrictions imposed upon the Church in your own country. Germany treats not only the Catholics well, but also the Jews. The last vestige of Antisemitism in Germany has been swept away by the war. You know what would happen if your Allies, the Russians, should win? A Russian victory spells pogroms in Breslau and Berlin. The first thing the Russians did in Lemburg was to institute pogroms. The commander-in-chief of the Russian army issued a statement that Francis Joseph had abdicated as Emperor of Austria and was now merely king of the Jews. Hence Russia's war was a holy war against Israel!

England until recently treated the Jews with consideration, but what changes have come over your country since the war? Let me remind you of a few things which you yourself have written. (Turning straight to Mr. Chesterton.) Did you or did you not say in "The New Witness" that Sir Edgar Speyer, Schuster and many others of the great Jews, who made the wealth of England, should be sent to a concentration camp and put to some useful occupation, like wood-chopping, so as to do for the first time in their lives an honest day's work? (Mr. Chesterton: Yes, I did.)

May I quote literally from "The New Witness": "Unfortunately, the many virtues of the Jewish race do not include tact and delicacy in dealing with Europeans. . . . Their manner often is insolent and offensive. To give Jews the control over our honored Belgian guests, is an outrage not put upon them by the will of the English people, but by the stupidity of a Jewish financier who has been allowed to worm himself into the ministry." Did you or did you not write this because two Jewish women were placed on the Belgian Relief Committee in London? (Mr. Chesterton: Yes, I did). (Hisses).

You may be right or you may be wrong. I, for one, do not agree with you, but if this is your opinion, and if you are the spokesman of intellectual England, then I can understand why your country should have formed an alliance with the country of pogroms! (Salvos of applause.) I now come to the conclusion, Germany is fighting for the liberty of all countries. She is fighting for the freedom of the seas. England controls every waterway in the world. Even our own Panama Canal is guarded by her Naval Station. She insists that the Panama Canal be neutralized, yet hardly had the war begun when Colonel Goethals, Governor of the Canal Zone, was forced to wire to Washington for war ships to protect the Panama Canal from English breaches of neutrality and English impertinence.

Under the guise of making war on Germany, England is making war on all neutral commerce, especially the commerce of the United States. England claims that with her great navy she is the policeman of the seas. But if so, she is a policeman who makes his own laws and changes them when it suits him.

In the present war England has reversed every one of her traditional policies with regard to conditional contraband. If England wins, which I do not think she will, the fight will have

to be fought over and over again, for no self-respecting nation can allow another to have the supreme command of the seas. As long as the German navy exists it forms, together with the American navy, a counterweight to the naval predominance of Great Britain. In case of England's victory no nation would be able to engage in ocean traffic, except by grace of Great Britain. That is why the fight will have to be fought over again, if not with Russia then with France; if not with France then with Japan ; if not with Japan then with the United States, (Applause and hisses.)

If Germany wins, it means that all the waterways of the world will be open, free and neutral, including the English Channel. Germany thus is fighting in self-defense. She is fighting in obedience to her plighted word. She is fighting for democracy against feudalism, for efficiency against inefficiency ; she is fighting, above all, for the freedom of the seas, as against the Maritime Trust of Great Britain. Thus she is fighting the battle of all nations, even of those — with the exception of England — who are now opposing her. If Germany's cause is not just, then, where in the world is there justice? (Prolonged applause).

PART TWO

Professor Shepherd : After these very neutral remarks, I may be allowed perhaps to say a few words. Though a professor of history, I would not wish you to be under the impression that I know all the past. There is only one set of persons, so far as I have discovered, who appear to believe that professors pretend to know it all, and that set is connected with the newspaper form of journalism. When a professor expresses an opinion that is entirely in accord with the views of a newspaper editor he is a scientist. When he expresses views at variance with those of the editor, he is a professor !

Acting in this latter capacity, all I have to say is I do not think the cause of this war is identical with any one of the several occasions hitherto mentioned. If you want to search for the real cause you will have to go back many, many years. We are but just beginning to know what caused our own Civil War. The men, also, who were responsible for the evil days between 1865 and 1877 we do not praise quite so highly as we did. A long time must elapse before we can get the proper perspective. If you imagine for one moment that you can find the real cause of this war in militarism, you are mistaken. If you believe that, because a country has a lot of soldiers it will want to try them out on its neighbors, then you might just as well assume that, because this city has a large police force, it will proceed to arrest everybody in sight. The causes of this war are not to be read in White, Blue, Gray or in any other kind of colored books or papers, except black ones which have not yet been published ! They do not lie in the action of diplomats and potentates. It is, therefore, a duty befitting us as citizens of a neutral country to suspend our judgment.

We do not know and cannot know as much about the responsibility for the war as those nations do which are carrying it on. This fact, however, does not prevent some of us from styling ourselves the "Supreme Court of Civilization." Why? Because we have no immediate enemies to disturb us. We can afford to philosophize, to moralize, to call one side or the other all sorts of hard names. The truth of the matter is that we are not immediately threatened, and therefore ought to be benevolent to both, and hostile to neither. In this connection I would like to read a warning from the late Lord Roberts, which applies admirably to the state of feeling in the United States, as represented by the English press. I did not say that such was the true state of public feeling; but simply that which is represented

by the English Press. These are the words of Lord Roberts, one of the finest of English gentlemen and soldiers: "May I give a word of caution to my countrymen against the unsportsmanlike practice of abusing one's enemies. Let us avoid what Kipling during the Boer War described as 'killing Kruger with your mouth.' Let us keep our own hands clean and let us fight against the Germans in such a way as to earn their liking as well as their respect."

That was a noble utterance. May I ask you to preserve the same fairness of attitude toward the speakers. (Applause).

Mr. Chesterton : After the very interesting and able speech of my opponent, Mr. Viereck, I feel it necessary to remind you of what this debate was supposed to be about. It is not about the Jewish problem. I have discussed that on other occasions, but I am not here for that purpose to-night. The very interesting subjects brought forward by Mr. Viereck are not the subject of this debate. It is whether Germany or the Allies have a just cause in this war, and I think not one-thirtieth of Mr. Viereck's sentences had any relation at all to this subject.

As to the question of England's interfering with American commerce, I never allow myself to say one word about it. Your government and mine are engaged in a discussion of this matter, and I am sure they will settle it in a friendly manner. But that has nothing to do with the cause of war. Nor is the quotation of Sir Roger Casement of any importance. I should prefer the testimony of an Irish patriot who had not been taking English money for years as a British Consul. The English censorship is supposed to prevent my learning the facts about the war. Evidently it is so, for I learned for the first time from Mr. Viereck that all the British dreadnoughts had been sunk by German submarines. I had not the faintest suspicion of that fact up to this moment. I am a little puzzled when I remember coming over on Tuesday on an English steamship and saw a lot of German ships detained in your harbors.

Mr. Viereck challenges me to say how Catholics are treated in England. I am a Catholic and so I ought to know. How are they treated in Germany. They are treated (except when they are Poles) with some measure of respect because they beat Bismarck and made him go to Canossa. But has Mr. Viereck forgotten the persecutions of the Kulturkampf ? Anyhow this has nothing to do with who caused the present war. I will now deal with that small part of Mr. Viereck's speech that has any reference to this subject. I also want to say a word with reference to one question which has some relevance.

Mr. Viereck told you that if Germany won the sea would be neutralized. I can only say that to anybody who has anything to do with the sea and has had some knowledge and experience of how Germany treats places that are neutralized, the promise is hardly reassuring. (Laughter.) Then Mr. Viereck says that Germany had never broken a treaty. It is true he added, after a pause, "unless it was really a scrap of paper." I think his conscience pricked him, for he hesitated after the "unless"—I think he was probably about to add "unless she very much wanted to do so."

As a matter of fact for Prussia all treaties are scraps of paper. There is one point which has struck me. Mr. Viereck said nothing about the Eastern aspect of the war. You will remember that I made a special and deliberate challenge to him to do so. I cannot believe that he would be guilty of anything so unfair as to keep back an argument favorable to him until I had no longer an opportunity of rebutting it, and I must therefore conclude that

he has nothing to say on that subject. In regard to the difference between small and large states, I admit, of course, there is a great deal of difference between America and Serbia, but there is no difference between their rights. What I say is that they have equal rights, and I say in the face of an American audience that the United States has not a bit more right than Serbia. And if you say the opposite you are tearing up the Declaration of Independence. (Applause.)

When Mr. Viereck said that Germany had gone to war in obedience to her pledged word, of course he meant her pledged word to Austria. That sounds plausible, but in fact it is wrong. By the evidence of the Blue Book, Germany declared war on France and Russia on August 1st, Austria did not until August 7th. It is quite incredible that the word Germany had pledged to Austria was to the effect she would go to war with Russia while Austria remained at peace. On the contrary, the evidence shows that it was Austria who was dragged into the war on account of having pledged her word to Germany.

In regard to Belgian neutrality, Mr. Viereck is inclined to make his quotations a little stronger than they appear in print, and then reads a speech of the German Chancellor that France and England would invade Belgium, and in another connection he leads us to believe that France might invade Belgium. Any one can say "might" invade. The Chancellor had no reason to believe that France would invade.

Mr. Viereck says that France had troops on the Belgian frontier. Of course she had ! Everyone knew that the German Government meditated a treacherous attack through Belgium. But those troops never crossed the frontier until England (sic) had violated Belgian neutrality. Documents are supposed to have been discovered by Germany in Belgium showing an understanding between the latter country and France and England. I assume that these documents are genuine, but that question should be raised, because Mr. Viereck said that the English censors forged. He also said something about the pot calling the kettle black ! It is therefore worth recalling that Bismarck forged documents to force on the war with France, and it is legitimate to wonder whether the Belgian documents are genuine, but assuming them to be genuine, what do they amount to? Simply to this: that the Belgians suspected Germany of intending to attack them and took reasonable precautions to secure the support of the other parties to the treaty in case of such attack. If you think a man likely to burgle your house and consequently lock up your spoons, you in no way debar yourself from calling him a thief when he does burgle you ! I do not propose to go over the question of Deuteronomy, first, because it refers to a very remote period, and second, because there is no analogy between the two cases. There is no suggestion that Moses had given any "scrap of paper" to sign !

There is something plausible in Mr. Viereck's argument about German efficiency and English inefficiency ; in fact, I believe there is a great deal of truth in it. The English Government is one of the least efficient in the world and I have had occasion to point that out. I have attacked the English Government on that score. The German Government is organized for a single aim, while there are complications in the English system which do not exist in Germany. Ever since the time of Frederick the Great, Prussia has been organized for the single purpose of aggression. There are great advantages to be derived from a complete disregard of morals, and long before Frederick this fact was well-known to professors of Teutonic "Kultur" such as cardsharps, blackmailers, people that stole silver spoons.

(Commotion.) Well, the Crown Prince of Germany does that! (Catcalls, hisses, loud cries of "Liar" and "Shame.")

Chairman : The speaker has the right to make any remarks he likes, but you have no right to interrupt him in any form. Mr. Chesterton : The fact that you gain advantages by disregarding morals was known long before. It requires the capacity of a child to understand that. What was also known was that, if a man who happens to be strong and powerful, goes about continually disregarding the rights of his neighbors, he may prosper for a time, but ultimately he will fail, because his neighbors combine against him, and that is the whole story of this war. The conspiracy against Germany is the conspiracy of the police against the burglar. The very existence of a comity of civilized Europe is incompatible with a powerful military state acting on the Denial of Right and the Atheist system of morals which are the first principles of Prussia. (Applause and hisses.)

Mr. Viereck: Mr. Chesterton complains that there was only one pertinent question raised by me, and then proceeds to reply to half a dozen. The trouble with Mr. Chesterton is that he looks merely at the superficial aspect of the war, whereas I attempt to go down to the roots of the matter. That is the difference between the English and the German temperament. (Clapping of hands.)

I maintain that there was not one statement in my speech that was not relevant to the question and did not bear out that Germany's cause was just. I have not replied to all of Mr. Chesterton's questions. Some of these questions were answered by the audience. Some deserve no answer. (Applause) Mr. Chesterton says that I have not referred to the Far Eastern question. How many historic questions am I to solve in half an hour?

The evidence against the Servian assassins has been published not in any English White Book or Blue Book, but in the Yellow Book published by France. Complete accounts of the trial of the murderers have appeared in the papers. But the sources of the war reach deep down into the centuries. The question as to who declared war is not of importance. The question as to who is responsible for the war is of the gravest importance.

The spark to the powder magazine was applied by Servia, but behind Servia stands Russia. The Servians are not a civilised nation, even if the English choose to speak of them as heroic. England changes her opinions whenever it suits her convenience. Not everyone would care to be judged by a jury of Servians. Let me remind you, Mr. Chesterton, that only a few years ago England herself refused to send a Minister to the court of the cut-throats of Belgrade. (Mr. Chesterton: That is right.) But now that Servia serves your interests it is heroic little Servia. It is only a few years ago that we heard about Congo atrocities. It was Belgium, then, that was unspeakable in the eyes of the English. English magazines were filled with pictures of boys and men whose hands and feet had been cut off by the compatriots of King Leopold. These pictures, no doubt, give the Belgians the idea of accusing the Germans of similar atrocities. (Applause.) In those days no one could speak of Belgium without a sneer. But now it is "heroic little Belgium."

Let us remember that Belgium is the sixth largest commercial nation in the world. She had a powerful army, and behind her stood England, France and Russia. Belgium is a victim of England. Not only did the English betray Belgium into this war

but they sent only a handful of soldiers to make the Belgians hold out when they should have surrendered. Even now England is starving Belgium by closing the seas to the transportation of food. England would rather starve a million Belgians than feed one German soldier. (Applause and hisses.)

Germany knew that France intended to invade Belgium. Every day brings new corroborative evidence to that effect. I have seen French mobilization maps in which Belgium and Holland are included. I place those at your disposal. I also place at your disposal the facsimiles of those documents in which your Col. Bridges threatened that England would invade Belgium under all circumstances in a European conflict, even against the will of the Belgian people. I did not say that the German submarines had destroyed all English dreadnoughts. I merely said that English dreadnoughts had been destroyed by German submarines, but people who feed on padded Blue Books are apt to pay little attention to the omission of such a little thing as an adjective.

Mr. Chesterton, you cannot approve of the methods of your government. You are a rebel. You always have been against the government. You ought to be an Irishman. But if you were, you would be with me and not against me. As an opponent of the government you naturally do not fully understand the real motives that actuated the men in control of England. Perhaps I can enlighten you on the subject.

Let me read to you a passage from an essay which received a prize from the Royal United Service Institution, published in January, 1909, and written by a distinguished naval officer. Speaking for England, he says: "We do not go to war for sentimental reasons. I doubt if ever we did. War is the outcome of commercial quarrels. It has for its aim the forcing of commercial conditions by the sword on our antagonists, conditions which we consider necessary to commercially benefit us. We give all sorts of reasons for war, but at the bottom of them all is commerce, whether the reason be the retention of a strategical position, the breaking of treaties, or what not, they come down to the bed-rock of commerce, the simple and effective reason that commerce is the lifeblood." This explains the motives of England. (Applause.)

You say that England has gone to war for justice. If that is so, why must you pick Germany's pockets? Why must you steal her trademarks? Why must you appropriate her patents? (Cheers.)

You say that I have read a statement by the German Chancellor and that I have over-emphasized the quotation. I am sorry I did not make myself clear. I did not read a quotation from the German White Book. The quotation I read was published by the English Foreign Office in one of the early editions of the English Blue Book, but was suppressed in all other editions, because it justifies the case of Germany. (Applause.) You cannot deny that Catholics are restricted with regard to public office and the celebration of their religious rites in your country. Even in Protestant Prussia there is no such restriction. If you must go back in the past and drag in "Kulturkampf," I can go back into the past and remind you of the time when England placed a prize of 20 shillings on the head of a wolf and a prize of 25 shillings on the head of a priest. (Cheers.)

Mr. Chesterton speaks of Prussian aggression. Who kept the peace of Europe for forty-four years? (Applause.) Was it England? All of Germany's wars were defensive wars. She took Schleswig-Holstein when Denmark threatened to annex that

State. Schleswig-Holstein was united with Denmark merely by the personal union of its ruler. Germany made war on France and took what France had stolen. In the words of your own Thomas Carlyle, "The cunning of Richelieu, the grandiose sword of Louis XIV, these are the only claims of France to those German countries." I am surprised that you have not quoted Bernhardt. I understand that he is very popular with you. In Germany nobody heard of him until he was discovered by the English. But if you have taken our Bernhardt we have taken your Shakespeare. (Hearty laughter and hand clapping.) You speak of Prussian aggression. Have you ever read Boucher, the French Bernhardt, who insists that France must annex Belgium ? Have you read Homer Lea, that Anglo-Saxon Bernhardt, who claims that Germany must be destroyed.

I call your attention to the much quoted statement of the "Saturday Review": "There is not an Englishman in the world who could not be richer if Germany were extinguished."

Germany, under the Prussian regime, acquired every one of her colonies by treaty or purchase, not by treachery or by force. Every one of England's colonies was acquired by fire and sword, by loot and pillage, by force and by fraud. You speak of the lack of morals of Frederick the Great. We in America have a different opinion of Frederick. Let me read to you a sentence by John Quincy Adams which appears in a message to Congress, published in 1826. President Adams said; " The infancy of their political existence, under the influence of those principles of liberty and of right, so congenial to the cause for which we have fought and triumphed, they (the United States) were able to obtain the sanction of but one great and philosophic, although absolute sovereign in Europe for their liberal and enlightened principles." That sovereign was Frederick the Great.

You, Mr. Chesterton, evidently have no conception of German morality or German idealism. England has not yet had a German invasion ; she will. We in America know the German invasion. Twenty million Germans have invaded this country. We know that they are not barbarians, for if they are we are barbarians, too. In the light of what I have said to-night you will perhaps understand the meaning of my poem to the Kaiser, that Prince of Peace, which so greatly puzzled both you and your distinguished brother. Inasmuch as you misquoted me, may I be permitted to conclude my remarks with this poem:

WILHELM II, PRINCE OF PEACE

Prince of Peace, Lord of War,
 Unsheath thy blade without a stain,
 Thy holy wrath shall scatter far
 The bloodhounds from thy country's fane!

Into thy hand the sword is forced,
 By traitor friend and traitor foe,
 On foot, on sea, and winged and horsed,
 The Prince of Darkness strikes his blow.

Crush thou the Cossack arms that reach
 To plunge the world into the night!
 Save Goethe's vision, Luther's speech.
 Thou art the Keeper of the Light!
 When darkness was on all the lands.
 Who kept God's faith with courage grim?

Shall He uphold that country's hands,
 Or tear its members, limb from limb?

God called the Teuton to be free.
 Free from Great Britain's golden thrall,
 From guillotine and anarchy,
 From pogroms red and whips that fall.

May thy victorious armies rout
 The yellow hordes against thee hurled,
 The Czar whose sceptre is the knout,
 And France, the wanton of the world!

But thy great task will not be done
 Until thou vanquish utterly.
 The Norman sister of the Hun,
 England, the Serpent of the Sea.

The flame of war her tradesmen fanned
 Shall yet consume her, fleet and field;
 The star of Frederick guide thy hand,
 The God of Bismarck be thy shield!

Against the fell Barbarian horde
 Thy people stand, a living wall ;
 Now fight for God's peace with thy sword.
 For if thou fail, a world shall fall !

(Resounding applause, cheers.)

Professor Shepherd: In bringing this meeting to a close, I feel that, although the majority seems to sympathize with the German point of view, the fact has not prevented the champions from stating their respective views with all the energy required! I am sure that everyone will go forth with sympathies less acute than before, that one and all of us have been brought nearer to the attitude of neutrality which should be ours in this mighty conflict of our brethren across the seas. (Applause.)

Irish Bulletin

A full reprint of newspaper of Dáil Éireann
 giving war reports.

Published so far:

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

Volume 3, 1st September 1920 to 1st January 1921. 695pp.

Volume 4, Part One: 3rd January 1921 to 16th - March
 1921. 365pp

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