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The Trouble With Democracy . . .

Democracy is no solution to the current economic problems of Greece, Ireland, etc. because democracy is the political medium in which those problems were generated. There is no ruling class which can be held to have brought about the economic crisis in its own interest, and which can be punished and overthrown as a means of overcoming the crisis. The economic system which caused the crisis was freely chosen by the democracy, insofar as anything is freely chosen in these things.

It might be said that the electorates did not choose to have mass unemployment, wholesale bankruptcy, and a reduction in their standards of living. They only chose the means which led to this end. But the means which seem to serve the purpose of the moment is all that is ever chosen by an electorate which acts freely, having overthrown its ruling class and having freed itself from hidebound tradition, superstition, and fears related to another world. Free action in the flux of the passing moment cannot have a long-term end as its democratic purpose.

It might be pleaded that the democracy is not *really* responsible for the crisis that democratic action has brought about, because it was not sufficiently informed about the probable consequences of the *avant garde* finance capitalist devices that it chose to ratify at election after election. But where, within the system, was there an authority which might advise them, warn them, and compel them to engage in voting for some long-term interest, instead of for some immediate financial advantage?

For twenty years the economic advantages came thick and fast from the increasingly tricky financial devices that are now being condemned because of the crisis they led to. The more the system succeeded, the greater the demand became for ever more tricky investment products, and the more every authoritative or traditional curb on free economic action was felt to be intolerable. Ten years ago Ireland boasted of having the highest *per capita* level of entrepreneurship in the world. Capitalism was great. Capitalism was freedom.

When the free action of capitalism, chosen freely by a democracy, over-reaches itself and goes into crisis—as it must do—then the only thing for the democracy to do is grin and bear the period of austerity until the system picks up again. And that is, to a considerable extent, how the Irish democracy is behaving.

But there is an element that cannot do without a scapegoat. And the only available scapegoat is *Grossdeutschland*.

All that Germany has done for sixty years is tend to its own economic affairs conservatively. It developed its national economy by means of staid, old-fashioned relations between local industry, local banks, and local Governments, and it carried on making things while its rivals made the tricky financial devices that were the particular precipitating cause of this crisis.

Germany was at the core of the stable European structure constructed by European Christian Democracy in the 1950s. When Britain was admitted to this structure (with Ireland in tow) in the 1970s, it set about subverting that structure by exerting free market pressure against the "*social market*".

There was socialist opposition within Britain to joining Europe on the ground that Europe would prevent the further development of socialism in Britain. The opportunity for further socialist development in Britain came in 1977, a few years after it joined

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Europe

Spinning Like A Top

FF SPIN

Micheál Martin gave a long-heralded talk at the Institute of International and European Affairs on 9th February. It was a bit of a classic on 'spinning'. It was textbook stuff on the methodology. The real issue was ignored. That issue was the Treaty that is necessary to implement the Fiscal Compact. The most significant fact about this Compact is that it is not a European Union Treaty. It cannot be, since David Cameron scuppered any plans to have an EU Treaty on the Compact. The Fiscal Compact is an inter-Governmental Treaty.

If it was an EU Treaty, there would be no real need to comply with the constitutional requirement for a referendum, as it could very plausibly be incorporated under the terms of the already-approved Lisbon Treaty.

These are elemental facts that make this Treaty a completely new phenomenon. These few basic facts were never mentioned by Martin in his address. Instead he talked and talked about EU Treaties of the past and of the future—all totally beside the point.

In his speech not once did he mention the inter-Governmental nature and essence of this new Treaty. And of course it was belittled in every way possible. For him the Treaty did not go far enough; it was not radical enough; he made federal noises; it was beside the point; it needed clarification; it did not ensure growth; it not deal with the real causes of the crisis; it did not change the mandate of the European Central Bank; etc. In other words, all that was not in it was empathised, but the essence ignored.

In any Treaty, or any piece of legislation, there are a myriad things that are not included and what's in it is always

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

From Guild To Trade Union

Mondragon, Part 5

(back page)

Due to pressure of space we have been obliged to hold over: *A West Cork Protestant Testament* by Manus O'Riordan; *Republicanism*: a response to Stephen Richards by Pat Walsh; and *Comments On Desmond Fennell's Picture Of Ireland* by John Minahane

Europe. It came in the form of a Royal Commission report advocating industrial democracy. Industrial democracy was defeated—but not by Europe. It was rejected by the socialists in the Labour Party and the Trade Unions because it was not "*the socialist revolution*". Then, some years later, a very militant socialist, Kim Howells (who was Arthur Scargill's lieutenant in Scargill's catastrophic Miners' Strike of 1984-85) became Labour's Minister for Competition in Europe. His object was to overcome the European "*social market*" restrictions on the free action of international capital. This was successfully accomplished over the years.

British politics remain effectively nationalist throughout all the vagaries of ideological fashion. Britain lives off the world. It became incapable of feeding itself and it outran its own raw material resources in the late 19th century. It arranged, by means of manufacturing and war, for the world to feed it. That is still its relationship with the world, with financial services having replaced manu-

facture. Britain's national interest is globalist, and all parties collaborate in tending to it.

The European Community, when Britain was admitted to it, was self-sufficient economically, and was guided by a supra-national Commission, which kept it in kilter and arranged for a considerable degree of re-distribution. That was very much against the British interest, and by means of relentless pressure, sustained for decades, it succeeded in marginalising the Commission, in establishing globalist competitiveness as the ideal, and in destroying European Christian Democracy as an organised force.

Germany, while not disputing the matter openly, and while giving way in principle, remained a hold-out for the old system, at least in its own internal affairs, by the conservative force of inertia. That is why it remains the one really functional economy in Europe today. If something of the original European project is to be retrieved from the shambles, it depends on Germany to tend to it. And so we get the howl of

Grossdeutschland.

Insofar as there is a demand behind the howl, it seems to be that Germany should pay off everybody's debts, so that they can then just carry on as before.

*

The globalist ideal of forming the human race into a single market can be presented as an ideal of universal democracy. In its historical origins, it is a construct of Ameranglian military, economic, and political power. And, insofar as a global market has actually been constructed, it functions under American hegemony.

Britain set about achieving world dominance through colonial expansion—the expansion of the population of Britain to regions of the world that were considered suitable for reasons of climate and of having a native population that might be exterminated easily—combined with the establishment of formal Imperial control over regions not suitable for colonising.

The British colonial and Imperial structure reached its greatest extent through victory in its 1914 war on Germany and Turkey and the seizure of the recently-established German colonies in Africa and of the Turkish Empire in the Middle East—in which various peoples had lived in peace for centuries but have been in conflict ever since. However, Britain over-reached itself in its expansionist war of 1914-19 and its decline began almost at once.

Britain's American colony, which had taken half a continent for itself as a state, became the hegemonic world power as the power of its mother country declined. And the decline of the mother country began as a consequence of its failure to defeat Germany by its own power, and its being rescued from the verge of defeat by the American declaration of war in its support in 1917, and the arrival of American Armies on the battlefield in 1918.

America won the Great War, but then left it to Britain and France to arrange peace in Europe—and to make a complete mess of it. France wanted to secure its position against a defeated and demoralised Germany, making sure that a German war of revenge would be impossible, but Britain prevented it.

America retired from the scene, allowing conflicted Anglo-French hegemony to make a shambles of Europe, before coming to the rescue again in 1944.

The British Empire launched its second World War in 1939, without having made serious preparations to fight it in earnest.

It depended on France to do its fighting for it. France, having been prevented by Britain in 1919 from achieving its object of a strong frontier against Germany, was not eager to hear the main burden of the war for a second time. Following the battlefield defeat of May 1940, France made a settlement with Germany. Britain withdrew from the battle while refusing to negotiate a peace.

Dominance of the seas of the world by the Royal Navy enabled Britain to maintain Europe on a war-footing, thus maximising the probability of a German-Russian war. When Germany invaded Russia in June 1941, Britain immediately declared itself to be Russia's ally, declared Bolshevik Russia to be a great peace-loving state, and began to churn out Bolshevik propaganda. At the same time it deferred the opening of a Second Front in France, which America was eager to launch when it joined the war in December 1941. The American position made military sense, but Britain obstructed it for political reasons. The Second Front was not opened until June 1944, by which time Russia had not only held the German invasion, but was pushing the Germans back into Europe fast. The American/British and the Russian Armies met in central Europe in May 1945, and the Cold War began. Eastern Europe, "*from Stettin to Trieste*" as Churchill put it, was removed from the world market.

China had lived peacefully with the rest of the world for centuries, until the British Empire made war in it in 1840 and forced it to engage in market relations with the British world market—in the first instance by opening itself to the sale of opium by British merchants. That was the first of a series of wars to destroy the Chinese state and plunder and commercialise Chinese society.

In the 1850s American warships sailed to Japan, which too had been at peace for centuries, and demanded market access. The Japanese, with the example of China before them, opened themselves to the world market, but they did so in the form of organising their clan communities into capitalist enterprises and making themselves active players in the capitalist world market, instead of being passive victims to be plundered. And, since they lacked raw material resources of their own, they set about acquiring them as Imperialists.

The British Empire made an alliance with the Japanese Empire before making war on Germany in 1914, and Japan became a protector of British interests in Asia. But America disliked the Anglo-Japanese alliance. America, having jolted Japan into capitalist Imperialism, came to see it as an

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"Leave Those Kids Alone!"

I read the speech made by Alan Shatter TD, Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence opening 'the Shoah in Europe' exhibition at The Atrium of the Department of Justice on 23rd January 2012.

He praised the Crocus Project, led by St Laurence's primary School in Dublin, where children learn about the Holocaust and plant yellow crocuses in memory of Jewish children killed in the Holocaust.

I cannot agree that involving children in the memory of this dreadful catastrophe could ever be justified. If a sensitive child so much as caught a glimpse of what it is they are learning about, it could be enough to blight their life.

In France people who had spent time interned in camps, as well as eminent psychologists, were eloquent in their denunciation of the involvement of children in this issue. Simone Weil, who returned from Auschwitz after being imprisoned there, and later became Government Minister, said:

"It is unimaginable, unbearable, tragic, and above all, unjust, to inflict this on 10 year olds. You cannot ask a child to identify with a dead child. This is far too heavy a burden to bear. We, who were deported, had great difficulty, after the war, talking about what we had gone through, even with our near relations. And even today we try to spare our children and grand-children that knowledge" (*L'Express*, 15 February 2008).

A psychologist, Boris Cyrulnik, was concerned about the effect such initiatives could have on the remaining aged survivors:

"Those who survived the Shoah, now very advanced in years, will see all their efforts of 40 years callously disregarded.

They kept quiet for 40 years because the Shoah was hard to say and impossible to hear. They thought their silence would protect those they loved.

It is not easy to present oneself as a victim, it is indecent even, it disturbs others so much. [...]

To escape their mental agony, they only wanted one thing: to be again like other people, reintegrate the human condition, regain their dignity.

And now they are asked to assume their role of victim again! They are pushed back into the destiny they did so much to escape from. The career of victim, which they had done so much to avoid, is imposed on them again" (*Le Monde* 20 February 2008).

The International League against Racism and Anti-Semitism (LICRA) spoke against targeting children in this context:

"To take advantage of the psychological immaturity of young children does not seem to us judicious, if it is history that you want to transmit.

The teaching of the Shoah should not be done first and foremost through emotion: this approach {of identifying with the victim} removes the time dimension and leads to anachronism and confusion."

The Jewish Resistance Organisation, one of the founding members of the present CRIF (Representative Council of Jews of France) said in this context: "*Emotion is to history what revenge is to Justice.*"

The Union of Auschwitz Deportees (which includes survivors of several Polish camps) agreed with Simone Weil:

"We are too aware ourselves of how difficult it was to speak of these things even to our own children, or even how difficult it was to adults to listen to our experience, to want that a young generation be confronted so early to the absolutely unbearable testimonies which destroyed so many of the children of our families."

The academic psychologist, Yoram Mouchenik, has pointed out that there is no way that a child confronted with such memories could avoid imagining that he should also shoulder the collective responsibility for the murders.

It should go without saying that creating such a sense of guilt is wrong and unjustifiable. But one is led to suspect that this may be the effect desired by some.

Many of these contributors to the debate, including Simone Weil, also make the point that there are other victims of wholesale massacres, in other times and other places, and that many people would not see any reason to privilege the Holocaust.

Boris Cyrulnik worried about the reactions of other victims of the Nazi genocide, or of the victims of genocides in Armenia, Cambodia or Rwanda, creating a competition of commemoration and memory among the diverse communities.

Keep children out of it!

Cathy Winch

inevitability that in its Pacific expansion it would have to make war on Japan. When the British Empire emerged from its Great War heavily in debt to the USA, the Americans insisted that the Anglo-Japanese Treaty should not be renewed.

Britain did not see its way to defying the US on this issue. If it had done so, the likely outcome would have been an arms race (with navies) ending in war—and an Anglo-American war was widely expected in the mid-1920s. So Britain ended its alliance with Japan. And a Japanese proposal that the League of Nations should adopt a statement of racial equality was rejected.

When American decided in 1941 that the moment had come for its war with Japan, it issued an ultimatum which Japan could not comply with, and Britain seconded the ultimatum. By doing so, Britain admitted to itself that it could only sustain its economic position in the world as America's shadow. When Japan responded to the ultimatums by bombing American ships at an island in the middle of the Pacific, it also struck at the British Empire in Asia—and the Empire never recovered from the blow.

Japanese Imperialism had been actively breaking up the Chinese state. The state of Manchukuo, which it formed out of it, seemed to have been viable. The defeat of Japan led to the re-unification of China. And the Communist movement, organising the base of Chinese society, quickly established its dominance over the American-sponsored Kuomintang middle-class stratum during the war against Japan, and in the civil war after the Japanese surrender.

As a consequence of the War launched by the declining British Empire, the territory of the world market shrank, and the world was simplified into a confrontation between the two victor Powers, which met in central Europe as the representatives of two antagonistic systems.

Britain, the creator of the world capitalist system, had brought it to the verge of collapse. It was kept in being by the USA. Capitalism was re-floated in modified form by American military, industrial and financial power. The money system of Cold War capitalism was the dollar. But the US had to turn a blind eye to deviations from the Free Market while Communism was an expanding force in the Third World. In 1965 Indonesia was saved for capitalism by the massacre of a million of its citizens, and for the next quarter century it was allowed to operate an aberrant national capitalism—which was declared to be a system of corruption and abolished when

the Cold War ended. And General Suharto, who had saved Indonesia for capitalism with American backing, and was sustained by America for a generation, was declared to be a tyrant.

Japan had no Imperialist hangover. It had become Imperialist as a matter of capitalist economic necessity. After 1945 it was able to acquire raw materials through commercial relations with the Cold War capitalist market, and to sell its products into that market. It was a shining example of capitalism in the Free World—until the Cold War ended. Then, about twenty years ago, it was told that this could not continue. It was reminded of what America had done to it in 1945 and was cautioned that it might be done again if it did not pull in its economic horns.

In 1990, with the Soviet Union fragmenting and China having become unsure of itself, the US found itself alone in the world as its master. It was a disorienting experience for it. It had never been without an enemy to conquer, from the very first moment of its existence when it had a long series of native peoples to exterminate. And now it found it could not do without an enemy. So it concocted an enemy out of Saddam Hussein, whom it had helped to power, and who was governing Iraq on Western liberal lines.

Saddam had made war on Iran in the Western interest, blocking the Islamic Revolution which, it was feared, would otherwise have run through the Middle East. While Iraq was fighting Islam, the oil sheikdom of Kuwait, made into a state by Britain, was stealing its oil. Saddam was given the green light by the American Ambassador to take direct action against Kuwait, but when he did so Britain started war-mongering against him, and the US followed the British lead. The Arab League tried to play the part of mediator between Iraq and Kuwait, and there is little doubt that the matter could have been resolved peacefully.

It was a principle of the United Nations when founded that it should operate as far as possible through regional bodies. This principle was enforced in America. South American states could not go directly to the UN with complaints. They had to go first to the Organisation of American States, which was controlled by the US.

If the Arab League had been allowed to deal with the Iraq/Kuwait issue, that would have given it status as the regional UN body in the Middle East. It was important to the West that that should not happen, so the Arab League was brushed aside.

Last year France, Britain and the US

purported to be acting at the behest of the Arab League when they overthrew the Libyan State. They now complain that they are prevented from carrying out the Arab League policy on Syria by the perverse conduct of China and Russia.

The term "*the Syrian people*" is now being used, as "*the Libyan people*" was last year, and "*the Iraqi people*" in 2003. It has been demonstrated that there is no Iraqi or Libyan people in the sense conveyed by the way the term is used. The suggestion is that there is a Syrian people kept in subjection by a terror State which somehow got control of them, and if that State was removed, there would be national democracy.

In fact the Western policy on Syria is a civil war policy, as it was in Iraq.

RTE has described the Syrian situation as one in which the Sunni majority is oppressed by the regime. But that is a programme of action, rather than a description. The object is to constitute the Sunni population into a coherent force, to give it the sense of itself as an oppressed religion, and to pit it against the existing regime as a confessional force which will establish a confessional state.

Al Qaeda, the great world demon for ten years, has been forgotten. It can hardly be declared to have been misunderstood, so it is just not mentioned. But it is well-known that Al Qaeda is a radical Sunni force, with its roots in Saudi Arabia, and that it was active in Libya and is active in Syria.

Ireland was riddled with Islamophobia a couple of years ago—a diseased fear or hatred of Islam. When a Muslim said on RTE that Sharia law would be established in Ireland if a majority of the Irish were Muslims, that was taken to be virtual terrorism. But now, as supporters of the warmongering against Syria, we are *de facto* advocates of Islamisation.

The sense in US policy seems to be that religious civil war at the present time seems to be the best way of maintaining Western control of the Middle East.

The west destroyed the liberal, secular, Westernising regime in Iraq, instead of invading Iran. Possibly it was thought that Iraq would provide a springboard for further conquests. The Shia democracy in Iran has confounded Western expectations by its durability and its resourcefulness and is close to displacing Saudi Arabia as the hegemonic power in the Middle East. And where would Western Middle East policy be without Saudi regional dominance? ■

Europe

continued

minuscule compared to what could be in it. To focus on such is a cheap debating trick. The other wonderful things that are omitted are only possible if this Treaty is a success—it will enable these things to be done and that cannot be done otherwise. Either he does not accept the methods or objectives of the Treaty, in which case he should oppose it openly and clearly, or, if he thinks it is appropriate, he should have the political balls to support it. Let's hope he makes up his mind in time for any referendum.

But, having damned the Fiscal Compact Treaty with as little/much faint praise as possible, he said he would support it! Why? Having described it over and over again as an EU Treaty, which it is not, he said that, as Fianna Fail always supports EU Treaties, it would support this one. Fianna Fail made me do it! That should really convince the multitudes, if a referendum was necessary!

At the august gathering at which all this was said, most of the subsequent discussion was full of praise for this transparent nonsense. One questioner did raise the issue of the lack of the 'community method', resulting from the decline of the Commission: perhaps that had something to do with the current problems, he suggested? Martin had indeed detected a decline in the community approach in the "*post Lisbon architecture*". The man who led the Government's referendum campaign for the Lisbon Treaty seemed surprised at this development after the event!

Apparently he never noticed that Lisbon simply confirmed this decade-long decline in the community approach of the EU. Naturally Martin thought it was a bad thing to see the Commission and the community spirit in decline: the nation states should address the problem. Of course they should—and no doubt it would be a good thing if they also addressed the issue of original sin. Closing doors and bolted horses come to mind. He genuinely seemed oblivious to the significance of this new development, and if he did not notice it until after Lisbon then he must have been locked away somewhere for the past decade—he was only Minister for Foreign Affairs for a large part of it. He and his audience seemed like people operating in a parallel universe.

The Treaty represents a game change, a new paradigm or whatever the appropriate

jargon would be for a completely new relationship between some European countries. There is no indication whatever that our EUophiles have adjusted to this as they don't seem to realise it's happening. It is a choice between the only feasible political future that can be called European in any real sense or a social and political disaster following a collapse of the Euro. They remain satisfied with parroting empty, redundant concepts and believe that this can pass for thought.

WHY THE SILENCE?

The issue of the deserters from the Irish Army during the Emergency and the castigation of the Irish State's policy of neutrality in the Second World War has been in the news, initiated by the Minister for Defence and Justice. One would expect the leader of Fianna Fail, the party that was the architect of that policy—one of its greatest achievements—to have given us his thoughts on these issues. Maybe I missed it, but I did not notice a word from him. He is anxious to distance himself from Sinn Fein and there could hardly be a more perfect issue than WWII and all related issues to defend the integrity of the State and Fianna Fail. This relates to the essential historical *raison d'être* of the Party and is the vehicle on which to establish clear blue water between the two parties. And the man has pretensions to be a historian. But as his acknowledged guru, Peter Hart, has passed away maybe he has lost his bearings on this as well. To revise the old cliché, he does not seem to know where he has come from, where he is and is hardly likely therefore to know where he is going.

Under Martin, Fianna Fail is spinning into a black hole.

MS LAFFAN GIVES UP THE GHOST

Brigid Laffan is visiting fellow at the Minda Guntzberg Centre for European Studies, Harvard University, and Professor of European Politics at University College Dublin. Her CV says that she was:

"the Principal of the College of Human Sciences, University College Dublin in September 2004. In 1991, Professor Laffan was appointed as Jean Monnet Professor of European Politics in the Department of Politics, UCD. She was the founding Director of the Dublin European Institute UCD in 1999. In March 2004, she was elected as a member of the Royal Irish Academy. She is a member of the Research Council of the European University (EUI) Florence, the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) and the Irish Government's High Level Asia Strategy Group. Professor Laffan is author of *Integration and Co-*

operation in Europe, 1992, *The Finances of the Union*, 1997 and co-author of *Europe's Experimental Union 2000*. She has published numerous articles in the *Journal of Common Market Studies* and the *European Journal of Public Policy*. Professor Laffan co-ordinated a six country cross national research project *Organising for Enlargement* (2001-2004), financed by the EU Commission's Fifth Framework Programme and is part of an integrated research project on New Governance in Europe."

Whew! Could anyone have a greater EU pedigree? She is the *prima donna* of her world. There is no more vocal and more highly-qualified EUophile in the country. Ever ready to castigate anyone who dared to question her claims for the Lisbon Treaty and all the wonderful things that would emanate from it. Remember the arrogance of the 'Red Card' episode when she and Mr. Cox had the brass neck to declare who were and were not liars. They arrogated to themselves the right to be the judge and jury of political debate.

She has given her views on the current crisis to the *Irish Times*. She did not mention the forthcoming Treaty, or give a view on it—which is strange coming from such a Treaty wonk. It might as well not be happening for her.

Now, she suggests that the EU hand over its most crucial problem—the financial problem in Greece and elsewhere—to the IMF. Wash its hands of the whole problem. Apparently, she has now become aware of all the faults of the EU for some years past and she is clearly overwhelmed and proposes that the towel is thrown in.

That is all she has to offer from all the lessons she has learned and from all the qualifications she has acquired about Europe and which no doubt adorn her mantelpiece.

She advises:

"...it would be better to transform the troika programme into an International Monetary Fund programme... It is impossible to say how this drama will end, either for Greece or the euro zone... Now is the time for the euro zone to hand over to the fund. The IMF has the experience and expertise to run these types of programmes. It is an expert-led organisation with far greater insulation from political interference than the EU. The IMF cannot lend unless it thinks it will get its money back. With an IMF-led programme, there is a far better chance of getting the money back and that the programme will work" (15 Feb.)

In other words she does not have a clue what to do despite all her qualifications. What an indictment of our EUophiles now that they are really needed!

PRaise BE FOR MICHAEL D!

Michael D. Higgins has had a well known reputation for long-windedness, and his speeches have always tended to sound like those of a lay preacher. At a certain point they tended to become unbearable. Any objection to the sentiments would seem like farting in Church.

However, things may be changing in this regard. He is faced with a difficult and very serious issue on the possibility of having to decide on the constitutionality of the Treaty on the Fiscal Compact. Giving his thoughts on this recently he is reported saying that:

"...he was concerned that the concept of a shared union under the EU's founding treaties had been lost. That, he said, was very different to an accommodation between currencies that had to face pressures from "speculative forces", he said. The President was speaking after an address at the London School of Economics" (Irish Times, 22 February).

He hit the nail on the head. No other politician has put it so concisely and so accurately. We are faced with an alternative to the EU Treaties, not just another EU Treaty. Higgins appreciates the distinction and the constitutional implications. It's a case of starting again—not continuing with what exists—and that causes the possible constitutional difficulty. It is a relief that he sees it so clearly.

However, I would question his use of the word "lost". Such major things as the development of a European Union are never "lost". They are destroyed by somebody or something for some reason. If they were lost, they could be found again. But if something is destroyed that's the end of it. And the EU has been destroyed, beginning with Pat Cox and Liberals a decade ago in their overthrow of the Commission's authority, and getting the final *coup de grace* from the UK on 9th December 2011. That is what is causing the constitutional soul-searching for Higgins. Those events and nothing else.

Let's hope he might develop his thinking and resist the temptation to resort to weasel words when explaining his case. He could become a very new type of President and do the political system a great favour with more straight talking.

Not too surprisingly the Government was no pleased with these comments.

"Remarks made by President Michael D. Higgins during a visit to London during the week have caused alarm in the Government, The Irish Times has learned. The primary concern among Cabinet Ministers relates to the President's comments about the possibility of summoning the Council of State if the

Government proceeds to ratify the fiscal compact treaty by legislation rather than referendum." (Irish Times, 25 February).

Higgins only explained the constitutional issues that could arise with the new Treaty, along with the well-known position about his role when considering a referral to the Supreme Court—which is not exactly a state secret—it's all in the Constitution. He also pointed out that, if he referred the issue to the Supreme Court, nobody else could. That could avoid a queue of such referrals and at least make the resolution quick and easy for all concerned.

The episode illustrates the lack of confidence this Government has in what it is doing, with the result that it cannot itself state the facts plainly—and would prefer if others did not do so either. If their concept of the future of Europe cannot stand the full light of day, then it's a poor outlook for what they believe in.

MORE CRAP FROM COX

At a dinner organised by the Society of Chartered Surveyors of Ireland, Pat Cox is reported as claiming that: "*In matters of legal interpretation the proposed intergovernmental Treaty would be subordinate to existing EU Treaties*" (Irish Independent, 10 February 2012). Why is this a concern for Mr. Cox? Why should it be a concern for anyone except professional legal eagles who love these sorts of issues? There is a whole new legal enterprise to be lived off with these types of legal points in the future. Europe has become a job creation paradise for lawyers.

Treaties are self-sufficient legal entities and sometimes are either withdrawn and/or ended for one or any variety of reasons. If one contradicts another, then one is clearly illegal and should be cancelled.

The two Treaties in question, Lisbon and the Fiscal Compact, relate to different issues and involve different states for different purposes. It's apples and pears. Why should one be used to override the other? The reason is that Cox cannot face up to the fact, and does not want others to face up to the fact, that his beloved Lisbon Treaty was and is inadequate to deal with the issues of the moment, so he must drag it in by hook or by crook for self indulgent reasons.

If the Compact Treaty fails, will Lisbon ride to the rescue? The idea is self-evidently farcical. And, if the Compact is a success, why should Lisbon override it—override a Treaty that saved the day; a thing which it, Lisbon, patently failed to do—indeed, it helped cause the problem! Another self-evident farce.

The Compact Treaty—apart altogether from its merits or demerits—is the methodology by which the European project should proceed. The trick is to deal with what is in front of its nose and the grander issues will take care of themselves. This procedure is along the lines of Occam's razor applied to politics.

But that is not for a messer and spoofer like Cox who has done more harm to the European project than anyone else in this country. Is anyone listening to him? As with the Fine Gael backbenchers, it appears he was hardly able to keep his audience's attention—much less convince them of anything—despite the quota of anti-German bias that people like him always find necessary to add:

"Guest of honour Pat Cox gave the SCSI value for money with a lengthy speech about how the new treaty on stability, coordination and governance in the Economic and Monetary Union had been driven by German concerns. But with attention spans dwindling and people eyeing up the bar, he showed true political grit, as impervious to the din, he carried on regardless to finish his speech" (Irish Times, 9th Feb.).

Things are looking up and I hope he takes a long holiday during any referendum campaign.

Jack Lane

PS. The Attorney General has just advised that a referendum is necessary. Let's hope that the full political significance of this new non-EU Treaty is spelled out, and that the resorting to fear and bluff is resisted. But that would probably mean changing the habits of a lifetime for our EUophiles.

NEEDS SECTIONED?

Kim Jong-il dies, the media sickens in competition to be of mean spirit, the rhetoric of a cold war they inherit, causing their intelligence to thicken. Liberal values makes Korea conform without bombing, assassination drones, sabotage incursions and no-fly-zones? The *free-world-press* descends as a snowstorm. Cry democracy, those tears from war-cries can burn away the heart of a nation. A million-army, a nuclear bomb denies rape and mindless, murderous laceration. The sit in suits, bourgeois language disguises the gangster soul that craves defenestration.

Wilson John Haire
5th January, 2012

Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

THE STATE AND THE PEOPLE

The Long Fellow was intrigued by the reaction of the media to two comments of senior Government politicians. There was outrage at the Taoiseach's *impromptu* remark that "*people went mad borrowing*" which "*spawned greed*" during the Celtic Tiger era. But there was no such reaction to the Minister for Justice and Defence, Alan Shatter's *prepared* speech in which he accused the State of "*moral bankruptcy*" during the Second World War. Many people disagreed with the Minister but there was no general sense of outrage.

As a consequence, the question of whether the "*people went mad borrowing*" was ruled out of order. By contrast, Shatter's moral bankruptcy remark prompted a lengthy debate on whether the State had the authority to sanction Irish soldiers who deserted to join the armed forces of a foreign and belligerent power.

The media consensus is that the Irish people are wonderful, but the State is corrupt. The people have rights, but no responsibilities or obligations. The State has only responsibilities and obligations, but no rights. Despite the fact that we live in a democracy, the people have no influence on the State and therefore they are victims who have, at best, been neglected and at worst suffered at the hands of the State.

Every grievance is nurtured and ventilated on the national airwaves; even the most trivial. So the departure of a Dutch economist from an economic think tank makes the main evening news as further evidence of the bankruptcy of the State. He even claims to have declined an appearance on the *Late Late Show* to air his grievances and comment on the national economic malaise.

But, of course, not all states are malign In Alan Shatter's view the moral bankruptcy of this State disqualifies us from criticising the State of Israel.

MONEY

It is said that money is the root of all evil. A long, long time ago wealthy traders deposited gold with gold merchants. These merchants issued receipt docketts or IOUs to the wealthy traders acknowledging their liability. It was the case that only gold (or some other precious metal used as the universal equivalent) was acceptable in

order to buy commodities, but as time passed the IOUs of the gold merchant became the means of payment. This was a revolutionary development. The buyer no longer had to carry gold around with him because the seller was prepared to accept a piece of paper with no intrinsic value but which carried with it a legal entitlement to part of the gold reserves of the gold merchant.

THE STATE AND MONEY

The Sovereign or State could not help noticing these developments and decided to monopolise the entitlement to create money. At first paper money had a direct relationship with the precious metal in question (usually gold or silver) but as time went on money detached itself from the precious metal that it represented and became a thing in itself (or *fiat* money). However, right up until the 1970s most of the world's major currencies were linked to the value of gold. It was only during the Nixon Administration that the United States severed that relationship in response to the exigency of financing the Vietnam War. This ushered in an era of inflation.

It is still the case that Central Banks hold gold reserves, but these are only used to prop up a country's currency in the event of a speculative attack. The value of the world's currencies has no relationship to the price of gold.

PLUS CA CHANGE...

It is interesting to note that Central Banks still use the same accounting treatment as the Gold Merchants of ancient times. The money issued (whether paper or electronic) is still considered an IOU from the State. It is recorded as a liability in the books of the Central Bank. But if a member of the public decides to present a 5 euro bank note or "State IOU" to the Central Bank, he will not receive any gold or silver in return. Instead he will receive another 5 euro note.

THE ECB AND MONEY

The European Central Bank licenses the National Central Banks of the Eurozone to print money. However the ECB's Governing Council, consisting of the National Central Bank Governors, has strict control over this function. If it did not exercise control there would be an irresistible temptation for the National Central Banks to print money for the benefit of their own country at the expense of other members of the Eurozone. This would inevitably lead to inflation and the collapse of the Euro. Something like this happened to the rouble following the break up of the Soviet Union.

The ancient practice of recording printed money as a liability of the Central Bank facilitates the ECB in supervising the National Central Banks.

EXCEPTIONAL LIQUIDITY ASSISTANCE

When the financial crisis broke in 2008 there was a threatened flight of capital from the Irish Banks. Lenihan's State Guarantee prevented this outflow and indeed reversed it, but when the credit worthiness of the State was called into question the outflow resumed, particularly from the weakest banks: Anglo Irish and Irish Nationwide. It quickly became clear that these banks were insolvent. Furthermore, it was decided that, if Senior debt in these banks (now called the IBRC) was not repaid, the financial stability of the whole Eurozone would be undermined.

The ECB authorised the Central Bank of Ireland (CBI) to 'print' money under what is known as Exceptional Liquidity Assistance (ELA). This money was lent to the IBRC so that it could repay its Senior debt. However, ELA was only a device to overcome short-term liquidity problems in the banking sector. It was never intended as a long-term loan to countries or banks with financial problems. According to University College Dublin economist Karl Whelan in his submission last month to the Oireachtas Finance Committee, the IBRC had 42 billion in ELA on its books in mid 2011. This is charged to the State at a rate of only 1 percent.

This represents a subsidy or cheap loan from the rest of the Eurozone to Ireland.

PAYING BACK ELA

It is very understandable that the ECB insists on this ELA being 'paid back', otherwise the Euro currency would be undermined.

Just like the gold merchant of ancient times, the ELA is recorded in the books of the Central Bank of Ireland [CBI] as a liability. The 40 billion of ELA, when it is lent to the IBRC, is then recorded as an asset or loan in the CBI's books (i.e. the CBI has replaced the "printed" money with a loan to the IBRC).

When the ELA is repaid by the IBRC to the CBI the principal plus the accrued interest at 1% per annum is deducted from the assets (amount loaned) and deducted from its ELA liabilities. In plain language, when the ELA is repaid, the money is "burnt" by the CBI in order to preserve the value of the Euro.

PROMISSORY NOTES

Of course, the IBRC cannot pay all of the ELA out of its own resources. It is estimated that 31 billion will have to be

paid by the State. The method of repaying this 31 billion is complicated and as a consequence has given rise to misconceptions—deliberate or otherwise—about the cost of repaying the IBRC's loans.

The State issues a 31 billion promissory note or IOU to the IBRC. Under the terms of this promissory note the State must pay 48 billion over a period of 20 years (the bulk of the payments are over the first 10 years). It is assumed that, since 48 billion is the total amount to be repaid, the interest bill is an exorbitant 17 billion (48 – 31). But this "interest" is paid by the State to another State institution (the IBRC). So the cost of the Promissory notes to the State is revenue to another State institution (the IBRC).

The IBRC uses these promissory notes to borrow ELA from the Central Bank of Ireland (CBI). Karl Whelan estimates that the interest costs paid by the IBRC to the

CBI is about 2.5%. But again, this cost to one arm of the State (the IBRC) is revenue to another arm of the State (the CBI).

The key issue is the terms that the ECB imposes on the CBI. The interest rate which the CBI pays is only 1 per cent. This is the ultimate interest cost to the State of the ELA.

It also should be said that there is little or no benefit in rescheduling the Promissory Note payments to the IBRC. If the payments are too great—as seems likely—the IBRC can return the surplus to the State. If those payments are too small the State will have to fund the shortfall.

The only real benefit to the State would be if the IBRC repayments to the CBI—which acts as a proxy for the ECB—were rescheduled.

This might happen, but only in the context of a general rescheduling of Eurozone banking debt.

Transaction Tax but also the banning across Europe of certain derivative financial products. In Germany there is a high profile row going on about the future of finance-driven capitalism. The austerity of *Merkozy* is not the only voice.

The Social Democrats have launched a rhetorically ferocious onslaught on "*finance capitalism*" and the "*games*" they play with the "*real economy*". The main headline in the financial daily, *Handelsblatt* (7th Feb), read: "*SPD plans election campaign against the financial industry*". The main planks of its declared platform include the separation of Investment from Savings Banks and Government aid for banks only in return for state share-holding and "*co-determination*".

In France, moderate leftist Francois Hollande now heads the Presidential polls, explicitly framing his candidature in pro-business, but anti finance-capitalism terms. "*My enemy is the world of finance*", said Hollande in his seminal Le Bourget speech, "*We're being upfront saying 'If you're a rich individual or a rich company, yes, you're going to pay more'...*".

Hollande committed to tackling the deficit through taxation rather than cuts, hiking Capital Gains Tax; with State-funded apprenticeships, more teachers, a public investment bank and R&D programmes aiming for growth, not austerity

Is Europe finally awakening to an alternative to finance capitalist austerity? The jury's out, but the noises are more positive.

This article by **Mark Langhammer**, a member of the Northern Ireland Committee ICTU, appeared in the *Belfast NewsLetter* on 17th February

Germany and the Eurozone

Television images are focussed on the flames of Athens, but is the real story that we are witnessing the death throes of the European Union, and the start of a more purposeful European counter-balance to Anglo-Saxon high finance?

Since the European Commission was stripped of its lead role in the 1990s the EU has experienced decision-making paralysis. This paralysis has obliged Eurozone states towards decision making by "*enhanced co-operation*" outside EU structures. Notwithstanding its historic reticence and disabling war guilt, Germany has asserted its place as Europe's most powerful nation. It moved decisively with France to keep Britain 'out of the room' in efforts to save the currency—a conscious effort to rebut the traditional, disruptive British "*balancing powers*" instinct on Europe.

True, Germany doesn't relish transferring subsidies to the less efficient southern and latin economies. Neither does it concede how German Eurozone trade benefits from the inability of other countries to competitively devalue. Likewise, a weak euro has helped German exports outside the Eurozone. However, in defence of the currency, Germany has pressed for a fiscal compact, the outcome of which may see a northern European budgetary and taxation area.

The EU has lost the practical idealism it once developed under the tutelage of Christian Democracy. Europe's problems

started when it dismantled its founding protectionist policies and adopted globalist, free market financial policies at Britain's behest.

Since the collapse of Communism, Germany has been pre-occupied in constructing first a unified German state, then the Eurozone. It now confronts choices it hasn't faced for 70 years.

Germany remains a vibrant manufacturer, producing huge annual trade surpluses. Its vocational education and apprenticeship system is without parallel. German domestic banking remains utilitarian, and German society is culturally resistant to consumer or state debt.

Germany banks facilitate business, like the Post Office sells stamps to facilitate communication. Germany nowadays resembles a mercantilist economy in the midst of a Free Trade area.

The Michael Lewis book *Boomerang* has a fascinating chapter on how German banks behaved differently abroad, naively trusting of the City of London and Wall Street and engaged, no less than others, in the same financial chicanery. One imagines that Germany has learned lessons and—as the only major country with any concept of normal banking—remains the only sufficiently confident State to counter the untrammelled speculation originating in the City and copied in Wall Street.

So, will the German domestic banking model prevail throughout the eurozone? '*Merkozy*' have floated not only a Financial

OPEN THE DOOR, IT'S ME

Do it now. Listen! Open the floodgates.
But will they not drown. I said we will
drown.
Let me think of something, something
called fate.
What was the point of going sixteen
rounds,
the waves will wreck what we built to
protect,
martyrs, those sent to aboriginal land.
Lead poisons the grave of the architect.
There is no more Celtic gold to be panned.
Away with those bitter tears and join the
world,
crate-up history and send to Oxbridge.
Decent the land with its own flag unfurled.
The dye did not take. Less of the umbrage.
Once the ancient land of saints and scholars
but now youthful and led by the collar.

Wilson John Haire
14th February, 2012

The Sovereign People and the Administrators {sic}

I'm confused. Who exactly is in charge of this country? I don't mean who is tasked with the day-to-day administration, but rather, who has final say on its future direction and the way of life? In an attempt to answer this question I dusted off and revisited some of the founding documents and principles of this State. The 1916 Proclamation states, "...we declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible..." In other words, the people have and always will have, absolute authority here and nothing can change that. The minutes of the First Dail—which met at Mansion House on 21st January 1919—having been elected there by an overwhelming majority of the Irish people in 1918—record the very first action of the Dail as re-iterating the 1916 Proclamation. Though the minutes do record that the elected representatives of the Irish people alone have the power to make laws binding on the People of Ireland, it is a clear reference to the previous habit of the English Westminster parliament's attempts to usurp this right and not an attempt to claim ultimate authority derives from the Dail rather than the people.

The key point referring to sovereign authority coming from the people of Ireland is also repeated under the section entitled *Democratic Programme*. Despite attempts from some quarters to arbitrarily date the foundation of this State to other events such as the ratification of the Anglo-Irish Treaty (implying we weren't a State before then), the present Dail is the 31st in an unbroken line going back to that 1st Dail of 1919. Even the British Government of 1921 certainly accepted this. The Irish signatories of the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty were all members of Dail Eireann and the British could not have conducted a Treaty with a Dail that did not exist.

In 1937 the Constitution of Ireland was enacted to replace the old *Saorstát Eireann* Constitution. Once again, the key declaration of the 1916 Proclamation remains intact. Article 6.1 unequivocally states:

"...all powers of government, legislative, executive and judicial derive, under God, from the people, whose right it is to designate the rulers of the State and, in the final appeal, to decide all questions of national policy..." (my emphasis)

This Constitution is still in force today.

So the answer seems clear enough. The 'people' own this country and have the

right to decide what happens to it. We appoint and entrust a Government through Elections to administer the country on our behalf for the common good, much as shareholders appoint a Board of Directors to deal with the boring details of the the daily running of a business. We do this because we have real, busy lives as shareholders who don't have time to get involved in every tiny decision made by the 'company'. And they are well-paid by us for it, indeed among the best-paid in the whole world. Normally we let them get on with it, which implies consent. Nothing I can see however takes away from us the right to decide policy "*in the final appeal*", as stated above.

When Fine Gael leader Enda Kenny told us that he had no power to change decisions made by Fianna Fail, was he trying to tell us that the will of Fianna Fail was superior to the sovereign will of the people?! I suppose years in opposition must have made it look that way! It was certainly not the message Fine Gael put out when it was desperate to get our votes. The discontent of the country with the Fianna Fail leadership was palpable, and not without reason. Brian Cowen had offered blanket debt guarantees to a number of banks far beyond our obligations to sovereign debt. This latter would have been manageable, it was the debt guarantee to the banks that has since broken us. He may have done this on good faith, though it subsequently emerged the banks had been anything but honest about the true nature of their balance sheets.

First it was our surplus public cash that was sucked into this black hole, then billions in borrowed Euros from the Troika. At that point Fianna Fail were engaged in compromising the sovereignty of the Government—allowing the Troika to dictate our fiscal policy in return for loans. At no point did it seem to enter into the minds of either Brian Cowen or Fianna Fail to put the question to the people in the form of a referendum, even though it was one of the most momentous decisions ever made over the fate of this country, and the first time in its 80-year history.

How low we had been sunk! Not even in the darkest days of the 1950s did this country go cap in hand to the IMF. If the sovereignty of the people meant anything to Fianna Fail—which used to make much of its republican credentials until it reduced them to a small print in its headed stationery

—it would have put the question to the people and not "*put the people to the question*" (as in the old days of judicial torture!).

Unsurprisingly we were then made vote twice on Lisbon until we gave the response the Government and the EU wanted and it has become something of a running joke that Irish democracy consists of repeatedly voting until you 'get it right'! Funny, but also painfully true.

Those who voted for Fine Gael presumably did so because they believed their election promises. Enda Kenny was supposed to be our Barak Obama—even down to stealing his catchphrase. He was going to be every thing Fianna Fail had failed to be—a strong man, a national hero to stand up to the bully boys in the EU. Enda Kenny was supposed to go to the EU and fight our corner—this was the mandate he was given.

The 'cuts'—over €3 billion per year—amount to about half the punitive annual interest being paid on the bailout introduced by Brian Cowen. If the Taoiseach managed to get even the interest cancelled, most of the current cuts would not therefore be necessary. Maybe we should have elected Bono instead, to preach debt forgiveness for his own country as he so eloquently did for Africa.

Meanwhile appropriately-named credit rating agencies like Standard and Poor cut us a few notches, the equivalent of kicking a man when he's down. Instead of fighting our corner our Government is to sell off our family silver and come after any remaining loose change in our pockets, most of it to disappear out of the economy in repayments, driving us even further into depression. The Government no longer listens to those who pay its salary and from whom sovereign authority derives, but to the unelected Troika who tell it how to run our country!

Do we have to put up with this? The sum effect has been as if our trusted leaders had once again played 'surrender and regrant' this time with the EU rather than Queen Elizabeth I. To hand over the nation and receive it in return as vassals of the EU. All without asking as much the by or leave of the sovereign people. Under the old Gaelic order, the Tanaiste who 'surrendered' and was 're-granted' had no right to do so. The land did not belong to them personally by hereditary right, but to the clan. They had the use of it during their lifetime but at their death it reverted to the clan. The English colonists of course, ignored such niceties and held the scraps of paper Irish Tanaiste had signed—often under duress—as legal title to Ireland. In

the same way, the actions of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael do not take away our sovereign authority as the people unless we allow this to happen.

If the Government—the administrators we appoint—enacted a Statute tomorrow telling us we all had to walk on our hands and knees from now on, even assuming it wasn't unconstitutional, would we be obliged to obey it? Not as far as I can see, if all sovereign authority in this State ultimately derives from the people and if in 'the final appeal' all decisions of national policy are decided by us. Just because we normally consent to such Acts does not remove from us the right to disagree with them and decide which we do not wish to have enacted. No majority shareholders would tolerate for long a Board of Directors that refused to listen to them. Of course we have to tell them if we do not agree, otherwise they shall assume we do.

What do we do when a Government refuses to listen? What mechanisms are open to us when the shepherds run with the wolves? Vote them out at the next election? Where does that leave us when our elected administrators betray us by reneging on the mandate we gave them at the time of their appointment? What can we do when elections offer no other choice than to be ruled by Tyrant A or Tyrant B? The only recourse, I believe, is to state very clearly that you—the people—in whom sovereign authority in this State resides, do not consent to or desire the specific Acts and actions of this Government; a message which must reach the ears of your elected representative.

Our 1937 Constitution, the Declaration of the First Dail in 1919, and the 1916 Proclamation all state it clearly—no wonder our Government / administrators want to downgrade history as a subject in schools! If they persist, they do so then without our sovereign consent, which I am guessing must be unlawful. While some may term this 'civil disobedience' the question has to be asked 'how can it be civil disobedience for a sovereign people to assert their authority and remind their appointed administrators of who is really in authority in this country?' The disobedience is actually on the part of our Government / administrators {sic} who have stopped doing what they've been instructed to do by the sovereign people.

How ironic that the 1916 Proclamation—of which the 100th anniversary is rapidly approaching—contains the stark reminder that "*...the right of the Irish people ... to be sovereign and indefeasible... can {not} be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people*". In short, it's up to you.

Environment Minister Phil Hogan, without a hint of irony, has said a boycott of the Household Charge would be "*a dangerous road for our democracy to travel*". Not as dangerous by a long shot as a Government that has blocked its ears to the sovereign electorate and takes its orders from un-

elected finance officials from another country. I hope we will see the beginnings of a peaceful 'Irish Spring' soon and we may yet again be the example that leads to the unravelling of a tyranny as we once did almost a century ago.

Nick Folley (February 2012)

A Tribute To Conor Lynch: Jack Lane

Roselawn Crematorium, Belfast

8 February 2012.

I want to thank Conor's brother, Barry, and son, Jimmy, for the invitation to say a few words. There are quite a number of people who wanted to be here but could not make it. Pat Maloney, Manus O' Riordan and Annette, Pascal Ranaghan and Tom Doherty send their apologies and sympathy.

I had suggested to Conor for some time that he write a memoir about his life. But he was too modest to do so and that was a great pity.

He had an unusual and in fact a unique story to tell. I don't know of anyone else who had the same political trajectory.

As you all know well, Conor was a very personable, sociable, gregarious person and could adapt to any situation and to get on with all sorts of people.

He had one annoying habit—he could suddenly disappear for periods—that could be weeks, months or even years and reappear just as suddenly and carry on as if he had just gone to the loo. He would be surprised if you asked him where he had been. I have had phone calls from him, out of the blue, from Spain, New York, Gaza, Syria and elsewhere.

That is why his death came as a surprise, as I and others thought he was on another of his sojourns over the Xmas period. He was free spirit—a rolling stone—almost literally.

He had an easy-going demeanour but this could be deceptive.

He had very strong feelings, convictions and qualities—and he always wanted to do something about those convictions—write, organize, publish, agitate or whatever. He could not just contemplate life for very long. Probably he had done enough of that during 7 years in Wakefield Prison which has the incongruous address of Love Lane, Wakefield. Even that did not prevent him from writing and debating with people on the outside though I am sure he broke several prison rules in doing so.

In politics we often agonise about what type of society we want and what would be the best. I suggest that a society dominated by the values and beliefs that Conor had would be as good as you could get. It would not be perfect but I would be very happy in it.

Everyone here will remember him in their own way, whether as father, brother, husband, and of course as a political colleague with some of us for over 40 years. A frightening thought!

The things I remember particularly about him were his physical and moral courage.

Anyone who volunteers to join an army, goes on active service, pays the price and survives is courageous—whether or not you agree with the army concerned. I have seen people being amazed at this aspect of him and it seemed so out of character with the person they had come to know. Someone said in amazement—'but Conor wouldn't hurt a fly'. Which is true.

But much more important, he had moral courage, the courage to change his views on issues—to face up to painful realities, to explain and say so—loudly—and carry on. Which he did a number of times on different issues in different contexts.

Like all in politics he had plenty failures but they never got him down—it just opened a new road for him—there was a lesson to be learned and you carry on. He would pick himself up and get on with it. He had a natural never-say-die attitude.

As he never published anything about himself, it is left to us who knew him to do so and we will do so. That will be our tribute to him. He will become known to others and his contributions will live on. So watch this space.

Thanks to the family for this ceremony and to Niall Cusack for being the perfect MC and thank you all for coming.

Conor

A friend and a colleague—a comrade since the 1970s—a long time; in which the life of political struggle bleeds into personal friendship of shared experiences, not inevitably, but in Conor's case, very much so: Raising a family; being a father; being a husband; being an ex-husband, although never being an ex-father. We are all different people but sometimes on similar personal journeys.

Conor was always talking and networking with me about his own family, Jimmy, Alex and Lileth. Conor was always on Jimmy's case, now out in Barcelona. I remember Alex and his family staying at my place onetime. I still have a memento from that visit, hanging around the house. Believe it or not, a baby's soother-dummy (which gets queer comments from visiting female friends). Conor wanted to show Alex some of his Irish roots. I'm still trying to plug my own sons into their Irish roots—and they were raised in Dublin! Conor and me shared all that stuff.

If there was an apt nickname for Conor it was "*The Man From God Knows Where*"—although he only had to open his mouth and he couldn't be from anywhere else but CORK—buoy! But then—shock Horror—like Charlie Haughey, there was no where he wasn't from. One time he confessed to me that he was actually a *Dub*! Ah here, I says, pull the other one. No, he says, he was brought up for a while in Dublin—the real Dublin, on the Northside. Well, I says, then there's hope for ye yet, ye're a true son of the Capital City of Ireland—Dublin.

The Ceremony

Niall Cusack hosted the Commemoration Ceremony. The following music and poems featured:

MUSIC

1. Nioclás Tóibin sang *Bóthar Chluain Meala*
2. Áine Uí Cheallaigh sang *Seoladh na nGamhna*
3. Aoife ní Fhearraigh sang *Úrchnoc Chéin Mhic Cáinte*
4. Kid Ory of New Orleans sang and played, *Oh Didn't He Ramble*.

POEMS

1. Niall Cusack read Patrick Pearse's *The Fool*
2. Niall Cusack read Piaras Mac Gearailt's *Rosc Catha na Mumhan*.

As a result I think Conor was at home anywhere he went. Paul Young used to have a song called, "*Wherever I lay my hat, that's my home*". Conor had that kind of soul about him. Wherever his curiosity, his generosity, his commitment landed—London, Spain, the Middle East, he formed a kind of family.

I always thought he had a talent as a travel writer. He had a knack of reporting ordinary everyday people and places which held your attention in a fresh way. He actually wrote a piece recently in this vein on Dublin in the midst of our economic crisis and I was saying as I read it—yeah, yeah, yeah, so, so, so and so what, because there seemed to be no expected political context to it—and then I just realised Conor was enjoying himself, expressing himself and this thing spoke for itself. He had the ability to surprise you in that way.

Family was everything to Conor. I never knew him to stop talking about his own father. He was a big man in Conor's life. Conor's outstanding trait was loyalty—loyalty to the tradition represented by his father's life. Conor carried on that tradition in his own way politically. Pádraig Pearse talks in his works of the politics of sacrifice. The bond between Conor and his father, I think, is an example today of that. I think Conor in his own way, in Athol Street, was bearing witness to that tradition, part of Belfast, Dublin, London, Cork and Derry, an effort to keep alive a flag of freedom, both in Britain and in Ireland—a tall order.

Right up to a month or so ago, Conor was robustly pursuing his little piece of that jigsaw—reporting for the *Irish Political Review* monthly journal an account of record of developments on the ground in Northern Ireland—as he saw it reported in the media and elsewhere, so as to cut through the spin and waffle, if possible. When he stuck to reporting he did that job well. There's another debt we owe him. And there were many others impossible to repay, but important to acknowledge.

On mature reflection, Conor's whole life, personality, guts, grit and selflessness came into focus with his total involvement and commitment to Pat Murphy's terminal illness only three years.

Life has a habit of surprising us, for better or worse, and filling us with uncertainty, despite our best laid plans. So it was with Pat Murphy's illness. When the

truth of it emerged to us all in Dublin, Conor immediately and completely threw himself into the cause of being Pat's minder. Pat wanted this: the medical profession, he felt, up to then had let him down and he wanted to control his own destiny wherever it might be with someone he could trust. That was Conor, as it happened. And, as it happened, it nearly came unstuck as things got more difficult very quickly. Here ye had two soldiers; one the officer; one the volunteer. The pesky redskins were everywhere, firing arrows from all directions and ammunition was running out fast. A messy ending was in sight until John Wayne in the guise of one Maria Tyrell rode over the hill with her Larkin Centre Cavalry to save the day and allow Pat to take command of the situation and end his days as a true Roman-style Republican with all his friends around him in an extraordinary positive experience for him in the Blackrock Hospice and the Raheny Hospice. All the time in this drama Conor was central to it. He sacrificed himself for Pat. In so doing, he acted as a Republican in that tradition of sacrifice, not in a dramatic way, but way out of his comfort zone, selflessly pushing himself to do the right thing. But it took its toll. That was 2009.

But then he bounced back from his health setbacks. He was full of plans for the future, outside of work for the *Irish Political Review* and Athol Street. Himself and Dave Fennell and others went on hollers most Summers down to Kerry and the real Ireland of West and North Cork.

He had don his physical odd-job stint in Spain. He had walked the Pilgrimage Route of the no trendy Camp de Compostella in N. Spain. He planned to walk with Mick Murray across the Southern Counties of Ireland in the conviction that the only way to know a place is to walk it, not drive around it. He was a bit of a bull when he tied on his walking boots, fags or no fags. Conor could walk the walk.

He lived coming down to Bray, where I live. I was always trying to get him to relocate to Dublin and to change his image, for the sake of his social life.

Conor was definitely going to adopt the Antrim Hurling teak and go to GAA Matches in Casement Park. But no, Athol Street was his Bear na Baol, he wasn't moving anywhere.

I met him for the last time about a month or so ago, at Pat Murphy's sister's funeral in Dublin. He growled at me, "*Mal, we're getting old*". "Speak for yourself", I snapped back. It was always like that between Conor and me. I was giving him a lift back from Glasnevin

Cemetery to Connolly Train Station. I pulled in my car too quickly and there was a ferocious bump of my passenger-side tyre against the kerb. Normally Conor would let out a string of curses, laugh at the so-called skills of Dublin drivers. Not this time. He was distressed by the physical shock, and wobbled down the road on his way. I put no more pass on it at the time. He always snapped out of these relapses. Not this time round, as it turns out.

I'm sad and shocked at the demise of a

robust friend; sad that there was none such as Maria Tyrell of the Larkin Centre in Belfast, on hand, to step in and sort him out. Of course I know that isn't, or wasn't, realistic. But then Conor was never realistic about himself either—too generous to a fault. That's of course, why he achieved so much, challenging himself and others until his bit of elastic broke in the end.

But he kept the faith—the Fenian Faith, and in his small way helped keep it alive in others.

The Septic Tank

Frank McDonald, Environment Editor of the *Irish Times*, wrote a diatribe against people living in the country on 25th February, titled *Septic Tank Hype Veils Public Subsidy To Rural Dwellers..* I consider the thing a quite egregious exercise and here is why.

"At least 450,000 tanks discharging 250 million litres of effluent daily is simply not sustainable", wrote Frank McDonald. This conjures up visions of hundreds of millions of sewage flowing anywhere but into a public waste system: over fields, into back gardens, into rivers and streams. Sewage, sewage everywhere.

Actually nothing could be further from the truth and I would hazard that the nightmare imagery is intentionally provoked by the writer. I am not a 'ruralite', if I might coin a word, very far from it. My instinct also is to favour licensing and inspection of septic tanks—and planning permissions. I favour inspections because people can abuse or not properly maintain a facility—or understand its limitations. Permits are also important as proposed structure and location may also be critical to the proper working of the technology.

The same applies to public sewer and waste water systems—whether for domestic or commercial waste.

I remember the late Conor Lynch, only a matter of months ago, explaining what septic tanks were in scientific terms. We were discussing the very issue with which McDonald is concerned: the proposed regime for septic tanks and the activities of Fianna Fail and in particular dev Og's campaign for rural revolution.

The point about a septic tank is that it does NOT generate vast amounts of sewage: it is a waste-processing technology. In essence the tank traps or collects and stores the waste but in a fashion and

deploying a technology that makes the tank function as an anaerobic biodigester, reducing the waste to a dry solid that requires to be periodically removed and a liquid that may be discharged to a 'draining field' where it is leached back into the ecosystem. There are variations on the system—for example the tank may be split into two chambers, one undertaking a primary digestion process with the liquid flowing into the second chamber for further filtering and settlement. It is an ancient technology still very widely used around the world, including in urban settings.

I was fascinated by Conor's departure into science and technology: he was thoroughly expert on it and this was based on practical experience—he used to 'look after' a septic tank in Spain. The technology worked well in Spain as everyone knew how it functioned and its limitations.

One point he did emphasize—one of the critical problems in the deployment of septic tanks was the need to understand that it is a biodigester and in this regard many aspects of modern life are unsuited. For example many washing detergents and therefore the waste from washing machines may disrupt the biological processes. Thus in Spain one found separate communal wash areas in villages with the waste water separately dealt with. I found this intriguing as it explained a phenomenon I had seen in hill and mountain villages and hamlets in Portugal—the communal areas and associated ponds or tanks. I quite accept that such communal dimensions to life are pleasant indeed in Mediterranean climes and quite another matter at the westernmost tip of Mayo in mid-winter.

There is quite a fascinating and to me comprehensive entry on septic tanks in Wikipedia, here:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

Septic_tank

The entry gives an account of how modern lifestyles have aspects unsuited—like the type of detergents used by many people.

There do seem to be unnecessary (pollution) side effects from the use of septic tanks in rural Ireland. This suggests that users need to understand the technology they are deploying and its limitations. Inspection is a necessary aspect of the regime and is a feature, it would seem, everywhere else. It may also be said that urban waste processing is not without problems in Ireland—even after the very large sums of money spent since roughly the 1980s on building urban systems (the funding to a very significant extent coming through Brussels). The sorry saga of the Ringsend works is by now legend throughout Dublin in terms of the delays in its construction, the budget overruns and the dreadful environmental impact for the large working class communities adjacent to the works as the engineers figured out how to use the technology after commissioning the works.

Here is a link to a leaflet from some Irish outfit giving some basic information on the deployment of septic tanks.

http://www.biofuture.ie/uploads/image_pdf1179505021.pdf

This leaflet states that "*It is estimated that there are 400,000 septic tanks in Ireland. These treat the effluent from 1.2m people and deal with 230m litres per day.*"

McDonald ends his piece as he began: "*What figures are available indicate that at least 250 million litres of effluent are discharged by the 450,000 homes with septic tanks every day.*" He then concludes "*And that's simply not sustainable.*"

I don't want here to focus on the differing estimates but on something else, the use of language. McDonald writes of hundreds of millions of litres of effluent **discharged by** homes with septic tanks, conjuring up a countryside awash with sewage. Ciaran Gillen on the other hand writes of septic tanks "*... that treat the effluent from ...*" every day. This conveys a very different understanding of what is happening. In this formulation effluent is being treated—however effectively is a matter for inspection as indeed it is also in the case of the many town works that have been installed in Ireland over the last 25 to 30 years.

To my mind McDonald is playing to prejudice, stirring misunderstanding and passing himself off as some kind of 'objective' expert'.

Fergus O Raghallaigh

Elizabeth Bowen In The Limelight

Before I write about the launch of this book, it is imperative that I look at the reviews and also say something about what I wrote about Walshe's methods in last month's *Irish Political Review*. It is usual scholarly procedure to use the endnotes/bibliography to source the references contained in the book and I have questions about the way Eibhear Walshe did this in reference to Bowen's Wartime Reports. Walshe wrote in his 'Notes and References' about Chapter 2, which he called '*Wartime Geography 1940-1945*' in Note 2: "*I am grateful to the National Archives, London, for assistance in tracing these reports.*" And this begs a question for me as to why he then used the publication page of all places for sourcing copyright ownership to: '*The National Archives of the UK for reports FO 800/310*'. We all know that Bowen worked for the Ministry of Information but, as Ireland had Dominion status, her secret reports were all classified by the Public Record Office Reference as *DO 130/38* etc. However, somehow, some of them were declassified and passed as FO 800/310—which is how Robert Fisk in his book *In Time of War, Ireland, Ulster and the price of Neutrality 1939-45* (published in hardback by the University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia in 1983) referenced them.

The Aubane Historical Society published all the extant released Reports of Bowen in their book *Elizabeth Bowen: Notes on Eire* in 1999 with the addendum that if other Reports became available then they too would be published as and when they became available by being made declassified by the UK Government. I do not understand why Eibhear Walshe simply did not use these published accounts but felt he had to go to London himself, as he stated in his 'Acknowledgements', by availing of a grant from the University College Cork Arts Faculty Research Fund—in other words, on the tax payer's money despite these straitened times. And then he only reproduced *five Reports*—all from 1942. It just does not stack up—to use a phrase from a colleague on the *Irish Political Review*.

There is just one other thing that I would like to clear up and that is whether Bowen called James Dillon "*a fascist*". While the British knew of his politics from Irish sources who had come to regard Dillon as "*potentially demagogic*", this

did not in the least phase them if he was also pro-British, Bowen herself was careful to qualify such observations according to Fisk:

"I have heard Mr. Dillon labelled a Fascist—which is I am afraid is at least partly true... He showed a truer sense than most Irishmen of the British mentality... In his most morbid interest in Hitler's personality he struck me as following a private bent of his own..." (Bowen to Dominion's Office 9.11.40.)

When Maurice Manning wrote his biography *James Dillon* in 1999, which was published by Wolfhound Press, Dublin, with a front-cover blurb by Garret FitzGerald calling him: "*Ireland's foremost parliamentarian*", there had been a see-saw change in how Fine Gael wanted Dillon to be perceived and the media and academia were fully on board. The *Irish Times*, 16th October 1999, carried a picture of Senator Manning with John Bruton, leader of Fine Gael, at the launch of the biography in the National Museum with the great and the good of the Fine Gael party. In that day's *Irish Times* as well, there was a huge picture devoted to James Dillon and his wife and there was a review of the book by Donal McCartney under a block heading of *A Decent Patriot*. Under the review we were told that Donal McCartney is Emeritus Professor of Modern Irish History at University College Dublin. There was no mention of Bowen nor her astute assessments of the "*great man*" in question. Peter Barry, a former Minister for Foreign Affairs for Fine Gael, did another laudatory review of Manning's biography in *The Sunday Business Post*, 17th October 1999 in which he claimed that James Dillon "*was in many ways the conscience of this country for 30 years*". Indeed.

Of course it was only recently that another Fine Gael Minister Alan Shatter TD—who actually runs two full Ministerial Departments, Defence and Justice—has again has gone on record as saying Irish neutrality was "*moral bankruptcy*", so nothing new there for that particularly oh-so-democratic parliamentary party. With its antecedents—it is running true to form.

Back now to Eibhear Walshe's book on Elizabeth Bowen, which was reviewed on the 3rd September 2011 in *The Irish Times* with a half page photograph of Bowen with a horse and cart in the field in front of

Bowen's Court, with the rather witty caption '*Home on the Range*' Elizabeth Bowen in 1962'. How this was achieved I don't know as both Bowen had sold the house in 1959 and it was already demolished.

Patricia Craig, who wrote the review, did a rather better job of it than did Mary Leland in the *Irish Examiner* but the bar isn't high here really. Craig avows for Bowen that "*Ireland had to fight it out with the Kentish coastal towns where she lived with her mother during the five years preceding Florence Bowen's death in 1912 and to which she returned in old age*". (Actually Bowen was back in Oxford immediately after the sale of Bowen's Court in 1959 and though she travelled a lot she had settled back in the former area, where she had been so happy with her mother. JH)

Craig also says that "*London*"—as a place of profound influence on her imagination—"*could not be excluded from the picture either*". And Craig again gets it right when she suggests that it was the Ireland of the Big House, "*Ascendancy Ireland... that is quintessentially Bowen terrain*". While Craig expresses admiration for Walshe's work here, she is justly right in saying that "*a lot of its inclusions are available elsewhere—in Hermione Lee's 'The Mulberry Tree' of 1986 or Bowen's own collection that appeared in 'Collected Impressions' and 'Afterthought'...*". It seems from these comments that Craig doesn't know that Alan Hepburn has published literally all of Elizabeth Bowen's published and unpublished work, i.e. reviews, essays, critical analysis of drama, film etc., including Forewords and other stuff that she felt didn't merit publication. And of course Bowen herself fell victim of the wartime censorship that hugely prevailed in England (much more severe that it ever was in Ireland). When she was preparing '*London, 1940*':

"Bowen cancelled the passage about the democratic levelling that wartime fighting created. The censor, moreover, cut passages from the essay. Perhaps as a consequence of the censor's disapproval, Bowen moderated her apocalyptic tone; the direness of the situation had led her to false prophecies. The "people's war" did not create revolution, nor even the possibility of revolution. Bowen's comments about democracy emerge from a specific context. Because the government passed the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act in May 1940, democracy per se did not obtain in Great Britain during the war. Martial Law had—after all in effect been declared." (Hepburn, ed. *People, Places, Things, Essays by Elizabeth Bowen*. Edinburgh Press. 2008. The "government" is the British government in this quotation.)

Craig allows that her Reports were "workmanlike, an undertaking far removed from any literary purpose, and it shows". Most people who have read the Reports find the language freed from the stylistic gymnastic of her fiction almost a revelation. I contend that Bowen read people well and that in itself is a gift. She nailed James Dillon rather brilliantly, and of course the great Archbishop John Charles McQuaid—who of course saw through her. He probably didn't need a tip-off from Joseph Walsh—whom Bowen called rather immoderately "a spoilt Jesuit priest". In my opinion, there was nothing "spoilt" about the brilliant Joseph Walsh who served Ireland so well in this critical period. Craig, as a Catholic herself, gives the usual tosh about His Grace, the Archbishop stating:

"She doesn't balk at taking afternoon tea with the egregious Archbishop (as recounted in a wartime Report)—an intriguing occasion, one feels, with both of them, moderate Protestant and rampant cleric, on their best behaviour, and topics of conversation ranging from "mystical visions" to the need to teach Irishwomen how to cook".

How dare Craig misrepresent what occurred in this encounter which is documented by Bowen in her Reports? She needed an excuse to meet the Archbishop and from his many Protestant friends, Professor Constantia Maxwell of Trinity College Dublin got her in on the false premise that Bowen was "interested in social work and cookery". After all, "The municipal school of cookery on the north side of Dublin he {the Archbishop} strongly supports", and she pretended that she wanted to visit it—but it was closed for the holidays. Again, according to Bowen, the Archbishop wanted the Irishwoman to learn from the French style of cooking: "He is an enthusiast on the subject of France; has lived there, and has many French friends. The greater part of our conversation was, in fact, about France." Of course he spoke French fluently, as well as Italian, and Bowen found herself in a sticky wicket as she—though liking France—could not speak the language. Craig calls the Archbishop "egregious" and "rampant" and that is just scandalous bigotry—plain and simple. As Bowen went on to state:

"I was aware that the Archbishop was being both courteous and diplomatic, he made every allowance for my point of view in any matter we talked about..."

Craig found two constant irritants in Walshe's work.

"I wish he would stop calling Bowen's novels and stories her "fictive writings"

like Bowen's own constant allusions to "Eire"—Eire this and Eire that—which only sounds right if you're speaking Irish. It's a relief when she reverts to "Ireland" or "the Irish Republic".

Mary Leland reviewed the book in the *Irish Examiner*, 1st October 2011—the very day that she launched it in Fota House. Again there is a half-page spread with a small photo of Elizabeth Bowen when she lectured in UCC in 1953. Leland reviews this in a rather hashed up way by quoting what Walshe promised to do and allowing that he actually did it. Really? There is a block quote of the Walshe theory that:

"Elizabeth Bowen had believed that by class and inheritance she occupied an ideological middle-ground between the British and the Irish which enabled her to mediate between Ireland and Britain".

Cold clinical spying as a sort of *mediation*? What paralyses the critical faculty of *these* people when they are talking such utter *ráméis*? Does the very mention of the Big House and the Anglo-Irish render them unfit for anything other than abject forelock tugging? Leland allows Walshe get away with his speculation that Bowen suffered under "the burdened nature of her heritage".

Bowen was tough and would never accept that her heritage was in any way a burden, she would be outraged at such idiocy. And then we have Leland fanning herself with the utterance: "Ah, those reports, those payments!" Leland goes on:

"Yet her understanding of that "unique class position" lends a wishful quality to her essays on Ireland, a quality contradicted by her treatment of Ireland and the Anglo-Irish in her fiction..."

"In this debate, distorted as it has been by later declarations of exaggerated outrage, Walshe provides a context of immediacy: "It was principally a response to the catastrophic situation for Britain following the fall of France". "As Robert Fisk has noted, Bowen, like other writers observing Dublin in the winter of 1940, was 'struck by the Irish predilection for ignoring the ideology of the war'".

What I would like to know is what precisely was the "ideology of the war" that the Irish had a predilection for ignoring? And why would Bowen bother with engaging in some kind of "ideological" dance in the middle ground—even supposing it ever existed outside of Walshe's idea fixe? Leland goes on by stating:

"That these reports could be termed betrayal stems from the fact that her Irish friends and the people she interviewed, from James Dillon (whom she totally misunderstood) to Archbishop John

Charles McQuaid and others did not know she was reporting their conversations."

And then Leland speculates that, if her confidantes knew she was spying (Leland cannot bring herself to say the latter word)—would they have been more forthcoming? Well Mary—we'll never know for sure now—will we? From the rest of what Leland says I know a lot of what follows is from Robert Fisk and this is what I suspected even when reading Eibhear Walshe's introduction. Leland's remark about James Dillon's infamous Dáil speech, where he denounced Irish neutrality and which—because of censorship—was related by the Press as "a remark on the pig situation" opened up Fisk's account. But Fisk went on to explain that, such was Dillon's fury at its suppression by Frank Aiken, Minister for External Affairs, that he went ahead with his threat and had it and other speeches published in pamphlet form. Aiken wanted to seize them but it was—according to Robert Fisk—"that only by de Valera's personal decision that prevented its suppression". The head of the British Legation, Maffey, played a dirty game with James Dillon, seeing him "constantly" and exciting him to ever more war-like sentiments which "were music to the ears of the British War Cabinet who in April 1941 even considered inviting him over to London". It took Bowen's cool eye to spot in Dillon something else altogether:

"he is very much disliked, and I must say that, though liking him very much personally, I see why. He holds some views which even I distrust, and which are abhorrent to many Irish people whose integrity I respect".

And she notes finally that James Dillon was seen by fellow Irish people as "a warmonger who well might lead them into war" and it soon became obvious that he had "no serious popular following".

Fisk allows that in 1940 there were—

"massive public demonstrations in Dublin in favour of neutrality, rallies that had been attended not only by Irish ministers but by Cosgrave and Norton who stood together with de Valera to show their solidarity with the Government's policy".

Mary Leland goes on to talk in her review about "exaggerated outrage" over the Bowen War Reports and Walshe speculated about something "lurking in the fields of North Cork" and I think we can all agree that the other unsayable word here is "Aubane".

The book launch by Cork University Press was, as I said, in Fota House and the publisher told us how lucky we were to be

in such magnificent surroundings which were rather perfect given the Bowen connection. We were provided with tea/coffee and rather lovely in-house baked biscuits. In all, there were about a hundred people present. Then Professor Patricia Coughlan said a few more pleasant words about Eibhear whom she knew to be a kind and generous colleague in the School of English. Mary Leland stepped in front of the crowd and seemed to be at ease with everyone, thanking us all for coming and saying how honoured she was to be the person asked to launch this edited collection of *Elizabeth Bowen's Selected Irish Writings*.

Julianne Herlihy ©

To be continued in next month's
Irish Political Review.

Reply by Jeff Dudgeon To Manus O' Riordan's Articles On James Larkin In *Irish Political Review* (October, December 2011)

The 1934 Larkin Affidavit: A Comment

Manus O'Riordan, in his *Irish Political Review* article, 'The 1934 Larkin Affidavit' (Part I, October, pp. 21-25), attacks James Larkin at length for an affidavit he made to American commercial lawyers in 1934. This named many of those involved, including Irish socialists, in German sabotage operations in the US and Canada in 1915-17. This collaboration is described as unconscionable, indeed reprehensible, something never before noticed.

I was then criticised, in passing, for having suggested in my Casement book that it was Casement's contribution to this sabotage (it comprised some one hundred bombings and arson attacks), more than his diaries, that ensured no intervention by President Woodrow Wilson to save him from execution.

Manus asserted (p21) "*there is not the slightest evidence that Wilson had any awareness in 1916 of Casement's name cropping up in association with German sabotage operations*" so doubting my "flamboyant claim... that Wilson's refusal to intervene on behalf of Casement's life... was primarily due to knowledge of the contents of intercepts that had yet to be decoded". It is thus Manus's case that Wilson's only reason for silence was homophobia—not American interests.

After a compliment to me, Manus indicated surprise that I should "*attempt to minimise President Woodrow Wilson's wholehearted embrace of the Ulster Pres-*

byterian prejudice to "Save Ulster (and the World) from Sodomy!". This "*embrace*" is the reason invoked for the President declining to seek clemency for Casement from the British Government. He later states it was obvious that "*President Wilson's raw-nerve of pure-and-simple Ulster Presbyterian homophobia had been touched in July 1916*".

It is anachronistic and itself religiously prejudiced to suggest President Wilson and Ulster Presbyterians were suffused with a peculiar homophobia at the time, one it is implied which lingered on until my Strasbourg case 60 years later—and Dr. Ian Paisley's and Peter Robinson's unsuccessful "*Save Ulster from Sodomy*" campaign in the 1970s.

The prejudice against homosexuals was in Casement's time universal. Next to nobody, except some advanced Liberals were other than utterly condemnatory. It is plain too that the longstanding campaign by Catholic nationalists and Republicans to deny the authenticity of Casement's Black Diaries was entirely motivated by a horror of the hero patriot being revealed as a homosexual and as engaging in sodomitical practices.

The attitude of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Randall Davidson, is a rare example in 1916 of at least a compassionate attitude to gays. The Archbishop, like others, first tried to promote the insanity argument in order to bring about a reprieve. He wrote,

"If Casement is now guilty in the vicious way alleged it may be taken as further evidence of his having become mentally unhinged. I have to do pretty frequently with problems of vice of that sort, and I suppose it is indisputable that sometimes a mental upset takes the shape of vicious behaviour, especially of an unnatural kind."

As I wrote, "*Dr Davidson being an Anglican would have, as he said, more experience of the subject*", while he exhibited due Christian charity saying, "*One feels that an incident such as this sends us all to our knees and that is really all we can say, but it is the best*".

He was to make a final plea to the Lord Chancellor two days before the execution, and in a last artful throw tried to turn the circulation of the diaries to Casement's advantage. He adduced the fear that people in America and Ireland would make mischievous capital of the execution

"far more so if they could (as they would) spin a tale to the effect... that the authorities had been privy to the trumping up of an infamous story about the man's immorality, an accusation with which he had never been confronted."

In contrast, it is worth noting that sixty

years later, during my Strasbourg case, the Cardinal Archbishop of Armagh, Tomás Ó Fiaich, endorsed the British Government's attempt to maintain the criminalisation of homosexual men in Northern Ireland. One could be permitted to ask Manus if Irish Catholicism is also homophobic or simply paedophilic?

The British Ambassador in Washington, Sir Cecil Spring Rice, sympathetic to clemency for Casement but stymied by London, perhaps started this prejudice against President Wilson. Brian Inglis in his biography quotes him saying, "*The President is by descent an Orangeman and by education a Presbyterian*", adding his own view that "*Wilson's sympathies were with the allies, and with Ulster*" (p357).

The Ambassador's opinion carried no accusation of homophobia (although the word had not then been coined nor when Inglis wrote). Spring-Rice was from a Limerick background and had a cousin, Mary Spring Rice, involved with Casement in the 1914 Howth gunrunning. She was famously photographed beside ammunition boxes and rifles on the Asgard with Mrs. Erskine Childers. The Ambassador probably retained a certain sympathy for Home Rule and a concomitant antagonism to Ulster.

Manus's view however probably says more about his own prejudices regarding Ulster Presbyterians than about homophobia.

On the main topic, attributing Larkin's behaviour (and his lapse from socialist virtue) in providing this affidavit to a prolonged nervous breakdown and "*severe depression*" is unconvincing and evidentially lacking.

I would argue the view, one Manus discounts, that it is much more likely it was the involvement of Franz von Papen in the Hitler government that prompted Larkin's statement, particularly as it was not then a police matter but a commercial compensation claim.

Manus writes that von Papen, the German military attaché in Washington "*had no hand in the July 1916 explosion on 'Black Tom' Island in New York Harbour*" nor was he ever "*accused of complicity in that act*" (Part II, December 2011, *From Sing Sing to Sing and Sing*, pp19-23).

This is Republican-lawyer argumentation not an historian's assessment. It is

Elizabeth Bowen: "Notes On Eire".

Espionage Reports To Winston Churchill, 1940-42; With an extended Review of Irish Neutrality in World War 2 by Jack Lane and Brendan Clifford.

Fourth edition with extra items.

296pp. 2009.

€20, £15.

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

unworldly not to assume von Papen was involved in long-planned acts of sabotage since he was expelled six months earlier, being properly "accused by the US government of complicity in a plan to blow up US railroad lines".

It is most likely that Larkin was of the view that the German National Socialist Government was a great threat to socialism and that his affidavit was given in "an anti-Nazi context". The affidavit came in 1934, a year after von Papen became Hitler's deputy and Vice-Chancellor of Nazi Germany.

Although he left government after the 1934 executions during and around the *Night of the Long Knives* and the extinction of German democracy, von Papen did not leave power. He became Ambassador in Vienna until the 1938 *Anschluss* with Austria, and was then posted to Ankara to the key post of Ambassador to Turkey.

Franz von Papen was therefore at the centre of the Nazi operation for more than a decade. He was far from unimplicated in the events of that period, especially in the 1930s. Larkin could have done no other than assume he was part of Hitler's system, indeed an enthusiastic supporter. He was certainly privy to most of its crimes, endorsing the regime with his presence until he left office in 1944—despite acquittal at Nuremberg of the specific charge of "crimes against peace".

Manus writes, "Nor can any amount of either foresight or hindsight justify Larkin 'fingering' von Papen in 1934 for conspiracy to commit murder in the USA" (Part II, p. 20). I hope if I was in Larkin's position I would have fingered von Papen. Present sight of him as Hitler's deputy would have been sufficient justification. Frank Ryan is excused for vastly more collaboration with the Nazi regime than Larkin is for an affidavit over events nearly twenty years earlier.

I didn't intend to take up a defence of Larkin until I realised the two articles had charged and convicted him in an unfair and unbalanced way. It is not as if the US authorities acted against any of the people he named. There was no felon setting involved.

Manus seems desperate to convict and then excuse him although I cannot see why. He is however guilty of writing history backwards, with England, as usual, being defined as a criminal nation for acting in its own interests. For some reason this does not apply to other countries as if none, particularly Ireland, acts on self-interest.

In tangential musings, he deals at length with the role of American statesman John McCloy who in 1934 was the lawyer who persuaded Larkin to prepare the affidavit. Oddly he does not speculate over the probability that McCloy, like Woodrow Wilson, was another American of Ulster

Presbyterian stock.

He also asserts, as stated earlier "there is not the slightest evidence that Wilson had any awareness in 1916 of Casement's name cropping up in association with German sabotage operations", partly, as the intercepts which I quoted "had yet to be decoded" (Part I, October, p22).

I am afraid this will not do. It is accepted that British Intelligence decoded the cables going to and from Germany's Washington embassy, for one, and in sufficient time to act on them. Why they often failed to act is another question.

When I mentioned that it is unclear "when these messages were decrypted", I was not suggesting it happened long after the event, rather that it was unclear which day they were decrypted and indeed who was told, when, of their contents. I did point out that London, through decrypts, knew about the Easter Rising a month before it happened.

It is absurd to suggest that President Wilson was unaware of Casement's name cropping up before the execution. As he had gone over to the Germans after his stay in America and his 1914 contacts with von Papen, it was hardly remarkable to assume he had conspiratorial connections with both German diplomats and Irish revolutionaries. British decrypts naming Casement however were not even necessary for a case as the US had a sufficiency of knowledge tying both him and von Papen to sabotage.

The reality is that on Tuesday 18 April 1916 the Americans raided the offices of Wolf von Igel, a German diplomat masquerading as an advertising executive in New York, and gathered up a cache of documents left lying out on sabotage operations in the US, on Casement and on von Papen amongst many others. (See the *New York Times* news article of 23 September 1917 <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9502E6D9103AE433A25750C2A96F9C946696D6CF>)

The seized documents were erroneously thought by John Devoy to be the reason for Casement's capture on Good Friday in Kerry. In fact his arrest was a matter of luck as the British had not warned the RIC in Tralee of his imminent arrival. Whether decrypts of Berlin's January 1915 message to von Papen in Washington specifically naming Casement as someone suggesting people "suitable for sabotage in the United States" reached Wilson matters not. He knew enough by April 1916 to be assured Casement = von Papen = US sabotage and thus was someone he was not going to be seeking a reprieve for.

Manus admits to being wrong about Larkin (plus neglecting the 1934 affidavit) and will have to again over President Wilson's supposed lack of awareness of Casement's link to German sabotage.

28 December 2011

A Response

In the absence of a comment from Manus O'Riordan, I will say something about this article from Jeffrey Dudgeon MBE, and bring my exchange of views with him to an end. MBEs have never been to my taste. I can see no point in discussing anything with somebody who joins an Order dedicated to the British Empire, in response to an invitation extended to him for services rendered. But that should not concern him unduly. The big battalions of the Dublin media are all on his side, both with regard to the Empire and to the presentation of the history of Irish Independence as a Catholic sectarian binge.

As to Jim Larkin, he had his moment as an agitator in 1913 and the years leading up to it. He then absented himself for a crucial half-dozen years. When he returned, he found it difficult to come to terms with what had happened during his absence and launched a feud with William O'Brien, who had at least constructed something durable in Irish society on the basis of what Connolly did after Larkin had left. Then, some years later, Larkin presented himself as one of the *26 Rulers Of The World*. I think it was 26. After seeing that, I could only see him as having entered a fantasy world. This is not a question of whether the Comintern was a Good or a Bad thing. It was certain by then that it was not going through the world like wildfire, and that socialist development could only be brought about by resourceful political action within the particularities of relatively settled nation states.

I should make it clear that I am not in any sense writing this comment on behalf of Manus O'Riordan. He left BICO a very long time ago. Dudgeon, though never a member, was closely associated with BICO for many years in the delicate business of establishing cross-community politics in the North. Manus left BICO on some issue which I do not recall, and he did not subsequently set about destroying what had been done while he was a member. Dudgeon never expressed disagreement with the project, on which he had collaborated with BICO, before he took part in wrecking it by sectarian disruption.

I don't think Manus agreed with that project of democratising Northern Ireland through the party-politics of the British state. But I don't know that he said anything about it one way or the other. But he went out on a limb on the 'Two Nations Theory',

which was denounced as a weak-kneed submission to Orangeism by Dudgeon MBE's Senate nominator, Eoghan Harris—before Harris himself became whatever it is that he is just now.

Manus's article made little sense to me. I assumed it had to do with his working through his disillusionment with Larkin. I believe he went through a phase of writing Larkin up and writing Connolly down (but I did not follow it), and that he was settling old scores with himself. But it did seem strange that Larkin should be denouncing von Papen for encouraging sabotage in the USA, during the war that Britain launched on Germany, at a time when the US, while remaining formally neutral, was financing that war and supplying it with munitions, and collaborating in the use of human shields (passenger liners) to ensure safe delivery of the goods.

Dudgeon MBE says he would have "*fingered von Papen*" in 1934. I wonder how he knows that. I once wondered what I might have done in Russia after 1917. I found out as much as I could of the circumstances and took account of my own inclinations as far as I was aware of them, and concluded that I would have been put down by Trotsky in 1921. Then, having written myself off, I went for an objective understanding of what happened next.

Now let's look at Germany 1934 from the viewpoint of an ethnicist Ulster Unionist MBE. The Empire was actively collaborating with Hitler to release Germany from the Versailles conditions, which it had maintained against the Weimar democracy, and which had been a major condition of the formation of the Nazi Party and of its rise to power. The Empire (judging by its actions) considered that its interests in the world required a great increase in the power of Nazi Germany, whereas it had required that the Weimar democracy should be strictly bound by its Versailles conditions. If I had been British, and of strong Imperial proclivities, I doubt that I would have fingered von Papen.

Unionist Ulster went to war against Germany in bungling fashion in 1939 as part of the UK, and as part of the UK it had collaborated with Nazism during the preceding six years. And Ribbentrop, the Nazi Foreign Minister, was feted at Mount Stewart by Londonderry, who in my view was one of the more politically conscientious Unionists.

Papen, though not a member of the Nazi Party, says Dudgeon: "*was certainly privy to most of its crimes... despite acquittal at Nuremberg of the specific charge of 'crimes against peace'...*"

So he was guilty though found Not Guilty at a trial which was not conducted under any any body of law and at which the defendants were not allowed to plead the conduct of their judges as a precedent to be taken into account in the judging of their own conduct. A senior American judge refused to have any part in the Nuremberg Trials because they were based on mere lynch law. Yet the Court, though unrestricted by any body of established law, found von Papen Not Guilty. But the MBE view is that he was guilty, and that this guilt on some matters that happened after 1934 has a close bearing on a 1934 accusation about things that happened in 1916.

This is eternity. There is no time, no causative sequence, and therefore no history. And yet history is referred to.

Manus wrote that there was no evidence that con Papen had a hand in the 1916 acts of sabotage, and that he had never been accused of complicity. This is brushed aside:

"This is Republican-lawyer argumentation not an historian's assessment. It is unworldly not to assume von Papen was involved."

"*Republican-lawyer argumentation*"—well, we know what that is. Douglas Hogg told us how diabolical it is. It is when a lawyer, within a system of law that considers itself the best in the world, uses the resources of the law to defend somebody, whom we thoroughly dislike because we know he is guilty, against a charge which the prosecution, despite its immense resources, cannot support with sufficient evidence. It is the alternative to lynch law. Of course we do not want lynch law. What we want is that defence lawyers should do enough to give the appearance of due process to the trial, but should actually be complicit in enabling the person we hate to be found guilty. That is what I understood to be what Hogg was getting at. (And that is what happened with Roger Casement's lawyer.)

The lawyer accused by Hogg of being too lawyerly was murdered.

I don't know if *Woodrow Wilson* was homophobic. I don't know what *homophobic* means any more. The term has become as slippery as *anti-Semitic*. Palestine Arabs, who are being ethnically cleansed by Jewish-nationalist colonisers, are now freely branded as *Anti-Semites* if they mention that their oppressors are Jews when they resist.

At one point it was Anti-Semitic to suggest that Judaism was something else as well as a religion: then it became Anti-

Semitic to assert that Judaism was only a religion.

Dudgeon was present at discussions between BICO and the Gay Liberation Front a long time ago, whether as a BICO hanger-on or a member of the Gay Liberation Front I cannot say. BICO treated law on homosexuality as a political matter to be decided by particular states according to their circumstances. That was not denounced as homophobic then by the GLF. Possibly it is now.

Anglophobic is another word often used by Dudgeon. Phobia used to mean disease, illness, irrationality. *Anglophobia* used to mean a diseased hatred of England, lacking any rational foundation.

Roger Casement, as a member of the Imperial administration, became aware of the thrust of British foreign policy. His disagreed with what he understood it to be. He saw it as being directed against the civilised order of Europe, of which Germany had come to form a central part. If what he thought he saw had not turned out to be the case, I suppose it could be described as a phobia. But how can it be described as a *phobia* since it turned out to be very much the case.

I suppose it might be done with some very intricate argument. It might be said that he was motivated by a diseased hatred of England that was somehow prior to all that he observed as an Imperial diplomat, and independent of it, and that he was overcome with a fanatical vision of what England was up to, not in any way derived from rational foreign policy analysis, and that it was sheer coincidence that his lunatic vision corresponded with the actual turn of events. Far-fetched, but conceivable. But Dudgeon argues nothing like that.

Casement came to disagree profoundly with British foreign policy, therefore he was an Anglophobe. No need to describe his observations and his reasoning when describing his life and times. He was an Anglo-phobe—a lunatic. Enough said.

I do not know if *President Wilson* was a homophobe, in whatever sense. I only know that he was a white racist, an admirer of the Ku Klux Klan, and a foreign policy bungler who defeated Germany, which the British, Belgian and French Empires had little hope of doing, and then left Germany at the mercy of Britain and France.

The first great American motion picture, the classic which is no longer showable, but which I saw when it could still be seen, *The Birth Of A Nation*, is a glorification of the Klan. It was premiered by Wilson at the White House when others were already

becoming uneasy about the way the defeated South was saved from the egalitarian Jacobins of the Congress at the end of the Civil War. I think it's a reasonable guess that the unembarrassed admirer of the Klan for its part in saving the defeated South for WASP civilisation was also "homophobe".

Wilson's publicising of *The Birth Of A Nation* by giving its premiere in the White House was not a case of admiration of artistic quality overcoming a distaste for content. Before becoming President, Wilson was a historian and he wrote about how White racism saved the defeated South for the civilised American nation when the democratic policy of Congress would have led it to regimes of uncivilised Blacks. Through the action of the Klan:

"Negro rule under unscrupulous adventurers had been put an end to in the South, and the natural, inevitable ascendancy of the whites, the responsible class, established" (*Epochs Of American History*, 1893, p273).

Cecil Spring Rice: he showed around the dirty photos—or whatever the documents were that disappeared without trace when they had served their purpose—intended to ensure that Casement was hanged. He might have thought it would be more prudent not to kill Casement, but he obeyed orders and handed around the dirty photos. And, when he was replaced as Ambassador by Balfour, he wrote that fanatical nationalist/Imperialist hymn, *I vow To Thee My Country*, which I have noticed becoming increasingly popular as the embers of Empire are being tended to in the hope that they will flame up brightly again as the world is thrown into increasing disorder.

The incident in which the Ambassador's cousin took part, the Howth gun-running—which Dudgeon in his book on Casement compares to the handing over of American nuclear secrets to the Soviet Union—had the purpose of establishing Imperial Home Rule in Ireland, within the UK, with the object of harnessing Irish national energy to the Imperial power-structure. As I recall it—and I did make some effort to understand it—the antagonism to that Imperial project came from Unionist Ulster. The antagonism against Unionist Ulster came from its raising of a private Army, without sufficient reason, to defeat by force a measure that was intended to make the British Isles a secure and active base of the Empire.

This Imperial consolidation may possibly have happened but for 'Ulster'. The Home Rule leaders certainly seemed willing.

The whole Larkin thing seems to me to be much ado about nothing on both sides, in which neither holds to the point, if there is a point. I have only described the *dramatis personae* insofar as I had found out something about them.

As to Casement's *Diary*: the historical starting point is the documents circulated in order to subvert the protest by important people against hanging him when the Austrian Government was being denounced for hanging Italians within its Empire for treason when they joined the *Entente*. I could interest neither side in the Casement dispute in starting at the starting point and demanding a full account of the circulation of the dirty photos by the Government, and how they then disappeared without trace. They prefer to dispute on grounds on which resolution is not possible.

To Dudgeon:

"It is plain... that the longstanding campaign by Catholic nationalists and Republicans to deny the authenticity of Casement's Black Diaries was entirely motivated by a horror of the hero patriot being revealed to be a homosexual and as engaging in sodomitical practices..."

That makes it for Dudgeon a matter of belief consequent on something else in the case of his opponents. He says the same thing in his book. But this is an argument that plays in reverse too.

It is a bit more complicated on Dudgeon's side, however.

The Anti-Casement campaign he directed at nationalist opinion (along with Bill McCormack), conducted on the assumption that nationalism was homophobic was one of the most distasteful things I had seen. Dudgeon is both a homosexual activist and a Unionist, and the only purpose I could see in the way that campaign was conducted was to discredit Casement to nationalists, in the Unionist interest, by exploiting their presumed homophobia.

I can't imagine where this presumption of nationalist or Catholic homophobia came from. I remember being told by a homosexual soon after I went to live in Belfast that Dublin was where queers went for dirty weekends.

I can't say whether Catholicism is homophobic or "simply paedophilic". I only know that Protestant England saw Rome as the refuge in which all the iniquities of the pagan world were preserved, and which it was the destiny of Protestant England to wipe out. It was held against Catholicism that it made allowance for sin as a permanent element of human life.

I was aware of no obsession about

homosexuality in North Cork when I lived there, and I know that when it began to be fashionable it blossomed very quickly there.

Dudgeon directed his campaign at a phantom of his own imagining. If it had not been a phantom, he might have had some success to his cause as a Unionist at the expense of his cause as a homosexualist.

His colleague McCormack was a former camp follower of the Republicans. I do not recall him being there when events in the North might have been directed in a different way. He flipped over at some point, and he seems to have embarked on the virtuous falsification of history which so many historians embarked on fashionably and high-mindedly, supposing that this would somehow undermine the Republican case, whose foundation in the perverse Northern Ireland political structure they never troubled to understand.

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As to Dudgeon's Dunmanway broodings published last month, "assuming it was the IRA in some form":

"If the Dunmanway IRA actions were sectarian it reduces the IRA war of the 1920s and that of the later Provisional IRA, in large part, to an ethnic dispute with sectarian outworkings".

When I was young there was a social movement based on the concept of *The Mystical Body Of Christ*. I thought it was absurd. But when I see what humanist reason in the grip of ethnic passion produces, that overtly stated mysticism begins to seem plain and sensible.

Assuming the Dunmanway killings were done by "the IRA in some form", without specifying which of the three parts into which it was split in April 1922, how would that retrospectively alter the character of the war in defence of the Dail against the British Government, which had lost the Election but was hanging on by use of force, into a mere ethnic/sectarian dispute?

And how would it determine as ethnic/sectarian another war at the other end of the country half a century later, under the altogether different circumstance that this region of the British state was excluded by the British democracy from the democratic system of the state and the Catholic third of the population was subjected to intimate communal rule by the Protestant two-thirds in a political vacuum?

If a handful of killings in Dunmanway in April 1922, unacknowledged by whoever did them, could determine the character of military actions in Belfast half a century later, the operative connection could only be made through some mystical

medium—some transcendental fabric in which the two situations, so different in time, place and circumstances, existed together timelessly and without causative sequence. Or maybe it was brought about by *"The invisible worm, that flies in the night,/ In the howling storm,/ Whose dark secret love/ Does thy life destroy."*

Bring back the Mystical Body, I say.

*

"Common sense tells us the killings were the work of the IRA but every possible obstacle and mystification is being put in the way of such an assessment, not least by Niall Meehan and Brendan Clifford".

The mystification with which I obstruct the operation of Dudgeon's commonsense is ascertainable fact.

Dudgeon has little use for facts. This is appropriate for a defender of Peter Hart against pettifogging factual criticism, and for Eoghan Harris's nominee for the Senate. But I'm afraid I got strangely attached to facts in those days when I was denounced by Harris for making a case for the Ulster Unionists/Protestants and I'm unable to break the habit.

I recall in Belfast in the seventies, when I was labouring along in my usual plodding way—often as a labourer among intellectuals—and presenting factual particulars in support of the case I was making about Partition, being exhorted as follows: *Oh don't think. Feel!!*

And here it is again. *Deja vu*. But through the looking glass. An Ulsterish ethnicist, with little factual knowledge of Cork, is impatient with me because I do not have a feeling that reveals the truth about the Dunmanway killings to me without the need of evidence.

Common sense is something I rely on a lot. But I have always understood that the basis on which common-sense functions is extensive familiarity with the facts of a situation. A general sense of the social and political dynamic of a situation when it engages with particulars can give rise to a conviction that could not be set out conclusively. But that feeling of conviction is worth nothing as proof.

Dudgeon's common sense knowledge of Dunmanway is, by his own account, the result of ethnic passion operating on a foundation of ignorance: *"I am no expert on Cork, its geography or demography, or the conflict in the area from 1919-23"*.

"Nit-picking about Hart is corrosive but has to be based on a rigorous honesty", Dudgeon says disapprovingly. Nit-picking is a very necessary and useful activity. I don't know where we'd be without it. As

Mountjoy said—I think it was Mountjoy—when slaughtering a community, children and all, *"Nits will be lice"*.

"Whatever Hart's errors and alleged deceits... he is no longer able to defend himself". This suggests that his "errors" were only brought to light after his death. That is far from being the case. He had ample time to defend or explain himself, or to remove the nits himself—and see what remained without them.

He left the nits in place after his attention was drawn to them. The picking of them by others was therefore corrosive of his reputation as well as his narrative. Dudgeon suggests it was not done *"honestly"*:

"What we got instead is distortion and reliance on evidence that remains doggedly invisible and must be taken on trust. Faith is required".

If this is not to be taken as mere gibberish, it must be taken as referring to the absence of evidence about the killers in Dunmanway. I suppose evidence that is absent could be described as being invisible. But is Faith needed to see that it is not there? If so, it can only be because it is there and a special faculty is needed for not seeing it. But if it is there, show it.

"Brendan Clifford... returns to a suggestion that Sir Henry Wilson instigated the killing of a bunch of West Cork Protestants to create the appearance of a deadly sectarian chaos that would justify an Imperial restoration... If Wilson did so instigate, he failed in every respect while managing... to cover his tracks..."

This is the kind of argumentation that was common long ago in the days of Marxist student revolutionism.

I did not suggest that the killings were organised by Wilson. Every time I have referred to the matter I have said there is no evidence of any kind as to who the killers were. In the absence of evidence there is nothing but groundless speculations. And I pointed out that one speculation was being omitted from the list of speculations, though I could not see that it had less to be said for it than the others. That is what I said in the article cited by Dudgeon. I said it again two months later when John Borgonovo omitted it from his list of speculations—while not revealing how he knew that *"unknown"* IRA men had done it.

Wilson's failure in no way detracts from the merit of the speculation that he did it. He failed in his whole Imperial enterprise—and, whatever about Ireland, I do not think that the world, which it was Britain's business to govern after fighting a war to dominate it, was the better for his failure.

And the fact that whoever did the

killings *"covered his tracks"* does not seem to me to be evidence that it was done by locals.

Dudgeon cannot focus on a point in order to consider circumstances relevant to it. He hops from twig to twig, unhampered by knowledge of circumstances. And he cannot resist misrepresenting a point in order to take issue with it more easily.

Pierce Martin raised the Dunmanway incident in a letter to the *Irish News* (Belfast) a couple of years ago. On an issue on which the only evidence was the circumstance in which it occurred, Martin was unable to sustain his position in argument with Jack Lane. Dogmatic belief could not discuss the particulars of circumstance. The published correspondence ended with a letter of Lane's. I assume the Editor ended it because Martin became absurd in his attempt to respond. A certain critical standard is still kept up by newspaper readers in Belfast. But, if Dudgeon had come to the assistance of a friend in need, I'm sure the paper would have carried another letter. The *Irish News* is not well disposed towards BICO or Aubane, and Dudgeon has a certain status in Belfast, while Martin is entirely unknown there or, it seems, anywhere else. But Dudgeon stayed silent.

Martin showed subsequently, in a letter in the *Sunday Times*, that his ignorance of Cork is at least equal to Dudgeon's, as he placed Aubane in West Cork.

For many years, Dudgeon either held the view (or pretended to) that the war in the North was connected with the circumstance that the region was governed undemocratically by being excluded from the political system by which the state was governed, and the fact that the Catholic community lived under the constant provocation of communal Protestant rule, without the option of participating in the democracy of the state; or, if he did not hold that view, he remained silent in the company of people who did hold it, and at public meetings where it was stated very clearly. He never dismissed the Athol St. view as nonsense, and explained to the dupes of Athol St. that the North was democratically governed after all. But now, having been active, by sectarian means, in breaking the cross-community movement based on that view, he treats it as having been nonsense. And he tells us that the war in the North was ethnic, and that it was made sectarian by the fact, which is known to him through a special kind of commonsense, that the

Dunmanway killings half a century earlier were done by the IRA "in some form" out of hatred of Protestants. The Wilson speculation is not allowable:

"Imagined conspiracies can only be faced down with reasoned analysis and what evidence does exist... You cannot prove a negative but this Wilson theory is not accepted even by Meda Ryan and other Republican writers".

I would have thought it obvious that the one certain thing about the Dunmanway killings is that they were the work of a very tight conspiracy. And that another certain thing was that the absence of evidence means that any attempt to identify the killers can only take the form of imagining a feasible conspiracy. Dudgeon's imagined conspiracy is that it was "the IRA in some form". He does not say which of the three forms of the IRA did it, so his speculation is worthless even as a conspiracy theory.

The speculation that the conspiracy might have been ordered by Field Marshal Wilson is "not accepted even by... Republican writers". So it isn't. But it is odd that Dudgeon should see this fact as having some weight.

I do not know that Republican writers have actually written anything demonstrating that Wilson couldn't have done it. I know that he is not their favourite killer, but when I see the quality of some of the "authorities" they cite in support of their favourite, I am no more impressed now than I was forty years ago, when they assured me that I was wrong about the North, and that the Unionists would disintegrate under pressure—and when I was excommunicated from the category of Republican writers by Dudgeon's Senate nominator, Eoghan Harris.

As a teenage labourer in rural Ireland, I read Descartes on how he coped with ignorance while he set about trying to remedy it. And very much later I came cross Brigadier Tracy who, figuring out the world afresh during the French Revolution, invented Ideology, but somehow failed to surface during the Ideological crazes of recent decades:

"When the motives of determination fail us, we should know how to remain in complete doubt, and suspend absolutely our judgment, rather than rest it on vain and confused appearances..."

"This is the most essential of logical principles; for in following it we may possibly remain in ignorance, but we can never fall into error; all our errors arising always from admitting into that which we know elements which are not really there, and which lead us to consequences which ought not to follow from those that are there effectively..."

"But at the same time it is also very certain that in the course of life we seldom arrive at certitude, and are frequently obliged, nevertheless, to form a resolution provisionally; to form none being often to adopt one of the most decisive..."

There are, of course, situations in actual life, in which it is necessary to act and therefore to make a judgment about what is the case, even though one might not be sufficiently informed about it. But where is the necessity to commit oneself to a judgment (which can be no more than a guess), about the perpetrator of the Dunmanway killings ninety years ago?

I can see the desperate need of Dudgeon, the ethnicist Unionist who was active in the sectarian disruption of the CLR and CEC, replacing them with sectarian travesties that withered fast. He was given ample opportunity in this publication to dispute that characterisation of his conduct

in Belfast, but chose not to avail of it. He chose instead to speak of other things, particularly about ethnicity.

I suppose, in a world which is fundamentally ethnic, it is a good thing to break up ethnic mixes.

But I can see no sense in playing the game that Hart and Fitzpatrick set out for us to play. It should be enough to demonstrate the trickery by which they dreamed up a Catholic massacre of Protestants and placed it in Dunmanway, being enabled to do so by the entire absence of evidence about the Dunmanway killings—and the decay of Republican critical faculties in Southern society in recent decades.

The nearest thing to evidence that has been brought to light is the Coroner's Inquest. And that did not come to light through the dispute between groundless speculators.

Brendan Clifford

A number of different events which occurred in the period between the signing of the 'Treaty' and the war over the 'Treaty' have been grouped together under the general title of the 'The Dunmanway Killings' or 'The Bandon Valley Killings'. But it is not clear whether they are all necessarily connected. These articles look at the events in their own terms and leaves speculation aside. Incidentally, Ballygroman is about halfway between Bandon and Cork, whilst Dunmanway is around halfway between Bandon and Bantry.

THE DUNMANWAY KILLINGS, CURIUSER AND CURIUSER

Part Two

"Taking it out on the Protestants"

This is a notorious quotation, which Peter Hart used in *The IRA And Its Enemies* (1998) to head his Chapter on the Dunmanway killings: it deserves a revisit. Consideration of the context for that quotation has not entered the current discourse on the period. Using this remark as a Chapter heading was designed to set the tone of the whole debate on the issue, and this has succeeded. Since Hart used it, every thought on the matter has been coloured by that Chapter heading. It is appropriate therefore to start with this.

Back in 1998, Brian P. Murphy, with his great knowledge of sources, for the first time showed that the use of the quotation, "Taking it out on the Protestants" was spurious, as the incident it referred to could have had no connection with the Dunmanway killings. The event and the words used in connection with it both happened later, during the 'civil war'.

The quotation is taken from Leon O Broin's *Protestant Nationalists In Revolutionary Ireland—The Stopford Connection* (1985). It is useful to look at it and the context for a number of reasons. But the most important of them is that it provides a perfect example of Hart's chicanery in his use of sources and in this connection

we must note that this academic malpractice was allowed stand by his supervisors, Professors Fitzpatrick and Townshend.

Here is how the matter appears in O Broin's book. He is reporting on an event recounted by a well-respected IRA leader in the War of Independence, Denis Lordan:

"One particular incident that occurred during the Civil War positively distressed her {Dorothy Stopford, JL}. The 'boys' went to a Protestant house to seize a motor car, were fired on, and one of them killed. Then "our fellows took it out on the Protestants" Denis Lordan told me ruefully."

How did Hart connect this killing, which occurred in an unspecified place in West Cork, in connection with an attempted seizure of a car, with a completely different event in which no car was at issue some months earlier?

Answer: firstly, by doctoring the original he was quoting from, thereby omitting the 'civil war' reference; and, secondly, by manufacturing a reference to a car at Ballygroman. The way this is done is to introduce two anonymous sources, "A.G." and "A.E." who allow him to speculate

that a need for a car or for petrol was the reason for the visit to the Hornibrooks at Ballygroman—just as in the event quoted above. QED.

On this scenario, the Hornibrooks and their friend, Woods, were so crazy as to kill the leader of the local IRA group over this trivial issue. And then the IRA was even crazier still in executing them all—all on account of a car, or maybe just a gallon of petrol. And then the craziness went crazier still to the killing of other Protestants at Dunmanway. It was all one sectarian binge. Whatever about the facts, this scenario fits Hart's overall theme that the whole revolution was sectarian and ridiculous. And it is the impression he succeeded in creating. Jeff Dudgeon and Eoghan Harris express this regularly.

Another scenario that accepts the same narrative is to see the events connected, caused and explained by the elimination of spies. I don't find either convincing on the available evidence and there is a teleological aspect to both that is unsatisfactory.

This is an attempt to explain the events on their own merits.

There are some more immediate problems with Hart's Ballygroman story. One of Hart's anonymous sources suggests that it was a car that was required; another that it was petrol. To begin with, if the IRA simply needed petrol, then presumably they had a car to put it in—which would contradict the claim that they needed a car. That is borne out by the fact that Charlie O'Donoghue did leave in a car to get help after Commandant O'Neill was killed. As there is no evidence that he stole either the car or any petrol, he most likely arrived in it as well.

Hart has further anonymous sources that appear at crucial times to fill out his narrative on Ballygroman: "B.B.", "B.V." and "B.Y.", and all these are very helpful to him for the rest of his story.

There is another problem with all this. It is quite explicable why the IRA would need to commandeer a car during the 'Civil War' as the original reference made clear. But the Ballygroman incident occurred on 26th April 1922, during the 'Truce'. Active operations which might require the commandeering of transport had ceased, so why such a pressing need for a car?

Information from contemporary sources does not bear any relation to the detail provided by Hart. And I am talking about eye-witness reports and evidence given at the official Inquest—as opposed to the anonymous, hearsay speculation used by Hart.

At the Inquest on Commandant O'Neill's death, Tadhg O'Sullivan—who organised and sanctioned the visit to the Hornibrook house—explained that "*in compliance with orders received from the staff of the 3rd West Cork Brigade, the deceased was ordered to go on special duty with others (Charlie O'Donoghue, Stephen O'Neill, Michael Hurley) to Mr. Hornibrook's*" (*Cork County Eagle*, 6 May 1922). The Inquest report says nothing about the specific purpose of the visit to the Hornibrook house. Moreover, neither at the time nor since, as far as I know, have any of these four IRA men who were given that assignment said anything that would confirm the car/petrol story. Evidence for this scenario is second-hand, even third hand, i.e., hearsay—at best—and at worst anonymous hearsay with Hart. And no one has explained the pressing need for a car at a time when no active operations were in progress.

The Inquest also heard statements by other participants and nothing remotely connected with transport was reported. Witnesses stated they went to the Hornibrooks' on "*business*", and sought to speak to the family but they refused to respond, even after half an hour of trying, knocking on the door several times.

The '*business*' no doubt meant Government business, as O'Neill was described in some of the press as a Free State policeman—and demanding people's cars was not very likely by such a person in this non-war situation. Duties performed for the Free State and IRA membership could still be compatible at local level at the time, April 1922. We don't know the details of the '*business*' but it must have been important to be ordered by the Brigade staff. One thing is clear, however, the IRA did not visit the house to kill the Hornibrooks. That is shown by the fact that they did not return fire when the leader of their party was killed.

It is most probable that the object of the visit was to assert the authority of the new Irish Government and to get this well-known loyalist family grouping to accept it and behave accordingly which they had not been doing. That could have taken many forms—a warning, a disarming, an arrest, or an expulsion order. The Hornibrooks knew this and were not willing to comply in any way—hence their reaction: the killing of the Volunteer. But, as the IRA did not return fire, it is clear that the new authority had not planned for such a confrontation and of course did not initiate killing.

It is all perfectly explicable. It is a very

typical event in the establishing of any new State power. Who rules? Every state depends ultimately on its physical power to establish and maintain itself against the power of its enemies. This was an example of it and both sides knew that perfectly well—car or no car, petrol or no petrol.

At the Inquest, if the IRA witnesses had been intent on making the Hornibrooks appear crazy, they might have mentioned that they had shot O'Neill over a car or a gallon of petrol. But they made no such assertion—they insisted the visit was about '*business*', i.e., something serious.

There is one other contemporary account by "*one who was there*" (someone who was not with the IRA party). This says that "*About 2 pm an IRA 'policeman' claimed to be 'on duty' came to a house in the street and demanded entrance*" and it goes on to say that "*the 'policeman' was shot by a Protestant named Woods*" (*Reminiscences And Reflections* by H. Kingsmill Moore, DD. 1930, p278-9).

Again, we find that there is no reference to cars etc., but we find confirmed the official '*business*' or '*duty*' nature of the visit.

The book this appears in was by a prominent Church of Ireland figure and loyalist who saw matters from the Protestant and Loyalist perspective. It might be noted that, though horrified by the whole revolution, Kingsmill Moore made the point that Protestant clergymen were never, ever, interfered with in carrying out their religious duties during the whole period. That is a rather important point to have come from a loyalist and Protestant source.

Hart mentions this book as a source but does not quote any account from it. I wonder why?

RAIDS AND RAIDS!

Kingsmill Moore has an account of another official visit/raid which showed how benign these events could be and how the outcome depended on the reaction of those visited. It is worth quoting to put these types of events in their real perspective and in the context of official business of the time and which is so often leavened with more natural business. The story of a raid on a Protestant house was told to him in the drawing-room which was:

"...the scene of the adventure—by a dainty little lady. There came loud knocking at the door one stormy night. She and an elderly connexion were alone in the house. The second lady was tall, strongly built and formidable. The raiders seemed awed as they entered. They demanded arms. 'There are none in the house.' 'We must search.' 'Certainly.' They searched

everywhere and found nothing. But the leader, a fine-looking young farmer, tried to capture another spoil before he left. Deferentially approaching the younger lady he inquired: 'Would ye be married?' and hearing she was single, he blurted out shyly 'Don't ye think I'd be a likely boy?' The whole (story) was told with peals of ringing laughter. 'Did you ever hear of an adventure like that, commencing with a raid and ending with a proposal?...' (p.285).

Hart did not see any need to include this very human story in his book but a staunch and fair-minded loyalist did, because it rang true for him and spoke volumes about the reality of these out-of-the-ordinary situations that ordinary people found themselves in.

DB BALLYGROMAN SPARK THE DUNMANWAY KILLINGS?

It is also worth pointing out that the idea the incident at the Hornibrooks initiated or sparked the Dunmanway killings was suggested at the time and vehemently denied by the members of the Cork County Council when it discussed a resolution from Cork Corporation about the events:

"Mr. Murphy said that there seemed to be an insinuation in the Cork Corporation resolution that the shootings of the Protestants were a reprisal for Commandant O'Neill's death. The Chairman said if such an insinuation were in the resolution, and it looked like it, it should not be in it... Mr. Ahearn said if there was any insinuation in the Corporation's resolution he would not agree to it. He believed the enemy had something to do with the shootings in West Cork, and that it was part of the old game" *Cork County Eagle*, 6 May 1922).

I assume the then Chairman of the Cork County Council and other members were likely to be representative of opinion and knowledgeable about the events. It is significant that they were clearly outraged at the suggestion the events at Ballygroman and Dunmanway were connected. They, on the spot, did not see the narrative that Hart created with the help of his anonymous sources and others at several steps removed and over six decades later.

The Bandon Rural District Council also discussed the events and its members, who included Commandant O'Neill's brother, went out of their way to pay tribute to Protestants who "had sheltered our brave men and had sympathy with us in our trouble" and one member said of the Dunmanway events: *This was a legacy left to them by the Black and Tans* (Cork Constitution, 9 May 1922).

So, far from it being assumed that the IRA had anything to do with the killings,

it was regarded as something like what the Black and Tans would do. There could not be a more contrary interpretation of the killings than that given by Peter Hart.

ANOTHER HOLE IN THE NARRATIVE

Hart's simple narrative of one killing at Ballygroman leading to the other at Dunmanway has now been seriously challenged from another perspective by Niall Meehan in his ongoing forensic analysis of Hart's work and in this case by his highlighting of the significance of the capture of the three British under-cover Intelligence Officers in Macroom, who were on active service in a revived Intelligence service. These were discovered on the afternoon of 26th April 1922, after the Ballygroman executions (which had taken place earlier that morning). That was before the Dunmanway killings, which began on the next morning of 27th April (*Irish Political Review*, Feb. 2011).

As Niall points out, Hart knew that the capture of the Intelligence Officers in Macroom ruined his narrative, so he simply ignored this uncomfortable fact and spread as much disinformation as possible about the event. Niall shows that the work of these agents was sanctioned at the highest level on the British side and correspondingly their execution was carried out on the highest authority on the Republican side (*ibid*). No maverick activity this—on either side.

It has been suggested that the Intelligence Officers revealed the names of local agents. But, if it was the case that they divulged the names of the people subsequently killed in Dunmanway as spies, it still remains a mystery why the resultant killings were carried out in a manner so distinctly different from what happened at Ballygroman and outside the pattern of other republican executions of spies—which were always acknowledged and explained. And it is curious that no Catholic spies seem to have been included in the agents' plans though there were plenty of them in the area.

It is worth bearing in mind that, if these three agents had not been captured, it would undoubtedly be considered a crazy conspiracy theory to suggest not only that they and the revived Intelligence service existed but that they went so far as to do their work in front of the IRA headquarters in Macroom Castle, of all places, at that particular time. It was so daring and brazen it still seems unbelievable.

THERE'S MUCH MORE IN O BROIN'S BOOK

It is even more useful to look at the full context of Hart's 'taking it out' quotation

in O Broin's book, as a fuller extract throws very important light on more important things than Hart's chicanery and abuse of sources.

In the book, as the title suggests, O Broin dealt at length with the role of a number of Protestants in the Irish Revolution and explains in some detail the role of Dorothy Stopford in West Cork. He shows her very close relationship with IRA members, and particularly with Denis Lordan: their exchanges are the basis of the relevant part of his book. The issue of informing by some Protestant farmers arises and is discussed in a very matter of fact way as another topic between close friends:

"This matter of 'telling on them' had painful consequences. 'One day', Denis Lordan told me, 'some of the column was going up for tea to a Protestant house. One of them, we called him Peter, was a deserter from the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. They met a local farmer on the way driving his pony and trap, an 'old fellow' and a Protestant. He got talking to Peter and thought from his accent that he was an Auxie. He started to blow the gaffe. 'Is it safe for me to be talking to you, sir', he asked, and was assured that it was. He then told Peter that he had been out walking his land and came across a passage and a dug-out in the middle of the brake. Then, to Peter, he said: 'I'm not like the rest of them round here at all. The Reverend Mr. Lord is my man, and I give him the information. You fellows should come round at night, I'd show you round.' Peter told his pals and, while Lordan was consulting Tom Barry and Charlie Hurley, the leaders of the column, who were staying with another Protestant nearby, the lads 'made a football of the old fellow on the floor'. He was shot that night; and a cousin of his who had also been giving information died four or five nights later. The clergyman in Bandon, Mr Lord, went unharmed.

"That there was a Protestant reaction in the area to the activity of the Volunteers, a sort of anti-independence movement, appears to have been the case; and local Protestant farmers were believed to have been responsible for the shooting of two boys named Coffey. Dorothy was upset by these happenings, and was afraid they might lead to a religious war.

"One particular incident that occurred during the Civil War positively distressed her. The 'boys' went to a Protestant house to seize a motor car, were fired on, and one of them killed. Then 'our fellows took it out on the Protestants', Denis Lordan told me ruefully. Dorothy's own position was clear enough. She was a religious person, Denis thought, and went regularly to the Church of Ireland in Rathclaren. If she was late for the Service there, she came to Mass in Kilbrittain. Lordan asked her one day about her church-going in Dublin. 'I hardly ever go

in Dublin', she said, 'because I don't see why the Minister should ask for prayers for the King and not for this ...' (p176-7)

This extract is interesting for a number of reasons, quite apart from the fact that the 'taking it out' could not refer to Dunmanway.

It is clear from this that using the word *Protestant* in this context is clearly descriptive and adjectival for identification purposes, in the same way as it is used in going to a *Protestant* house for tea or to stay the night. It is also clear that there were Protestant safe houses, as the members of the Bandon Rural District Council pointed out when rejecting the sectarian explanation for the Dunmanway killings. And 'the taking it out' was clearly done to the Protestants who not only refused to have their car commandeered by the Army, but killed a volunteer. 'Taking it out' is a vague phrase: it could mean a beating; it cannot be assumed they were killed. After all, in the instances when opponents were killed, that was made clear in the other cases described above. It cannot simply be assumed to have happened.

Another point to be borne in mind is that Lordan is explaining these events to a Protestant as a simple fact and his report was accepted as such. There was no sectarian overtone intended, nor was that a meaning taken out of the story by the person hearing it.

The extract is also revealing in that it clearly establishes there was shooting of a number of Protestant farmers for giving information—along with *not shooting* the Protestants who received it! If there was a sectarian element to all this here was a perfect excuse to kill the Rev. Lord.

But most significantly, the information provided in the extract above complements the description of informers who were executed in the area during the War of Independence, as described in the British *A Record of the Rebellion in Ireland in 1921 and the part played by the Army in Dealing with it (Intelligence)*, when it said that "...in the Bandon area... there were many Protestant farmers who gave information". It also complements the claim by Frank Busted to Ernie O'Malley that "*we shot 5 to 6 loyalist Protestant Farmers as reprisals*". It is somewhat amazing that the British record and Busted appear at one on this and, together with Lordan, what we have therefore is *three* separate independent sources complementing each other so specifically as to which Protestants, i.e. farmers, were killed when, where and why.

By contrast, in Dunmanway, those

killed on 27th-29th April 1922 were clearly urban and professional people—solicitor, shopkeeper, chemist, draper, estate agent, clergyman, post office clerk, etc. This together with a host of other very different characteristics means that it is not very convincing to link the two sets of killings and treat them as simply two of a kind.

Briefly, the Dunmanway killings also differed from these other killings in the type of execution: there is no proven rationale for it; no identification of the perpetrators; no admission and acceptance by anyone as to who did it; and in the timing in a non-war situation. Added up, it is clear that the killings in Dunmanway were of a unique and remarkable kind. Linking them is a bit like Hart's linking of the Ballygroman killings with the Dunmanway killings. The connection made partly depends on the timing of the killings, but it cannot be assumed that they were connected simply because they followed chronologically. The Dunmanway killings and these other executions were discrete events, as indeed were the Ballygroman killings and the Macroom killings.

There is not even *one* source so specific and confirmed, which enables us to identify the Dunmanway killers, in contrast with the *three* sources I have mentioned for the execution of the Protestant farmers and for the many sources for Ballygroman. Such information may very well exist but it is not in the public domain and there is no point indulging in nods and winks, accusing alleged mavericks, alleged unknown IRA members, etc., about such an issue. In the absence of available evidence, this type of approach does not explain who conducted the Dunmanway killings or why—rather such an approach merely explains them away. This approach helped to create the vacuum that enabled Hart and others to fill it with their chicanery. In this vacuum Eoghan Harris and Jeff Dudgeon—who admits to knowing nothing about the subject—can indulge themselves to their hearts' content with any variety of speculations.

For instance, the last time I spoke with John Borgonovo he said he believed the killings were caused by drunkenness. In his book on the *Battle For Cork* he claims it was done by "*unknown IRA gunmen*"—but there is actually more evidence to claim it was done by unknown drunkards. So, pardon the pun, but it can, and has, become a case of whatever you're having yourself.

(To be continued)

Jack Lane

This letter of 28th January to the *Irish Times* was not published

Deserters, the Holocaust and Neutrality

Ireland managed with great difficulty to remain neutral in the horrendous "Second World War". Many other European states sought to remain neutral too, though only a handful succeeded. The war was not seen at the time as an "anti-fascist" war, let alone one to "save the Jews". And the holocaust did not begin until late 1941, after the local dispute over the status of the then German city of Danzig (Gdansk) in 1939 had been escalated by all powers involved into a Europe-wide conflict, and had reached Armageddon-like proportions with the German invasion of Russia. De Valera's successful assertion and defence of Irish neutrality—which was ever only really under threat from Britain—was supported by the majority of the people and all political parties in the state.

As regards Minister Shatter's attacks on de Valera for doing nothing in the face of the holocaust, he is simply wrong. In fact, once news of the nazi massacres reached him in 1943, the Irish state mobilised its very modest diplomatic resources to attempt to save threatened victims. This story has been recounted in detail by Professor Dermot Keogh in his excellent book, *Jews in 20th Century Ireland* and indeed was acknowledged even at the time by Chaim Herzog.

On the issue of Irish deserters, it is very questionable whether those who deserted the Irish Army to fight for Britain did so to fight fascism. Stories in recent days in the press reveal a very wide variety of motivations. Furthermore, not a few of those who deserted stayed on in the British forces which, as soon as the World War was over, returned to squashing colonial rebellions shaking the roots of that tottering Empire (Burma, Malaya, Aden, India, Ceylon, Kenya etc.). Apart from the deserters, many people from old unionist families rallied to the "colours" and would have done so regardless of who Britain's current enemy was. At last year's commemoration service, Kevin Myers spoke very eloquently about this, referring also in passing to the high proportion of Irish volunteers who ended up in RAF Bomber Command which was engaged in a morally very questionable war on the German civilian population which resulted in 600,000 deaths.

Then there is the question of the "stay-behind" loyalist groups organised in Ireland by British Intelligence to be mobilised as an underground sabotage force in support of a British invasion. Professor Eunan O'Hallpin, in his book *Spying on Ireland* revealed the facts of this amazing story from the records of Irish Intelligence. Are they too now to be honoured by Minister Shatter as "anti-fascist" heroes?

Philip O'Connor

Naval Warfare

Part Eighteen

Captain Grenfell has much of interest to say about the waging of the Great War in his 1940 book *Sea Power*. Of particular note is what he thought about the innovation of Continental warfare brought in by the Liberal Imperialists—which he saw as relegating the role of the Royal Navy to one of subservience to the British Army. And he is particularly critical of how the secretive military planning and slippery diplomacy of the Liberal Imperialists led to a surrender of the traditional independence established by Britain between itself and its allies in the waging of war.

Captain Grenfell explained how such over-confidence developed amongst the cabal who planned the innovation of Continental warfare to achieve a quick destruction of Germany, so much so that little else was thought about until it was too late. Henry Wilson was allowed to get on with the work of planning the War in isolation from the wider military and political command, lest the secret of it got out. And that had repercussions when things did not go according to plan:

"The war, as Wilson saw it, would be a matter of weeks; provided, of course, that the British Army took its place in the French line. If it did, the war on land would become a glorious forward march into Germany, about which the only doubtful point could be the exact date for the crossing of the Rhine. It was sufficient, therefore, for the British Force to be joined up with the French Armies. The rest could safely be left to the French High Command, whether the British knew what they were proposing to do or not... While, therefore, Sir Henry Wilson may have had a shrewd idea of what the French intended to do in the event of war, it does not appear that the British Government had been officially informed of those intentions before the outbreak. Nor are the French in anyway open to criticism on this account. Sir Edward Grey had insisted throughout on the non-committal nature of the Staff conversations and had made it clear that Britain reserved the right to come or not to come to France's assistance against Germany" (p49-50).

Grenfell argues that, if the pre-War conception of a rapid and victorious Anglo-French march into Germany had been fulfilled, then the downside of attaching the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) to the French line would have been forgotten about. In the event, the British Force was immediately swept up by, and carried along with, the French retreat into France.

And by the time the situation had been stabilized, the British Generals found themselves standing on the defensive on the wrong side of the Belgian frontier.

Captain Grenfell believed that the Liberal Imperialist planners of the War had acted so secretly in instigating it that no form of scrutiny had been possible from either the historical or contemporary military perspective to highlight the anomalies in the strategy. And, as we have seen, any criticism voiced by those that had to be let 'in the know' was considered as most unwelcome by the inner cabal.

Grenfell thoughtfully pointed out that there was a fundamental contradiction between the War that was planned and the War that was sold to the Liberal backbenchers and the British public. But no one cared to notice it (or if they did, they refused to bring it to the attention of the public in the interests of supporting their country once at war):

"The British public had initially been told that the nation was going to war to defend Belgium. By October 1914, however, that plea could no longer be advanced. The British Army, instead of going to Belgium, had gone to France, and in so doing had left the Belgians to their fate; and by far the greater part of their country was by now under German occupation" (p52).

Grenfell considered that it would have been much more effective to have landed the BEF on the Belgian coast rather than in France because, even if the Germans had instituted their sweeping advance in the way they did, the German manoeuvre would then have had the problem of a large British force to their rear on their right flank, with the Royal Navy in support and in control of the channel ports.

However, that would have represented a betrayal of the secret arrangements with the French.

Captain Grenfell noted, therefore, that the Liberal Imperialists had abandoned a fundamental principle of British foreign policy in planning and waging their war with the French:

"Historically, the Belgian ports had always held a much more important place in British strategical calculations than the Channel ports of France. While we had never, prior to 1914, felt any particular anxiety regarding the latter, the former had long been the objects of our liveliest concern. For centuries, it had been a

cardinal principle of British strategy that the ports of the Low Countries must not be allowed to fall into the hands of a great power who might one day be at war with Britain. It was a principle that went back at least to Elizabethan days... Handed on from the far-off days of the Spanish galleons, it dominated British strategy during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries... and remains even to-day as one of the platitudes of political utterance. It was, for instance, in 1938 that Mr. Anthony Eden declared that 'we have never been able, in all our history, to dissociate ourselves from events in the Low Countries; neither in time of Elizabeth, nor in the time of Napoleon; still less at the present day, when modern developments have brought striking force so much nearer to our shores'.

"This historic anxiety of the English people regarding the occupancy of the Low Countries was, of course, concerned exclusively with their ports. Regarded only as pieces of territory, it would not have mattered who possessed them...

"It was this ancient fear that had led her to back the Dutch against the Spaniards, and later against the French, that had led her to oppose Louis XIV and Napoleon, and that had caused her to join in the international guarantee for Belgian neutrality in 1839. There was no unselfish desire for the rights of small nations behind that guarantee. England had always been constitutionally averse from continental commitments. It was regard for her own security that induced her to underwrite Belgian neutrality" (p54-5).

It appeared strange to Captain Grenfell that, even though the War was supposed to be about defending the 'rights of small nations' like Belgium, and despite the fact that it had been a cardinal principle of British statecraft to keep the Channel ports out of the hands of a rival, the Liberal Imperialists chose to position their Army in a place where neither of these considerations could be taken care of.

The propaganda unleashed by the Liberals and Irish to justify the War in moral terms was fundamentally flawed as the War could not have been about Belgium in any real sense because the military plans, which were indeed put into force, all pointed to a completely different intention in waging the War: much more to do with a general offensive against Germany than the defence of Belgium.

Captain Grenfell is interesting on the consequences of what the Liberal Imperialists did—the consequences, that is, both for the Royal Navy, in the short term, and the British Empire in the medium and long. He notes that the side-lining of the Admiralty, the attitude of taking for granted the Navy, and the general concentration of effort in Continental warfare nearly had

disastrous consequences in the War:

"The sea service had suffered more from lack of attention than deliberate neglect. Accustomed for generation after generation to a position of predominance at sea, the British people took their Navy for granted. On the other hand, the idea of a great national army fighting on the Continent was a new conception, and was endowed with all the attractions of novelty. Lord Kitchener was appealing for hundreds of thousands of men, civilians of all classes all over the country were besieging the military recruiting offices, and the chief colour to be seen all over the land was khaki. Moreover, desperate fighting was going on on the Western Front, and the papers were ringing with the gallant deeds of the British troops, while the casualty lists were surfeited with their dead and wounded.

"The creation of this great new instrument captured the imagination of the nation, and the anxious contemplation of its bloody adventures across the Channel drew the popular mind towards the trenches and away from the sea...

"It is not, therefore, entirely surprising that the opening of the unrestricted German submarine campaign in 1917 found the Navy very largely unprepared to deal with it; short of ships, unready in organization, and worst of all, lacking in ideas. Had the undivided attention of the Government and the country been free to be devoted to naval defence as the principal security problem from 1914 onwards, it is hardly contestable that the chances of our being caught ill-equipped for the submarine campaign would have been very much reduced. As it was, the gaze of both politicians and people was almost monopolized by the titanic struggle and fearful bloodshed going on in France and Flanders, while a great part of their activities was necessarily directed towards meeting the insatiable material demands of the land fighting.

"The consequence was that we committed the elementary strategical blunder of leaving our vital communications inadequately guarded; so that while the Army was in the midst of its series of sanguinary offensives on the Western Front, the submarine campaign against our commercial life line was soon within an ace of losing us the war, whatever the armies might or might not be achieving on land...

"Taken all round, there can be no doubt that we purchased our security, so far as it was wrapped up in the Channel ports, at an inordinately high cost. If we had trusted to our sea power, as on most occasions in the past, we could have guarded ourselves and our vital sea communications at a small fraction of the expenditure of lives and money incurred by the combination of naval action and full-blooded military invention on the Continent that was actually employed. This twofold policy very nearly ruined us. By the spring of 1917,

continued on page 28

This letter, sent to the *Irish Times* on 14th January, was not published

Cavalier With Archives

Regarding the report in your newspaper on Friday (13th January) on the transfer of State documents relating to the arms de-commissioning during the Peace Process.

I'm not sure if I read this report correctly but it seems to relate to an issue where an Irish Government decides to donate what is in effect part of the State archive to a foreign university. Whether this decision was made by Fianna Fail or the Coalition is not really the issue. Nor is the fact that the material involved "was of a general nature and did not contain sensitive information in relation to individuals".

If my reading of the case is correct it's quite incredible and creates a precedent on how the nation's "memory" is to be treated. I know of no other incident anywhere in which a Government makes such a decision regarding the State's archives—and I have worked in the archive profession for nearly 20 years. There is a legal distinction between the State and the Government of the day. The State is the "eternal" entity while the Government of the day is charged with the temporary custody of that entity. For a Government to make a decision regarding the disposal of part of the State's archive to a foreign source without consulting the Dail and indeed not to make legislation to the effect is quite astonishing. It's so astonishing in fact that I'm doubting that my reading of this report is in fact correct. But then again—given the way the country has been treating the nation's memory in the last 20 years why should I be surprised?

Eamon Dyas

Editorial Note: Fianna Fail leader Micheál Martin has called on Justice Minister Alan Shatter—

"to clarify why exactly he agreed to donate documents from the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning, the body appointed in 1997 to oversee the process of putting 'beyond use' weapons used in the Northern Ireland conflict, to Boston College. ...For reasons of security and safety it is imperative that these papers are not made public for a sufficient period of time. What is of major concern is that these papers have been given to an institution outside the island of Ireland which is now involved in a major controversy about protecting the integrity of its sealed archive" (13.12.11 IT).

Martin is referring to the current scandal over Boston College making secret archive material available to the US Courts on foot of an application by the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Mr. Shatter responded that the arrangements to hand over the Archive were made by the International Monitoring Commission itself before he took office.

This letter, submitted to the *Irish Independent* on 21st January, was not published. It refers to a bravery award given in respect of service in Afghanistan

Soldiers

The report of Lance Corporal James White from Tipperary being awarded a medal from the Queen raises some important considerations of what our attitude should be to our citizens serving in the armed forces of a foreign state.

A few considerations should inform our attitude. Firstly, every member of the British armed forces have to pledge an oath of allegiance to the Queen to serve her above all others; secondly, the British armed forces are known to have been involved in various nefarious activities in Ireland between the 1970s and 1990 which have led to the deaths of scores of citizens of the Irish republic; thirdly, the British armed forces have been involved in more theatres of conflict than any other army with the exception of the United States and not all of these are sanctioned by the United Nations (witness the recent revelation of their unsanctioned SAS-led ground activities in Libya last year); fourthly, their covert operations involve the use of non-British passports (again in Libya last year); fifthly, the British Government continues to refuse to cooperate with the Irish Government in the investigation of the Dublin and Monaghan bombings in 1974 and other incidents.

Given that the Irish Republic claims to be a sovereign state should it not be incumbent upon it to ensure that its citizens do not enlist with the armed services of any foreign state as presumably there is always the possibility that such armed forces could become involved in hostile acts against it.

I have nothing personal against Lance Corporal James White and his choice of career is something that only concerns him. However, I do feel that in making that choice he should no longer be considered a citizen of the Irish Republic. People who make the choice to swear an oath of allegiance to another state to serve that state above all others should not expect to remain a citizen of the state that they have foresworn. I'm surprised that the voices which on other occasions ring the rafters with claims that Ireland has become a banana republic remain silent on this, more apt, illustration of just such a status.

Eamon Dyas

ITEMS FROM 'THE IRISH BULLETIN' – 8

The "Irish Bulletin" (7th July 1919 – 11th Dec.1921) was the official organ of Dáil Eireann during the 1919 – 1921 period. Lawrence Ginnell, then Director of Publicity for the Dáil, first started it in mid 1919 as a "summary of acts of aggression" committed by the forces of the Crown. This newsheet came out fortnightly, later, weekly. We reprint below the summaries published for February 1920

Date - February	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	Total.
Raids:-	300	51	-	99	6	13	469.
Arrests:-	92	-	1	20	5	4	122.
Sentences:-	-	-	9	1	3	-	13.
Courtmartials:	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Suppressions & Proclamation	-	-	-	-	1	-	2.
Armed Assaults:-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2.
Murders:-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2.
DAILY TOTAL:-	392	55	12	121	15	17	612.

Date, February	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th	14th	Total.
Raids:-	307	234	134	1	03	320	1,199
Arrests:-	3	5	-	1	3	13	25
Sentences:-	-	-	2	3	1	1	7
Courtmartials:-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Proclamations & Suppressions	1	2	1	-	-	-	3.
Armed Assaults:	60	-	-	1	1	1	6
Deportations:-	-	-	-	3	-	-	63.
Murder:-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1.
Daily Total:-	371	243	137	9	209	336	1,305

Date:-	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th	21st	Total.
Raids:-	504	360	3	38	330	20	1255.
Arrests:-	-	7	4	14	18	16	59.
Sentences:-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2.
Courtmartials:	-	1	-	1	2	2	6.
Proclamations & Suppressions:-	2	2	2	-	-	2	6.
Armed Assaults:-	1	1	2	-	3	-	8.
Deportations:-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2.
Daily Totals:-	509	371	11	53	353	41	1,338.

Date: February	23rd	24th	25th	26th	27th	28th	Total.
Raids:-	17	67	516	1	307	289	1,197.
Arrests:-	6	7	28	10	7	32	90.
Sentences:-	2	-	3	-	-	3	8.
Suppressions & Proclamations	1	-	1	-	-	7	9.
Armed Assaults:-	-	3	3	-	-	-	6.
Courtmartials:-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1.
Deportations:-	1	-	-	3	-	4	8.
Daily Totals:-	27	77	552	14	314	335	1,319.

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

IRELAND FIRST

Ireland First consists of seventeen prominent people who have got together last year and they produced a report entitled *"A Blueprint for Ireland's Recovery"* which was presented in March 2011 to the Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, TD. Not much has progressed since then, except the savage and barbaric cuts in health services and benefits affecting the poor and unemployed while by contrast the kid glove treatment of public service payments and pensions and expenses has been quietly infuriating the people. The *Ireland First* report proposes that the State must work its way out of the Depression and the borrowing must stop. This is a businesslike proposal and should be rigorously pursued. It is hopeless to be borrowing for current expenditure, most of which is salaries and expenses. What should happen is that completely new pay scales for all grades of public servants should be introduced at fifty percent of the present scales for any new entrants to public servant jobs. People, well-qualified people, would be glad to take the jobs at half the present rates.

National and local politicians have put in place for themselves really massive rewards by international standards. Let them keep them only until the next election. Bring in new scales of rewards and expenses at one-half of the present scales for every politician elected or re-elected at the next elections. Do away with travel expenses for every National and local politician and give each of them a Free Travel Card to be used on the public transport system. Let them travel with the people whom they represent. Ireland has an excellent public transport system (at enormous cost) and the elected representatives and Public Service should use it the same as everyone else.

These are drastic proposals and it is drastic measures which are needed now to cut out the superfluous fat which has accumulated in the past. We cannot afford any fat now. Especially not on our backs.

If we saw drastic measures being implemented by our politicians for themselves and for the public service of the future then we would begin to believe in our leaders.

Any State is at the mercy of other states if it does not look after its own manu-

facturing and extractive industries. This Ireland has failed to do for the past fifty years. The IDA has done a great job in keeping Ireland supplied with large factories in foreign ownership, but the expected spin-off into native Irish industries has not happened. In a healthy economy most of the people should be employed in small businesses. In Ireland, we have hindered and neglected small business. We made a mistake when we traded away our very lucrative fishing industry—we should have retained exemption for fishing boats less than fifteen metres in length. We should assist and help our farmhouse cheese industry instead of imposing red-tape and very restrictive conditions on it. These are only two examples. There is a multitude of these apparently small things which, if they were looked after properly, would add up to a huge number of jobs for people.

There are also the active discriminations against employers. The most oppressive are:

- * No unemployment benefits for a businessperson who becomes unemployed and no contributory old-age pension for self-employed people. People know this lack of two important safety nets available to everyone **except** not to people who start a business.
- * There is the Employee Tax Credit which is allowed to all full time and part-time employees but is allowed to family members employed by parents only on certain conditions. Not so long ago, it was not allowed to family members at all. This does not encourage family businesses and I know a man who emigrated rather than suffer on in Ireland where he had to pay more tax on the same pay as an employee working next to him who was not his father's son.
- * There is the Revenue Job Assist for long-term unemployed who *"take up a qualifying employment"*. This allowance €3,810 plus €1,270 for each child per annum is not available to a long-term unemployed person who starts his or her own business. Where is the logic in this? It just does not stack up!

It is a huge but unacknowledged fact that employers are paying 99% of the taxes in Ireland. They are responsible for collecting and paying to The Revenue Commissioners—Value Added Tax, all the PAYE and PRSI, Excise duties, Corporation Tax and their own personal taxes. And, whether they like it or not, employers have to have and keep service of a business computer and a bank account.

Just try starting a little business and the Public Service will give you a hard time. There is plenty of scope for the Government to stop hindering someone who wants to start a business by cutting out the red-tape and levelling the playing-field.

Of the seventeen people—sixteen men and one woman on *'Ireland First'*—there are four whom one could identify as *"self-starters"*. The self-starters are the real backbone of any economy. It is they who identify or create a need and who can get together the people and the money to get a business off the ground and get it to be an employer.

Without such people, it is impossible to get the economy going and to keep it going. Among the seventeen are many who are good talkers and pleasant company and two heavyweight advisors to Fine Gael. Three of them are former Bank of Ireland Directors and four are or were Directors of AIB. And there is Pat Cox and the ubiquitous Peter Sutherland. Present too are Dermot Desmond and Denis O'Brien, either of whom could run the country very well on his own if appointed Dictator. What are very obviously missing from the group are women. The only woman on it is Angela Kerins who is Chief Executive of Rehab Group. What about Margaret Heffernan of Dunnes Stores? She could really get the country going. There are many very capable women involved in the Tourist Industry whose advice is sorely needed. But they are not here represented which is a pity. Maybe they weren't asked?

TOURIST INDUSTRY

The Tourist Industry in Ireland is not well-organised. The industry does not look after the product properly. Our roads, for example, are badly neglected. As are amenities such as quays, car-parks, lay-bys, camper van parks and yacht marinas (where they exist at all). Scottish tourist roads wind pleasantly and very smoothly across the countryside, and are unmarred by cowboy-pipe-layers or by potholes. Why is it that our roads are not treasured and nurtured as part of our tourist product?

Another much-neglected part of our tourist product is our local heritage; every square mile of Ireland has its heroes and heroines. Poets, writers, soldiers, actors, inventors, politicians, men and women who became famous in other countries. We should celebrate them all. What have we to be ashamed of?

Cork County Council obliterated the site of the Béal na Blath ambush where Michael Collins was killed when it widened the road in a tasteless manner and in

recent years likewise the Crossbarry Battle site was bypassed, again in a very ugly way. The Crossbarry site is internationally-renowned and arguably General Tom Barry was the greatest general of recorded history when he led 104 volunteer Irish soldiers and one bagpiper to fight and break out of an ambush by 1,370 battle-hardened British troops led by General Percival (who later surrendered Singapore to an inferior force).

The Irish lost three men, the British lost 35 (some reports say the British lost 39). It was 13 of them to each one of the Irish. A very famous victory and we do not make enough of it. The site should be carefully and reverently preserved. Great work has been done at Knowth, which is older than the Great Pyramid of Egypt, and at castles such as at Trim and Barrycourt. But there is an awful lot more to be done and such restoration is a great investment in the future of tourism.

RECENT LEGISLATION

The Education (Amendment) Bill 2012 and the Finance Bill 2012 have between them three very out-of-date features—in the Education Bill, the Education Act of 1878 is referred to and in the Finance Act, reference is made to Customs Consolidation Act 1876 and the Succession Duty Act 1853. Is it not about time that all enactments prior to 1922 would either be re-enacted or repealed? We should not have to depend now on a foreign legislature for our laws.

The Health (Professional Home Care) Bill 2012 has a peculiar wording on page 6. Clause (5) (b) reads: "*An undertaking providing professional home care services shall maintain a log in the home of all medication administered, which shall be accessible to all?*" And who is the 'all'? Can people demand to come into the Home off the public street for medication or to read the log? It doesn't stack up somehow.

Michael Stack ©

Naval Warfare

continued

our international credit was virtually exhausted, and had it not been for the entry of the United States into the war on the side of the Allies, the extent of our war effort would undoubtedly have had to be drastically reduced. We entered the war the richest country in the world, with abounding supplies of capital invested abroad. In two and a half years of war, we had practically run through our entire fortune and were on the verge of collapse. The effort to fight a first class war on both sea and land at the same time had proved too much for our finances. And over and

above this must be set a loss of life on a scale never before dreamed of in these islands." (p94-5).

Captain Grenfell's view was that the Liberal Imperialist commitment to Continental warfare—which used up vast amounts of the British Empire's blood and treasure in the waging of an unending war of attrition—placed England in a position whereby she came very close to losing the War.

For Grenfell Britain had taken 'her eye off the ball' and nearly 'got caught napping' by the submarine response of Germany to the blockade.

The War, which was supposed to be a quick formality, became unwinnable without the infusion of vast amounts of finance and then finally a vast infusion of manpower from the United States. And, of course, the money and men from the United States had implications for not only the waging of the War, but also the peace settlement and the long-term sustainability of the British Empire—which had exhausted and bankrupted itself in waging its War to the bitter end.

In some ways it could be said that the United States played the role, vacated by England, of the island nation that used large subventions of cash to fuel the War, whilst the European Continent bled itself dry. This time England bled itself dry as well. And it was the emerging island nation, and not Britain, that emerged on top as a result.

Pat Walsh

Roger Casement: *The Crime Against Europe.* With *The Crime Against Ireland* Introduction by B. Clifford. 184pp. 2003. **£13, £9.99.**

The Casement Diary Dogmatists. Edited by *Brendan Clifford.* 68pp. October 2004. **£5, £4.**

Traitor-Patriots In The Great War: Casement & Masaryk by *Brendan Clifford.* 56pp. October 2004. **£5, £4.**

Casement, Alsace-Lorraine And The Great Irredentist War by *Brendan Clifford.* With extracts from *Casement's Crime Against Europe,* and works by *Rene Bazin, Coleman Phillipson* and *Nicholas Mansergh.* 48pp. **£6, £4.**

Six Days Of The Irish Republic (eyewitness account of 1916), by *L.G. Redmond-Howard.* Contains a profile of Roger Casement, written during his trial; the Irish Case for the League of Nations; and a play written jointly with Harry Carson (the Ulster leader's son). Intro. by *Brendan Clifford.* March 2006. **£16, £12.**

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GUILDS continued

One of the outstanding developments of the 1890-1930 period has been the remarkable expansion of the activities and power of the State. This has been due partially to pressure of events, partly to public demands. It has shown itself in many forms, but principally in

(i) a great extension of State ownership and administration—of railways, forests, mines, posts and telegraphs, electric power—so that the State has become the direct employer of an ever-increasing army of citizens in addition to the large numbers of soldiers, police and civil servants;

(ii) an intensification in centralised State control with absorption of local municipal services, so that these have been taken over by the State or made entirely dependent on a State department;

(iii) a great increase in the control and regulation of all private enterprise in agriculture, industry and trade by Government departments. This development has resulted in a considerable addition to the cost of administration and to taxation.

As this is borne very largely by private enterprise, the latter is being driven back into a smaller area on which the State steadily encroaches. Again, the power of government over the individual citizen has so much increased that it is much easier to drive a country into aggressions and wars which the body of citizens do not want. In other words, the growth of State intervention leads to totalitarianism and this tends to be militaristic.

BUREAUCRACY

Finally, even in democratic countries there has been a transfer of power from Parliament and Ministers to administrative departments. Even when there is a change of Government by the electorate, the actual power of the political Executive to carry into effect a new policy is very seriously limited by the administrative power of the civil service. Owing to the great extension of legislation regulating agriculture, industry and commerce, there has arisen a tendency whereby Parliament decides only the general principles of legislation and delegates to Ministers of State power to make orders and regulations applying these principles in detail. As these orders are drafted by departmental officials and have the same obligations as Acts of Parliament, the power of officials over the social and economic interests of citizens has greatly increased. This power, exercised in a formal, inflexible manner by persons remote from the operations they regulate, has come to be known as Bureaucracy, and is one of the most significant developments of the twentieth century.

(To be continued next issue with reference to the Protestant Reformation and the Guilds).

GUILDS continued

questions, with their decisions subject to the approval of the national body; lastly, Works Committees in the individual establishments for dealing with local matters, subordinated to the District and National Councils. For the less highly organised or badly organised industries where no effective machinery existed for the regulation of wages, the Committee recommended that the Minister for Labour should have power to set up Trade Boards even though these industries were not 'sweated' in the technical sense.

Finally, the Committee recommended that there should be a Standing Arbitration Council to which differences which the Councils could not settle might be referred. As a direct result of this recommendation came the establishment, under the Industrial Courts Act, 1919, of the first permanent Arbitration Court in Great Britain. This Act also provided for the appointment of a conciliator by the Minister of Labour, at the request of either side, in any dispute, and for the holding of a Court of Inquiry into the causes of a dispute when such action seemed expedient. On its publication the Whitley Scheme received general approval of both trade unions and employers' association and was widely adopted.

Causes similar to those in England gave rise to systems of conciliation and arbitration in most countries of the world. The tendency towards either conciliation or compulsory arbitration varies in the different systems.

On the one hand, we find systems which are intended merely to strengthen the desire for an understanding between the parties and help them to an agreement, either with or without State aid. This may be called voluntary conciliation. On the other hand, there are systems which, under certain conditions, generally after voluntary conciliation has failed, provide for compulsory State intervention in fixing working conditions and supervising the maintenance of industrial peace. These may be called compulsory arbitration systems.

VOCATIONAL ORGANISATION

The development of vocational organisation in the nineteenth century had been influenced by theory and has itself exercised an influence on theory.

An outstanding event in the history of social theory was the publication in 1867 of Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* and the great moral and intellectual impetus that it gave to socialism. Exasperated by their poverty and by the economic liberalism which forbade the State to defend them, the workers throughout Europe turned to State ownership as their ultimate objective. There were, however, many differences as to the most effective means of securing

the eventual triumph of the worker. The most extreme section—anarchists and communists—urged the ruthless intensification of class warfare and the use of revolution to bring about the collapse of the capitalist system, the elimination of private property, and the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship.

On the other hand, Fabian Socialists and Social Democrats on the Continent believed in a gradual evolution by peaceful, constitutional means to a stage in which the principal means of production would be taken over and administered by the State, which would become the chief if not the sole employer. In England the Trade Union Movement had held aloof from political parties after the failure of the Chartist movement in 1848, but in 1899 the Trade Union Congress formed a distinct parliamentary group which, in 1907, adopted a socialist policy of the Fabian type.

But there was another form of socialism which was opposed to giving such power to the State. Syndicalists held that both liberty and efficiency would be preserved, if ownership and control of industry were vested in the Syndicates or Trade Unions. They left no place for the owner or employer, and, on the Continent at least, advocated direct action, sabotage, general strikes and class warfare. Syndicalism originated in France about 1850 and secured strong support there, in Spain and in Italy. The movement known in America as Industrial Unionism has many of the features of Syndicalism.

In England, a mild and expurgated version of Syndicalism appeared under the name of Guild Socialism about 1906 and exercised a powerful influence over many leaders of the Labour movement and in the professions. It advocated the transfer of industry by peaceful parliamentary methods to the joint management of State and Trade Union, the latter being recognised by the State as the normal controller of industry. This theory appealed to the tradition of industrial self-government which existed under the mediaeval guild and to the demand for industrial democracy.

It should, however, be noted that in both Syndicalism and Guild Socialism the owner is eliminated, and the parallel with the mediaeval Guilds is not complete. A unique practical experiment was made in 1920 with the foundation of a Building Guild, but it collapsed in 1922.

MANCHESTER SCHOOL

Throughout the nineteenth century the chief opponent of socialist and reformist theories was the dominant economic liberalism identified with the so-called Manchester School and the policy of *laissez-faire*. It occupied a position of apparently impregnable strength in University teaching, in finance and business, in the legis-

lature and Press. In a period of growing expansion of trade and industry and in a mental environment that favoured 'sturdy' individualism it could make a very strong case in favour of the freedom of contract, trade and competition and of non-intervention by the State.

VOCATIONALISM

Between these extremes of State Socialism and *laissez-faire* a middle way was pointed out in 1891. Leo XIII, in his Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, responded to the need of the Catholics for moral guidance on the many disputed questions raised by the growing urgency of the social problem. While reprobating Socialism because of its deification of the State and the denial of natural rights, he insisted on the right and duty of the State to intervene for the defence of the worker and of justice: he asserted the right of workers and employers to form free associations and pleaded for collaboration in place of class warfare. He proclaimed the doctrine of the living wage and expounded the true nature and limits of private property. In 1931 the intensification of social unrest led Pius XI to develop this line of teaching and apply it to the new problems of the post-war era. He maintained the condemnation of communism and socialism on the one hand, and of economic *laissez-faire* on the other, demonstrating that free competition had led to the new financial domination and the international struggle for economic power. He appealed to the State to intervene energetically for the reconstruction of the social order on the basis of justice; brought out the twofold character, social and personal, of property and labour; recommended workers' and employers' associations, and, finally, urged that they unite in vocational groups.

This theory of vocational groups was not a discovery or invention of Pius XI. Ever since 1840 it had been stressed by social writers, especially in France. With them it was not due to nostalgia for the mediaeval Guilds but to their belief in the natural right of free association.

Three reasons for his advocacy of vocational groups are given by Pius XI: first, they provide a remedy for the disorder of class warfare which is leading society to ruin; secondly, they prevent undue State control and preserve the salutary principle that, as far as possible, the State should leave to subsidiary bodies the work which they can efficiently discharge; thirdly, they preserve the important natural right of free association and do not interfere with the right of citizens to choose their form of government nor with the proper functioning of the authority of the State. Class warfare and bureaucracy are the two dangers against which Pius XI wished to guard.

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GUILDS continued

rise of the factory system, Friendly Societies came into existence to provide the benefits of insurance against death, sickness and unemployment, which the guilds had formerly provided. These societies were frequently used as a cloak for trade union activities during the early nineteenth century in order to evade the restrictions of the Combination Acts.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Next to the Trade Unions and Friendly Societies the most important organisation of workers that grew up at this time was the Consumers' Co-Operative Society, founded in Rochdale, Lancashire in 1844. This type of body was the result of a spontaneous movement on the part of workers and has had remarkable success in England, Scotland and the Scandinavian countries. The working and middle classes have proved beyond doubt their ability to operate enterprises in wholesale and retail distribution, banking, insurance and manufacture. But in these co-operative concerns control always remained with the shareholders and not with the workers employed by the co-operative.

Agricultural Co-operative Societies also appeared. In 1862, the first Raffeisen Credit Society was established in Germany to provide co-operative banking for farmers by farmers, and in 1882 the first co-operative dairy society was established in Denmark. Both these forms of organisation have proved successful and enduring. Attempts to form Co-operative Societies of workmen owning materials and means of production, and manufacturing articles for sale, were made in France after 1848 under the influence of Louis Blanc's teaching, and also in other countries. But in spite of assistance from Trade Unions, Governments and Municipalities, they were not successful, mainly owing to difficulty in maintaining industrial discipline, neglect of salesmanship and lack of adaptability to new processes. Unlike Consumers' and Agricultural co-operatives they were not able to compete with private enterprise or to solve their problems of capital and management.

Both workers' and employers' organisations were at first formed as local bodies confined to a town or district, but as time went on, they amalgamated into regional or national associations. Not merely did the Union in each trade endeavour to become national so as to include in one organisation all craftsmen in the whole country, but different Unions linked up in Trade Councils for a particular town or city, or in regional groups such as the Manchester Cotton Federation, until the process of consolidation reached its final stage when the British Trade Union Congress was established in 1868 to be the co-

ordinating authority for the trade unions of the whole country. The Irish TUC was founded in 1893. The movement of developing order in the Trade Union, with an ascending scale of authorities, was slow and not uniformly successful; there were many failures, but the direction and strength of the trend were unmistakable.

The Peel Act of 1825, while recognising the right of collective bargaining, did not provide any protection for workers who took collective action to attain their ends. Molestation and obstruction were expressly forbidden by the Act and picketing even of the most peaceful kind was frequently severely punished. The cases of the Southwark shoemakers in 1832 and the Dorchester labourers in 1834 are instances of how the efforts of the workers were repressed and punished.

The next 30 years witnessed great industrial unrest accompanied by riots and outrages on the part of the workers which caused a strong antagonism to Trade Unionism. But, while opposition between masters and workers was very real and at times developed into actual warfare, there were periods, of peace and co-operation; otherwise trade and industry could not have functioned at all. After 1850 there gradually grew up organisations designed to fulfill the essential tasks of peace, negotiation and collective bargaining.

"An organisation, as we see it, is a body through which the spirit of a group can be made manifest and operative. It is the spirit and will which are important. Hence, if members and leaders have not the outlook and spirit of co-operation, if they are not disciplined in mind and will so as to work together for a higher common purpose, mere mechanical association, however well designed by the legislature and encouraged by the administration, will not succeed. The history of workers' and employers' organisations—as well as of democracy itself—proves that abundantly" *Commission on Vocational Organisation 1943, Report, p.312*.

CONCILIATION

The House of Commons Committees of 1856 and 1860 found the operatives in all trades disposed to support the principle of voluntary submission to arbitration. This finding is borne out by the resolutions favouring the establishment of Councils of Conciliation passed at Sheffield in 1866 by a gathering of 138 representatives of Trade Unions.

The employers on the other hand did not view this trend with favour, and in their evidence before a Royal Commission in 1867 denounced all attempts by the workers to claim collectively any share in regulating the conditions of their labour as "*unwarrantable encroachments on their rights as employers*". Nevertheless, from this period we find a growing tendency

towards collaboration.

The Nottingham Hosiery Board (1860) and the Joint Committees of the Wolverhampton Building Trades (1864) remained for some years isolated instances, but from 1867 to 1875, many Boards of Conciliation were established at which representatives of masters and men "met on equal terms". Many of these Boards, such as those of the Iron Trade of the North of England, founded in 1869, and of the Bootmaking Industry have flourished since then and proved the value of conciliation. The early Boards worked on the principle that rates of wages should be based on the selling price of the commodity, and during the years of industrial prosperity which followed their formation proved most effective. In the period of contraction and depression, however, which set in about 1874, this principle reacted very unfavourably on the workers. Reduction in wages became widespread until it reached such a point that frequent, prolonged and bitter strikes occurred in almost every trade with disastrous results to the Trade Unions and employers alike, and the voluntary conciliation boards failed, for the most part, to solve the difficulties of the times.

"The stability of society depends on a continually increasing affluence drawn from the productive world beyond Britain by means of a money system in which Britain is once again close to being the major player. Affluence is the condition of development of the British ideal of individualism which leads logically and practically to the single-person household, with the abolition of marriage and state provision for the raising of children" (Brendan Clifford, *Labour & Trade Union Review*, October, 2007).

1896 CONCILIATION ACT

The Conciliation Act of 1896 gave recognition to the advantages of joint representative boards of conciliation in well-organised trades. In trades where the rate of wages was "*exceptionally low as compared with that in other employments*", that is to say, in 'sweated' trades, machinery to fix minimum wages was set up by the Trade Board Act of 1909. The abnormal conditions and unrest of the war period led to the setting up of the Whitley Committee in 1917. This Committee, in its reports, strongly advocated co-operation between employers and Trade Unions as the best method of securing industrial harmony.

For highly organised industries it recommended the establishment of, first, a National Joint Industrial Council for each industry composed of representatives of the associations of both sides, meeting regularly and often to consider matters affecting the trade; secondly, district Councils, similarly composed, to handle district

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GUILDS continued

of interest to the Communist Party' was in relation to a resolution by Miss Louie Bennett, Irish Women Workers' Union (Dublin), who was also a member of the Dublin Trades Council and of the 'Friends of the Soviet Union'. Her resolution required the incoming national executive {Irish Trade Union Congress} to request the joint council of congress and the Labour Party 'to devote special attention to the possible reactions, economic and social' of a vocational system 'upon the working class of Ireland'. The immediate context was the Commission on Vocational Organisation, still sitting, and the fear that a form of vocationalism and corporatism might emerge similar to Fascism. Miss Bennett, a member of the Commission, viewed vocationalism in some form as inevitable and judged wrongly, 'that Mr. de Valera was in love with Vocational Organisation'.

"Mr. O'Brien said the subject was an important one. He agreed with Miss Bennett 'that there was a great deal of confusion regarding the meaning of Fascism, Vocationalism, Communism and Socialism', but the confusion did not end with these. 'A process of clearing our minds and understanding what these things mean and stand for is certainly a desirable thing.' He hoped the members paid attention to the fact that Miss Bennett pointed out that a trade union is a vocational organisation. 'Whatever differences we have on the other facts, I think we are all agreed that a trade union is desirable, so to that extent we believe in Vocational Organisation.' He thought that if Miss Bennett gave a lecture on the matter or initiated a debate it would be of much greater help than setting up a committee. Unfortunately, the Irish Women Workers' Union seemed 'to have an infallible remedy for every problem—to appoint a commission. In America they would say it was 'passing the buck'. Instead of involving the National Executive, why did not the Women Workers' Union set up their own commission and come up with a report which Congress could discuss? Such a report was required. At present people were 'talking about Vocationalism and about Fascism when they do not know what they mean, and they did not know also what Socialism or Communism means'. He continued:

'Vocationalism, as Miss Bennett has pointed out, does not necessarily mean Fascism, Socialism or Communism. It can stand upon its own. We have it here to a certain extent. The various unions and professional organisations and so forth are all based on the vocational idea. What have we to consider? The development of Vocational Organisation, such as trade unions, or are we to consider it as a rival to the parliamentary system? That is the real crux of the matter.'

"He did not think it fair to pass the

problem over to the national executive. The resolution should be withdrawn.

"Mr. M. J. Keyes, T.D., vice-president, observed diplomatically that Congress was entitled to accord hearty thanks to the Women Workers' Union for having brought about such a magnificent contribution from Comrade O'Brien. If it had not been put down they would have lost the benefit of that understanding and research he had put into the matter." (*William O'Brien 1881-1968: Socialist, Republican, Dail Deputy, Editor, and Trade Union Leader*, Thomas J. Morrissey, SJ, Four Courts Press, 2007).

According to *The Oxford Companion of Irish History*:

"Bennett's belief in vocationalism as an alternative to socialism and capitalism led her to membership of the Commission on Vocational Organisation 1939-1943."

She became the first woman President of the Irish Trade Union Congress in 1932 and wrote several novels.

Thomas Morrissey does not reveal if William O'Brien was invited to serve on the Commission on Vocational Organisation. His ITGWU colleague, Senator Thomas Foran, served. Jim Larkin, Snr. was a Commission member also, but attended only 20 of the 84 meetings.

William O'Brien and James Larkin, Junior both gave oral evidence to the Commission.

We conclude by reporting how the Commission Report handled the Guilds and the History of Vocational Organisation.

TRADE UNIONS

The eighteenth century belief that the abolition of all restrictions on industry and of all guilds and associations would lead to peace, progress and prosperity was not found by the workers of the 1770-1830 period to be based on reality.

There is no need to describe here the state of the working classes at this period in regard to rates of pay, hours and conditions of work in factories and mines, living conditions and civic rights. They were appalling, degrading and inhuman.

Against these cruel hardships workers reacted with a new method of self-defence—the trade unions. In some cases there was undoubted continuity with an old guild or journeyman's association, but for the most part the trade unions were new, because the vast majority of their members were new to industry, and the trades themselves were often of recent origin—the result of inventions of the industrial and mechanical age. The origin of the trade union was due to the same need as that which produced the guild—self-

defence against unjust and oppressive conditions. Workers fell back instinctively on the natural right of association and as instinctively based their association on their comradeship in the same trade.

In England, Scotland and Ireland the unions had a remarkable growth towards the end of the eighteenth century. But they were met in 1800 with an absolute prohibition by Parliament which in the Combination Acts, forbade any association of workmen. It is clear that the legislators regarded trade unions as contrary to the public good on the grounds that they were in restraint of trade and destructive of freedom of contract. At this period the State left workmen entirely unprotected, for not merely did it prohibit them from combining in self-defence, but refused to enforce any of the old legislation which protected the worker or to enact any new legislation for that purpose.

The exasperation of the workers was very great and was not confined to peaceful modes of expression. The Combination Laws were repealed in 1824 (Hume's Act), but many of the restrictions were before long renewed. The struggle for the right of the worker to form unions and to take collective action in trade disputes continued through the nineteenth century with varying success.

The doctrine that the State should not regulate industry or business had also to yield to the dictates of humanity, but only after a long, bitter struggle in which men like Lord Shaftesbury had to contend strenuously for years. Radicals like Cobden strongly opposed bills prohibiting the employment of children for sweeping chimneys and predicted the downfall of industry if factory hours were reduced from fourteen to twelve per day.

"Sufficient for the present to state that Trades Guilds existed in Ireland as upon the Continent and England, during Roman Catholic, pre-Reformation days; that after the Reformation those Trade Guilds became exclusively Protestant, and even anti-Catholic, within the English Pale; that they continued to refuse admission to Catholics even after the passage of the Catholic Emancipation, and that these old Trade Guilds were formally abolished by law in 1840. But the Catholic and Protestant workmen who were excluded from guild membership (Episcopalians only being eligible), did nevertheless organise themselves, and it was their trade unions which dominated the labour world to the wrath of the capitalists and landlords, and the chagrin of the Governments" (James Connolly, *Labour in Irish History*, Chapter XVI).

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES

With the decline of the guilds and the

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LABOUR

Comment

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"A system of socialist democracy is not possible if the organised workers continue to act as a proletariat whose highest aspiration is to be destructive of 'the system'..." (*Labour & Trade Union Review*, October, 2000).

From Guild to Trade Union

"A Union Chief has rejected suggestions that the new Social Partnership wage agreement is modelled on 1930's Italian fascism.

"SIPTU Vice-President Jack O'Connor told the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) conference that he 'totally objected' to any comparison being made with Italian fascism. He was responding to criticism of the Sustaining Progress Social Agreement (signed up last month) by economist Colm McCarthy.

"In a discussion on competitiveness and Social Partnership, Mr. McCarthy had said that Sustaining Progress 'has a strong whiff of Mediterranean corporatism from the 1930s'. Later he said he was thinking more of Salazar's Portugal, rather than Mussolini's Italy..." (*Irish Independent*, 24.5.2003).

Mr. McCarthy might have saved himself much confusion if he had checked the thoughts of two eminent academic predecessors, one from his *alma mater*, Professor Michael Tierney, University College Dublin and the 'Moses of the South', Professor Alfred O'Rahilly, University College Cork. Both endorsed the following in the *Commission on Vocational Organisation 1943 Report*:

"We feel it necessary to say a word or two about the terms 'totalitarian State' and 'fascist State' owing to the fact that these terms are constantly used, either deliberately or in confusion, as synonymous with the vocational organisation of society. It has been suggested again and again that the introduction of vocational organisation is equivalent to the introduction of 'fascism' or 'totalitarianism' or 'dictatorship' or is at least the first step towards such forms of government. Such an opinion is unfounded since the evidence shows that vocational organisation exists under democratic forms of government, or under communistic forms.

"There is no more reason for thinking that vocational organisation is equivalent to 'fascism' than there is for thinking that it is equivalent to syndicalism, socialism

or communism. We see no necessary connection between a special organisation of the vocational sphere of social activity and any particular form of political regime or administrative machinery. Admittedly the form of political regime and administrative machinery will, to a considerable extent, influence the whole social and economic structure of any country and therefore its vocational organisation as well. But the fact that the country is organised on vocational lines does not deprive the people of the power to change the political regime and its machinery and to secure safeguards against the system being distorted from its true purpose and function.

"A 'totalitarian State' is one that claims the right, the mission and the competence to intervene in every activity of its citizens' lives, private and public, individual and corporate. 'The State is absolute, individuals and groups relative. Individuals and groups are admissible in so far as they come within the State.' (Mussolini, *Fascism*, p.27.) A monarchical form of government may make this claim, so equally may an oligarchical, or dictatorial, or democratic form. 'Totalitarianism' does not in any way depend on the particular type of political regime. There is certainly no reason why a society composed of strong, autonomous, independent, freely-

functioning vocational organisation should be totalitarian. Indeed such a society would present an almost insuperable obstacle to an excessive concentration of power in political or bureaucratic hands such as is found in a totalitarian State" (*Commission on Vocational Organisation 1943, Report*, p.11).

TRADE UNION RESERVATION

"We agree to the principal of Vocational Organisation, because the general trend of economic and social development impels us inevitably towards a system based upon it... We perceive how vitally important it is that Parliament should retain supreme power under a system of vocational organisation in order to avoid the danger of Corporatism and a dictatorship, whether individual or bureaucratic... Vocational organisation belongs to the producer. But the capitalist producer approaches economic enterprise from a different standpoint from that of the consumer. Production for profit is his primary aim. So long as the profit motive remains the dominant factor of production and the power of money is vested in a minority group, dangers both to the employee and the consumer remain inherent within vocational organisation" (Reservation No. 1, Ms. Louie Bennett, The Irish Women Workers' Union; Senator Sean Campbell, Dublin Typographical Provident Society, *Commission on Vocational Organisation 1943, Report*, p.477-478).

WILLIAM O'BRIEN : IT&GWU

The present writer has always considered William O'Brien of the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union as one of the most underestimated leaders in the Labour movement. He had his finger on the pulse at all times whether it was the ITGWU or the Labour Party. The following is an interesting insight to O'Brien's thinking on the issue of Vocationalism whilst admonishing the more 'left' leader, Louise Bennett.

"The other instance of his {William O'Brien} intervening in the interests of clear thinking and of upsetting 'matters

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