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Constitutional Nationalism!

The futility of Irish Constitutional Nationalism at Westminster was demonstrated yet again at the Commons debate on Syria, but essentially on Russia, on October 11th, when Mark Durkan intervened in an effort to broaden the moral concern, on the basis of the principles that were being invoked, to include atrocities which it would be of no benefit to Britain to condemn. He asked:

"Does the Foreign Secretary not think that more weight would be attached to the strength of his words about the International Criminal Court if the regime of President al-Bashir of Sudan—who has also been bombing his people from the air, who has recently been seen to be using chemical weapons against them, and who has been indicted by the International Criminal Court for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity—was not now being embraced by the UK Government through the UK-Sudan strategic dialogue as a partner in countering terrorism and managing migration?"

The Foreign Secretary responded:

"I take that point very sincerely, but it is vital that we concentrate our efforts and our censure on the Russians and on the Assad regime, who are primarily responsible for what is going on in Syria now. We can get lost endlessly in all sorts of moral equivalences..."

Political morality is interest-oriented. It always has been everywhere, and nowhere as much as in Britain.

The mathematical axiom, that two things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other, does not hold good in political and social affairs. Such "*moral equivalences*" are empty debating points. Political morality is national. England has had its singularly national morality for about half a millennium and, at the moment when it is striking out on its own again, it has no intention of dissolving itself into moral equivalences.

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2017: Another Safe Budget!

Probably the most noteworthy aspect of this Budget is that it was the fifth delivered by the current Finance Minister. That is remarkable given the economic turmoil the country faced in that period. Last February the Government changed, but Michael Noonan remains *in situ*.

This budget was similar to the previous four. It could be described as safe, cautious and politically astute, but certainly not radical. The last radical budget was introduced by the late Brian Lenihan for the year 2011. In that budget the principle was established that every income earner should pay some tax. This was the rationale behind the much derided USC [Universal Social Charge]. There were significant increases in capital taxes and also, as a result of external pressure, property taxes and water charges were put on the agenda.

No doubt Minister Noonan would argue that his cautious approach has been vindicated. GDP is expected to grow by 4.2 per cent in 2016 and 3.5 per cent in 2017. There are now over two million

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Trump v Clinton

What is at issue in the US Presidential election that concerns Ireland, Britain or Europe?

One would expect it to be the clear foreign policy difference between the two main candidates. Clinton seems to stand for continuing and intensifying the Obama policy of fundamentalist hostility to the restoration in Russia of an effective national state based on Capitalism and

Christianity and governed by means of democratic elections, and pushing it to the brink of war; and the policy of destroying effective States in the Middle East and Africa because they are dictatorships, and replacing them with popular chaos.

"*We came; we saw; he died*", Hilary exclaimed jubilantly, as Secretary of State, when former ally Colonel Gaddafi was killed in Libya: in the chaos brought

about by the US, tribal civil war set in, and the gate for the mass exodus from Central Africa to Europe was opened.

Trump wants the USA to pull in its horns, call a halt to the drive for total global dominance, let most of the world be, and treat Russia as a legitimately existing rival capitalist state.

But in Ireland, Britain and Europe the prospect of the USA letting other regions of the world have their own independent existence is so unthinkable that their

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EASTER, 1916

Erskine Childers

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A Thinking Democracy

Seán Ó Riain

(page 23)

It has its own absolute morality determined by its interest, and there is an effective consensus about this within Constitutional politics. Durkan just struck a jarringly irrelevant note. He did so because the Constitutionalism of the SDLP is merely imitative. It has never been a participant in the Constitutional system by which Britain is governed, and it has developed no insider sense of what is appropriate.

The founder-leader of the SDLP—Gerry Fitt, who tried hard to be a Brit—used to deplore the "tribalism" of the people he had to deal with in the Six Counties, but it is in Westminster that something like a real tribal spirit operates. It functions as a sort of Council of Elders which irresistibly generates substantial consensus, subverts the expression of earnest antagonism, and marginalises those who do not succumb to the influence of the obligatory language of the clan.

Irish Constitutional Nationalism at Westminster is a contradiction in terms. Even before Partition and Independence, when it was 80 strong and held the balance of power, it failed to achieve its very moderate object of making Ireland a Home Rule participant in the Empire. Since

Partition it has been nothing but the flimsiest of fig-leaves helping to disguise the systematically undemocratic nature of Northern Ireland government.

At home in the Six Counties it is neither one thing nor the other—neither British nor Irish in any effective way. It was founded 46 years ago. During 28 of these years a Republican War was fought, and it routinely condemned the acts of war along the way, repeating that there was another way and that it stood for that other way—to do what?—to make United Irelanders of the Protestants, and to do it by peaceful persuasion.

The current SDLP leader, Colm Eastwood, urged the Unionists to attend an all-Ireland forum to discuss the problem that Brexit poses for Ireland. He reassured them that "those attending will not be sprayed with holy water at the door". This demonstrates that the fixed idea of Ulster Unionists as mere religious bigots, asserted 46 years ago, remains in place.

Everything that the SDLP hoped for in 1970, in the way of shaking Ulster Unionism out of its bigotry by breaking up its political structures and breaking the very tenuous connection of the UUP with the

Tories, was achieved, but Unionism still stood its ground. And, all the SDLP can do is echo itself from 1970—giving Newton Emerson the opportunity to say something sensible:

"The implication is that unionist objections to all-Ireland co-operation are of a piece with deranged religious bigotry. Lest anyone accuse this in turn of being a gratuitous sectarian insult, the SDLP carefully directed its statement at "political unionism". This is a phrase used to separate unionist people from their politics, so it is of a piece with the dismissal of unionism as a false consciousness" (*Irish Times*, 20.10.16).

Budget 17

continued

people at work this year and there will be a further 43,000 at work by the end of 2017. While employment is still short of what it reached in 2007, as Noonan has pointed out, as recently as 1989 less than 1.1 million people were at work in Ireland. In 2012 the unemployment rate had hit 15%; it is now 7.9%.

The public finances have also been transformed in the last six years. In 2010 the current budget deficit was over 12 per cent of GDP (excluding bank transactions). The forecast for 2017 is 0.4 per cent. After 2018 the Minister intends running budget surpluses. The National Debt peaked at over 120 per cent of GDP during the crisis. This time last year the Minister predicted it would be 93% at the end of this year. It will, in fact, be down to 76 per cent. The Minister thinks we should aim to reduce it to 45 per by the mid-2020s.

Rightly or wrongly, Noonan's view in his first three budgets was that there was no further scope for increasing tax rates or reducing reliefs. In this budget and the 2016 budget he was able to give something back to the taxpayer. Without doing anything, there has been a dramatic increase in income tax revenue in the last five years as a result of the economic recovery. For the most part the budgetary changes that were implemented by the last Government came on the expenditure side.

From a political point of view Noonan's job has been relatively easy. Most of the political flak was taken by Labour's Brendan Howlin. Indeed, Paschal Donohoe, Fine Gael's new Public Expenditure Minister, admitted as much by acknowledging in his speech the contribution of Howlin. In this budget the value of expenditure increases was three times that of tax cuts.

There is not a lot to be said on the tax side of Budget 2017. There were no changes in the income tax rates. However, there was a reduction of 0.5 percent in the three lower rates of USC and an increase in the 2nd lowest band by 104 euro. The third lowest band was reduced by the same amount. For 2017 the rates will be:

- 0.5% on the first 12,012 euro
- 2.5% on the next 6,760
- 5% on the next 51,272 and
- 8% on the balance.

This will benefit all tax payers, but in proportional terms the primary beneficiaries will be those on a salary of 70,044 or less. This time last year Enda Kenny made some speeches advocating a reduction in the top rates of income tax and USC. But, whether as a result of the chastening experience of the General Election, or the influence of Fianna Fáil on the budget, this policy was not pursued.

The self employed Tax Credit, which increased from 550 euro to 950, was about the only significant change. Last year the present writer was a little dismissive of this Tax Credit, suggesting it would benefit accountants and lawyers in practice rather than entrepreneurs. This was probably a little harsh. The Credit will also benefit proprietorial directors (directors owning more than 15% of companies) which covers entrepreneurs. These directors are not eligible for the employee Tax Credit, which is 1,650 euro.

The Minister indicated his intention to increase this self employed Credit to match the employee Credit. On grounds of equity it is difficult to disagree with this. The PAYE Credit was introduced in 1979 when the burden of taxes fell disproportionately on the PAYE sector. This is no longer the case. However, the idea that this measure will encourage entrepreneurial activity is wildly optimistic.

In Budget 2016 the Minister reduced the Capital Gains Tax rate from 33 to 20 per cent for entrepreneurs selling their businesses. This applies to the first million euro of lifetime gains. In this budget he reduced this to 10 per cent. The rate is now equal to the UK rate for entrepreneurs, but the UK ceiling is set at 10 million pounds. The present writer is sceptical of the economic benefits of such a policy. Does an entrepreneur become an entrepreneur on the basis of the Capital Gains tax rates? Also, why should the State encourage entrepreneurs to sell their businesses?

Noonan seems intent on reversing Brian Lenihan's policies on Inheritance taxes.

Who broke the Syria ceasefire?

On 9th September 2016, the US and Russia made a deal in Geneva on Syria. If the US had implemented the deal, it would have led to

- (1) a ceasefire between the Syrian Government and its allies (Russia, Iran and Hezbollah) and the so-called "moderate" opposition
- (2) joint action by the US and Russia against al-Nusra, the erstwhile al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria, with which many of the "moderate" opposition groups co-operate

However, the US failed to deliver on its promise to persuade the "moderate" opposition groups to accept the terms of the ceasefire (see [report](#) by the BBC's diplomatic correspondent Jonathan Marcus on 21 September). The opposition groups' refusal to accept the terms of the ceasefire was understandable since a successful ceasefire was to be followed by joint US/Russia military action against al-Nusra, which would have severely weakened the armed opposition and strengthened President Assad's hold on power.

Without an effective ceasefire between the Government and the "moderate" opposition the deal done in Geneva was—and the US failed to deliver on that.

David Morrison

In 2009 the threshold for cases where the beneficiary was a child of the disponent was 542,544 euro. This tax-free allowance on lifetime inheritances was reduced each year so that, by 2012, the relief was 225,000. But last year the Minister increased it to 280,000 and this year it was increased by another 30,000. This is to be regretted. Allowing 225,000 of an inheritance to be tax free seems generous. Asking someone to pay 33% on the balance does not seem at all unreasonable.

Probably the most eye catching initiative was the "help to buy scheme". First-time buyers of new build homes will be entitled to a tax credit of 5% of the value of a property. The credit will have a maximum value of 20,000. The relief will not be available for properties costing more than 600,000. The taxpayer will be able to claim the Tax Credit against income tax paid in the previous 4 years. Also, the Credit can be designated as part of the deposit of the first-time buyer, thus enabling him to overcome the central bank restrictions on loan to value ratios.

This, to the say the least, is a controversial measure. Noonan was quite explicit in his justification of it. His argument is that it will stimulate new build prices, thereby encouraging builders to build more houses. In effect, it is a subsidy to builders. It is also encouraging home-ownership in a society which has high ownership by international standards. The present writer does not agree with this.

On the expenditure side Paschal Donohoe had, as earlier noted, a far easier job than his predecessor Brendan Howlin.

Donohue claimed that his 2017 Budget will increase current spending by almost 4 billion since the reversal of the downward spiral of spending in 2014.

There has been an increase on the capital side of 26 per cent since 2014.

The 58 billion euro in total is split between 53.5 billion on the current side and 4.5 billion in capital spending. In total this is an increase of 1.9 billion or 3.3 per cent on the expected 2016 out-turn

Donohue proposes:

- Additional recruitment of close to 4,500 additional frontline staff, such as nurses, Gardaí and teachers
- 1.2 billion euro in funding for Housing to the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government for 2017. This will allow for 47,000 new social housing units to be delivered by 2021.
- 50 million euro for the 200 million Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund, which will accelerate the provision of local public infrastructure to support the development of key sites for private housing in urban areas. Donohue is hoping that this will facilitate the delivery of up to 20,000 private houses by 2019 through developers working in cooperation with Local Authorities.
- From July this year, the Government increased rent thresholds for the Housing Assistance Payment and Rent Supplement. In this budget an additional €105 million for the Housing Assistance Payment Scheme will be made available. This will bring the budget for this purpose

to nearly 153 million, an increase of 220% compared to 2016.

This will enable an additional 15,000 households to avail of HAP, and together with the capital allocation provided for housing and other measures, will mean that over 21,000 applicants for social housing will have their housing needs met next year.

- There will be an increase in the allocation for emergency accommodation for homeless people by an additional 28 million approximately, to almost 100 million.
- There will be an additional 1 billion, or a 7.4 per cent increase in health spending from Budget 2016 (taking account of supplementary spending).
- The increase in spending of 458m for education (+4.8 per cent) will fund an extensive programme of recruitment in 2017, including an additional 2,400 teaching posts, of which 900 will be resource teachers.
- In the area of childcare, the Early Years funding will rise from 345m in 2016 to 465m in 2017, an increase of 35 per cent.
- State pension, disability allowance, carers' allowance, job seekers benefit will rise by \approx 5 per week from March.

It is a standard criticism by the Opposition that the Government lacks ambition. Donohue finished his speech by making a virtue of caution and consensus. He concluded by saying:

"Those of us in the middle ground of politics have a duty to show that cooperation and consensus can work. To show that our tone can be moderate, but still convincing. To show that things won't just fall apart and the centre can hold—and stay firm".

In the budget speeches Pearse Doherty of Sinn Féin tried to position the party as the main Opposition. Fianna Fáil attempted to take credit for some of the policies in the budget statement while distancing itself from others: most notably the "help to buy" scheme. Michael McGrath of Fianna Fáil seemed to agree with Donohue about the need for the centre ground to hold. However, he entered the *caveat* that we can disagree on where exactly the centre ground is.

It will be interesting to see how the new political configuration copes with challenges such as Brexit and other dark clouds on the horizon. All we can say is that the Government in its first budget has passed its first serious test. But there may be more severe examinations in the future.

John Martin

John Gillespie

John Gillespie (Mac Giolla Easbaigh) of Gaoth Dobhair (Gweedore), Donegal, who died on August 12th, was an early member of the B & ICO. He came to it by way of the IRA of the late 1960s, with its Socialist Republican tactic by means of which it hoped to undermine Ulster Unionism.

The events of August 1969 in Derry and Belfast demonstrated the futility of Republican Socialism as an anti-Partition tactic. It met with no response across the barricades, though it did perhaps contribute something to the erection of the barricades in Belfast.

With regard to Socialism, the social provision made in the Six Counties by the British State, in disregard of its oppressive Northern Ireland facade, went far beyond what existed in the Republic in those times, or than was likely to be brought about by unification, even supposing that the Official IRA became the driving force in the Southern state.

The Unionist workers took little heed of the new Socialist slogans of the IRA acting through its recently-legalised Republican Clubs. They had a bird in the hand and would not let go of it to grab the two that they were told would be in the bush. And they were comfortable with British political life to the extent that they were allowed to have contact with it.

Only a handful of them in the Trade Union leaderships where the Communist Party had a presence took any interest in the new-line Republicanism, and their influence beyond the narrowest sphere of Trade unionism was negligible.

The Unionist Government treated the new Republicanism, which only spoke of Socialism, as being just a tricky form of anti-Partitionism. And so it was. John, who was active in the movement, was very clear on that point. The internal briefings told them that the Socialist slogans were anti-partition tactics and not a statement of ultimate purpose. He left the movement and joined BICO after that tactic did no more than contribute marginally to the August explosion, and the leadership didn't have a clue about what to do next.

The explosion was precipitated by the

actions of a few British ex-servicemen in Derry who were Catholics and who were irritated by being treated as rubbish in their retirement in this corner of the United Kingdom. They interfered in the annual routine connected with the Apprentice Boys commemorations in Derry and applied their military skills to erecting barricades against RUC entry into the Bogside. They were not Republicans. They just wanted to be treated as British in what was supposed to be a part of Britain. They did not approve of what their intervention led to. But, even in hindsight, they did not see that they had any choice but to do what they did.

The blocking-out of the RUC from the Bogside for a number of days sparked off the spirit of insurrection in other areas, and the Loyalist/RUC launched a counter-insurrection in Belfast before the Catholic insurrection had actually happened there. And, out of all of this, a new IRA, shaped to the reality of the Northern Ireland situation, was generated.

John Gillespie drew from those August events the conclusion that the Ulster Unionists were not latent elements of a general Irish nation awaiting development by means of appropriate slogans, and that they must be treated as a distinct national entity.

He was active in the B&ICO in the 1970s, both on Northern Ireland policy and the attempts made by Sean Kearney to develop a Socialist movement in Irish literature in the Gweedore region.

Both ventures were unsuccessful. The Southern Establishment refused to see the Ulster Unionist as anything but defectors from the Irish nation, even after it joined with the British Government in the attempt to suppress the insurrection of the nationalist minority against the absurd form of government to which it had been subjected.

And Gaoth Dohair was hostile to Sean Kearney's efforts to get Trade Union business transacted in Irish, supported by a socialist magazine published in Irish (*An Lamh Dearg*).

Irish was the comfortable language of the family and the pub. For the stressful conduct of business, English was the language.

Sean Kearney migrated from Belfast to Gaoth Dobair in order to live in an Irish language environment. But it was in West Belfast that an authentic revival of Irish as a language for living the whole of life in took place.

John Gillespie did not have the temperament for pursuing causes that were probably lost. He accepted the linguistic *status quo* in Gaoth Dobhair and the inevitability of the way things developed in the Six Counties. He was industrious and capable and found that he had entrepreneurial talent. While he was active in the B & ICO, he worked for the ESB. He subsequently bought a public house in Gaoth Dobhair and developed businesses of many kinds on the basis of it—before the era of the Celtic Tiger.

Trump v Clinton

continued

medias barely mention that that is what Trump proposes.

They have presented the Election as being in substance a conflict between a woman whose essential political attribute is that she is a woman, and a rich male who made lewd remarks about women eleven years ago which were secretly recorded and were sold to the Clinton campaign for a fortune. Tolstoy, and in his virtuous old age, was reported by Gorky, who visited him, as making lewd remarks about the bottoms of peasant women passing by. So, burn *Anna Karenina* and *Family Happiness!*

What would happen to the world if men became so politically corrected and fixated that they ceased to notice women's bottoms in advanced cultures?

The question doesn't apply to the most vigorous traditional culture that exists in the world today—the culture which is scaring the wits out of Euro-America. In that culture women do not display themselves as sex-objects, and yet it reproduces itself more plentifully than Euro-America does, and even supplies part of the shortfall in Euro-American reproduction. Sexual attraction functions romantically—that is, through secondary or tertiary features.

But, in the USA, the home of political correctness, where secretly-recorded remarks about women are Clinton's political trump-card in a Presidential conflict, Jennifer Lopez's bottom is a national talking point, and Freud's notion, that

everything that obstructs genital sexual display and contact is unhealthy repression that should be overcome, is close to realisation.

America today combines the Puritanism of its origins, as an earnest hypocrisy, with an immense, high-quality, freely-conducted, pornographic film industry. And that bizarre combination stunts its reproductive capacity.

British television, disconcerted by the success of Trump's old-fashioned views, went in search of his typical supporters and found that they were largely working-class in areas where industry was threatened by the export of capital, by means of which the USA has been pursuing its goal of world dominance. They responded to his call to help "*America First*". The interviewer told them that "*America First*" was a fascist slogan from the period of US neutrality at the start of Britain's 2nd World War, 1939-41. They were unimpressed. They could not see why their jobs should be exported in the service of increasing America's world power.

In 1939-41 the US kept out of the European War begun by Britain and France because it had entered much the same war in 1917 with the programme of settlement which helped to end the War with the German political collapse in November 1918, and was then prevented by Britain and France from making a European settlement on the basis of its programme.

President Wilson agreed to the unstable Anglo-French punitive settlement, but it was repudiated by Congress. America became "isolationist"—meaning that it let Britain and France get on with running things. When, less than 20 years later, Britain and France had somehow managed to get up another Great War against the defeated and disarmed Germany of the 1920s and early 1930s, there was, very understandably, a very strong sentiment against intervening again.

What "*America First*" means today for the world is that stable political structures within it should not be overthrown from the outside by overwhelming military power acting in the service of a Utopian global ideal which functions as camouflage US world conquest.

Trump's foreign policy bears a strong resemblance to Joseph Chamberlain's proposal in 1905 that Britain should call a halt to Imperial conquest, consolidate the existing Empire as a segment of the world, and accept the existence of a number of other Empires and strong nation-states as

part of a stable world order. His proposal was not accepted by his Party, the Unionist Party, but the fact that it was seriously discussed by the Unionists led to the great Liberal victory of 1906 on a globalist program, and to the 1914 bid for world dominance in which Britain over-reached itself, and its decline began

We expect that Trump will be defeated and that the US will continue in the mode of expansionism without limits, which has characterised it ever since it was founded, and that it will be incapable of acting otherwise until it suffers a major catastrophe.

A Trump victory would oblige Europe to become something other than an American poodle, and it finds that prospect too awful to contemplate. Varufakis, the Greek whizz-kid, appeared on the BBC's Question Time on October 20th. He described Trump as a Fascist. He was like Mussolini, an outsider with wild schemes, who when the electorate is feeling desperate could gain power and bring disorder on the world. Nobody on the panel pointed out that Mussolini was an invaluable ally of Britain in bringing Italy into the Great War in 1915—and therefore also the ally of Redmondite Home Rulers. And the chronic post-War disorder in Italy ended when Mussolini took power.

Another member of the BBC panel was Conrad Black International capitalist and personal friend of both Trump and Clinton. He said that in a private conversation Hillary was foul-mouthed compared to Trump—where are the secret recordings? And he said that Trump as an employer had an impeccable equal opportunity record.

Also on the panel was Jeremy Corbyn's Shadow minister for Education, Angela Rayner, apparently a typical member of the *Snowflake* generation. She wasn't interested in Trump's record as a good employer, or his foreign policy. All that concerned her as a potential Cabinet Minister in a major state, was that piece of secretly-recorded private banter.

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Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

THE IRISH TIMES

The Irish Times financial results were published a couple of months ago. They showed an operating loss of about 1 million euro. There is no immediate danger of the company going bankrupt. It accumulated substantial reserves in the 1990s and, since it is controlled by a Trust, it could not pay dividends from its profits. This has provided a cushion in the bad times. But, if it continues its recent performance, it will be in serious trouble within a couple of years.

Its problem is that its print circulation has been in decline. From a peak of about 115,000 it is now down to 70,000. In a declining market it has been losing market share to *Independent Newspapers*. Revenue from its digital platform has not been enough to stem its deteriorating financial position.

It appears to be pinning its hopes on "monetising" its digital output. It may not have an alternative. There are three problems with this strategy. Firstly, people are not prepared to pay as much for digital output as they are for the print version of a newspaper. There are still numerous sources of information that are free on line. Secondly, if fewer people are viewing *The Irish Times* website because of the newly erected pay-wall, it is likely that there will be a loss in advertising revenue. Thirdly, investing in digital undermines the print version. If its print version loses any more readers the business case for continuing with its print facilities is undermined.

The logic of its strategy is to follow the London *Independent*, which now has only a digital version. Before the London *Independent* ceased its print edition it had a circulation of 58,000 which is not much less than the current circulation of *The Irish Times*.

If the newspaper went out of business altogether, would that be a tragedy? The Minister for Communications Denis Naughten (ex Fine Gael) seems to think that it would. He is proposing that the State should subsidise "quality" print journalism. But why? If the State under Richard Bruton's watch allowed the *Irish Press* and its sister titles to go under, where is the national interest in preserving

The Irish Times? As readers of this magazine will understand, in the case of *The Irish Times*, the national interest is in the opposite direction.

BUDGET 2017

The most eye catching measure in the budget was without doubt the "help to buy" scheme, which subsidises first-time buyers up to a maximum of 20,000 euro.

Elsewhere in this magazine, the Long Fellow, writing under a pseudonym, has opposed it on the grounds that it will fuel property prices with the ultimate beneficiary being the builder. Far be it for the Long Fellow to disagree with his pseudonym (!), but it must be admitted that it was the one measure that has caught the imagination of some young people in their late twenties and early thirties. Judging by those he has talked to in that age category, people who had resigned themselves to renting their homes are now considering for the first time stepping on to the property ladder. Whether that is a good thing or not remains to be seen.

BUDGET 2012

Often it is not obvious what the consequences of a budgetary measure will be until months or even years afterwards. The Long Fellow is glad to report that he (or rather his pseudonym) opposed at the time one disastrous budgetary measure which Noonan introduced in his first budget (the 2012 budget). Here is what the pseudonym said:

"It is also difficult to understand why Noonan is exempting from Capital Gains Tax for a seven year period property purchased up until the end of 2013. Why is it necessary in these straitened times to give a tax incentive to property speculation?" (*Irish Political Review*, January 2012).

However, it must be admitted that the above extract doesn't really capture the stupidity of the measure. At a recent property conference a property speculator said that he was holding on to his land because that's what the Government told him to do in the 2012 budget (*Sunday Independent*, 16/10/16). In the midst of a housing crisis it is in the interests of land speculators to hold on to their land until 2019. They will thereby maximise their tax free profits when pent up demand is released in three years time.

PROJECT EAGLE

There have been no findings of corruption by NAMA in relation to Project Eagle, which involved the sale of Northern Ireland loans. The Comptroller and Auditor

General's Report suggests at worst incompetence. NAMA normally used a discount rate of 5.5% to value an asset from the projected future cash flows. In Northern Ireland it used a discount rate of 10%. If NAMA had used its normal rate it would have recovered £190 million more than it did.

That's all very well in theory, but in practical terms the value of an asset for sale is only worth what someone is prepared to pay for it. NAMA argues that the normal rate does not apply to Northern Ireland because there was a greater risk (e.g. Brexit, exchange rates and lack of engagement by debtors). The Department of Finance agrees with NAMA, but it seems that for some politicians the pronouncements of the CAG have the status of Holy Writ.

The CAG criticises the sales process for being restrictive, but appears to wish that the winning bidder should have been excluded because it used the same lawyers as Pimco (the firm that was paying a finders fee to Frank Cushnahan).

Should NAMA have gone for a quick, short sale—as it did—or should it have sold the numerous properties in the portfolio separately with uncertain future returns over a longer period of time? Also, the State had an interest in reducing its contingent liability, which is the ultimate objective of NAMA. These are complicated decisions that had to be made. Even with the benefit of hindsight it is not clear that NAMA made the wrong call.

THERESA MAY BREXIT

Immediately after the Brexit referendum, there remained a doubt as to what form that Britain's exit would take. Perhaps there were lingering hopes that it would be a soft exit. But the EU has been surprisingly firm. Firstly it was made very clear that it would not negotiate until Article 50 was invoked. In other words the negotiations would be about exit, rather than an attempt to keep Britain in by giving her better terms. Secondly, it has been indicated that, once Britain invoked Article 50, she could not expect favourable terms since this would be an incentive for other States to leave the Union.

Theresa May had an unenviable challenge, she has been forced to deal with a situation that was not of her own making. In the Long Fellow's opinion she has played a rather weak hand very well. She has been criticised for naming March 2017 as the deadline for invoking Article 50. The argument is that she is weakening her negotiating hand, but it is difficult to see

how she could have delayed any longer. Prolonging the uncertainty would have caused even more danger to the economy.

IRELAND AND BREXIT

This, of course, presents a challenge for Ireland. It is difficult to see how Brexit can be anything other than hard. We are now faced with a dilemma, which we have faced many times before. By asserting our sovereignty we are in danger of copper fastening partition. Probably the most dramatic example of this dilemma was Churchill's offer to de Valera to abandon our neutrality in exchange for an ending of partition. In the present Long Fellow's

view de Valera was right to reject the offer.

There is talk that we don't need to have border checkpoints if there are checkpoints at the ports (both air and sea). It is difficult to see how this will operate. Presumably, all EU citizens arriving in Dublin will have to be stopped and interrogated to make sure they don't travel Northwards and into the UK. Also, we will have to rely on the British to make sure goods arriving from mainland UK to Northern Ireland do not turn up in the Republic of Ireland.

It is difficult to see how checkpoints on the border between the North and the Republic can avoid being re-instated.

Adenauer was the most consistent supporter of the Americans and the most effective politician in the whole project. But the project itself would have been stillborn without the Americans.

There can be no doubt that, when the forces that made the EU a going concern disappeared, as they did when the Soviet Union was abolished, an opportunity arose for the EU to live and thrive on its own in the world without any dependence on America. There was no economic dependence and there was no longer any political or military threat to Europe.

But the EU insisted on being a subservient echo and supporter of American foreign policy. That poses the question as what is the purpose of the EU in the world. Being an economic power is not sufficient as '*man does not live by bread alone*'. In the same period, beginning from political anarchy, Russia has remade itself as a new independent moral force in the world that is a solver of problems not a creator of them which the US and the EU have willingly become.

Why?

Jack Lane

Book Review: *"The history of European integration"* by **Ivan T. Berend**, Routledge, 2016.

How America Made Europe!

There is plenty discussion at the moment about the EU having an existential crisis. That is valid but what exactly is wrong? A look at its origins must be a good starting point. This book is a very useful introduction to that issue. The accepted narrative is that the European nations, essentially France and Germany, saw sense and decided not to go to war again. So it was wished into existence by an outbreak of commonsense!

If that's the explanation then it has a very flimsy basis. Why did it take so long for the most 'advanced' peoples in Europe to see sense? The logical conclusion is they were stupid before that.

Britain is not part of this narrative, of course, and it's given a clean pair of hands in the wars that wrecked Europe in the 20th. Readers of this magazine will have been provided with the reality of its role.

This book concentrates on the formation of the European project following WWII and it makes a convincing case that the project would never have got off the ground without American insistence that it must happen and the Marshall Plan was clearly conditional on definite acceptance and plans for a federal Europe. The Americans had a clear purpose for this arrangement—to counter the power of the Soviet Union.

This was not the immediate American view at the end of the War. The first approach taken was the *Morgenthau Plan* which reflected Roosevelt's intentions. It was for the *"converting of Germany into a country primarily agricultural and*

pastoral in character" and depriving it of the Ruhr, Saar and Upper Silesian regions under a partition plan. It was essentially a plan to destroy Germany through *"industrial disarmament"*. All the victors were agreed on this strategy. The French, with Monnet as Foreign Minister, wanted to go even farther with unlimited military occupation and dismemberment of Germany (p.11).

But Roosevelt died unexpectedly and American policy quickly changed with the realisation that this policy could drive Germany into Soviet hands. Suddenly the very opposite policy was adopted by the Americans: Germany was to be rebuilt and the denazification programme dropped.

Only the use of sheer American power, financial, military and diplomatic ensured this new policy was implemented. Allen Dulles published a book on the Marshall Plan (1948) making clear that the American aim was for the Europeans to take *"a step nearer the establishment of a United States of Europe"*. This was reiterated again and again by American leaders and officials. Dulles made it crystal clear that the Marshall Plan was conditional on Europeans working convincingly towards integration.

France's enmity to Germany did not suddenly disappear and they—including French Foreign Minister Monnet—had to be browbeaten and ordered in no uncertain terms to abandon it. The reparations mentality had to be broken. The pressure and ultimatums by the Americans were sustained until the Europeans, essentially the French, had no choice but to comply.

Appeal on the release of a State Paper case—Round 5

September's *Irish Political Review* published a press release on Round 5 of the case that Barry Keane has been pursuing to get the British State to release a 106 year old file on Informants for the benefit of his historical research. Part of the file (TNA HO 317/78) had been available in 2009 but was withdrawn at the request of the Metropolitan Police, when it was brought to their attention as a result of Mr. Keane's request to have the full file made available.

The hearing on the 29th September, being an appeal, no further evidence could be presented and the issue was discussed strictly on points of law. But, as often happens in such cases, common-sense kept breaking in and the substance of the issue could not be avoided. That issue was: should a 106 year file on RIC informants be withheld from historians today? The historian's case was that the role of informants was a crucial aspect of Irish history. Their motivation and the quality of their information were determining factors for some historical events and historians had a valid reason for obtaining this information in order to

make a judgement on them and their significance. Therefore there was a public interest in making such information available.

The Defence case by the State was that such information can never be released as it would hinder a crucial element of the fight against terrorism, i.e., the recruiting of informants where a guarantee of anonymity in perpetuity was vital. The release would therefore endanger national security. Also, there was a danger to life and/or injury to people who were related to the informants. This is Ireland, after all, being the subliminal message.

The appellant queried what exactly *perpetuity* meant. Did it apply as far back as the English Civil War as, asserted at an earlier hearing? The State accepted this was probably not defensible.

But that then denied the perpetuity argument and begged the question—where

was the line to be drawn?

As to the danger to life or injury to people related to the informants the Court was reminded that at an earlier hearing the MET admitted that the file had been examined by three police forces, the MET itself, the PSNI and the Garda Síochána and all confirmed that they could see no danger to anybody's life in releasing it.

The State said that a balance had to be struck between national security and public interest but that balance could not be precisely measured and an "*impressionistic*" judgement was entirely valid. When the matter concerned death or injury, the writing of a book "*did not cut it*" in striking that balance.

The judge said he would give his judgement in a week or so, remarking that he was surprised by the level of attendance—a full court.

Jack Lane

Centenary Commemorations, Casement and Gavin Friday

To date the figure of Roger Casement has featured a great deal in the commemorative events marking the centenary of the 1916 Rising. There have been a number of multi-media format art exhibitions in Dublin, as mentioned already in this publication. There has been a new play, *McKenna's Fort* by A.T. Fanning (see review *Irish Political Review*, May 2016), a one-man monologue, which premiered at Dublin's New Theatre in March and featured as part of in the 13th International Dublin Gay Theatre Festival in May.

Thousands turned up at Banna Strand, near Tralee, Co Kerry on 21st April to witness the President, Michael D Higgins, and the Defence Forces mark one hundred years to the day since Casement, with two associates, came ashore in the very early hours, on that very same strand, having been passengers on the submarine, U-19.

There have been a number of commemorative events in County Kerry organised by local groups. As well, there is at present an elaborate exhibition, *Casement in Kerry*, at Kerry County Museum, Tralee. An exhibition is currently at the National Museum, Kildare Street, where objects associated with Casement's time in the tropics are on view.

There were a number of formal public discussions held around the country.

There was *The Rogers Casement* held

near Ballycastle, County Antrim on June 24th, organised by the local history group, Carey Historical Society. The title arose from the fact that there was another Roger Casement living in the vicinity of Ballycastle contemporaneously with his famous first cousin. This man, like the great majority of his kinsmen, was a Unionist as well as a Protestant. The background and lives of these other Casements—who devoted much of their time and energy to the armed services of the Imperial British State was ably described by one Patrick Casement, of Magherintemple, Co Antrim. The day-long conference presented a wide range of speakers and viewpoints.

There was also an exhibition of press cuttings as well as traditional music and dance from Ireland and from the Congo.

Yet another conference took place in Ballycastle, in early August to mark Casement's execution.

The *Casement Project*, undertaken by interpretative dance choreographer Fearghus Ó Conchúir, is backed by the Irish Arts Council as well as an exotic collection of additional sponsors. It offers a specially conceived new dance piece based on the choreographer's interpretation of Casement's life called *Butterflies and Bones*. This has premiered in London. The butterflies refer to a butterfly collection Casement made in the tropics. The bones

refer to the return of his bones to Ireland in 1965 for the state funeral and re-interment.

The project also involves a symposium, a panel discussion, public dance events, theatre, cabaret and a programme on RTE television. The events have taken place or are to take place in various locations in Britain and Ireland.

Two new books have appeared on Casement's Berlin Diaries by two veterans in the field; Jeff Dudgeon and Angus Mitchell. The recent issue of the magazine *History Ireland* (July/August 2016) has a portrait of Casement on the front by the well known artist Jim FitzPatrick. Inside there is an article, *Casement Tried and Tested*, by Paul Hyde in which the already much battered Giles Report of 2002 gets a severe mauling.

The rather mysterious Hyde, described only as a "*retired university lecturer*", has featured also in a special Casement-devoted edition of the online Irish Studies journal *Breac*, produced by the University of Notre Dame. Here he provides a paper, *Lost to History*, which plausibly attempts a deconstruction of the authenticity case. He also has created a website: <http://www.decoding-casement.com> which contains a number of additional papers related to the same issue.

The Casement edition of *Breac* appeared last April, thus exactly marking the centenary of the Rising and Casement's arrival in Ireland by submarine which was to lead to his capture. There are interesting articles on a number of questions including one on *Casement and the Irish language* by Nollaig Mac Congáil and another, *Ireland, Empire, and British Foreign Policy: Roger Casement and the First World War* by Margaret O'Callaghan.

The London Easter 1916 Centenary Committee held a vigil at Pentonville Prison, London, on 3rd August, to mark the exact centenary anniversary of Casement's execution.

There is a documentary on YouTube by Marcus Howard, *Roger Casement Easter Rising Stories*, which includes interesting, interview footage.

Impressive though this list is, yet, centenary events and presentations concerned with Casement will have been overlooked. This brings us to the question; why so much focus on Casement?

At a panel discussion at Kilkenny Castle, some weeks ago, Fintan O'Toole attempted to answer why Casement had become such a central figure in the Centenary Commemorations. He claimed

Casement was "double" in so many ways. He was both Protestant and Catholic, both British Consul and Irish rebel. There was a "disjunction" between his public life and his private life as revealed by the Diaries. We are embracing "double-ness" in the way we are now looking at the Rising; it was neither all good nor all bad; it was a combination of both. Casement exemplifies the "double-ness" we are now embracing . . .

Well?

Could the truth be a whole lot simpler and more obvious? Could it have to do with the Casement story having such a wide scope? Could it be it involves exotic locations, idealism, danger, intrigue, tragedy, bravery, loss, eloquence, adventure, romanticism, heroism and controversy? There is so much to grip the imagination, to discuss, to agree or disagree with, as you please.

A man of many parts is the vocalist, composer, singer-songwriter, record-producer, actor and painter; Gavin Friday. Prior to his teenage years he was the more prosaically named Fionán Hanvey. A product of Dublin's north side and friend of Bono of U2, Friday, in 1977, founded the *avant-garde* band *The Virgin Prunes*. With the break-up of the band in the mid-1980s he has tried his hand at various forms of artistic endeavour. Now he has been bitten by the Casement bug. The latest product of his creativity is the *Casement Sonata*, which has recently premiered at the Hugh Lane Gallery, Parnell Square, Dublin.

On his website Gavin Friday is quoted:

"Like Parnell and Wilde before him, Casement was a sophisticated Irishman who threatened the fabric of British hegemony and was deliberately targeted for his sexual behaviour as a reactionary countermove. Casement was a poet like several other key leaders of the Rising, but remains unique for his global profile and contemporary social relevance. Roger Casement is the Shakespearean tragic hero at the heart of the Irish revolutionary experience. The Sonata is his testament."

Is it a musical composition with aspects of an art installation or, on the contrary, is it an art installation with aspects of a musical composition? Or, could it be something else again? Such as a new art form.

The production lasts for approximately fifty minutes. There is simple and striking accompanying visual art on the walls and by the front of the room. The atmospheric electronic music adopts various guises. Sometimes it pulsates along. At times an insistent hypnotic tropical rhythm takes

hold. Other times the mood is serene, or oppressive or claustrophobic. A voice erupts from time to time, over the music, delivering rasping, pained messages.

Poet James McCabe has provided the words. *The Casement Sonata* claims to represent "a new auditory genre, an ambient poem which unites the tradition of narrative and dramatic verse with the rhythm of contemporary electronic and trance music". So say the provided program notes.

There are memorable phrases, such as—

"There is a God, but he is deaf and drunk... Christ, you are crucified again on this day...crossing the dark heart of Africa... I do not inhabit my life, I survive it... I have walked through history to the other side..."

The work gives a sense of the scope and grandeur and desperation of Casement's

manysided life experience and is, in its way, curiously haunting.

That a concept album will eventually reach the shops arising from this is quite possible.

A particularly interesting upshot from the centenary, for this writer, is a song from the up and coming Irish alternative folk group, *The Mariannes*. The song is called *The Black Diary Waltz*. It was released in March this year. Composed by members of the band, the subtle, catchy melody has the power to grow on you. There is the line, "Foiled by my pen and the ending was great...". Are *The Mariannes* outright proponents of authenticity or does the phrase "foiled by my pen" also embrace the possibility of forged interpolation?

I leave it for you, dear reader, to decide.

Tim O'Sullivan

Loughinsland Massacre—A Policy Of Collusion

Portcullis House, Boothroyd Room, Westminster, London, 7th September, 2016.

A very warm evening with a blinding failing sun. The area is totally occupied by tourists exploring, obviously fascinated by the Houses of Parliament. There is also Westminster Abbey, hijacked from the Catholic Church at the time of the Protestant Reformation during the 16th Century, then restored by the Catholic Mary 1 of England (Mary Tudor) to the Benedictines, and once more hijacked by Elizabeth after Mary died.

A white non-Indonesian busker sits with his back against Portcullis House hitting a series of bells and drums to imitate what might sound like Indonesian unmelodious music, to our ears anyway. On Westminster Bridge, another busker, a Scots bagpiper, in full regalia, plays: *Scotland the Brave*. Lighted-up pleasure boats continually pass under the bridge. All seems well with this world.

So the tourists from all over the world, relaxed and taking countless photographs, including selfies, pass by, girls prettier than you can imagine, relaxed polite males, no pushing and shoving, like the work rush-hour which has just ended. All are having a pleasant time unaware, most likely, that a Croppy-Lie-down episode back in 1994 in a small village in County Down, possibly guided by those in the back rooms of Parliament across the road, is again being brought under scrutiny.

Then into Portcullis House to go through

the airport-type security, into the bleak Boothroyd Room with its lightly-coloured basic desk/tables and cold lighting. This is where Sir Philip Green could have been questioned over his over-consumption of finance to the detriment of poorly-paid but loyal BHS workers. You might also have got a lecture in morality from Keith Vaz here. Two screens high up on a wall tells you that Parliament is in session. You can't help but feel the mighty power of the English State here and realise how successful and dynamic this once cold and barren off-shore island on the edge of the European land-mass has become over the centuries.

Then you think of the Catholic population of Northern Ireland and its 28-year war. Here, sitting facing us in the centre of the English administration, is a representative of the Northern Catholic nationality, Pat Docherty, Sinn Fein absentee MP, for West Tyrone. Alongside him is Niall Murphy, human rights lawyer and solicitor, representing the Loughinisland Massacre families and survivors.

At 10 pm on the evening of 18th of June, 1994, in the small village of Loughinisland, County Down, 24 people were watching the Republic of Ireland vs Italy football match in the World Cup series on a large-screen television in the Heights Bar. At 10.10 pm two members of a loyalist death squad, wearing balaclavas, burst in and sprayed the small room with 60 bullets from two assault rifles. They ran away laughing. The six who died were Adrian

Rogan (34), Malcolm Jenkinson (52), Barney Green (87), Daniel McCreanor (59), Patrick O'Hare (35), and Eamon Byrne (39), all Catholics, with five other people wounded. The UVF later claimed responsibility.

The morning after the attack the getaway car—a red Triumph Acclaim—was found abandoned in a field near Crossgar, also in County Down. On the 4th of August one of the rifles used in the attack was found hidden at a bridge near Saintfield, still in County Down, along with a holdall containing boiler suits, balaclavas, gloves, three handguns and ammunition.

As Niall Murphy, for the families, said: "This was the jackpot of forensic evidence". But it was all destroyed by the RUC arousing the suspicion that there had been collusion between them and the UVF death squad.

The Ombudsman Report was finally published on the 24th June, 2011. It said that the police investigation had lacked: "*diligence, focus and leadership*", that there were failings in record management, that significant lines of enquiry were not identified, and that the police failed to communicate effectively with the victims' families. However, it said there was "*insufficient evidence of collusion*" and "*no evidence that police could have prevented the attack*".

The role of RUC informers within the UVF wasn't mentioned.

So here we were sitting in the Boothroyd Room, 22 years after these cold-blooded murders, listening to Niall Murphy giving over an hour-long talk of evidence that said there had been State collusion and here was the proof in this lengthy document he was quoting from—the report by Dr Michael McGuire published on 9th June, 2016. To my mind he gave an amazing energetic statement which could only be the truth, considering the familiarity we have with other massacres of Catholics that happened frequently throughout the Long War. Here is Niall Murphy speaking about the report:

"Dr Maguire's report is one of the most damning expositions of State collusion in mass murder that has ever been published. It joins the ever growing library of indictment of Stalker, Cory, Saville, de Silva, and O'Loan, but these reports sit on a shelf gathering dust and being examined by academics. There must be accountability."

Then it was any questions from the 60 or so of us attending. One English journalist, purporting to be naive, asked if the dead and injured, not being Republican,

were Nationalists. Was he asking if the assassins had made a mistake? Was it alright to gun down Republicans? I expected Niall Murphy or Pat Doherty to say all they had to be was Catholic. But this wasn't said by either of them. Instead Niall Murphy just repeated some more facts about collusion in the RUC. I doubt if any of this came to reside in the journalist's brain. A very restrained meeting without emotion, English in essence, almost parliamentary, and quietly determined.

Questions were few and I guessed, at looking around at those there, that they were already aware of the Loughinisland Massacre and had come to hear what was going to be done about it. But Niall Murphy had given such a good comprehensive account of events there were no gaps to be filled in by those listening.

Then another question from someone from Cork. He lives in Brighton and travel-

led the 54 miles especially for the meeting "*Why isn't the Irish Government holding this enquiry?*"

A quiet intake of breath, knowing looks between Pat Doherty and Niall Murphy, then silence, a slight nod of the head but no answer. The meeting ended immediately. It is conveniently 9pm.

The screens flashes to tell of a recess in a Parliamentary discussion.

Outside in the still warm air the busker still bangs away at his instruments, the tourists still take flash-photographs and selfies in the dark, still good humoured, still enjoying themselves. A skirl of bagpipes in the distance. The pleasure boats still slide under Westminster Bridge..

A world-away, in Loughinisland Village, County Down, the people still wait for justice.

Wilson John Haire
8 September 2016

DVD Review: Hubert Butler. Witness to the Future.... but silenced in his own country. Filmed, Directed and Produced by Johnny Gogan. Bandit Films Ireland. 2016.

Part 3

Hubert Butler: The DVD

VO: Lara Marlowe:

"He" (Butler) "described a young law student Catholic from Croatia who excelled in massacring Orthodox Serbs who refused to convert to Catholicism and this boy—he slashed the throats of 1,360 Serbs and he won a prize for doing this, he won a silver tea-set, a gold watch and a roast suckling pig.

VO: Slavko Goldstein.

Text: "Butler is right—many of them (Catholic priests) were glad that the situation for the Serbs (Orthodox) was dangerous and then they go to be converted. Some of them used the conversion procedure thinking it saved them from death and some of them used it to make possible for those that were to kill them".

(Because Goldstein speaks with a strong accent what he says is put up in text on the screen while he is talking but the words in brackets are not used by him at all and seems to have been added by the film maker.) While he spoke—there are pictures of people being blessed by a Franciscan friar and they all seem devout—blessing themselves—men, women and youngsters as he blessed them.

VO: Rev. Rob Tobin.

"And Butler keeps pressing the issue and goes back to Yugoslavia to learn more—to reconnect with some of the people he knew was there in the 30's and comes back to Ireland and finds that

nobody wants to know—nobody is interested because it does not fit with the received narrative."

VO: Chris Agee:

"The trial of General Germanic (sic) and five other Quisling Ministers of Croatia and" (named person impossible to make out) "the German Ambassador to the State of Croatia which has just concluded in Zagreb and it is of the highest importance yet as it happened at the same time as the Zagreb Fair it excited relatively little interest. Obviously in Yugoslavia a new philosophy of justice quite different from ours is shaping. Each trial seems more closely associated with immediate needs than to ultimate principle. It is possible that when the need for stability becomes less urgent—this tendency will be reversed. In the meantime it must be admitted the guilt of the accused has unusually been so obvious that justice has not suffered conspicuously by the preoccupations of the accused. All seven prisoners were condemned to death."

(A picture of a trial but no source is given—this is a quite common practice throughout the documentary which seems a novel way to approach a fact-based historic documentary!)

"It was a just sentence and the trial as so far as it concerned them was fair enough."

VO: RT:

"Very much the post new narrative we have of the Cold War and the Catholic Church very much presented itself against the forces of Communism and so when you have people like Archbishop Stepinac and Monazite" (sic) "who are arrested by the Communist regime in their respective countries—it seems that they are portrayed very much as martyrs to the cause of anti-Communism. Tito offered to suspend the trial of Archbishop Stepinac if he withdrew to Rome but the Vatican refused.

VO: CA:

"Amazingly in 1951 Butler managed to gain access to Lepinavic Prison" (sic) "and to interview Archbishop Stepinac in his private cell. Butler's interview with Archbishop Stepinac here at Lepinavic is an extraordinary moment at what might be called *the literature of actuality*". (Italics JH)

VO: SG:

Text: I would say that he was partly a collaborationist. Perhaps Butler's definition of him as collaborationist is very near to my opinion and very near to the correct but about the responsibility I think that Stepinac was not responsible in a legal way for a court" (pictures of a grave ecclesiastical, lots of priests and huge crowds) "but he had a moral responsibility. I think his beatification was completed" (picture of Chris Agee looking at a picture collage of presumably Archbishop Stepinac and others).

VO: SG:

"In my—Jewish—not Christian opinion that is enough."

VO: RT:

"So when Butler starts out saying things like well actually some of the hierarchy—the Catholic hierarchy knew about at the very least and perhaps were complicit in war time atrocities—this cuts right across this received narrative and in 1950's Ireland the anti-communist narrative" (picture of 'The Irish Press'—on front page there is a picture of a huge crowd with the headline "Monster Dublin Protest Meeting) "is the dominant narrative so by 1952 Butler is becoming increasingly frustrated—he can't get this story told and so that was going to lead him into one of the great moments of his public life."

VO: Judge Peter Smithwick, *Chair of the Smithwick Tribunal*.

"Hubert was invited to go to a meeting of the International Affairs Society in Dublin and he went and the topic of the meeting was an Address by Peadar O'Curry who was I think the Editor of 'The Catholic Standard' at the time and O'Curry was going to talk on the pattern of persecution in Yugoslavia."

VO: Fintan O'Toole.

"O'Curry has set himself up as a kind of

intellectual policeman looking out for Communists, or Proto-Communists or Communists fellow travellers as he saw them particularly in the Irish media. So when he set himself up as a kind of policeman of the Irish media—therefore people were very afraid of him. O'Curry was using the pages of 'The Catholic Standard' to denounce people who he thought were closet Communists. We know that he was co-operating very closely with the Irish Special Branch/Police. O'Curry reports were on Special Branch files and we know that extraordinary they found their way—at least some of them did from Irish Special Branch files to the CIA files—so even American intelligence was paying attention to what O'Curry was saying about suspected Communists in the Irish media".

VO: PS:

"And Hubert stood up at the end of the address and said: "You can't talk about the pattern of persecution in Yugoslavia without going back to the persecution of the Orthodox Serbs during the 1940's by the Croatian Government who had forced conversions to Roman Catholicism and he only started on this observation when a dignified figure in the front of the room and his companion who was equally clad in black walked out. The man was Archbishop O'Hara who was the American Archbishop" (a picture of a grave/sober Archbishop O'Hara—though again not acknowledged) "who was the Papal Nuncio in Dublin."

VO: RT:

"But as soon as the Papal Nuncio walks out journalists surround Butler" (a hugely inflated newspaper page appears with the headline 'The Pope's Envoy Walks Out' and in smaller print 'Government to discuss "insult" to Nuncio') "because it is thought that he has created a Diplomatic Row because of insulting the Papal Nuncio. So what emerges essentially is that Butler is regarded as something of an embarrassment really—a national embarrassment because of the official representative of the Vatican has been seen to be embarrassed—to have been insulted by this Irish Protestant from Kilkenny."

VO: PS:

"And immediately Kilkenny heard he had been insulted by a Kilkenny man—they went berserk and there was a very powerful campaign against Hubert who is blamed for insulting the Nuncio and the then Chairman of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society—a Dr. Phelan—a figure I knew well who led this campaign to have him removed from the Society immediately."

VO: RT:

"He finds that he is ostracised in Kilkenny by those who are embarrassed

by what he had done but he also seems to have insulted their Church and yet much to his disappointment and disillusionment he doesn't feel that he gets much support from his own fellow Protestants. Who support him and who rallies around him—well it's more other intellectuals—some of them with a Catholic background. You have the educated and cultured members of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society who he has come to know and trust—they are the ones who stand up for him in the face of a quite considerable assault on him and indeed also on his family."

VO: Julia Crampton—daughter:

"A creamery manager in Bennettsbridge was told that all the creamery co-operatives were passing a condemnation of my father. What he had done was ask a question and it was perfectly legitimate in a public meeting, and he had no idea that the Papal Nuncio was there."

VO: Olivia O'Leary. *Author & Broadcaster:*

"My grandfather John O'Leary was the President of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society and he was the President" at the time "and he and Hubert Butler would have been colleagues—not so much friends—their social positions was quite different—my grandfather was the local baker in Graiguenamanagh and Hubert Butler was part of the Anglo/Irish landed gentry but they would have worked together in that Society. What happened was that a motion to expel HB from the KAS was put forward as a result of the Nuncio incident. The motion was put. The motion was not carried—it was defeated. People forget that—it was defeated" (a picture of O'Leary as she is talking and she is obviously infuriated—grimacing a lot) "so my grandfather as President, chairing the Meeting never really had to cast a vote. Now it would have been very difficult for him—he had great admiration for HB but he was an Irish Catholic—the Church in the 1950's and you know in the 1960's was very much the dominant power in the world. The Church mattered much more than the Government or anybody else so for him to have gone against *what seemed to be the Church position* would have been very very difficult."

VO: FOT:

"You have to remember that the Catholic Church" (a picture of Eamon de Valera alongside a Cardinal—Dalton (?) both of them held their hats in front of them amongst massive crowds and I think it was from the 1932 Eucharistic Congress in Dublin—again no source is given so I am surmising!) "was here long before the State was established. And when the State was established the Church had already enormous control over every aspect of cultural, social, intellectual and moral life—that was the terrain it saw for itself. And it was really pretty unchallenged in the terrain it saw for itself. You know it

was able to get the State to pass laws which were completely in keeping with all its Theology but perhaps even more pervasively there was just this sense that you did not take on this Institution. It had the power to anathematise people—you know if you were outside of the Catholic consensus—you were at risk of being outside of Irish society—of *being an outlaw*".

VO: RT:

"The big and most hurtful effects of the Papal Nuncio affair" (a picture of a library with two books very conspicuously placed: 'Albert Speer' and 'Hitler in Vienna 1907-1913') "is that he is forced out of the KAS because he is seen to have insulted the piety of local Catholics and it strikes him as a particularly terrible result. Now in retrospect this might seem to be pretty small potatoes given how much he cared about the Society" (all this despite Olivia O'Leary's testament to the contrary!) "as an emblem not only of his passion for Archaeology but the sort of symbolic meeting place for Protestants and Catholics in the local community."

VO: O.O'Leary:

"To be Catholic was to be Irish and there was an element of being loyal to the tribe and feeling HB had insulted a Prince, a chief of the tribe."

VO: FOT:

"There is quite a thick file in the National Archives in Dublin which is simply the passport application by Hubert Butler and his wife Peggy to have their passports which you'd think was a very standard ordinary piece of business but it generates quite a substantial file in 1958 saying should we be renewing this man's passport? He is a danger to Ireland—he has a bad reputation" (again the picture of 'Pope's Envoy Walks Out') "and he is going to a place—God knows what he is saying—God knows what he is looking at and this goes all the way up from the ordinary clerical official level—right up to the Head of Irish Military Intelligence who is consulted about whether or not the man's passport should be renewed. I don't think Butler knew anything about this at the time—the passport was subsequently renewed in the end but in that file there is this very enigmatic note saying that the Office of the President of Ireland who was Seán T. O'Kelly at the time entered a caveat against HB" (here O'Toole giggles maniacally) and there flashes up on screen a page with the notepaper of Uachtarán na hEireann—very difficult to make out and it is kept out of focus by the film maker because it would be very easy to zoom the page up) "now it is hard to know what this exactly means—a caveat means a warning and it seems to me that there is a warning which has gone from the President all the way down through the system which seems to say to me that this man must not be involved in any

official engagement at all" (a picture of Séan T. O'Kelly signing a document) "he is a bad egg, if you are seen with him or are in his company or in a photograph with HB—it is keep away HB from the State.

VO: Joseph Hone. Foster Son:

"He was thought to be a Communist already—a danger to the body politic in the Republic and that he was an advance guard of a Communist take-over of the Republic and that he had binoculars in the front room of Maidenhall and was working out the conditions where the Red Army would be able to get a billet and maybe in the Clubhouse Hotel in Kilkenny and so on. The man who was sent down to investigate the thing was a sergeant *who lurked outside the front gate* apparently watching all the comings and goings and who said: "No—there was no evidence that he was a spy—or a red or a communist at all—that the information he had gathered it was quite clear that he was a farmer, a market gardener, an apple grower who had written a few pieces which might perhaps be considered a little left of centre but nothing serious—nothing serious!"

VO: FOT:

"I think the implications for Butler were of the kind of hostility that you find in the files of the State that he really is persona non grata and the State doesn't recognise the fact that there is a kind of valued role to be played by a dissident intellectual—you must remember Butler was not a subversive—he was not a Communist, he was not out to foment revolution—when he was engaged in no illegal activities of any kind and yet here there is a stain on his character that he is a dangerous individual and of course this means that he is never going to be engaged in any public role at all."

VO: CA:

"In the months when Butler was attending the war crimes trials at Zagreb—a major fascist Croat war criminal has escaped this city and Tito's justice and was making his way to Ireland. Butler would later make it his business to find out how Dublin had played host to this man."

VO: FOT:

"What we knew Artukovitch is a very major figure in the Croatian genocide. He is Interior Minister—he is very much hands on in terms of mass murder. We know that he is smuggled out of Croatia at the end of the war through right wing Catholic Church channels—he finds his way into Ireland under the protection of Catholic priests using an alias. He is then given Irish identity papers under a new name which is crucial for him because it allows him to enter North America as the new person he is pretending to be and he could not have got this identity papers

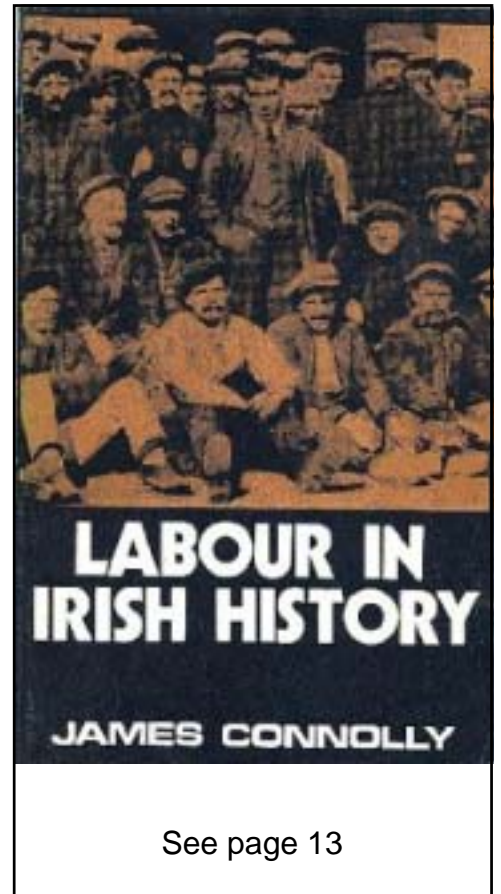
without official help so this isn't just about the kind of right-wing Church sources who are smuggling him out. At some point he has to get the official stamp of the Irish State and HB discovered this and tries to unpick it—it is a great piece of detective work to try and find out how did this happen. Where did Artukovitch live while he was in Ireland—who was in touch with him and he writes this absolutely brilliant essay, which doesn't answer all the questions and you have the dramatisation of Butler himself running down leads, trying to run round and find what this is all about. And finding a lot of people saying: "ah he was a lovely man, absolutely gorgeous man and his family were lovely and I don't believe he could ever have done those nasty things and so in itself it becomes a great moral essay about people's blindness to evil."

fVO: CA:

"I could not get it out of my head. Artukovitch had stayed for a year in Ireland." ('The Artukovitch File' 1966) "how had he come here, who had sheltered him and where? In the Spring of 1966 Butler writes: "I am in Dublin for a week and I decided to find out. Here is a clue. His nine year old son Radislav had been born in Ireland. The children had been exploited sentimentally to mask the truth—they could now be used to rediscover it....."

Julianne Herlihy. ©.

To be continued in the next issue of *Irish Political Review*.



The 1921 Cork Docks Strike & *The Irish Times* —And A Book Cover Explained

In 1959, in its 50th anniversary book, *Fifty Years of Liberty Hall*, the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union published a photograph with the caption, "CORK DOCKERS ON STRIKE 1920". The book's text had nothing more to say about it, but this date was in error—it should have read 1921—in a sloppily edited publication, mainly written by Cathal O'Shannon Snr, and whose most glaring feature was the attempt to write the ITGWU's founder, Big Jim Larkin, out of the history of the Union's pioneering years.

Cork City Alderman Tadhg Barry had been Secretary of the Cork Branch of the ITGWU, until he was arrested by the British authorities in October, in the aftermath of the death in Brixton Prison of Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney. Barry was interned in Ballykinlar Camp, Co Down, and fatally wounded by a British Army sentry on 15th November 1921. He was succeeded as the ITGWU Cork Branch Secretary by Robert Day, and it was Day, along with Branch Chairman William Kenneally, who would lead the Cork Docks Strike in September 1921. A year later, Day would become the first Labour TD to represent Cork in Dáil Éireann.

Following Day's death, Kenneally would recall his comrade in the July 1949 issue of the *Irish Democrat*:

"There was a wage dispute. Men were getting about £3 2s. 6d. for a hard week's work. We were demanding £3 10s., together with a cost of living sliding scale. The Harbour Commissioners had been busy at the old game of procrastination for months and months. I was chairman of the branch, and Bob Day was secretary. We called a meeting on a Sunday night and decided to take over the port ourselves next day."

Kenneally described how he and Bob Day succeeded in passing the Black and Tans and troops, who were relatively quiescent during this Truce period, and entering the offices of the Board. They informed Sir James Long that Robert Day was now 'Chief Commissioner of the Port of Cork' and that he must now take his orders from him. Sir James left the building at once, but 50 per cent of the clerical staff remained. Alderman Kenneally then took a steam launch to Cobh where the entire staff agreed to accept orders only from the

Transport Union. The dispute was settled late on the same day, as a result of the intervention of the Labour Department of Dáil Éireann—Constance Markievicz being the Republic's Minister for Labour. The men won a complete victory, and the national principle of the supremacy of Dáil Éireann as opposed to the British authorities was simultaneously vindicated.

The 1921 Cork Docks Strike evoked such banner headlines in the *Irish Times* as: "THE RED FLAG IN CORK: HARBOUR BOARD ON STRIKE" (September 2), and "CORK STRIKE OVER: A ONE-DAY SOVIET; THE HARBOUR SOVIET MEETS" (September 7). The *New York Times* of September 7 had been no less alarmed, with its report headlined: "DÁIL ÉIREANN HALTS CORK HARBOR STRIKE. Intervenes and Quiets a Tense Situation When Workers Seized Board Offices. HAD HOISTED A RED FLAG. Men Return to Jobs After Sinn Fein Labor Ministry Has Negotiations Reopened."

In 1959, my Cork City father, Micheál O'Riordan, had been pleasantly surprised when turning the pages of *Fifty Years of Liberty Hall*. For there, in the incorrectly dated photo of "CORK DOCKERS ON STRIKE", and seated up front in a white shirt, was his own Ballingearry father, Micheál O'Riordan Snr, from the townland of Inchinossig! In 1973, my father, the then General Secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland, was out of the country when the CPI brought out a new edition of James Connolly's *Labour in Irish History*, edited and introduced by 'A. Raftery', the *nom-de-plume* of Paddy Carmody, Editor of CPI monthly newspaper, *The Irish Socialist*.

When, upon his return, my father saw a copy of the new edition, his reaction was a mixture of pleasant surprise and embarrassment. For the cover design, by artist Charles Cullen, had been excerpted from that same Cork dock strike photo. Yet both Carmody and Cullen had been completely oblivious of the fact that the man who figured most prominently in that cover photo was my father's own father, and my father, in turn, was embarrassed, in case anybody might think that he was so vainglorious as to put up Carmody to

highlight his father in such a manner! Indeed, when, in 1983, the next CPI edition of *Labour in Irish History* was edited and introduced by my father himself, my grandfather was dropped from the front cover and replaced by the author of that work, James Connolly himself.

But what was it, in the first place, that had so grabbed the imagination of Carmody and Cullen, that they focused so much on that image of my Ballingearry grandfather? Did they think there was something "*Soviet Russian*" about the image? To my own eyes, my grandfather, in his white shirt, was not very much different in appearance than the Russian writer Maxim Gorky. But, of course, my grandfather was neither a Russian nor, indeed, a "*Red*". That was the adjective applied to my father. (See <https://vimeo.com/145580588> for the 1971 documentary, "*Don't Vote for the Red O'Riordan*".)

In the dedication which he wrote for his 1979 book, *Connolly Column: The story of the Irishmen who fought for the Spanish Republic 1936-1939*, my father summed up both the complexity and integrity of his own father's political outlook: "*To the memory of my father, who, because of the propaganda against the Spanish Republic in Ireland, did not agree with my going to Spain, but who disagreed more with our 'coming back and leaving your commander, Frank Ryan, behind'.*"

But, if my grandfather was not a "*Red*", neither was he a docker, notwithstanding my father drawing on that Cork docks strike photo to suggest, with apparent photographic plausibility, that, indeed, he was. Not so. Yes, my grandfather had worked on the docks, but as a self-employed carman or carter, an owner/operator with his own team of horses. As I related in "*The Ballingearry Moonlighting Case of 1894*", published in *Journal 2000* of the Ballingearry & Inchigeela Historical Society, my grandfather was the son of an evicted Ballingearry tenant farmer, Jer Mór Inchinossig. But, over the course of a life of hard work, he himself had risen in the world, and also possessed his own grocery shop in Cork City's Adelaide Street, which he named "*Ballingearry Stores*".

But perhaps my father had been unduly influenced by the Soviet preference for biographies of impeccable, and uncomplicated, proletarian lineage. I once remonstrated with him that, by not telling the full story, he was denying to his own father the full credit for being a man of property who had never forgotten his own

humble origins, and who had decided to take a stand—in his best white shirt—of unashamed solidarity with the striking dockers of 1921, and damn the *Irish Times*!

Yet there was a far more sartorially impressive presence in that photograph, immediately behind my grandfather, and wearing not only a collar and tie, but a three-piece suit to boot! This was Jim Hickey, not yet an ITGWU member, but Secretary of the Cork Branch of the National Union of Dock Labourers—the British-based Union that Larkin had split from in order to found the ITGWU in 1909. In 1922, however, Hickey brought his NUDL members over to the ITGWU and, when Bob Day was elected to Dáil Éireann, Hickey succeeded him as the ITGWU's Cork Branch Secretary. When my father was invited to be a guest speaker at the Irish Labour Party Conference held in Cork in September 2001, he praised Hickey in the following terms:

"In mentioning the need to learn from the past, I must, however, pay tribute to one Cork Labour leader who did take a noteworthy stand against fascism. Jim Hickey, who was a close personal friend and fellow striker (sic) with my father on the Cork docks in 1921, served several terms in Dáil Éireann. He was also my own branch secretary in the ITGWU when I earned my living as a bus worker in this city. It was as Lord Mayor of Cork that he hit the international headlines for all the right reasons in February 1939. When the Nazi warship "*Schlesien*" visited Cork that month, Jim Hickey adamantly refused to accord it the civic welcome that was normally due to such a so-called courtesy visit. And how right he was!"

Now, Jim Hickey's demonstrable Catholicism is not something that would endear him to today's militant secularists. On 27th February 1939, with the heading of *Cork Bishop Supports Lord Mayor's Protest*, the *Irish Times* for 27th February 1939 had reported:

"While one hundred men from the German naval cadet training vessel *Schlesien* were at Mass in St. Colman's Cathedral, Cove, yesterday, the Bishop of Cork (Dr. Cohalan) announced his support for the action of the Lord Mayor of Cork (Councillor James Hickey, TD) in refusing to welcome the officers and crew ... The Lord Mayor, in a statement on Friday, said that his refusal was because of *'the insult given to the Catholic world on the death of the Pope (Pius XI), when the responsible German Press termed our Holy Father a political adventurer'*... The Bishop, speaking at Cork Catholic Young Men's Society said: *'I regret the unavoidable absence of the Lord Mayor, because I would have wished in his*

presence to congratulate and thank him for the stand he has taken up in this German matter. The whole world—Catholic and non-Catholic—expressed appreciation of the great Pope who has passed away. The Head of the German State is a nominal Catholic, but after the death of the Pope the language of the official German Press was outrageous... It is not for such occasion as this to refer to the general persecution of the Church in Germany-Austria, but I take this opportunity of congratulating the Lord Mayor in what he did on his own initiative. I did not ask him to do it, nor do I suppose did anybody else!'"

In his diary entry for 24th July 1939, the future Editor of the Connolly Association's *Irish Democrat*, C Desmond Greaves, reported as follows on a visit to Cork:

"We went to look up a (Communist) Party member, Michael O'Riordan... We also discussed the Irish attitude to Fascism. A few years ago (it had, in fact, been only five months previously—MO'R) the Mayor of Cork had refused to attend a civic reception for a German naval unit. But this was on the grounds of the disrespect shown by the Nazis on the death of the Pope, not for political reasons."

Greaves had remained totally unimpressed by Hickey. But, for whatever reason, my father chose not to enlighten him any further. Moreover, Bishop Cohalan had been mistaken in assuming that nobody had asked Hickey to speak out. Cork ITGWU leader Jim Hickey was not only a good personal friend of my father's; he, in turn, always regarded Hickey as an honest-to-God hero of Cork Labour. It was my father who had approached Hickey to argue that there was no way, as a Labour Mayor, he should receive the armed forces of a Nazi Germany that had bombed the Basque town of Guernica two years previously, and that had supervised the incarceration of Irish defenders of the Spanish Republic—Bob Doyle, Jim Haughey, Johnny Lemmon, Morry Levitas and Frank Ryan—in Spanish fascist prisons and concentration camps.

Hickey readily agreed, but said he would have to find a formula to justify the denial of normal Mayoral courtesies to the visiting Nazi warship that would have the maximum popular appeal. My father regarded Hickey's "*Irish solution to an Irish problem*" as a stroke of political genius, ensuring world-wide press coverage, but he obviously left Greaves in the dark as to his own role.

If Bishop Cohalan and Desmond

Greaves had not got the full measure of Jim Hickey, my father was not alone in doing so. Nazi Germany was as adept in understanding what made Hickey tick, as it was in tracking the trajectory of the *Irish Times*. On 4th May 1939, the Irish Minister in Berlin, Charles Bewley, reported back:

"An official of the Foreign Office also mentioned that they did not expect any change in the attitude of the *Irish Times*, as they knew that it had to take its orders from certain English and international organisations, but that they regretted particularly that the only editor in Dublin with any knowledge whatever of Germany should be so hostile... **Finally, in referring to the episode of the Lord Mayor of Cork who refused to greet the German training ship, he said that they had not wished to make too much of the discourtesy of an individual, especially as they knew that, although he stated in public that his action was dictated by his Catholic sentiments, he had stated to his friends that his real objection to Germany was the suppression of Social Democratic trade unions**" (My emphasis—MO'R).

The regret that Nazi Germany now felt in respect of the *Irish Times* being the mouthpiece of British foreign policy, was rooted in the joy it had felt in 1933 when that paper followed the British policy of appeasing Hitler. And the ideological position of the *Irish Times* in 1933 was, in turn, rooted in what it had been twelve years previously. On 7th September 1921, in an editorial quite deliberately headed "*Dáil Éireann's Test*", the *Irish Times* pronounced its \verdict\ on both Labour and Dáil, as follows:

"The strike of the Cork Harbour Board's workers has ceased for the time being, but its moral remains. The men demanded a minimum wage of £3 10s., which the Board—for reasons that Alderman de Roiste clearly explained at Monday's meeting—was unable to grant. During the strike the shipping trade of Cork was paralysed, but this was not enough for the local organisers of the Irish Transport Workers' Union. They had grander schemes in view. On Monday they rejected with scorn a proposal that the dispute should be referred to a tribunal consisting of a representative of the Commissioners, a representative of the men, and a representative of the Labour Department of Dáil Éireann. They decided to depose the Board, to dismiss some of its officials, to take over its business, and to pay themselves the minimum wage of £3 10s. at the community's expense. They hoisted the flag of their Soviet over the Board's offices. Councillor (Robert) Day, the leader of this enterprise, dictated his terms with more than Cromwellian arrogance at Monday's meeting. He defied the

universe to pull down the red flag of Irish a Labour, and declared: 'If the Irish Republican Government put me out of the office to-morrow, they can do it; but they have to count the cost.' Yesterday morning the Transport Workers' Union carried out its threat. It expelled the Board's secretary, installed its own men, and, apparently, took immediate charge of the affairs of the harbour, including the collection of dues. In the afternoon, however, wiser counsels seem to have prevailed. We have not learned the details, but the dispute has been referred to a conference at which a chairman appointed by the Labour Department of Dáil Éireann will preside. The men are expected to return to work to-day."

"Short-lived as was this outbreak of Irish Bolshevism, it was highly ominous. To-day Irish Labour is permeated with a spirit of revolt against all the principles and conventions of ordered society. The country's lawless state in recent months is partly responsible for this sinister development, and the wild teachings of the Russian Revolution have fallen on willing ears. It is small consolation for thoughtful Irishmen that the first experiments in practical Communism—like this affair at Cork and like the seizure of Messrs. Cleeve's premises at Bruree—have collapsed in a few days or hours. Their real significance lies in the temper and aspirations which they reveal. If Irish Labour is not educated by example and precept in the immediate future, if popular government does not induct it fairly, but firmly, into its proper place in the national economy, insisting upon its duties as well as upon its privileges, it may become a source of infinite trouble, and even of disaster, to the Commonwealth. In the first stages of Irish self-government the claims and position of Irish Labour will constitute one of the State's gravest problems. Mr. de Valera and his colleagues have, for political purposes, a sort of working relationship with Irish Labour; but they know perfectly well that it will not survive the opening of the first Irish Parliament (by which the *Irish Times* meant something other than the First and Second Dáils—MO'R). At the outset there will be as sharp a conflict of interests between Capital and Labour—that is to say, between the farmers and the now largely Bolshevised trade unions—as ever existed in any country. The prosperity and peace of self-governing Ireland will depend largely upon the swiftness and skill with which these rival interests are reconciled and adjusted to the nation's common service. Only true statesmanship—wise, practical, tolerant, supple statesmanship—can hope to achieve the task."

"Mr. de Valera's latest pronouncement, which we publish today, betrays some irritation at the widespread criticism of his attitude to the (by which the *Irish Times* meant 'British') Government's

proposals. He ought to recognise, however, that most of this criticism is honest. The anxiety and disappointment of Irish Unionists—and, we add confidently, of hundreds of thousands of Irish Nationalists—have a double cause. They are alarmed by Dáil Éireann's apparent failure to appreciate the magnitude of the Government's offer and by its apparent readiness to endanger that offer through a policy of punctilio and delay. They are exasperated by its refusal to deal simply and quickly with a simple and urgent issue. That, however, is not all. These lovers of their country are becoming, as the days pass, more and more doubtful of Sinn Féin's capacity to not merely win settlement, but to administer it when won. The negotiations are a crucial test of statesmanship, and, so far, the leaders of Dáil Éireann have failed to satisfy it. They have shown little or nothing of the clear vision and constructive ability that will be needed when England surrenders to Ireland the full management of her own affairs. There is small promise in Dáil Éireann's confused and dilatory dealings with Mr. Lloyd George that it will be able successfully to handle great national problems—such as the Labour problem—in a self-governing Ireland. Irish Unionists do not question Mr. de Valera's magnanimity, but magnanimity is not the only essential of good government. They are beginning to be afraid that the men who seem to be fumbling a national crisis now will fumble Irish administration if and when they take charge of it. If Dáil Éireann wants to remove that impression, it will change its tactics and will get to the business of settlement without further delay. It is probable that an imperative (the *Irish Times* euphemism for a Lloyd George *diktat*—MO'R)—perhaps, a final—summons to business will issue to-day from Inverness."

By this time the Unionist *Irish Times* had to come to terms with some form of self-government having been won by the War of Independence. But it used the Cork Dock Strike to paint de Valera as some sort of Irish Kerensky, paving the way for a Bolshevik takeover—the very propaganda line that would be adopted a decade later by the Cumann na nGaedheal Government in its failed campaign to try and prevent de Valera winning the 1932 Election. This, of course was a result much lamented by the *Irish Times*. That newspaper's 'Red Scare' tradition led it, in turn, to welcome Hitler achieving power in Germany a year later.

There were two very telling *Irish Times* editorials in its issue of 4th March 1933. The first—"Broken Promises"—charged the de Valera Government with kow-towing to Labour, and discriminating against Capital; in this case, specifically

against the private shareholders of the Great Southern Railways Company, with the Railways Bill and the Road Traffic Bill:

"These bills are not the conscientious output of economic thought; they are shaped upon the political exigencies of President de Valera's Government. They are concessions not to the needs of trade or the rights of shareholders, but to the demands of the party which keeps the Government in office. Nearly every section of both bills reveals a regard for Labour's interests which is as scrupulous as their disregard of every other national interest is unscrupulous. Economics, however, when outraged by politics, seldom are cheated of an ironical revenge ... for Free State railwaymen the inevitable result will be further dismissals and a further shrinking of their livelihood. The two bills, indeed, must bring not peace, but a sword, since the railways now must insist on reduced wages."

"*Herr Hitler's Way*" was the heading of the second *Irish Times* editorial on 4th March 1933:

"Events in Germany are moving rapidly towards a dramatic denouement. The general elections take place to-morrow, and, although opinions vary concerning the result, there seems to be a fairly general belief that Herr Hitler will score another of his spectacular triumphs... In the meantime, the burning of the Reichstag, for which Communist extremists were almost certainly responsible, has caused much indignation throughout the Reich... The new Chancellor has taken the fullest advantage of the popular resentment to pursue a ferocious campaign against Communism in every shape and form... The Nazi storm troops have given short shrift to any Communists who have been foolish enough to cross their path. Omelettes cannot be prepared without the smashing of eggs. Innocent people have suffered, and are likely to suffer, before Herr Hitler achieves his object... In reasoned warfare against the Communists Herr Hitler will have the support of all civilised nations. At the moment he is Europe's standard-bearer against Muscovite terrorism, and although some of his methods certainly are open to question, nobody doubts his entire sincerity. If he can stabilise Germany, he will place the whole world in his debt. At all events, he has earned his chance; we have little doubt that the German people will give it to him to-morrow."

And that is how the *Irish Times* 'progressed' from its denunciation of the Cork Docks Strike in 1921 to championing the Nazi achievement of power in 1933!

Manus O'Riordan

The Origins of the Long War in Historical Context

In the course of a hatchet job in the *Irish News* on Pat Walsh's recently published book, *Resurgence—the Catholic Predicament in 'Northern Ireland'*, and its companion volume, *Catastrophe*, Dr Robert McNamara, a history lecturer at the University of Ulster, stated:

“The comprehensibility of these volumes is not aided by the method that the writer deploys. Long quotations from books and documents, which will put off all but the most enthusiastic reader, are often followed by what can only be described as sweeping and curious conclusions” (*Irish News*, 28 July 2016).

Not exactly a ringing endorsement! On the other side Pat Walsh is not greatly impressed with the practices of contemporary historians. He says:

“History is meaningless outside of context. The thematic and sociological approach favoured by ‘post modern’ Irish historians removes the historical context and makes any notion palatable, notions that would be absurd within their actual historical chain of causation” (*Resurgence*, p. 104).

This article will look at how historical context is treated in *Resurgence* and question the substance of McNamara's criticism.

THE RUPTURE OF AUGUST '69

In the first six chapters of *Resurgence* Walsh is focussed on the context in which the Provisional IRA came to launch its war on the British state. At one point he refers to the content of *Citizen Press*, a news-sheet produced behind the barricades in 1969, as showing that, “*what subsequently happened need not necessarily have happened*” (p.32). His point is that the *Citizen Press* was distinctly un-republican, that there was nothing inevitable about the emergence of the IRA as a community backed army. He shows that the Provisional IRA came to be formed as a result of a set of extraordinary events that, taken together, severely ruptured the political alignment of Northern Catholics.

Resurgence begins with August 1969. Walsh recounts the different outbreaks of conflict at that time and the responses of the two Governments, all the while noting factors that contributed to the later development of what he terms, the Republican Army. The events he describes are: the initial unsuccessful attacks by Orange mobs, backed by the RUC, on Unity Flats

in Belfast; British determination to intervene only in circumstances of complete breakdown; the defence of the Bogside over three days (12th-14th); Jack Lynch's ‘*We will not stand by*’ speech of August 13th; the attempted pogrom in West Belfast in the following days when 6 Catholics and 2 Protestants were shot dead and over 150 Catholic homes were burned down; the deployment of British troops in Derry and Belfast; Cathal Goulding's inflammatory press statement of August 18th on behalf of a barely functioning IRA; and the *Downing Street Communiqué* of August 19th in which Whitehall undertook to guarantee minority rights over the head of the Stormont sub-Government.

In the Introduction Walsh summarises his view of what happened in August.

“A defensive Insurrection was produced within the Catholic community in response to the going berserk of the Unionist repressive apparatus which had been spoiling for a fight since the Civil Rights movement had been getting the better of the publicity war, for the proceeding year” (p. 8).

Later, referring to the victory achieved by the defenders of the Bogside, he describes how the experience of communal violence changed the Catholic community.

“This (the defense of the Bogside, DA), combined with what was happening in Belfast, was something of a turning point in the life of the Northern Catholics. The Unionists had been held at bay and had their illusions of independent existence shattered; the British had been forced to re-engage with the Six Counties and the minority itself had shown it could achieve something momentous through its united efforts” (p. 21).

Walsh's treatment of the events of August shows that both the British and Irish Governments lacked a clear understanding of the underlying cause of the communal conflict in Northern Ireland: the imposition by Britain of a system of devolved government, kept separate from the party political set-up in the UK, in which the majority subjugated the minority. It was not surprising, given their lack of understanding, that both Governments ultimately failed the minority community. Nonetheless, in the immediate aftermath of August, Northern Catholics were cautiously optimistic that both Governments could be trusted to protect their interests.

An excerpt from a 1988 *Irish Times* interview with Austin Currie, quoted by Walsh, serves well as a pointer to the most fundamental mistake made by the Callaghan Government in dealing with Ulster. It reads:

“The Civil Rights movement wanted British troops in, but it should have been accompanied by a British political presence. The crunch mistake in 1969 was to keep Stormont, with Oliver Wright as the British government's watchdog in the North. That was the crucial period in which the Provisional IRA was founded and gained momentum” (p. 57).

Walsh's own account of the “*detachment policy*” (Britain's insistence on keeping Northern Ireland at arm's length) shows how it undid any positive effect of the Labour Government's intervention.

“The detachment policy was manifest in Britain's desire to avoid Direct Rule at all costs; to pull its army out of the Six Counties as soon as possible; and to dither on legislating for the formal transfer of security to Westminster. The effect of this latter failure was to let authority seep back from Whitehall to Stormont, when the pressure slackened off from early 1970, as Catholics waited patiently on reform” (p. 41).

Walsh shows that the manner in which the British implemented policy in Belfast and Derry, with specific reference to allowing the ‘*no go*’ areas to remain, was as influential on subsequent events as their policy failures.

“Callaghan conducted a British withdrawal from the areas behind the barricades. This was not apparent to all as the British Army kept up a visible presence in Catholic districts by extravagantly patrolling in armoured vehicles for the media. Presumably, this was to reassure Unionists who were increasingly angered that the Catholics were being failed to be policed by the authorities and kept in place.

However, when the media was gone and the motorised patrols had flitted the Catholic areas were ceded to the locals.

On the basis of the belief that things had settled, particularly within the Catholic community, Callaghan withdrew the apparatus of State from the Nationalist areas of Belfast and Derry while neglecting to give any political leadership to them. He left the Stormont regime in being as a façade in the hope that the Westminster intervention of August 1969 could be put in reverse. In leaving the Catholic areas of ‘Northern Ireland’ to their own devices immediately following the trauma of August, and with Stormont still functioning as a symbol of Unionist

domination and a provocation to Catholics, Callaghan set up a situation in which something like the Provisional IRA could be generated" (p. 66).

DUBLIN'S POLICY REVERSAL

Chapter 5 of *Resurgence*, 'Dublin's About Turn', deals with the Arms Crisis in which Jack Lynch sanctioned the arrest of various individuals including Government Ministers whose crime was involvement in the implementation of the Northern policy of his own Government. Lynch acted under pressure from the British Ambassador to Ireland, Andrew Gilchrist, and his reversal of the previous policy had the effect of negating Dublin's influence in the North. Dublin's influence moved from being of central importance to the Defence Committees and other representative bodies within the Northern Catholic community in the critical period from mid-August 1969 to April 1970 to being a compromised and distrustful outsider in the months thereafter.

Pat Walsh summarises the effect on Northern Catholics of Lynch's *volte face* by quoting a sentence from the autobiography of an important figure in that community, Paddy Doherty, the community leader who had led the defence of the Bogside. It reads: "*Lynch reversed the government's policy of involvement in the North and created a vacuum which the Provisionals were only too willing to fill*" (p. 122).

There is a great deal of insightful coverage of Dublin's role in *Resurgence* from references to the mistaken policy of Lemass, to the emptiness of T K Whittaker's moderation, to Lynch's inflammatory anti-Partitionism, but the purpose here is to evaluate Pat Walsh's treatment of the historical context in which the Provisional IRA came into being. In the following excerpt from the Introduction Walsh pulls some of the main strands of his analysis together.

"After the August explosion something new was possible with the re-engagement of Britain with its 'Northern Ireland' region of responsibility and Dublin's re-awakened activism with regard to the Six Counties.

But the new dawn was short-lived. The re-assertion of the arm's length policy of Westminster and the withdrawal of Dublin under pressure from British diplomacy facilitated the emergence of a new force in the political vacuum of the North. That force, starting from a small nucleus, went from strength to strength and there is little doubt that it became, politically, the most effective thing that was ever produced by the Northern Catholic community—much more

resourceful in every way than the movement of the early 1920s" (p. 8).

The emphasis that Walsh places on context allows him to cut through a tangle of historical complexity and produce linkages between different happenings that enable readers to think coherently about the matters under discussion. That his conclusions jar with the official narrative is a point in his favour, given the anti-Sinn Fein preoccupation of that narrative. Incidentally, Pat Walsh makes deductions favourable to republicanism but his viewpoint is clearly independent.

Taken together, *Catastrophe* and *Resurgence* cover the many different aspects of the Catholic predicament in Northern Ireland over the best part of a century, a major undertaking that the author has completed with thoroughness and concision. In this short article I have taken a number of extracts from *Resurgence* relating to the context in which the

IRA campaign took off. Readers can see for themselves that Walsh has explained it in a way that is comprehensible and coherent. Far from being "*sweeping and curious*" his conclusions are based on evidence and argument; his references to the considered judgements of Austin Currie and Paddy Doherty, both respected figures across the spectrum of Irish political opinion, show that he uses authoritative sources. The conclusions of *Resurgence* also fit with the direction of political development in the North, the consolidation of Sinn Fein as the voice of Northern nationalists, a phenomenon that the mainstream has found mystifying.

Regarding the substance of Robert Mc Namara's criticism, I am obviously treating it with more respect than it deserves. McNamara's review had the single purpose of deterring people from reading a body of work that performs the function his own profession has defaulted on.

Dave Alvey

TWO BOOK LAUNCHES

The Pearse Centre,
27 Pearse Street, Dublin 2

"The Catholic Predicament in 'Northern Ireland'"

Volume Two

Resurgence 1969-2016

Launch by the author:
Dr Pat Walsh

**Friday 11th November 2016
7:00 pm**

In August 1969 came a pivotal event in the collective experience of the Catholics of the North after the Unionist Pogrom of that month set off a defensive Insurrection. Things could never be the same again. And they weren't.

The Catholic community, let down in its hour of need by both the British Labour Government of the State and Jack Lynch's Government in Dublin, for the first time fell back on its own resources. In the vital hour it produced something from itself that transformed its situation, turning its position from one of subordination to that of equality.

The Insurrection turned into a 28 Year War that set out to solve, once and for all,

the political predicament that the Catholic community of the North had been sealed into back in 1920-1 by Westminster. That was when Britain set up the perverse political construct known as 'Northern Ireland' that generated an eternal conflict between its two communities, in which 'the minority' always came off worst.

Volume One in this series, aptly titled *Catastrophe*, gives an account of what happened between 1914 and 1968. The present volume tells the rest of the story, putting military and political developments in context.

Resurgence explains why the primary responsibility for that conflict lies with the architects and operators of the system that gave the minority community a stark choice only between permanent second-class status or war. And it describes how that War was ended to the advantage of the community, though short of its final objective, in such an effective way that momentum was carried from war to politics.

It is the story of how the *Catastrophe* of 1920-5 was transformed by the *Resurgence* of August 1969 so that the map of Ireland can be unfolded again.

**'THE ROAD TO
INDEPENDENCE:
Howth, Sutton and
Baldoyle play their part.**

**Launch by the author:
Philip O'Connor.
1916**

**Saturday 12 November 2016
7.00pm**

While the 1914 Howth gun running that made the 1916 Rising possible is well known, even in Howth itself very little until now was recalled of the part played by local people in the Rising, the rise of Sinn Fein and the War of Independence. This story is now told in great detail in what a local community newsletter described as the "new and magnificent book", *Road to Independence – Howth, Sutton and Baldoyle Play Their Part*, researched and written by Philip O'Connor over 310 pages, illustrated by 120 photographs mostly from family and private collections.

Though its sources are meticulously referenced, the book has been described by detective novelist and former *Irish Times* journalist, Eugene McEldowney, as a "marvellous read ... written with all the pace of an adventure story, which is really what it is."

The book traces the revolutionary traditions of the area back through the Land League, the Famine era and the 1798 Rebellion. It covers the rise in the area of the Gaelic League and GAA and also the story of the local Unionist community. It tells of the impact of the "Great War" on

the area, of those who went to war or fell victims to it, like the crews of the fishing boats, the *Geraldine* and *St. Micham*. It also tells of the pioneering trade union movement among local farm labourers and harbour workers, their creation of a Citizen Army branch which was to be the only ICA group outside Dublin to participate in the Rising and later events. It describes the diverse Sinn Fein movement composed of people from a wide variety of social backgrounds and different faiths, the role of Cumann na mBan, the Irish Volunteers and the IRA in the area, and their fate through the Independence struggle and the "Civil War", which left indelible marks on the local community.

The book is not purely a local history, as it weaves local events into the broader narrative of the national happenings of that extraordinary time. Some leading local figures from different sides also played significant roles at national level, and these too are described in detail.

**Book Review: "Uncertain Futures: Essays about the Irish Past for Roy Foster"
Edited by Senia Paseta (Oxford University Press) 2016. £60**

Foster's 'Uncertain Future'

The most interesting chapter in this book is the last one by David Fitzpatrick. Foster may be the doyen of modern revisionism but Fitzpatrick is the actual father of it. He entered the fray and produced the prize fighters via the Trinity Workshops. The best known being the very industrious Professor Peter Hart.

By comparison Foster was always above the fray, urging on the prize-fighters of course with his usual dilettante, offhand and superficial style, but he did not engage in the way Fitzpatrick did. Fitzpatrick was on the field and Foster was a hurler on the ditch. This tells, as Fitzpatrick effectively writes an obituary for revisionism in this chapter. As he was in at its birth and nurtured it he recognises its death in a way Foster and his acolytes never could. Like a soldier he knows when a battle is won or lost.

How does he explain this? His chapter is entitled "*Words and Irish History*", and he tries to get beyond all the accepted words in the litany of Nationalism and Unionism in the hope that he can then get to the reality of the issues. He writes three synopses of Irish history as parodies from Nationalist and Unionist perspectives and one covering the revolutionary period avoiding 'inflammatory' language. But he

says the problem remains that: "*Yet, the revisionist analysis offers no way out of the impasse implied by the underlying assumption of two or more separate, potentially hostile, and possibly irreconcilable political cultures*" (p.279).

In other words, the revisionists are stuck between a rock and a hard place, Nationalism and Unionism, and cannot get around them or over them or under them, no matter how hard they have tried. But historians are there to explain such issues and Fitzpatrick does feel the need to offer some way out of the dilemma.

The vast majority of the revisionists see no problem and are content to waffle on forever about dualisms, ambiguities, uncertainties, etc., etc. Foster thrived in this world. The Anglo-Irish world was perfect for him in this regard and if it did not exist he would have had to invent it.

However, Fitzpatrick appreciates the problem and asks:

"How might one set about assimilating the nationalist and unionist interpretations, rather than merely rephrasing them in inoffensive language in the hope of sustaining a more civilised debate along familiar lines?"

But he gives no answer to his question. The 'impasse' remains. Is there another

way to cope with the rock and the hard place? He suggests there is: "*An alternative approach is to emphasise ambiguities and dualities in Irish political culture, rather than assuming the dominance of deeply held attitudes and allegiances.*"

So one can "assume" something else rather than the reality of the "dominance of deeply held attitudes and allegiances". In other words one can avoid dealing with the obvious issues that needs explaining!

But he tries. He describes how many individuals and families have varied and changed between being Irish and British, by intermarriage, general mixing by migration, nationalists who became imperialists and vice versa, etc.

"Such contradictions" he says "Generated an imaginative duality which allowed Irishmen to alternate between seemingly intransigent nationalism and practical internationalism, their stance in any particular situation being dictated by calculations of short-term advantage. Otherwise how could one explain the seemingly effortless conversion of Home Rulers into Sinn Feiners, and former 'rebels' into imperial statesmen?"

But all this can be explained by the factors involved in each individual situation and is an answer to a different question to the one he originally identified— "*the impasse implied by the underlying assumption of two or more separate, potentially hostile, and possibly irreconcilable political cultures*". This of course is not an 'assumption'—it is the reality of past and present politics on the

island of Ireland. That 'impasse' persists despite all the mixing up and intermingling and this is an attempt to explain away, rather than explain, the continuing reality of the 'impasse'.

Rather than explaining the reality of the forces that make the 'impasse' he concludes and avoids the issue by saying that—"*The proper function of the socially responsible historian is not to assert and document the irreconcilable differences between communities or nationalities, but to seek out buried dualities and affinities which may, in the end, erode those differences.*" A great cop out.

The job of any socially responsible historian is to do precisely what Fitzpatrick dismisses. He thereby confirms the uselessness of his profession in Ireland as he lays down a scenario of futile chasing of will o' the wisps for the profession. The only thing which that will ensure is the production of more and more of less and less in academic theses.

His chapter is headed "*Words and Irish history*" and he begins it with "*An Irish thesaurus*" of words and synonyms that are "*loaded*" in dealing with Irish history. But there are two words missing that would explain the 'impasse' that he and the other revisionists wrestle with—*two nations*. But they are clearly too "*loaded*" for Fitzpatrick. But they would cut the Gordian knot of modern Irish history and get rid of the need for all the "*imaginative duality*", ambiguity and the sheer nonsense that comes from academia on the subject.

If you want to read some good samples of this nonsense buy the book for £60.

Jack Lane

**In Problems magazine,
Issue 27—**

**China: Agnes
Smedley's Battle Hymn
Against Japan**
by Gwydion M Williams

Smedley as Stranger In Her Own Land:
Chinese Trotskyism; The little-known
Trotskyist influence on Khrushchev;
Witness at Xian – and Loose Cannon at
Xian; A Failed Sexual Revolution at
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Persecution by the Ignorant and Powerful;
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Letter submitted to *Irish Times* on 17th October, but not published

Kilmichael And Eunan O'Halpin

Congratulations on historian Eunan O'Halpin's robust review of Tim Pat Coogan's *The Twelve Apostles* (15th October). It marks a refreshing change from academics in print promoting each other's work. The fact though that the author is a mere journalist, those 'schooled generally not to reveal their sources', lowers his efforts in your reviewer's professional estimation. Will O'Halpin's side of the fence be subject in future to similar treatment?

That noted, it is ironic that O'Halpin dismisses Coogan's acerbic reference to an academic historian, the late Peter Hart. Hart interviewed a Kilmichael Ambush participant six days after the last recorded (97 year old) ambush veteran died. Historian Meda Ryan first pointed to this anomaly, having inspected the veteran's gravestone.

The point is that Hart the historian refused to reveal his sources. His IRA veteran interviewees were anonymous. Unraveling the Kilmichael anomaly has therefore proved exceptionally difficult. Commentary on Hart's refusal to resolve the issue, similar to O'Halpin's on Coogan, was pooh-poohed by some historians as inappropriate. How times have changed.

On a further positive note, O'Halpin's suggestion that Coogan 'repeats[s] a canard' on this issue means, surely, that your reviewer has at last discovered the identity of the Kilmichael mystery man. Pray tell.

Niall Meehan

Southern Protestants and the State

Roy Foster suggests it to be a "stupid assumption... made often by people" (who else?) "that Irish Protestants are unionists", on the basis that his Church of Ireland parents "thought that partition was a tragic mistake" ("Interview—The Irish argue about history all the time", October 1st.

But southern Protestants who opposed partition were unionists, mainly. They favoured Ireland as a whole remaining in the union and felt betrayed by Ulster unionists. Roman Catholic unionists felt somewhat the same way. Protestants experienced a generational shift in a nationalist direction during and after the second World War, as reflected in The Irish Times transition from John Healy's retirement in 1934 to Douglas Gageby becoming editor in 1963.

As for partition being a tragedy for southern Protestants in particular, how so? The Church of Ireland Gazette observed of Southern Ireland in May 1922, "the Protestant community holds a commanding position in the economic life of the country". That remained the case for many decades. As late as 1972, 50 years after State formation, the less than 4 per cent Protestant population provided an estimated 25 per cent of senior managers in industry and 36 per cent of all bank directors.

One of a series of Irish Times articles by Michael Viney in 1965 opened with: "'For Heavens sake,' said a Protestant accountant, 'don't make us out to be whingers, we've nothing to whinge about.' As a working citizen the Protestant of the Republic of Ireland has little to complain of. Among the poor, he is unlikely to be poorer for being Protestant. Among the wealthy, he is likely to be wealthier for it."

In return for the preservation of relative affluence, including employment discrimination, and separate institutions in health and education, thoughtful Protestants did not complain too much about the irritations of overarching Roman Catholic controls. The controls began fall apart when those they were mainly aimed at, Roman Catholics, began to express a lot more than irritation.

One of the reasons why many Protestants kept their heads down in independent Southern Ireland is not because they were treated badly, rather the opposite (why upset the apple cart?). So much so, former Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald advertised the advantages of being a southern Protestant to northern unionists.

Forced discrimination in favour of Protestants in Northern Ireland, or by consent in Southern Ireland, probably would not have survived a united Ireland. It might have been good for the island's people (whatever their assumptions) though.

It seems to me that Prof Foster's is a typical revisionist historian's observation, in which he erected a straw target, knocked it down, wiped his hands and walked away. It is called proof by constant assertion. I wish him well in his retirement from Oxford.—

Niall Meehan (*Irish Times*, 10.10.16)

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

AUDITORS AND ACCOUNTANTS, PART 3

As we have seen the Auditing profession throughout the Anglophone world is part of the Accounting profession whose members are basically trained in accounting, whereas members in other countries—such as France and Germany—the auditor receives a legal training: they qualify first as lawyers and then train as *Wirtschaftsprüfer* etc.

In Ireland, the auditors of limited liability companies and of Trade Unions, of Industrial and Provident Societies (Co-ops) and Building Societies are controlled and defined in *Companies Act 1963* which recognises five Institutes as providing the necessary education and these were and still are under subsequent Companies Acts:-

- The Chartered Association of Certified Accountants (British),
- The Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland (Irish),
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (Irish),
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (British), and
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (British).

And so there are three non-Irish Institutes recognised as producing members who are, by law, qualified to be appointed as auditors to Irish companies **even though they have no training in Irish law** which, after ninety years, has diverged significantly from UK law.

The Irish public servants whose job it is to supervise the auditing profession appear to have no regard for the self-respect and dignity of Ireland as an independent sovereign State.

If they had such regard, they would at the very least introduce a Ministerial Order to ensure that only those members of the British Institutes who demonstrated by examination their grasp of Irish law—company law, employment law, civil law, taxation—should be qualified to be appointed as Auditors of Irish Companies.

This is a vitally important matter because, in addition to their own members, the British Institutes by reciprocal agreements take in members from the former

British colonies (except the USA) without the necessity of even passing examinations in UK law.

Does the Irish Minister care about this? Or does he even know about it? Whether in or out of the EU and regardless of the BREXIT outcome, accountants from, say, New Zealand can freely come and go as Auditors in Ireland under these 'behind the scenes' reciprocal agreements.

Is it any wonder that the audit of Irish public limited companies (plc's) is so flexible? Just how flexible we discovered on Monday 29th September 2008 when AIB and Bank of Ireland sought a meeting with the Minister of Finance Brian Lenihan, TD. They feared that, if depositors demanded their monies to be repaid, the banks could not survive.

Lehman Brothers had collapsed in USA on 15th September and the Irish Stock Market had been collapsing in the week up to Friday 26th September, and on the 26th September 2008 the Financial Regulator had belatedly banned "*short selling*" of financial shares i.e. selling shares which were not owned by the seller—a manoeuvre to force market prices down, in which the criminal sellers would buy the shares at the lower price and hand them over to the original purchaser making a loss for the purchaser and a handsome profit for the short seller.

The respective Auditors of the Bank of Ireland, AIB and Anglo-Irish Bank had all reported in glowing terms on the Banks' previous year's profits and assets which were now, in September 2008, turning out to be seriously overstated. It cost the Irish taxpayer at least **€70 Billion** to bail out the banks. Seventy Billion is a guess—estimates vary and it was at least that amount.

The Auditors escaped somehow! Although Pricewaterhouse Coopers were paid **€12.5 million** in respect of their work for Bank of Ireland for 2007—they had given the Bank a clear bill of health. KPMG performed a similar service for AIB and the fees were **€7.7 million**. Why were they being paid so much—well over the going rate? By comparison, in respect of 2015, PwC were paid **€5.5 million** by the Bank of Ireland and Deloitte & Touche were paid **€5.5 million** for AIB in respect of 2013.

Almost immediately after the 2008 crisis, it became known that the Banks had given out loans to Builders, Developers and House buyers without proper, or indeed any, regard for the repayment capability of the borrowers and the Banks

had not given out these loans from their own resources but had instead wildly exceeded their resources and had funded the loans out of borrowing from abroad.

And of course the foreign lenders to the Irish banks expected to be repaid and the banks could not repay. The increased trend in foreign borrowing was quite evident to the Bank Directors who were doing it intentionally to boost their business. It must have been equally very evident to the Auditors but they did not comment on this drastic change in the risk profiles of the banks.

The Auditors got away with it because nowhere did they report succinctly that "*the annual financial statements gave a true and fair view of the bank's affairs and of its profit for the year*". You might be forgiven for thinking that is what auditors do after auditing a bank. But no. They protect themselves with adjectives and adjectival clauses such as the following in AIB's Annual Report:

"The Group financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with IFRSs as adopted by the EU, of the State of the Group's affairs as at 31st December 2007 and of its profit for the year then ended" and "the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts 1963-2006 and Article 4 of the IAS Regulation."

This is KPMG's wording and in their report they go on to say that "*in our opinion proper books of account have been kept by the Company. The company balance sheet is in agreement with the books of account*".

We will overlook the reference to "*books of account*". Although it is most unlikely there were "*books*" when computerisation had been by then underway for twenty years. But the references to IFRSs and to the Companies Acts and to Article 4 of the IAS Regulation are all references to accounting methods and **not to auditing standards**. IRFS stand for International Financial Reporting Standards and IAS stands for International Accounting Standards and the Companies Act refers to the wording of the Auditor's Report and it does provide penalties for Company Directors who do not provide records requested by the Auditor. Nowhere in these regulations is it specified how an audit should be conducted, nor do they define what an Audit is.

Pricewaterhouse Coopers, KPMG, Ernst & Young, and Deloitte are all bank auditors and they are all Chartered Accountants. To report that banks are

following Accounting Standards is all very well but are the banks honest, are they dealing within the law of the land, are they overcharging their customers? These are matters that have not been reported by the banks' auditors. For example, in the DIRT (Deposit Interest Retention Tax) scandal, it emerged from reports of an internal auditor Tony Spollen, that each of the banks was assisting customers to defraud the Revenue Commissioners out of over £230 million. This widespread fraud was not reported by PwC *et al.* Nor was the Faldor scandal, where some favoured clients of AIB were allocated profits while ordinary clients were deprived through manipulation of AIIM (AIIM is a subsidiary company of AIB) and the overcharging scandal was exposed, not by the auditor who signed the public Annual Report, but it was blown by a conscientious employee—the internal Auditor Eugene, Mc Erlean (a Belfast Catholic), who exposed it to a Dáil Committee and on RTE.

Interestingly enough, buried in their Bank of Ireland Auditor's Report for the year ended 31st December 2015 Pricewaterhouse Coopers made an unusual statement:

"These statements are not a guarantee as to the Group's and Bank's ability to continue as a going concern."

The stock market price of Bank of Ireland shares has since been steadily falling cent by cent.

Each of the Auditor's Reports in recent years has included a reservation of liability along the lines of :

"This Report has been prepared for and only for the Bank's members as a body in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014 and for no other purpose. We do not, in giving these opinions, accept or assume responsibility for any other purpose or to any other person to whom this report is shown or into whose hands it may come save where expressly agreed by our prior consent in writing"(PwC Report on Bank of Ireland 19.02.2016)

And it is said that the Big Four firms of Chartered Accountants had a significant input in drafting Section 391 of Companies Act 2014. What has been stated above about bank auditors is equally true about the auditors of other Public Limited Companies. as indeed it seems it is true about Auditors of Co-ops, Trade Unions, Auctioneers, Solicitors—all of whom by law require Auditors' Reports to be attached to their Accounts.

Do Chartered Accountants themselves have to have auditor's reports on their annual accounts? Interesting question. Some years ago one Chartered Accountant in practice, Russell Murphy, who was also a Director of Bank of Ireland, died and his financial affairs were found to be in complete disarray. Many of his clients lost their life savings which they had entrusted to him to invest for them. He was self-promoted as a financial genius. When Russell Murphy died, the playwright

Hugh Leonard found he was over £250,000 short and Gay Byrne lost his life's savings. Russell Murphy was a cowboy in a pin-stripe suit—when he kept it on, and he sometimes didn't apparently.

Michael Stack ©.

PS

In the next issue I will address 'what is to be done about Auditors. Are Auditors an anachronism? Are they past their sell-by date?'

"The most thought-provoking thing about the times we live in is that we still are not thinking." Martin Heidegger

The Heidegger Review No. 3

- * Editorial (1): Some World War I Philosophers and Poets
- * Editorial (2): Overlooking Chamberlain. Donatella di Cesare on German Philosophy and Nazism
- * Absolute Beginner: Review of "*Martin Heidegger - The Philosophy of Another Beginning*" by Alexander Dugin Peter Brooke
- * Arthur Balfour, England's Philosopher King Brendan Clifford
- * War and Progress Pat Walsh
- * *Towards a Criticism of the Age* (1912): Thoughts On Progress Walther Rathenau
- * The Early Poetry of World War 1 John Minahane
 - I. Pro-war poets in the early days
 - II. The outstanding pro-war poet: Rainer Maria Rilke
 - III. The outstanding anti-war poet: Pavol Országh Hviezdoslav
 - IV. The *Bloody Sonnets* of Hviezdoslav

Athol Books

The Heidegger Review—costs (2 issues): *Postal*: £8, €10 per annum for Britain and Ireland.; *Electronic*: €6 (£8) It deals historically with philosophical themes and philosophically with historical matters. (ISSN 2055-7779).

Roger Casement Remembered At Pentonville

Roger Casement, the Irishman born in Dublin, arrested in Kerry, conveyed to London, hanged by an Englishman after conviction by an English Jury of High Treason' was remembered and honoured outside Her Majesty's Prison Pentonville, London on Wednesday 3rd August, the centenary of his death there, by between a gathering of 60 to 70 drawn from the Connolly Association and other organisations. A representative of the Congolese community recalled the humanitarian work of Casement who had revealed to the world the enslavement, torture and murder of Africans by the employees of King Leopold of the Belgians. Leopold was responsible for genocide there of up to ten million Africans to enrich himself, and Belgium, by the extraction of rubber.

Casement's speech from the Dock of the Old Bailey was read out, to remind us of the reasons for his presence there, for which he made no apology. At 9.00 AM the crowd stood bareheaded for one minute's silence. A lament was played on the Irish War Pipes.

Authentic and Authenticated writings of Casement written between 1911 and the outbreak of the Great War and entitled "*The Crime Against Europe*" and "*The Crime Against Ireland*", published by Athol Books in 2003 with an Introduction by Brendan Clifford, were on sale. Casement forecast Britain's War on Germany which had been planned and prepared for since 1904 and condemned it as a crime. The Socialist James Connolly independently judged it a crime, as did the Catholic Bishop of Limerick, Dr. Dwyer.

Casement's authenticated essays collected under the titles above appear to have been ignored by nearly all commentators, or dismissed as unworthy of study.

But other alleged writings of his have been lucrative sources for some writers and useful weapons for anti-democrats, who would not dare to suggest that his trial judge, Lord Reading, the former Rufus Isaacs, had been involved with Lloyd George in a scam involving Marconi Shares.

Donal Kennedy

DEMOCRACY continued

cause ripples by questioning authority or perceived wisdom. When discussion begins, vested interests are then capable of launching a huge volume of either inaccurate or certainly slanted reports sometimes disguised as news thus overwhelming the critic in noise and heat.

Secondly, there is the even more insidious motives and actions on the Web or in the Cloud where Governments and key industrial interests can conspire to harm individual citizens. Personal data can be stolen and misrepresented. Patterns of people's behaviour, consumer choices, travel, financial arrangements and lists of friends are part of massive stored knowledge which can be accessed or mined when Government and communication companies and broadcasters happen to co-operate in mutual interest. Occasionally Governments, without the patience of waiting, can demand Google or Yahoo etc. to hand over the built-up information of individual usage in their accounts of the services available in the means of communication even down to the books they order.

The late billionaire, Steve Jobs, is worshipped by many from Pasadena to Portmarnock. So, essentially, people invest their hopes and dreams with the princes of communication companies such that the information machine (murder machine) becomes the pre-eminent standard version of world order. Mark Zuckerberg of 'Facebook' now wants to cure all world illness in forty years—he probably wants to live forever. Such promises might well be megalomaniac from one who is so powerful, yet remains a party of one. RTE ever so often broadcasts a brilliant documentary late at night. In early September, it showed 'Facebookistan' about Zuckerberg's company which is well worth a search.

4. A commitment to address facts concerning the activity of secret services and police spying, etc.

Martin O'Hagan was a journalist in Belfast who was ultimately murdered for his investigation into Loyalist paramilitaries and their practices of intimidation—even extending to influencing newspaper editors. It has long been known that the most successful

Loyalist paramilitaries were trained and armed by British Secret Service elements in the British military. Our own Government in the 1970s tapped the phone of Vincent Browne. Much of the propaganda on the North's troubles emanating from Chatham House, home to the Royal Institute of International Affairs, has gradually come to be accepted as unchallengeable script by RTE news and current affairs.

British Crown forces placed spies in the IRA who were allowed to carry out murders and then point the finger at others to take the blame or to be accused of being informers or touts. For a time operatives in the British Army had a 'shoot to kill' policy used against suspect Nationalists, and then the highest echelons of Government security jumped into action to nobble the work of John Stalker who tried to get to the bottom of it.

Our own Special Branch have spied on peaceful protesters at Rosspoint and Ballynafoy in recent times. Others, of whom there are many, who have been targeted include Luke Flanagan MEP. Similar to point Three, we have a duty of care to those who have suffered trauma as a result of experiences endured by those working for what is right and encouragement to those who may be about to go public on issues of great concern.

5. Investigation of Government money spent on Heritage, Commemoration Museums, Nature Reserves etc.

We do not have to go to the extreme example of the commemorative plinth for Sir Walter Raleigh (the butcher of Rathlin) to see deluded notions of history and how we portray it, funded by the unfortunate taxpayer. Under the heading of Heritage, some appear to have an inside track in obtaining objectives with their pet projects that are at best highly subjective and at worst a determination to dominate the contested space of the national locality of sites both metaphorically and physically.

There is a question of governance in how certain individuals consistently get appointed to various Government boards and agencies. In a lot of cases it is virtually impossible for the public to discern the boundaries and jurisdiction of a multitude of agencies from 'An Taisce' to the 'National Parks and Wildlife service'.

To put it another way, no one is assured of the maxim of President Truman "*The buck stops here*". Commentators have not sufficiently asked the question '*What exactly is heritage?*' A lot of money is being spent but it is highly questionable whether the state is being well served or indeed historical truth!

6. Fearless comment on the performance of University faculties and academic publishers.

Currently, there is a crisis in Universities in many countries. However in Ireland, where Humanities in particular practise such state self-denunciation (in terms of any pride being taken in the national or the Gaelic tradition) is particularly acute. Our Universities *contain* environmental conditions ideal for the propagation of leaders who are self-centered, self-righteous, self-congratulatory and dictatorial.

The frequency of junior staff both with and without tenure having to resort to the courts to deal with bullying, poor conditions or unfair dismissals is truly disturbing. Faculties are full of whispering campaigns, brown-nosing and spite that would put Byzantium to shame. These are not very appealing surroundings for questioning students who want to celebrate knowledge and discourse.

There is another area where our academic centres fall short: in terms of being open to innovation, fair competition and cherishing a plurality of views.

Several publishers are either directly or indirectly funded by the taxpayers. For those inside the favoured circle some ideas are given more value than others. Informal arrangements mean that particular actors have their prestige defended and that 'a nice little earner' in their slice of academic material is preserved.

In conclusion, taking public stances and writing theory cannot be completely divorced. I believe the talent and determination of contributors to the *Irish Political Review* and our supporters can substantially influence Ireland for the better. In the case of the sample points I have raised, I would welcome critique suggestions and advice.

Discussion and thoughtful effort is certainly needed.

Seán Ó Riain

A Thinking Democracy

In the course of attempting to struggle with matters of depth in stolen hours, either in giving a sincere attempt to write an opinion or contextualise current happenings : one comes to the conclusion that we cannot completely separate review, critique or historical research from taking an ethical stance and to some degree contribute to progressive action. By its nature this august publication attracts contributors from a diverse array of positions and people who emphasise many different tendencies. I am not talking about going to the barricades, after all, some of us may be restricted in action whether by working in the public sector or infirmity or various domestic commitments.

However, rarely has there been a period in Ireland which needs the maximum of people to participate in thinking globally and acting locally. Both those burnt out by previous political campaigning and those for who for the first time are considering the present to be the right moment to be active in public discourse, we can all learn from each other and support each other.

Vested interests would love to divide us and we certainly require an undertaking to have a lot of patience with others. Des Fennell has correctly argued that the rejection of the confessional state has not been replaced with anything concrete. As people thrown together in a community whether we like it or not, I would argue we need to start somewhere in building unity and solidarity. It is not necessary to duplicate existing gatherings, for major or minor developing groups. On the other hand it may require *Irish Political Review* (IPR) and our supporters outlining some red line issues which we can as a unit publicly defend. I will throw out a sample six points which I consider should attract a strong measure of consensus.

There are now so few media outlets that can be trusted and similarly recent graduates are coming out with nowhere to go to pursue precise and even-handed research (particularly in the humanities) that does not involve surrender to the oversight of an ever present academic ideas control. The fact that occasionally brilliant studies leak out should not blind us to the existential crisis. It is not time to

wallow in it; quite the contrary—it is time to get networking and be busy.

The Irish people with its public component is not worse than what went before. However, the consumerist treadmill and a culture of nuclear partition of people into individual households has led to more isolation, stress and uncertainty and the loss of some skills in local organisation and the feeling of destiny being in one's hands. In this small country we can come up with our own impressive improvisations, remembering that ultimately all politics is local. Therefore my sample list consists of the following.

1. A defence of Irish Military neutrality

An early September edition of the magazine *Phoenix* (if you excuse the pun) featured a call to arms by Paddy Prenderville for people to defend Irish Neutrality. Unfortunately few media outlets will back him while the ranks of those who would contribute to such a good cause are under-organised and scattered. NATO members today, along with their cheerleaders, are on an aggressive stance rarely matched at another point in the organisation's history. Gt. Britain, Poland, Canada, Lithuania and Italy in particular are intent on cementing the one world order.

Another member, Turkey, as a state, is now losing all control of itself. There are of course counter currents : the opposition in Italy seems to be considering a more sober approach while some in Norway would like to see that nation's involvement scaled back. Yet, the United States has in no way back-tracked in the adoption of regime change in several regions in the name of its own security and defence. Military spending across the West is rising. Research on biological weapons and sonic weapons continue, while the use of white phosphorous by Western armies is ongoing. Armament industries and country rebuilders are beating a track to "*democracy exporting governments*" anxious to be in early with tenders little of which is truly scrutinised by the public.

Some surmise a new Euro force led by France and Germany without the participa-

tion of the UK or the United States could emerge instead of NATO and that it would be more progressive! That scenario is extremely unlikely and even if it happened the advantages would be minor and limited. Thus for Ireland to play her best part in the world it is crucial for her to remain neutral. Europe does not need any joint defences and this should not be a stumbling block to positive forms of European integration.

2. Rational and fair discussion of the 'Civil War'

These times of remembering which began in 2014 (or 2013 if one is a committed Trade Unionist) will continue up to 2023 or 2024. In that context, there ought to be no problem for us to begin a sensible discussion and approach to the Irish 'Civil War' ahead of the posse.

By this I do not mean glamorising or doing any form of proselytising for the Republican side. However, I do mean writing and talking in a way that is not irrational and full of the usual establishment claptrap for the Free State that is now practised by Micheal Martin as well as Kenny, Noonan and Varadkar. It should be within our intellectual compass to put the arguable case that it may have been just or even preferable for an honest and intelligent person to have participated on the Republican side in the 'Civil War'

3. Support for individuals countering and resisting propaganda and modern electronic intimidation.

The first part of this proposal might apply to individuals that have either suffered in a direct sense from the pharmacology industry or the State mental health services but also the person who speaks out in criticism of the above-mentioned interests. Persons who try to speak out might be Doctors or Industrial Chemists or others with considerable significant data. Bringing institutions to account is difficult—it requires courage to "*tell it as it is*". We cannot overlook our flawed Anglo-based legal system which does not deliver on fairness in our society.

The second part of the proposal has two parts. Firstly we must recognise the barrage of hate mail on the Internet that is often instantly released against those who might

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Comment

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EASTER, 1916

by

Erskine Childers

"Poblacht na hEireann", 20th April 1922

The keynote of the whole glorious epoch is this: that these men had a transcendent faith in the tradition of Irish Independence and placed it above all else—not only above their own lives and happiness, but above the security and comfort of their generation, above the remedying of social evils, above every minor amelioration of the condition of the people they loved. On April 28th, 1916, Pearse wrote in a general order to his troops:

"For my part, as to anything I have done in this, I am not afraid to face either the judgment of God or the judgment of posterity."

Those who came after Pearse have already judged him, and their judgment has consisted in calling him the greatest of our dead.

At this hour, when his spirit is present with us, some of whom he looked to complete his work, some to whom he handed the torch he had kindled at the fires of the nation's soul are fearful and would quench it. We pray that the retelling of the greatest act of his life may bring to all those courage and a renewal of that hope which never died in him. It was his faith which sustained him in fulfilling the awful mission to which he felt himself to be divinely appointed.

He lived not for the Ireland of his day, but for the Ireland of all time. He was saddened by the want and suffering he saw about him, but he knew that there was no lasting remedy for these evils other

than the rescuing of Ireland from every vestige of British authority. He had in his day been one of those who hoped to gain strength for his nation from the little compromises. But as his mind and character matured he learned that this was the false way, which could lead only to bitterness and sorrow for his people.

He, who, more than any other Irish leader was truly a democrat, realised that there are moments in history when a nation's greatness can only be preserved by a few men acting boldly in its name without consulting its will. So it was that he came to oppose the majority of General headquarters of the Irish Volunteers, ignore the recorded will of an apathetic electorate, and, openly and fearlessly assuming the role of dictator, throw the

nation into war. Who amongst us to-day will say that he was wrong or deny that his act galvanised his people into a new and richer life?

Six years after he and his comrades gloriously fell, the nation whose name was to him the sweetest of all names is once more torn with doubt and dissension, racked with the desire of material comfort, sickened with the fear of war. It is that hour when men seek for false phrases in which to hide their frailty. Men who do not understand assert that Pearse and his comrades would have accepted the overthrow of Ireland's independence in return for wealth and peace as a vassal state.

They do not know his philosophy or the motives of the men whom he inspired and led. They are blind to to-day's fulfilment of the terrible prophecy of Pearse, that when Ireland foregoes her rightful heritage she earns nothing but the tragic turmoil which now surrounds us and the bitterness between brothers which robs even the material gains of compromise of their worth. If the Irish people would but learn what this man has taught they would know that one thing alone can bring comfort and prosperity to their fatherland, and that one thing is fealty to the spiritual tradition of the Gaelic Nation as expressed for us to-day in the living Republic.

(From *The Wolfe Tone Annual*, 1933—Published by Brian O'Higgins)

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