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Northern Ireland

The End Of An Era?

Northern Ireland is without a Government at the moment. It has been without a Government since before the last British General Election. Or, to put it another way, the Northern Ireland region of the British state is being governed by the Government of the state and that is not what the State wants.

What the State wants is to have a subordinate Government in its Six County region—a Government which has no power of its own, but whose flimsy existence at Stormont helps to conceal the fact that the British system of government in its Northern Ireland region is, and always has been, essentially undemocratic.

The Fianna Fail leader, Micheál Martin, is unhappy that Sinn Féin is not facilitating British policy by enabling the Northern Ireland false front of democracy to be restored. He says that Sinn Féin is falling down on its duty as a class party by giving priority to national considerations. He urges Sinn Féin to get back into harness with the DUP, restore the subordinate Government, and then undo the austerity regime imposed by Westminster.

We recall a time, not very long ago, when Sinn Féin, in the government at Stormont, was refusing to implement the austerity measures demanded by Westminster, and Mr. Martin condemned it for refusing to take the hard, unpopular decisions that Governments often have to take, and said that proved that Sinn Féin was unfit to take part in a Government of the Republic.

And Mr. Martin has forgotten—if he ever took enough interest in the North to have known it—that the austerity measures in question were imposed by Whitehall against the opposition of the subordinate Stormont Government, even though the authority in the matter lay with the devolved Government under the terms of the Agreement which was supposedly the Northern Ireland Constitution.

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Fishing in the troubled waters of Brexit

Under the guise of defending Irish interests, Taoiseach Varadkar and Foreign Minister Coveney are acting as participants in the internal UK debate on Brexit. Speaking in Belfast in early August Varadkar listed off the options that he thinks the UK Prime Minister should be following and, on the eve of her speech in Florence (September 21st), in the course of a telephone conversation, he impressed on her the need to accept 'soft Brexit'.

Meanwhile Minister Coveney has gone further. He has stated explicitly that 'Ireland needs to encourage the evolving Brexit debate' (Irish Times, 25 September). His prescription for Britain was described in the same article:

"The Irish Government position is very clear - that the UK should stay in a newly constructed Customs Union, he said, in an extension of the Customs Union, a trading partnership. 'Something between our free trade agreement with Canada and what Norway has - direct access'."

If the charge of meddling in the affairs
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Balfour Declaration

Part 4

Taming the Jew

Britain did not have a Jewish problem to the extent of other European countries but, in the course of its Great War, it began to see itself as having an *international Jewish problem* that obstructed the winning of its War over Germany and the Ottoman Turks. That is the fundamental reason for the Balfour Declaration, aside from strategic considerations.

The Balfour Declaration came about through the existence of some of the most

powerful beliefs of Anti-Semitism in high places in England. These were that Jewry in Russia, Germany and the United States had secret and powerful international links in Finance and Government, tantamount to a conspiracy. The implication of such an understanding was that the War could be decided by Jewish influence. So Jewish influence needed to be turned.

Any reading of Imperial writings of a century ago will uncover a sensitive

and unmentionable aspect of the Balfour Declaration—the British desire to restrict, or utilise, what it believed to be the global political, economic and social influence of international Jewry. This aspect of the Balfour Declaration can only properly be termed Britain's 'Taming of the Jew'.

There is a memorandum to Lord Peel and the other members of the *Royal Commission on Palestine* in 1936 marked "Private & Confidential", written by James Malcolm, which sets out the reasons behind the Balfour Declaration:

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All the powers of state lie with Westminster. It set up a subordinate Six County Government to exercise some of them. But the Six County system has no sovereign authority at all, even within the sphere allocated to it. Whitehall can over-rule its decisions whenever it pleases. It has both legal power and the actual political influence to do so.

There is authentic devolution in Scotland. Whitehall would not dare to over-rule it in its exercise of powers devolved to it, as it did with the northern Ireland Government on the austerity issue. Devolution was conceded to Scotland in the hope that it would appease the Scottish Nationalist movement. It appears to have done so. But the measure of appeasement has conferred layer of actual authority to the Scottish devolution system that Whitehall would over- rule at its peril.

That is not the case with the Six Counties. The Northern Ireland system was imposed, in response to no demand for it, as British policy for handling the Irish situation as a whole.

The two national communities with conflicting interests that made up the Six County Area were bundled into the strange Northern Ireland adjunct of the

British state. Neither of them wanted it, but Whitehall persuaded the Protestant Community to accept it, under the threat that otherwise they would come under an Irish Home Rule system. For half a century the Protestant majority ruled over the Catholic community, in exclusion from the political life of the British state, in the make-believe 'Northern Ireland state', with most of the services of State continuing to be provided by Whitehall.

Communal conflict—called "*sectarian conflict*" by superficial political commentators who did not trouble to see what the ground of it was—was what happened in the Northern Ireland political vacuum.

It was all that was there to happen.

The Protestant Community became addicted to the political system which it had not wanted but had agreed to rule. It called itself Unionist, but had agreed to operate a system outside the political life of the Union, and was damaged by that decision. It had no political purpose beyond turning out the Protestant vote at every election in order to keep itself 'connected' with Britain.

The Catholic community has been

accused of refusing to participate in the Northern Ireland political system, but there was actually no internal political life within the system for it to participate in. It was routinely humiliated in the most casual manner by the rulers, and it was discriminated against routinely, but it was aware of itself as a politically detached segment of the Irish nation, which had formed a state through war with Britain, and so it had a political purpose beyond Northern Ireland.

In Northern Ireland it lived in its own life within its own culture and it grew despite discrimination and strong inducements to emigrate, and bided its time. After half a century it launched a War against the State and sustained it until the State re-ordered the devolved system in a way that abolished the majority of political status of the majority population. Throughout the War it grew in confidence as well as numbers.

A position has now been reached where Unionism is no longer a political majority. In the last Elections (Six County and state) the combined votes of the Unionist Parties was less than the combined votes of the other Parties. (The holding of Censuses was abolished sometime ago in order to conceal 'Demographics'.)

Northern Ireland is without a Government (but the Six Counties isn't) because of gross mismanagement by the DUP leader of the subsidised heating issue when she was a Minister. Sinn Fein under Martin McGuinness appeared willing to fudge a way through the crisis but the SDLP would have characterised it as a DUP stooge if it had persisted in the attempt, so it resigned from the Government when Arlene Foster would not stand aside while an investigation was being held.

The SDLP at the time was refusing to participate in Government in accordance with the spirit of the 1998 Agreement. It made an alliance with the Official Unionists in an attempt to break the Agreement and restore some kind of majority rule system.

Sinn Fein, having been put under pressure to end collaboration with the DUP, was then criticised for not getting back into coalition quickly without any real change in the circumstances under which it was under pressure to resign.

The new SDLP leader, Colm Eastwood, having tried to restore SDLP fortunes by means of an anti-Republican pact with the Official Unionists, and come to grief in the Elections, has reverted to Republicanism. Sinn Fein has made a "*stand-alone*" Irish

Language Act a condition of entering government again. The DUP insist that any Language Act must put on a par Gaelic and a variety of Scottish said to be spoken somewhere, but impossible to find.

Sinn Féin insists that there must be an Act that it is specifically directed for the revival of Irish, which has been seriously undertaken in the North ever since Partition. It points out that such an Act has already been accepted in two official agreements, which have never been implemented.

Official Unionist Reg Empey says that, if this is done, everyone will be forced to speak Irish, thus putting pressure on the DUP to maintain a hard-line stance.

But the SDLP supports the Sinn Féin position—as does the Fine Gael-led Irish Government.

Fianna Fáil says Sinn Féin should put nationality on the long finger and get back into government as a class party and reverse austerity.

When did Sinn Féin ever present itself as a class party? a Labour Party? It is a nationalist Party formed by the working class—the most working-class party in composition that there has ever been amongst the major Parties in Ireland or Britain, but a nationalist party. It treats social issues within the context of nationality—Just as Connolly did.

Fianna Fáil seems to have lost itself under Martin's leadership. He is going down the way prepared for Fianna Fáil by Martin Mansergh who tried to obscure its origins in the War against Lloyd George's one-sided 'Treaty'. (And could it be that he is being advised by Ireland's most blustering political commentator, Eoghan Harris?)

Fine Gael, however, seems to be changing in the other direction.

Fianna Fáil has been 'maturing' towards the view that the Treaty State replaced the elected Republic in a democratic way in 1922-3, while Leo Varadkar has commented that the Treaty regime was established by means of war-crimes.

The crucial event leading to the crumbling of Republican morale in Fianna Fáil was Jack Lynch's prosecution in 1970 of members of his Government and Army for treasonable conspiracy when all they had been doing was carrying out his own Northern policy of 1969, and his prosecution of John Kelly, who had been his liaison with the Northern Catholic Defence Committees, which had been formed in response to the Unionist pogrom

A Balanced Approach?

Simon O'Donnell wrote last month of being required to take a '*balanced*' approach by a Dublin City Council official when erecting a plaque to Thomas Mac Donagh.

But what about memorials already in place, hangovers from British rule? Should they be pulled down or moved to a museum? Or should they be kept in place to remind people of Ireland's colonised history? Perhaps the Indian example might be helpful.

"... the British remembered the siege and capture of Delhi [*in 1857*] as one of the great moments of the Empire... Monuments were erected all over the subcontinent commemorating massacres and last stands. The most important of these is the Delhi Mutiny Memorial, erected on the site of the British Camp on the Ridge [*from which General John Nicholson, even after being fatally wounded, directed the battle—strikingly similar to the 1944 German action against the Warsaw Uprising*]... It still stands today above the swirl of domes, rooftops and bazaar shacks that is Old Delhi. The original British inscriptions commemorating the siege and capture of the City remain, though they are now complemented by another plaque which intends to set the record right:

"'The 'enemy' of the inscriptions on this monument were those who rose against colonial rule and fought bravely for national liberation in 1857. In memory of these immortal martyrs for Indian freedom, this plaque was unveiled on the 25th anniversary of the nation's attainment of freedom, 28th August 1972'..." (William Dalrymple, *City of Djinns*).

Perhaps that is the approach that should be adopted in Ireland: leave the British memorials in place—including the Glasnevin Wall—but add plaques explaining exactly who and what is being commemorated.

Pat Muldowney

Readers may be interested in these further observations about British actions by Dalrymple:

"But the most striking thing is not either of the two inscriptions; it is the statistical tables raised by the British to commemorate the Mutiny's casualties. Each of the monument's eight sides has one of these tables, set in a little Gothic trefoil. Against a list of each of the engagements fought in 1857 are three columns: KILLED, WOUNDED and MISSING; each of the results are then, inevitably, divided into NATIVE and EUROPEAN. The cold and exact set of mind which could reduce the human casualties of a bloody war to the level of bowling averages ...

The recapture of Delhi by the British on 14 September 1857 led to the wholesale destruction of great areas of the city... Three thousand Delhi-wallahs were tried and executed—either hanged, shot or blown from the mouths of cannon—on the flimsiest evidence. British soldiers bribed the hangmen to keep the condemned men 'a long time hanging, as they like to see the criminals dance a "Pandy's hornpipe" as they termed the dying struggles of the accused.' ... Even today, stories about British atrocities in the aftermath of the Mutiny are current. In Karachi, Ahmed Ali told me how he vividly remembers his grandmother describing in hushed tones how she was thrown out of her haveli [*courtyard house*] and forced to take shelter in a tomb to the south of the city; later a pair of British 'Tommies' found her hiding there. They pulled off her chador and stripped her naked in their search for the jewels they supposed she was hiding from them. Up to then she had never once left the family zenana [*women's part of Muslim household*] or revealed even her face to anyone except her maid..."

of August 1969. He did this under pressure from the British Ambassador, acting through the Fine Gael leader.

The court verdict in all cases was Not Guilty, and was strictly in accordance with the evidence presented. Respectable people in all three Irish parties, who had been routinely mouthing Anti-Partition slogans until then, were frightened out of their wits by the turn of events in the North, swallowed Lynch's suggestion that either the jury had been packed by the IRA

(which barely existed at the time) or had been intimidated.

Dermot Keogh, who was on the editorial staff of the Fianna Fáil daily paper, *The Irish Press*, had a vision of Fascism while reporting the burning of the British Embassy in Dublin in 1972, in response to the administrative massacre enacted by the British Army in Derry on Bloody Sunday—not that the British regime in the North was Fascist but that the nationalist response to it in kind was Fascist.

It was arguable that the British regime in the Six Counties was Fascist. We never described it as such, but since it was obviously not democratic the idea that it was Fascist could not be dismissed out of hand. But Fascism is not the only kind of undemocratic government.

Keogh left the newspaper business for academia. He became an influential Professor in Cork University where he cultivated the notion that Northern Ireland was not an undemocratically governed region of the British state but was itself a state, and he wrote a hagiography of Jack Lynch.

No reasoning was never brought to bear by Keogh on this matter. He did not review the institutions of state in the North and show that they were not institutions of the British state, entirely under British sovereignty and administrative control. What he relied on was not reason but administrative academic control of commercial publishing in the circumstances where third level education was undergoing phenomenal expansion.

It was necessary for the frightened minds of the Free State Establishment in the Lynchite era that the plain fact that Northern Ireland was an undemocratically governed region of the British state should not be seen. If it was seen, then some thought would have to be given to the consequences of undemocratic government. And, judging by what was said with regard to other parts of the world, the conclusion must follow that war was a possible consequence.

In the era of general democracy, are the victims of undemocratic government in a region of a democratic state, who are deprived of the means of political remedy by Constitutional means, to be allowed to do nothing but suffer patiently?

War was the actual consequence of undemocratic government in the North. That seems to have been half-conceded in many quarters, which at the same time deny that it was a legitimate consequence. It is a nonsensical distinction which expresses nothing but an evasion of thought.

This state of mind of the Lynch era (which may now be approaching its end) was neatly summed up by Colm Toibin, in his function as a fiction-writer as distinct from a direct commentator. His early novel, *The Heather Blazing*, is one of the very few modern Irish novels that engages with politics and law. A Government advisor reflects:

"He had written a report for the government, which he presented early in 1972, on the ways in which the government should

respond to a concerted campaign by the IRA... There were two chapters in his report...; no one, beyond those who were entitled to see the report, had ever read these chapters. He had been told several times that they had been influential and had helped shape government policy... He had warned never to allow public opinion to become inflamed... The north, he argued, must be presented as a different society, a place apart" (p177-8).

The Dublin Establishment sleepwalked through the war in the North, uttering phrases as a robot might do. Opinion surveys were arranged to show that public opinion had gone off the North and wouldn't have it if it offered itself. And all the time the assertion of sovereign right over the north lay in the Constitution.

Keogh's characterisation of the Provisional movement as Fascist was not seriously disputed by Important People. But the Fascists won—and they gave permission to the Dublin Establishment to repeal the sovereignty claim in the Constitution.

The 26 County State had no Northern policy between the time of the Arms Trials of 1970 and the Constitutional referendum of 1998. Its function under the Good Friday Agreement should have been to act as an advocate and guarantor of the northern nationalist community. But it could not do that coherently without recognising, at least *de facto*, that there were two distinct national bodies in the Northern situation and aligning itself with one of them. Under denial of the two nations reality that would be 'sectarian'.

The Official IRA (aka Eoghan Harris) condemned in the Provisionals as sectarian in 1970 because they acted within the social facts of the North. Micheál Martin has done the same with regard to Sinn Féin conduct of politics within the Agreement system. But what was the essential thing that this universally-applauded Agreement did? It gave Constitutional recognition to the fact that the population of the North was in fact two distinct populations which did not constitute a common body politic. We welcomed it at the time for what it was: an arrangement for the separate development as far as possible of the two communities, the two political bodies, the two nationalities—or whatever other name you prefer to call them, which amounts to the same thing.

The British Government had to concede a lot to get the Agreement. It then tried to get back what it conceded—that is what

Britain normally does. Dublin Governments have, for the most part, been more British than the British on the matter. They have a degree of official standing under the Agreement but have not troubled to familiarise themselves with the mechanisms of the Agreement.

If, over the generations, they had tried to understand what Northern Ireland was, and to deal with it realistically, they would have had to understand what Britain was. The reality of Britain is not grasped by standard Anglophobia any more than by standard Anglophilia. Ping-pong between the two is all that there has been in nationalist intellectual or academic life. That is why Brexit was traumatic. The actuality of British political life lay beyond the understanding of both.

Political life within Northern Ireland under Brexit influence remains much as it was before Brexit: a process of attrition between two national communities. That is what it has been ever since 1921, whether in war or peace. Gerry Adams is hated no more on the Unionist side than John Hume was.

The British purpose in setting up the Northern Ireland system—unique in Constitutional history—can only have been to deter the independent development of nationalist Ireland by offering the illusory hope of unity if it conciliated the Ulster Unionists. Brexit, by raising the prospect of a land border in Ireland between Britain and the European Union, brings greater powers and complexities into play. The context of communal attrition within the North is changed, but we do not expect it to cease.

PS: What is said about the Dublin Establishment should be read as excluding Charles Haughey who, as Taoiseach, was very widely regarded in political circles as a dodgy intruder, and whose remarkable achievements during his few years as Taoiseach without a secure majority have never been consolidated in political literature into something that could be called a political heritage. His astonishing *tour de force* did not seem to be appreciated anywhere outside of Athol St.

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Travels and some Reflections

When we set off recently for two weeks travel in the UK, we thought, as we were near the middle of September, we'd have no problem with huge traffic congestion—well as the old saying is: "*Men plan, God laughs*", but enough about that till latter on. We set off from Rosslare to Pembroke for a four hour ferry sail at 9.30 a.m. and arrived with a good headwind at 1 p.m. In my entire time going to and fro between Ireland and the UK I have always been asked for my Passport so, when I have been hearing in the media lately—especially with regards to Brexit about the Common Travel Area—imagine my surprise—it does now exist. Similarly, when I have asked others, they too have had to produce their Passports except in the case of one man recently who, having forgotten his Passport, proffered his new Identity Card and after inspection was allowed through.

But there is a new thaw in the air and we were all gaily swept through Passport/ Customs with nary a glance at our documents. We were astonished—a first for both of us. And not only that but all the heavily weaponed-officers (and what weaponry!) gave us a smile and a wave. Well, said I to himself—at least the Brexit negotiations are having some effect if only in their intention to disarm the Irish.

Our destination in Wales was Hay-on-Wye—of the famous second-hand book-shops where their motto, "*You are now entering a Wi-fi free Republic*", was famous and was then followed by the yearly Literary Festival. Alas, the famous sign was gone, as were many of the shops and of those that were left most had "*To Let*" signs with almost empty book shelves. The little market town was adjusting to the new era of the internet which had indeed scooped up its little book-shops, leaving amongst the few the big Hay Cinema Book Shop (HCB) which alas too had to go online to survive meaning no longer queues of book lovers standing/kneeling/leaning all over shelves of books that were just a delight to wander through and picking up some great bargains as well.

The Swan, where we always stayed,

It Is Time

was an old 17th century inn gradually modernised but never losing its quaint appeal. But now, under new management, it has 17 super rooms and its gardens are apparently a gold mine for weddings, corporate events and other such things as their brochure advertised.

All the staff are locals, with some coming on duty at 6 p.m. after the farm day ended. What staggered me as we went through the Welsh landscape (and indeed such was the lack of signage that we were up hill and down dale literally!) was the absence of livestock or indeed tillage. Always in the past, there were the sheep but I spotted from my vantage point of a Land Rover only three fields of sheep—nothing in the scheme of things. Their hay was still not harvested and one young lad who was serving us our dinner told me that they had awful weather and were hoping for the following day—Sunday up to 1 p.m. of sunny weather and I promised to pray for this. And blow me down if at 2 p.m. precisely the downpour started so they got their hay saved.

Such is the efficacy of prayer. I won't listen to those who say they had their weather forecast well on!

After spending a few nights amidst the Black Mountains—obviously they had never seen the great majestic Kerry Mountains (the mortification if they had!)—we travelled towards the Cotswolds. Going through Salisbury Plain and its environs there were loads of signs warning us of "*Tanks crossing*" and in case we might mistake what this meant there were pictures of old fashioned tanks of World War 2 vintage. Who says the English don't have a sense of humour? The vibe around Porton Down was more ominous and certainly one knew we were in overt military territory.

When we were driving that first day through the town of Brecon where the Welsh Guards were stationed, we were stunned to see all the Guards, with highly visible weaponry, literally standing side by side across the entrance to the Barracks guarding it in a most obvious way. What we wondered was the threat? And then the following week Parson's Green happened so the UK is taking things very seriously.

As we drove onwards, we decided to stop for lunch at an inn that was advertising food all day. It was after lunch hour and there were just enough people inside that we were served quickly enough. It was interesting to listen to the chat—mostly retired army types and their wives. Two elderly army officers were deep into

a political discussion and they were focusing their ire on Len McCluskey, a Trade Unionist who should be taken out and shot. I remarked to himself how the sentence rang out just as if a shot itself had done so—their clipped voices having that effect. Apparently, if only Thatcher was around today, the bold McCluskey certainly wouldn't! Brexit was exactly the right thing for the country—according to these somewhat impressive types—because no matter what the reality was or will be—these people were so sure of themselves—and isn't that what the Home Counties are really all about?

We finally arrived in Stow-in-the-Wold and, by this time, I was becoming accustomed to the Union Jacks flying everywhere. Even in Wales they were flying there too—with the exception of two small Welsh Red Dragons—and road signs that had places twinned with the Continent had the names erased carefully with white paint which looked official and not by local blackguards. What I found utterly remarkable during all this driving around thus far was the absence of foreigners even from the EU. At our hotel in Stowe all the staff were English. And one lady, who gave me extra towels, was local—so, when London journalists talk about a catering crisis if Brexit doesn't allow migrants in from the EU—that will not have any effect on the places we visited.

There was something in the air that wasn't there when we have visited before, even during the Northern Ireland War. I could only put my finger on something slightly sinister and when I asked himself—he came up with something "*uncomfortable*".

When Edward Heath described Britain in December 1969 as:

"a Luddite's paradise... a society dedicated to the prevention of progress and the preservation of the status quo"

I think one can hear that echo in the UK once again.

It is said by Martin J. Wiener that, although World War 11 and the economic crisis that followed—with its accompanying push for "*work and productivity*", "*socialist discomfort*", with "*material values*" "*often tinged with ruralism*"—by no means vanished. This was most vividly and continually expressed by writers and publicists, the left-wing counterparts of Tories like Bryant and Inge. The most notable of these was J.B. Priestley, novelist, playwright, and essayist, who identified himself throughout his life with the Labour movement, and wrote frequently for papers

like the *New Statesman*. Indeed he was taken off the BBC by Churchill for his "radicalism".

As late as the 1970s there were highly influential figures, like the Poet Laureate Sir John Betjeman, who "*was more widely read*" than any previous Poet Laureate. Betjeman extended the pastoral nostalgia of his predecessors, John Masefield and Alfred Austin, to suburbia, now an integral part of old England. His writing disparaged the new and evoked the security of old, "*familiar things*". The public responded with enthusiasm to his Tory "*longing for the simplicity of irremovable landmarks*". This longing moved the Left, as well as the Right: The *New Statesman* in 1973 hailed Betjeman's denunciation of urban redevelopment. "*At last*", it announced in its front page leader:

"a Poet Laureate has expressed the nation's feelings. This week Sir John Betjeman observed that destroying the surroundings in which people live—and which they like, and are accustomed to—amounts to straightforward robbery. It is stealing the people's property, said Sir John Betjeman: exactly the same as being burgled. In some ways, maybe worse. You can buy substitutes for the contents of a house. A familiar narrow street, with its obscure chapel, tree and corner shop is irreplaceable."

Similarly, the socialist playwright and critic Dennis Potter wrote with approval in the *Sunday Times* (London) that,

"Betjeman is the surviving proof that it is all right, after all, *to be an Englishman. He stands at the wrought-iron gates, ready to hold back the flood.*"

The identification of "English" with "*holding back the flood*" of change had been made familiar by that widely read man of the Left, J.B. Priestley, who had by the 1970s become a popular authority on the national character. He revelled in attacking the modernisers, arguing in 1970 that they failed to understand that, as he had implied as early as 1949, the modern world was

"alien to the English temperament"... We are instinctively opposed, he announced, "to high pressure industry and salesmanship, wanting something better than a huge material rat race."

This was a kick to the USA, Priestley acknowledged. But Thatcher, for all her yearning for "*progress*", wanted Victorian ideals still to be wedded to the English people. And John Major famously expressed his desire for an English idyll every bit as nostalgic as Betjeman's.

So where now for the UK with Brexit looming?

We finished up our journeying in Southampton where, for the first time, we came across many different races and colours. The young lady who dealt with us at our hotel reception told us she came from Spain and had never been in Ireland. We assured her that she had to come to visit and she was delighted—and her feelings weren't feigned in any way. Of course it is a port city and the different races were to be expected but, as Marina the Spanish girl said when we enquired about Brexit—things are changing—and she was not happy about it.

Finally we left Southampton (the Boat Show was on) and made our way on the M4 for Pembroke Dock. The heavens opened and Warnings about water on the roadway were advertised and drivers advised to to slow down to 50 miles and then 40 miles across the board—did the devil racers take this on board? Some were still flying past at 85 miles easily—my heart was not in the better of such blackguardism. By Our Lady's Blue Immaculate Mantle we did arrive safely home. I am only now getting over such terror on the English roads.

But, of the UK now, the person who most clearly would have felt that the country was going right finally—and not off a cliff—would be Enoch Powell in his later years. And surely there is an irony that he went—like Conor Cruise O'Brien—to the Unionists of Northern Ireland and that they now hold the balance of power with the Tories at this unprecedented time.

"Powell's orations beginning in 1964 ... drew upon the myth of England that had come to pervade middle-and upper class culture. They were drenched in evocations of the beauties and virtues of pastoral, historic England; parodies, almost, of Austin, Kipling, Houseman, Masefield, and so many other writers; and first cousins to the speeches of that earlier Tory politician, Stanley Baldwin. In one address, for example, Powell called upon his and his listeners' long dead ancestors to tell England:

"What would they say? They would speak to us in our own English tongue, the tongue made for telling truth in, turned already to songs that haunt the bearer like the sadness of spring. They would tell us of that marvellous land, so sweetly mixed of opposites in climate that all the seasons of the year appear there in their greatest perfection; of the fields amid which they built their halls, their cottages, their churches, and where the same blackthorn showered its petals upon them as upon us; they would tell us, surely, of the rivers, the hills and of

the island coasts of England."

Julianne Herlihy ©

Fishing in the troubled waters of Brexit

continued

of another Government seems far fetched, the evidence of a discussion on the Marian Finucane radio programme some time ago should be consulted. On the show (July 23rd), to the mild disbelief of the other panellists, former assistant to Tony Blair Alistair Campbell insisted that the Irish should not be shy about having a presence in the British debate. That such a statement could be aired publicly indicates that it is also being communicated privately by anti-Brexit campaigners to the Irish Government.

It is possible that the pro-Brexit camp has raised no objection to these tactics because the British exit may sunder a close relationship between Britain and Ireland that has been a long time in the making and that is much to the advantage of Britain.

The Varadkar/Coveney leadership of Fine Gael have maintained continuity with the Brexit gameplan devised under Enda Kenny's leadership. Coveney stated in the Dail last December that, regarding Brexit, Ireland should be neutral as between the UK and the EU; and, in July, after he had taken over as Minister for Foreign Affairs, he reiterated that position by stating:

"I will be clear during my visit to London that Ireland remains fully committed to our membership of the EU and is equally intent on preserving our strong relationship with the UK." (21st July press statement on Department of Foreign Affairs website)

Leo Varadkar revealed his own position in late August when he described the British negotiating stance of desiring to hold talks about future trade at the same time as the exit talks as '*common sense*'. This provided the basis for a front page article in the Irish edition of the *London Times* which had the headline, '*Varadkar backs Davis in Brexit talks*'. The Taoiseach's statement was eagerly seized on as evidence of the UK gaining the upper hand in the negotiations by various UK commentators such as Iain

Dale of LBC in London. As a response, a letter from the *Irish Political Review Group*, published in the *Irish Times* and reproduced in this edition of *Irish Political Review*, accused Varadkar of "*jeopardising the EU negotiating position*".

While the Government has a difficult hand to play regarding Brexit, and while credit is due to the diplomatic corps for causing Irish concerns to be prioritised by both sides in the negotiations, the Anglophile predisposition of the Irish Establishment represents a liability to the national interest at this time. Being a member of the EU, Ireland cannot afford to be neutral between Britain and Europe. On the contrary Ireland has a long term interest in the successful development of both the EU and the Eurozone.

In recent years the Fine Gael party has disparaged the republican tradition associated with 1916, attempted to depoliticise the Centenary celebrations, extolled Redmondism, instigated the anti-republican Memorial Wall in Glasnevin Cemetery, been complicit in a slander that the Cork IRA engaged in ethnic cleansing, and resisted the efforts of the 1916 relatives to conserve the Moore Street site of the Rising. All of these actions are of a piece with the Government's Brexit stance; for Varadkar and Coveney, as for Kenny and Flanagan before them, an unspoken priority in dealings with London and Brussels has been the preservation of the much hyped new relationship between Britain and Ireland.

Fine Gael, in its grass roots organisation as much as its leadership, lacks the political capacity to adjust to the reality that Britain and Europe are now travelling in opposite directions, that Ireland needs to travel with the EU, and consequently that the Anglophile mindset needs to be ditched.

An *Irish Times* article published on September 25th tells us that Taoiseach Varadkar believes that insufficient progress has been made in the Brexit negotiations for talks on a post-withdrawal trade deal to start. The second paragraph reads:

"But Mr Varadkar stressed that there was still time for the situation to be resolved before the 27 remaining EU members make a decision on the matter in October."

Well informed journalists like Sean Whelan of RTE believe that the European Council will refuse to sanction trade talks with the UK at its October meeting but will probably relent later in the year. Does anyone doubt that, when the opportunity

arises at a Council meeting, the Irish Taoiseach won't be vociferous on the side of the UK?

Ultimately the Varadkar/Coveney agenda, in line with the machinations of anti-Brexit elements in Britain, is to derail Brexit completely. The strategy reflects the new Anglo-Irish relationship by making it look as though Ireland and the UK are not foreign to each other. But that is ahistorical nonsense. The misconceived project of erasing historical memory in Ireland has led to an abnegation of national sovereignty; and the official Brexit policy of the Irish Government is to go fishing in the troubled waters of political division in Britain. The extraordinary aspect of this is that the new leaders of Fine Gael see nothing wrong with that.

The other recent Brexit developments which can only be briefly noted are the policy shift in the British Labour Party; Theresa May's efforts to regain control of her Government; the surprising results of the German Elections; and a speech by President Macron setting out his vision for the EU.

Under the influence of Keir Starmer the Labour Party shifted to support for a transition period following Brexit in which the UK would remain in the Single Market and Customs Union. The duration of the transition was not defined and the possibility that those arrangements would continue after the transition was left open. It only became clear at the recent Labour Party Conference that Jeremy Corbyn and his deputy, John McDonnell, remain opposed to staying in the Single Market on the grounds that it would tie Britain to the State Aid rule and constrain policies that entail public expenditure.

Theresa May interpreted the Labour change as an advantage for the Conservatives and announced that she would be reshuffling the Cabinet and that she intended to lead her party into the next General Election. However the attraction of a transition period to senior civil servants and business representatives—remaining in the Single Market and continuing to make a financial contribution to the EU Budget—would remove the need for paying a large 'divorce' payment, or at least repackage it as the cost of Single Market membership for a number of years—was sufficiently strong to cause a shift in UK Government policy similar in some respects to the new Labour policy.

At that stage Boris Johnson published a long defence of '*hard Brexit*' in the *Telegraph*, which had the effect of creating

a counter pressure to the pragmatists. The end result was Theresa May's conciliatory speech in Florence in which she committed to a transition period of two years in which the UK's relationship with the EU would remain virtually unchanged. By his presence in Florence, Johnson showed that he believes this to be compatible with Hard Brexit.

One of the interesting developments arising from the German Elections is that the 13 per cent of voters who voted for the AfD (giving them 90 seats in the Bundestag), voted not only for an anti-EU, anti-immigration platform, but also as a protest against the Merkel Government for being "*puppets of the victorious powers of the second world war*". The unusual arrangement whereby Germany is still expected to conform to the Ameranglian account of German history is now under the spotlight. If the incoming Government avoids confronting the historical distortions of British and American war propaganda, the momentum behind the AfD will continue to grow.

This new factor will impinge on Germany's position in the EU and influence the post-Brexit political landscape. It will test the proposition that Germany wants a *European Germany rather than a German-dominated Europe*, a proposition that is unlikely to be disproved.

The other outcome of the Election relevant to Brexit is the likelihood that the new Government will reflect the colours of the Jamaican flag: black (Christian Democrats), yellow (Liberals) and green (Greens). The enthusiasm of the Greens for Emmanuel Macron's programme for EU reform is matched by the determination of the Liberals that the cost of such reforms will not be borne by German taxpayers. In this the Liberals certainly have a point. Frau Merkel is known to be sceptical about the viability of the Macron agenda, while acknowledging the need for some reform. It seems that the content of the post-Brexit reform of the EU/Eurozone is to be heavily influenced by the negotiations for the next German Government, a process likely to take many months.

The contents of an important speech by President Macron given at the Sorbonne in Paris (September 26th) was well summarised on the Open Europe blog as follows:

"His suggested plans include increased cooperation on defence and climate change, a more flexible Common Agricultural Policy, an EU-wide tax on financial transaction linked to foreign aid, and the protection of member states against uncontrolled migrant flows with

strengthened border control and cooperation with the countries of origin. On the issue of EU security and defence, he argued, 'Europe should be equipped with a common intervention force, a common budget and a common doctrine to act.' On Eurozone reform, Macron said the common currency needs common rules and instruments as well as convergence and stability. He called for a 'real budget at the heart of Europe' which would require 'increased responsibility, and said this would need 'parliamentary supervision'."

It is very welcome that the French President is performing the role of visionary leader at this important time in EU history. Not since the Delors Presidency of the Commission has there been a comparable presentation of 'big' political ideas. Macron has set the ball rolling and expressed his ideas in a manner that will provoke debate across the Union. Even before the German Election results, however, it was clear that in Germany and elsewhere in Europe people have become wary of grand French schemes that may end up costing them money.

Inside the politics of the post-Brexit EU, we currently have a set of idealistic proposals on one side and a degree of hard-headed scepticism on the other. Is it possible that for once we may get a debate about the future of the EU that is grounded in reality?

Dave Alvey

Balfour Declaration

"I have always been convinced that until the Jewish question was more or less satisfactorily settled there could be no real or permanent peace in the world, and that the solution lay in Palestine. This was one of the two main considerations which impelled me, in the autumn of 1916, to initiate the negotiations which led eventually to the Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate for Palestine. The other, of course, was to bring America into the War.

For generations Jews and Gentiles alike have assumed in error that the cause of Anti-Semitism was in the main religious. Indeed, the Jews in the hope of obtaining relief from intolerance, engaged in the intensive and subversive propagation of materialistic doctrines productive of 'Liberalism', Socialism, and Irreligion,

resulting in de-Christianisation. On the other hand, the more materialistic the Gentiles became, the more aware they were subconsciously made of the cause of Anti-Semitism, which at bottom was, and remains to this day, primarily an economic one. A French writer—Vicomte de Poncins—has remarked that in some respects Anti-Semitism is largely a form of self-defence against Jewish economic aggression. In my opinion, however, neither the Jews nor the Gentiles bear the sole responsibility for this.

As I have already said, I had a part in initiating the negotiations in the early autumn of 1916 between the British and French Governments and the Zionist leaders, which led to the Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate for Palestine.

The first object, of course, was to enlist the very considerable and necessary influence of the Jews, and especially of the Zionist or Nationalist Jews, to help us bring America into the War at the most critical period of the hostilities. This was publicly acknowledged by Mr. Lloyd George during a recent debate in the House of Commons.

Our second object was to enable and induce Jews all the world over to envisage constructive work as their proper field, and to take their minds off destructive and subversive schemes which, owing to their general sense of insecurity and homelessness, even in the periods preceding the French Revolution, had provoked so much trouble and unrest in various countries, until their ever-increasing violence culminated in the Third International and the Russian Communist Revolution. But to achieve this end it was necessary to promise them Palestine in consideration of their help, as already explained, and not as a mere humanitarian experiment or enterprise, as represented in certain quarters" (Robert John, *Behind The Balfour Declaration: The Hidden Origins Of Today's Mideast Crisis*, p.84).

This makes it clear that the Balfour Declaration was a response to a perceived global problem and the Taming of the Jew through relocation to Palestine was taken to be the final solution to the Jewish Question: "*to take their minds off destructive and subversive schemes... owing to their general sense of insecurity and homelessness.*"

Malcolm's was just one of the voices encouraging the establishment of a Jewish Nation in Palestine as a solution to the Jewish problem. Halford Mackinder, the famous Geopolitics Professor at the London School of Economics, and advisor to the British Delegation at Versailles, pointed to this aspect in his influential book, *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, written a year after the capture of Jerusalem in 1917:

"The Jewish national seat in Palestine

will be one of the most important outcomes of the war. That is a subject on which we can now afford to speak the truth. The Jew, for many centuries shut up in a ghetto, and shut out of most honourable positions in society, developed in an unbalanced manner and became hateful to the average Christian by reason of his excellent, no less than his deficient qualities. German penetration has been conducted in the great commercial centres of the world in no small measure by Jewish agency, just as German domination in southeastern Europe was achieved through Magyar and Turk, with Jewish assistance. Jews are among the chief of the Bolsheviks of Russia. The homeless, brainful Jew lent himself to such internationalist work, and Christendom has no right to be surprised by the fact. But you will have no room for these activities in your League of independent, friendly nations. Therefore a national home, at the physical and historical centre of the world, should make the Jew 'range' himself. Standards of judgement, brought to bear on Jews by Jews, should result, even among those large Jewish communities which will remain as Going Concerns outside Palestine. This, however, will imply the frank acceptance of the position of a nationality, which some Jews seek to forget. There are those who try to distinguish between the Jewish religion and the Hebrew race, but surely the popular view of their broad identity is not far wrong" (pp.173-4).

The Jews were viewed within the British Foreign Office and other Imperial Departments of State as a unitary collective entity rather than a diverse collection of individual communities across the world. They were seen as powerful and they were seen as pro-German and pro-Ottoman and disruptive of British interests. And there was no distinguishing between one Jew and another until a distinction was made between Zionist and other Jews.

Two Irishmen, Gerald Fitzmaurice and Hugh O'Beirne, both products of Beaumont Public School, and contemporaries of Mark Sykes (a Catholic convert) were particularly obsessed with the power of the Jew over the Young Turks. O'Beirne, a Foreign Office official from Drumsna, County Leitrim, suggested in a memo that:

"If we could offer the Jews an arrangement as to Palestine which would strongly appeal to them we might conceivably be able to strike a bargain with them as to withdrawing their support from the Young Turk government which would then automatically collapse" (David Fromkin, *Peace To End All Peace*, p.198).

In February and March 1916, O'Beirne wrote two memoranda in favour of the idea of a declaration for a Jewish homeland. Although O'Beirne died before the Balfour Declaration was issued, his influence is

described in detail in various Zionist books on the evolution of the document. O'Beirne and Lord Crewe (who was married to a Rothschild, a woman who boasted that all in her house were 'Weizmannites') devised a formula for a Jewish state that was, in fact, much more Zionist than the eventual declaration.

O'Beirne drowned with Kitchener in June 1916 when their ship was struck by a mine while *en route* to Archangel.

Sir Gerald Lowther, British Ambassador in Constantinople before the War, sent a 5,000 word report to Edward Grey on 10th May 1910 which contains the flavour of understanding of the Young Turk revolution, as a "*Judeo-Masonic conspiracy*" inspired by French Revolutionary ideals. It noted how the great Ottoman Jewish city of Salonica produced the Young Turks (Committee of Unity and Progress):

"Jews of all colours, native and foreign, were enthusiastic supporters of the new dispensation... every Hebrew seemed to become a potential spy of the occult Committee, and people began to remark that the movement was rather a Jewish rather than a Turkish revolution... Talaat Bey, the Minister of the Interior, who is of Gipsy descent... and Djavid Bey, the Minister of Finance, who is a Crypto-Jew, are the official manifestations of the occult power of the Committee. They are the only members of the Cabinet who really count, and are also the apex of Freemasonry in Turkey... The invisible government of Turkey is thus the Grand Orient with Talaat Bey as Grand Master... The Jew... seems to have entangled the pre-economic-minded Turk in his toils, and as Turkey contains the places sacred to Israel, it is but natural that the Jew should strive to maintain a position of exclusive influence and utilise it for the furtherance of his ideals, viz. the ultimate creation of an autonomous Jewish state in Palestine or Babylonia... It is obvious that the Jew, who is so vitally interested in maintaining his sole predominance in the councils of the Young Turkey is equally interested in keeping alive the flames of discord between the Turk and his (the Jew's) possible rivals, i.e. Armenians, Greek etc... The Jew hates Russia and its Government, and the fact that England is now friendly to Russia has the effect, to a certain effect, of making the Jew anti-British in Turkey and Persia—a consideration to which the Germans, I think, are alive. The Jew can help the Young Turk with brains, business enterprise, his enormous influence in the press of Europe, and money in return for advantages and the eventual realisation of the ideals of Israel... The Jew has supplied funds to the Young Turks and has thus acquired a hold on them... Secrecy and elusive methods are essential to both. The Oriental Jew is an adept at manipulating occult forces, and political

Freemasonry of the continental type has been chosen as the most effective bond and cloak to conceal the inner workings of the movement..." (cited in Elie Kedourie, *Young Turks, Freemasons and Jews*, *Middle Eastern Studies*, January 1971, pp.95-102).

The British Ambassador's Report goes on, for page after page, about Jewish influence here, there and everywhere with the Ottomans.

These views were widespread across British officials and their Departments and persisted through the War. In the opening months of the War *The Times* accused the Jews of attempting to keep Britain neutral on Germany's behalf (in its *Washington Despatch* of 23rd November and the *Correspondence Column* of 26th November).

During the War itself Britain's Ambassadors bombarded London with dispatches about the sinister power of the Jews being exercised on the German behalf. George Buchanan, Ambassador in Petrograd, complained of the "*large number of Jews in German pay acting as spies during the campaign in Poland*" against the Russian Ally. In the correspondence of the British Ambassador at Washington, Cecil Spring Rice, between 1914 and 1917, there are continual references to the Jews as German agents (e.g. "*the pro-German Jewish bankers toiling for our destruction*"). See Mark Levene, *The Balfour Declaration: A Case Of Mistaken Identity*, *English Historical Review*, January, 1992) and the character of the views expressed can only be described as Anti-Semitic.

The Anti-Semites worked hand in glove with the Zionists to secure the transference of the Jews to Palestine. The English Zionist Samuel Landman, in his *Secret History of the Balfour Declaration* pamphlet, describes how this happened behind the scenes as Lloyd George took power at the end of 1916:

"Through General McDonogh, Director of Military Operations, who was won over by Fitzmaurice (formerly Dragoman of the British Embassy in Constantinople and a friend of James Malcolm), Dr. Weizmann was able, about this time, to secure from the Government the services of half a dozen younger Zionists for active work on behalf of Zionism. At the time, conscription was in force, and only those who were engaged on work of national importance could be released from active service at the Front. I remember Dr. Weizmann writing a letter to General McDonogh and invoking his assistance in obtaining the exemption from active service of Leon Simon, (who later rose to high rank in the Civil Service as Sir Leon

Simon, C.B.), Harry Sacher, (on the editorial staff of the Manchester Guardian), Simon Marks, [J] Yamson Tolkowsky and myself. At Dr. Weizmann's request I was transferred from the War Office (M.I.9), where I was then working, to the Ministry of Propaganda, which was under Lord Northcliffe, and later to the Zionist office, where I commenced work about December 1916. Simon Marks actually arrived at the Office in khaki, and immediately set about the task of organising the office which, as will be easily understood, had to maintain constant communications with Zionists in most countries.

"From that time onwards for several years, Zionism was considered an ally of the British Government, and every help and assistance was forthcoming from each government department. Passport or travel difficulties did not exist when a man was recommended by our office. For instance, a certificate signed by me was accepted by the Home Office at that time as evidence that an Ottoman Jew was to be treated as a friendly alien and not as an enemy, which was the case with the Turkish subjects."

A number of influential British writers noted in their writings that the Jews were a significant element in the vigour and success of German commerce prior to the War and it was a priority that they should be removed from this function in German life. It was also said that the Young Turks had been founded by Jews and contained mostly crypto-Jews. (Eamon DeValera, another dangerous man for Britain, was later portrayed in England as "*the Spanish Jew*".)

The famous writer, John Buchan, had popularised the German/Jewish/Ottoman conspiracy idea in his *Thirty Nine Steps/Greenmantle*/Richard Hannay series of bestsellers. He was quickly appointed by Lloyd George as Director of Propaganda and put in command of the secret engine of information at Wellington House.

Lord Robert Cecil, deputy to Grey and then Balfour at the Foreign Office said in 1916: "*I do not think that it is easy to exaggerate the international power of the Jews*" (FO 372/2817).

The British offer of a Homeland to the Jews in Palestine presented a means of taming and 'turning' the Jew from his German, internationalist/socialist proclivities in the world, to being harnessed to more progressive, nationalist and British Imperial purposes. As Halford Mackinder put it "*a national home, at the physical and historical centre of the world, should make the Jew 'range' himself.*"

There was always a fundamental anti-Semitic strain in English culture but the flamboyant anti-Semitism exhibited in other European countries was frowned upon in Polite Society. When the Balfour

Declaration was published, and England announced her intention of repatriating the Jews of the world to where they belonged, there was a natural tendency for the anti-Semite to become a Zionist. Anti-Semitism and Zionism were no strangers to themselves.

Al Carthill's *The Lost Dominion* from 1923 reveals some interesting assumptions held about Jews in Imperial circles. It was written after the fall of the Coalition that had won the Great War for Britain, an event that became attributed to Jews in high places (something also mentioned by the French writer on English affairs, Andre Siegfried). "*Al Carthill*" was a senior judge in the Indian Empire:

"Many subversives have been Jews. But there is no evidence that the forces of anarchy were directed by any purely Jewish corporation. The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, though possibly published in good faith, were based on older tendentious forgeries or mystifications. A priori, it is extremely unlikely that the Jewish race, which has profited so much in the last century by Western civilisation, should wish to destroy it.

That many subversives should be Jews is not a matter of surprise... It may perhaps be admitted that the Jew, while using our civilisation, has a poor opinion of it. This is not unnatural. He has seen so many civilisations pass. He has used them all. The more degenerate they became, the greater the influence, and thus the greater the profit of the Jew... He was generally able to exercise great influence over the Government, and always found aiders and favourers among the powerful...

The heathen imagines a vain thing, and their devices come to nought, but the Kingdom of Zion is an enduring Kingdom...

The Jew, then, may be perfectly loyal to the ideas of the society in which he lives. Yet his belief in them is not of the degree that is requisite of martyrdom. Just as the most valiant and loyal mercenaries will break and fly after suffering losses which a national and volunteer army would bear without wincing, so the Jew is rarely prepared to stake all on the maintenance of a social state in the absolute value of which he has no belief...

It is but recently that the influence of the Jew in politics, and particularly in foreign and imperial politics, has awakened uneasiness in England... In a country like England, where the small share of power which is not monopolised by wealth was wielded by intelligence, there was thus every probability of the Jew becoming one of the dominant castes. Jews were welcomed as intimates, advisers, and sons-in-law by leaders of both the great parties. Jews provided the empire with statesmen, lawyers, men of the pen, and men of science... For many years they have abstained from an active share in politics...

This latter policy has been abandoned in recent years, to the regret of the old-fashioned pious Jew. And here, I think, the Fromme Jude was right. No one can be blind to the beginning of a reaction against Jewish control... The alleged monopolisation by the foreign Jew of certain reprehensible traffics has revolted the pious. There is therefore a vague anti-Jewish feeling floating about in solution in England which needs but a shock to crystallise it. The fall of the Coalition is principally to be ascribed to an uneasy and probably erroneous idea that the Jew exercised too much power in the counsels of that remarkable body, and that that influence was being applied to unpatriotic ends. Erroneously, no doubt, it was supposed that the last rags of honour of the British people, the last pieces of gold in an exhausted treasury, the last drops of the blood in the lacerated body of the republic, were about to be jeopardised, in order to decide which of certain Jewish financial houses were to have the profitable business of liquidating the Turkish Empire. The mere absurdity of the supposition is convincing proof of the reality of the general uneasiness.

And as usual the uneasiness of the people, though in itself apparently baseless, was not actually without a rational basis. To return to first principles, it is inexpedient, in a world where rightly or wrongly the idea of nationalism has such power, that the affairs of the nation should be conducted by men who, in so far as they are not citizens of a foreign nation, are cosmopolitans by birth, training and inclination...

For the last three generations organised labour must be counted among the subversive forces. In the propagation of Socialistic doctrine individual Jews have taken a considerable part. But to suppose that the diffusion of Socialism among the labouring classes is due to the efforts of a small subversive secret society is ludicrous. All attempts to make Socialism an international church directed by an extra-nationalist directorate have hitherto failed" (pp.109-116).

Anti-Semitism became a weapon to be wielded against anyone who dared to criticise the expansionist Zionism of the Jewish nationalist state—even against those who had suffered directly at its hands. But it was clear that it was a fundamental ingredient in Britain's 'Taming of the Jew' and was one of the main driving forces behind the Balfour Declaration.

Pat Walsh

To be continued

Catching Up With Aubane On The All For Ireland League

"*The Boys who bate the Black-and-Tans were the Boys from the County Cork*" was the song that my father sang at an International Brigade Wolfe Tone Commemoration held in the Spanish Republic in June 1938. Both Michael Collins and the Hales brother leaders of the IRA's West Cork Brigade came from families that had *been* committed All-For-Ireland League activists. "*The All-For-Ireland League: How Redmond's Party Lost Cork in 1910*" was the title of an article of mine published last year in *The Ballingeary & Inchigeela Historical Society Journal 2016*—Ballingeary having been the West Cork Gaeltacht home village of my paternal grandparents.

As I pointed out in that article: I must say that I myself was essentially ignorant of that decisive turn in Irish political history until I read *The Cork Free Press in the Context of the Parnell Split: The Restructuring of Ireland 1890-1910*, a book by Brendan Clifford, published in 1997 by the Aubane Historical Society of Millstreet, North Cork. Two further Aubane publications—*Canon Sheehan—A Turbulent Priest* by Brendan Clifford (1989) and *D. D. Sheehan—Why He Left Cork in 1918* by Jack Lane (2003)—added to my store of knowledge of the AFIL. Further research on my own part for an article on the 1916 West Cork By-Election (*Irish Political Review*, July 2009) and for a critical review of John Borgonovo's 2013 book *The Dynamics of War and Revolution—Cork City 1916-18* (*Irish Political Review*, December 2013) convinced me all the more of the significance of the 1910 triumph of the AFIL in Cork for the National Revolution itself.

"*Did Borgonovo miss the point about the AFIL?*" had been the title of my 2013 *Irish Political Review* article, where—in a point-for-point analysis of how the AFIL had been covered in his book—I demonstrated how John Borgonovo had seriously underestimated its significance in the routing of Redmondism, not least because he had chosen to disregard what had already been published by the Aubane Historical Society. As my 2016 *Ballingeary Journal* article concluded: The West Cork Brigade's victories at Kilmichael and Crossbarry shook British rule in Ireland to its foundations. As the song says, "*The boys who bate the Black-and-Tans were the boys from the County Cork*".

The IRA's West Cork Brigade had

nonetheless been created and commanded by the former AFIL activist Tom Hales; Michael Collins's brother, the former AFIL local leader Johnny Collins, was to be involved in the planning of the Kilmichael ambush; and the former AFIL activist Seán Hales was to be a Section Commander at the Battle of Crossbarry. In fact, the boys who bated the Black-and-Tans were Continuity AFIL! The decade of centenaries was officially designated to commemorate the momentous events from 1913 to 1923. But, for Cork, it should really have commenced with 1910, and marked the decisive political changes wrought by the All-For-Ireland League in that year.

I forwarded all of these articles to John Borghonovo. Happily, they finally bore fruit, and he has now caught up with the *Aubane/Irish Political Review* analysis of the AFIL. So it is that I could write, in a letter published by the *Irish Examiner* this September 21st:

"Congratulations on publishing (September 18) an excellent excerpt from

Atlas of the Irish Revolution, entitled "The war in Cork", wherein John Borghonovo records that, unlike the rest of national-ist Ireland, County Cork did not support Redmondism; that in 1910 "*William O'Brien's All-For-Ireland League defeated Redmondite candidates in seven out of the eight Cork constituencies*"; and that, following the Easter Rising, AFIL centres "*became republican hotbeds, and the party's membership defected to the independence movement virtually en masse*".

I was, however, perturbed that the blurb advertising the following day's excerpt read: "*The day Michael Collins was assassinated*". Thankfully, this was not the actual term used in the Collins excerpt by Michael Foy (September 19), which accurately records that "*Collins chose to stop and fight, going against the advice of Emmet Dalton*".

Michael Collins was no more assassinated than was Cathal Brugha. They were each killed in action, while fighting on opposite sides of the tragic Treaty War.

Manus O'Riordan

swathes of the country south of this region, extending down the east coast to Valencia and Cartagena, and including the Balearic Islands are also old Catalan territories and have a stronger affinity towards Catalonia than Spain proper.

In a previous job I had quite a lot of dealings with Catalonia—with Barcelona City Council, the Regional Government and, most revealing of all, with Councils in rural and smaller urban districts and civic organisations of all kinds. This experience (over the decade 2001-10) taught me very clearly that these people were not Spanish, and didn't see themselves as such. They proudly used their own language and, more pertinently, very obviously looked northwards to "Europe" and never southwards to Madrid.

They simply ignored the rest of Spain and had little interest in it. Barcelona regards itself as a capital city, and acts like one. It even has its own Foreign Ministry and Ambassadors in places like Brussels.

Catalan is a distinct language and quite different from Spanish. It is of course 'close to' and 'related' to Spanish. But ordinary Spanish people don't understand it (they think it's French!). As Colm Tobin pointed out in late September, the main reason there were no Madrid politicians travelling to Catalonia to make their case against the referendum is because they can't speak Catalan, and standing up in Catalonia making political speeches in Spanish would only go to prove the case for independence!

Very crucially, Barcelona (and Catalonia generally) is a very rich, affluent and sophisticated place, some would say far more so than Dublin, for instance. It is north or central European in feel rather than Mediterranean. It produces 25% of Spanish GDP—the most high value added element of it—and is the heartland of Spain's most advanced industries, technologies and financial services. Catalans regard 'Spaniards'—who even look different to them—as poor, like southern Italians, 'backward' (compared to them), unsophisticated, etc. In terms of arrogance, it is certainly a stronger trait in Catalan attitudes towards Spain, with the Spanish centralists coming across as the weaker, more pathetic force, very much on the back foot in the face of these formidable and economically super-successful Catalans.

There is a large c. 20% minority in Catalonia of actual Spanish nationals. I have witnessed these Catalan 'Spaniards' at football games in Barcelona (one of the

The Catalan Question Is Tricky

Are the Catalans a nation? Most definitely—they fulfil all the 'criteria' of the classic definitions, including a contiguous and coherent territory, a 'national' economy with their very own clearly identifiable 'bourgeoisie', a common language, customs and community life. Catalan family and Christian names are quite distinct from typical Spanish ones. Like Northern Ireland, a surname is often a quick identifier of who you are speaking to.

Catalans compose about 80% of the population of Catalonia, 'Spaniards' the rest. Until now the Catalans had been content to act as the Catalan Nation within a Spanish democratic state, with separatism an aspiration rather than an active policy. They see themselves as largely having made democracy the default structure of the Spanish state after Franco went in the 1970s.

But the tensions between Spain and Catalonia never went away. Even in football, a national passion, when the Spanish 'national team' plays, the many Catalan players on it remain silent while the Spanish national anthem is played, leaving it to their true 'Spanish' colleagues to sing along to it with gusto.

The recent commotion in Catalonia over the 'referendum' was very revealing.

It might also be recalled that the Franco coup was at least partly driven, and supported, as a desperate attempt to pre-empt the break-up of Spain which a Catalan declaration of independence in 1934 seemed to threaten.

The Catalans are a sophisticated and cool-headed people, unlike those 'hot-headed' Basques, as they like to point out. The very fact of the threat of a violent situation developing was probably enough to convince many to stray at home. The Catalans' search for greater autonomy was always hitherto a sober, orderly, affair. They don't riot easily, they dislike disorder and, unlike the Basques, have not produced an armed wing for their independence movement . . . something that may now be about to change.

The Catalan Region is the territory claimed by Catalan separatists. But great

main local teams is essentially the club of the Spanish 'minority') and in cultural demonstrations. Many 'Spanish' came to Catalonia in the Franco era, either as central government administrators (hated as such) or as poor industrial workers. These two groups are still clearly identifiable. These Spanish ("Aragonese") tend to be among the poorer of the population.

This is also why I feel a certain reluctance to welcoming Catalan separatism, while admitting they are totally entitled to want to separate. It is a selfish affair — *we want to separate from you backward Spaniards down there, who are a millstone around our neck, holding back our European post-modernity. We want to separate and link up with Central Europe, our natural home.*

The European link is significant. In mediaeval times, before the brutal 'unification' of Spain under the Madrid monarchy, Catalonia was a major power, extending across the Mediterranean. Catalan culture dominated the whole of Eastern 'Spain', down to Valencia and Cartagena — while the latter are now Spanish-speaking, 'ethnically' they are Catalan, and still feel themselves as such. The same goes for the Balearic islands (Majorca etc.). The southern area of France (Carcassonne) was also Catalan. All of these places developed like the Italian city states.

Historians say that, if the centralised monarchies of 'Spain' and 'France' had not crushed them, a Catalan state stretching from Valencia, through Barcelona, around the south of France to Northern Italy, would probably have emerged. Culturally and economically these areas were far more advanced than the rest of Spain at the time. Even Sardinia is fundamentally Catalan. Through the EU and with its own 'Foreign Ministry' and Ambassador in Brussels, Catalonia feels it's coming 'home' to its natural place in 'Europe' (rather than Spain).

No amount of heavy-handedness from Madrid will change the trajectory of Catalan separatism. Maybe some new federal arrangement can be achieved, but a suppression of Catalan national aspirations will only have the predictable result of strengthening the separatist movement. Push too hard and the eventual, even if reluctant, emergence of an armed response can be guaranteed.

Philip O'Connor

Realpolitik and the EU/US relationship

The Irish Europhile position as articulated by Professor Laffan and Brendan Halligan, sees the EU essentially as an external phenomenon over which Ireland has little or no influence; in it the new momentum of the European project is portrayed as a Franco-German development to which Ireland, in pursuing its narrow interests, must now adapt.

As argued in the section following this section, this stance constitutes an overly passive response for a nation state, even a small one, in a supranational union, but the pragmatic approach that Halligan and Laffan are advocating — expressed in the Halligan article using the concept of '*realpolitik*' — is also inappropriate, especially at a time when the debate about the EU's future following Brexit has re-focused attention on fundamental principles.

'*Realpolitik*' is a term that has meant different things at different times and its evolution, summarised in a book review of "*Realpolitik: a history*" by John Bew, (Financial Times review by Duncan Kelly, Feb 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/802c822e-d0d6-11e5-831d-09f7778e7377>) is instructive. Originally it seems to have been coined as a synonym of 'politics' in its most positive sense but, following the success of Bismark's drive to unify Germany in the mid-nineteenth century, it acquired the meaning of 'hardheaded realism' as against woolly 'moralism'. Following the Great War it became a term of abuse for the German political tradition but it was subsequently adopted in lower case form by British supporters of Imperialism as a counter to the perceived moralism of the League of Nations.

The term became much used in US discussions on foreign policy in the 1940s for the reason that it accorded with the rise of US world power and accompanying theories about the primacy of national interest. In these discussions to be labelled 'Utopian' and therefore unable to grasp the *realpolitik* of US national interests was to be damned. In the 1950s and 1960s a '*Bismark Debate*' took place, attracting contributions from luminaries like AJP Taylor, George Kennan and Henry Kissinger, in which Bismark's achievements were ascribed to luck as much as genius and

the counterposing of realism to idealism was recognised as a theoretical formulation that could be overplayed.

Allowing that Brendan Halligan uses the term *realpolitik* in its customary usage as 'pragmatism/hardheaded realism', it is nonetheless apposite to point out that Irish foreign policy rests on a view of international peace-keeping that is fundamentally at odds with the concept of *realpolitik*. The historical example that demonstrates this is de Valera's criticism of Great Power aggression in the League of Nations in the 1930s. When, as President of the Council of the League, he indirectly denounced the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in September 1932, he caused an international sensation. Three years later he took a similar stance against the Italian annexation of Ethiopia (then Abyssinia).

The Irish position that the obligations of the Covenant of the League needed to be enforced by military force where necessary, was widely respected at the time. De Valera's case that the machinery of international peace-keeping needed to be strong enough to override the wishes of the major Powers is effectively the case for international law.

His work in the 1930s was followed up in later decades by Frank Aiken as Minister for Foreign Affairs. The following paragraph in a document with the title, '*Disarmament and non-proliferation*' from the website of the Department of Foreign Affairs indicates the success of Aiken's efforts on the international stage.

"In 1958 Ireland introduced at the UN the first of what became known as the "Irish Resolutions". This initiative culminated in the adoption of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Ireland was the first country to sign the NPT in 1968. Almost half a century later, the NPT remains at the heart of international efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. The next NPT Review Conference will be held in New York in 2015."

Not only has Irish foreign policy been opposed to the principle of *realpolitik* in international affairs, Irish diplomats have led the way in showing that it can be overturned.

EU/US RELATIONS

To underline the point that the present

focus on the future of the EU affords an opportunity for making a principled defence of Irish neutrality, it will be useful to briefly examine the history of EU foreign policy, especially the relationship between Europe and the US and how that relationship has been affected by UK Governments over the years. Many commentators have noted that, since the UK Government was the lead exponent of neo-liberal ideology in the EU, the British exit may hasten a shift to the left in matters of economic policy. Less commented on is the possibility that Brexit may spur a greater independence from the US on the part of the EU; if weaknesses in free market ideology are now up for debate, might not the same be true for the customary EU subservience to US hegemony?

The following analysis is based mainly on an essay, "*European Union Foreign Policy: a Historical Overview*" by Federiga Bindi published by Brookings Institution Press (2010, <https://www.google.ie/search?q=federiga+bindi+european+union+foreign+policy+a+historical+overview&oeq=federiga+bindi&aqs=chrome..69j69j59j0l4.8408j0j1&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>).

From the immediate post-War years to the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1958, while the EEC was in gestation, a central question in international politics was how Germany could be allowed to rearm as part of the defence of Western Europe in the circumstances of the emerging Cold War. The underlying tension revolved around whether Western European defence should be controlled by the Europeans themselves or by some form of Atlantic alliance.

A US plan in which a German army would operate under direct American control was rejected by the French in 1950. Eventually in May 1952 a European Treaty, the European Defence Community (EDC), described as "*the brainchild of Jean Monnet*" (known to history as the founder of the European project) was signed. While the Treaty was ratified by four of the six states that later constituted the EEC, the Italians withheld ratification pending a French decision and, reflecting the instability of French politics at the time, in August 1954 the measure was defeated in the National Assembly.

Later that year, with the backing of the US, a military alliance, the Western European Union (WEU) was formed. Bindi concludes, "*The question of European defence thus became a transatlantic issue and a taboo in Europe for decades*" (p. 14). Notably, the initiative that culminated in the formation of the WEU began with a proposal from Anthony Eden,

the British Foreign Secretary.

After being elected the first President of the French Fifth Republic in November 1958, Charles de Gaulle became the dominant personality in the newly formed EEC. He wanted a '*European Europe*', meaning a Europe free of US dominance, and believed this could be achieved through close political cooperation between the six member states rather than integration. In this he had mixed results; his more ambitious projects like the Fouchet Committee on political cooperation met resistance from a number of member states.

In 1961 the UK, Ireland, Denmark and Norway applied to join the Community and in 1962 President Kennedy launched his *Grand Design* initiative which was aimed at enhancing cooperation between the EEC, with the UK as a member, and the US. In line with this strategy Kennedy offered Polaris missiles to both Great Britain and France. The UK accepted the offer while de Gaulle turned it down, seeing the British acceptance as evidence of '*the UK's true allegiance*'.

By way of response de Gaulle abruptly ended the enlargement negotiations. In 1966 he withdrew French involvement from the operative structures of NATO while remaining in the Atlantic alliance. By his actions the French leader showed the depth of his abhorrence at being brought under the aegis of American power; he also made plain his attitude towards America's main European ally.

Historians generally treat de Gaulle's antipathy to the Anglosphere as prejudiced but, had he accepted the US offer of Polaris missiles, Europe would today be considerably more beholden to American power than it is. Viewing the history of the UK's involvement in the EU, who could now say that his suspicions about Britain's allegiance were not well founded?

During the 1970s further divisions between Europe and the US opened up over issues as diverse as the Vietnam War, the oil crises, the Arab-Israeli wars, the establishment of martial law in Poland, the Falklands War, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the Russian invasion of Afghanistan and the Iranian Revolution. On more specific differences between the two blocs, Bindi states:

"By the 1970s, the United States perceived the EEC as an economic competitor and held it responsible for the deficit that the United States experienced in its balance of payments. U.S. behaviour vis-a-vis the EEC became rather contradictory. The United States insisted that Europe should contribute

more to NATO expenses while the U.S. president, Richard Nixon, affirmed the principle of American leadership over the organisation. Similarly, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger called 1973 the 'year of Europe'. Yet the idea was essentially that the United States had global responsibilities and interests while Europe's interests were and could only be regional" (Bindi, p. 21).

Meanwhile, along with Ireland and Denmark, the UK became, in 1973, an EU member state. During the first seven years of membership the UK received valuable support from the EEC on international issues like the Rhodesian Civil War and the Falklands Campaign. Notwithstanding this, the UK opposed a number of common EEC positions on foreign policy; Bindi provides the example of EEC sanctions against South Africa in 1985—which the British only signed up to so long as member states were free to decide their own actions.

In the thirty years between 1980 and 2010 a power struggle went on in the background of US/EU relations, with the main issue of contention being Europe's military alignment. At times the balance seemed to swing in the EU's favour, as when the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 created the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) which was '*permitted*' to address the previously taboo question of European defence, or when in the run-up to the Berlin Council of 1996 the EU began to plan for a European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) which threatened to rival NATO, or on the occasions when proposals for the WEU to be merged with the EU were discussed.

However, the US always maintained the upper hand and its dominance is most clearly seen in the appointment of the ex-Secretary General of NATO, Javier Solano, to simultaneously holding three key posts from 1999 to 2009: High Representative of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU; Secretary General of the Council of the European Union; and Secretary-General of the WEU.

Both Gulf Wars were flash points in EU/US relations. In 1991 friction between the Thatcher Government and the rest of the Union over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait spilled over into disagreements over "*issues of security, majority voting, how to integrate foreign policy into the Community, and whether the philosophical distinctions made between security and defence could be abandoned*" (Bindi, p. 26).

These disagreements in turn provoked US concerns that the authority of NATO

was being undermined. Differences arising from the 2003 war, when France and Germany opposed the plans of America and Britain to invade Iraq, were more significant again, as has been well documented.

In more recent times, three developments—the 2008 Great Recession, Brexit and the election of Donald Trump—have complicated the picture regarding the relationship between the EU and the US. The essential pattern of that relationship has been an unwillingness in Europe to submit to US dominance, leavened by a need to adapt to its existence as a geopolitical reality.

The UK position as the defender of US interests in Europe has been a factor in the divisions between London and the rest of the EU, divisions that contributed to the parting of the ways that is Brexit. It has also been a factor in holding Europe in an unpopular subservience to Washington. Precisely because of Brexit, Trump, and the 2008 Financial Crash, there is now a space for the EU to take stock and re-orient itself.

In these circumstances it behoves Ireland to take a principled stand in defence of its foreign policy tradition which in its way is a beacon for multilateralism, collective security and the rule of international law, as opposed to a position based on *realpolitik*. Such a stance would imply movement by the EU away from allegiance to the US hegemon. Political development is often shaped by pragmatic accommodations and negotiated compromises, but it is also determined by ideas and adherence to principles. This is a time for more of the latter than usually obtains.

NATION STATES IN A SUPRANATIONAL UNION

However much they may wish to disavow it, Professor Laffan and Brendan Halligan are both members of the EU elite. Their treatment of the topic of Irish neutrality, especially as exemplified by the Halligan argument that Ireland will need to give something in order to procure the financial assistance from Brussels that may be needed as a result of Brexit, reveals an understanding of the way the Union functions that bears the unmistakable hallmark of the EU elite.

The officials responsible for the creation of the supranational institutions that underpinned the EEC back in the 1950s distrusted electoral democracy and especially distrusted the force of nationalism. Their focus was on saving Europe from the possibility that war would

ever again threaten the survival of the Continent, a commendable aim.

In recent times, however, especially since the 2008 Crash, populist movements of right and left, recognising the anti-democratic bias of the EU, have made major inroads against the dominance of the pro-EU Establishment parties. This development can be easily exaggerated; its only solid gain to date has been the Brexit referendum result; it may even be possible to say that the election of Macron in France has stemmed the populist tide. Yet a more realistic assessment would be that the EU has been granted a temporary reprieve, an opportunity to put its house in order so that the legitimate concerns raised by large swathes of its citizens can be addressed.

While Merkel, Macron and other member-state leaders seem to understand all this, the indications are that among many members of the supranational elite of the EU, among many high bureaucrats and think tank intellectuals, the customary anti-nationalist economic rationalist mindset continues to reign supreme. In this mindset, the world is viewed through the prism of economics; history, culture, politics—and such factors as national identity and religion count for little. Instead of seeking to build allegiance to the EU as an extension of national allegiance, the EU elite prefers to appeal to the mercenary instincts of member states. The problem is that where the loyalty of member states to the EU is built exclusively on economic factors, the entire edifice becomes unstable every time economic development fails to go to plan. In a healthy polity, economic development follows political allegiance, not the other way round.

The idea that, in order to cope with the fallout of Brexit, we will need financial assistance similar in scale to the structural funds that were transferred to Ireland in the 1990s—and that we will need to give up neutrality to have any chance of getting such funding—is a direct appeal to the mercenary instincts of the Irish State. If such a scenario were to be acted out, it would constitute the worst possible building block for constructing a supranational union of nation states; it would signify a European Union resting on the pursuit of narrow self-interest and the selling out of national traditions.

The *Irish Political Review Group* has argued that, in response to Brexit, the infrastructure of the ports and airports of the Republic need to be upgraded to facilitate direct trade to the Continent rather than the current

landbridge across the UK. In making that case we have argued that the EU should provide special funding to Ireland, or at least relax the State aid rules.

That argument is made in the context of an overview of Ireland's EU involvement which draws on the European dimension of the 1916 Rising and the ending of dependence on the UK market that the EU facilitated.

In other words, the *Irish Political Review Group* sees membership of the EU as a logical extension of the Irish national tradition. That approach is qualitatively different to the mercenary approach counselled by the IIEA.

Without pretending to have all the answers to the many challenges confronting the EU at the present time we would suggest that allegiance to the supranational union needs to be placed on a more secure basis than the anti-national, anti-democratic prejudices of the founders of the European project.

Another justification for the Europhile case against Irish neutrality is the federalist argument that the power of the member states in the Union needs to be eroded. This is similar to the argument that, in order to secure the Euro, progress in the direction of a European federal state needs to be speeded up. But these points exaggerate the extent of supranational integration that has already been achieved. For the foreseeable future, perhaps as far as the 22nd century the nation state is likely to remain as the main site of public allegiance in the EU. Progress can be made towards 'ever closer union', as described in the Treaty of Rome, but federation remains a far off aspiration.

Regarding the need to strengthen the position of the Euro, an institutional framework that *mimics* the structures of a federal state would be nearly as effective as actual federal structures. When the single currency was introduced as notes and coins in January 2002, the prevailing orthodoxy decreed that it should be left under the exclusive management of the European Central Bank (ECB) and that Governments should refrain from interfering in its operation.

As Jean Pisani Ferry has pointed out in *'The Euro Crisis and its Aftermath'* (2014) the opposite course needed to be followed. The Euro needed to be subjected to close political supervision through interactions between the Commission and the member states as well as between the member states. The Growth and Stability Pact needed to be enforced and differences

in rates of inflation across the Eurozone needed to be monitored and—in the case of property bubbles like those that developed in Spain and Ireland—corrective measures needed to be implemented locally. So, even without more institutional integration, the Euro could have been—and for the future, could be—better supported by coordinated political supervision.

There are a number of different plans for the Single Currency currently under examination and debate, none of which require the creation of a federal state and most of which would have the effect of creating an apparatus whose effects would be similar to that of a state.

CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH A REVIEW OF NEUTRALITY MIGHT BE CONSIDERED

The case for abandoning Irish military neutrality has yet to be made; it cannot be tossed off in a few paragraphs of a newspaper article. If pro-EU elements in Ireland wish to see the policy replaced by a commitment to common EU defence arrangements, they will need to make a detailed case for it. Such a case would need to cover topics like: why Ireland's defence forces should become integrated into EU military structures that are ultimately subservient to the US General Command; why faith should be placed in the competence of the US as the world's Super Power and policeman; why the historical legacy of Casement and de Valera should be abandoned; why the Irish diplomatic tradition of challenging militarism should be displaced by realpolitik; and why a major Irish policy shift should be based on ill-founded assumptions about European federalism.

The European Union is a vast organisation encompassing a great diversity of political opinion. Even in circumstances where leaders of the Union expressed a preference to see the EU follow a path independent of the US in global affairs, there would be legitimate grounds for asking how long such a policy would last and how genuine it was. To be credible, such a policy would need to be accompanied by a sea change in official thinking; it would need to be expressed in a statement backed up with the force of constitutional law. In short it is difficult to envisage it occurring in a modern political setting.

Nonetheless, the EU has its own anti-militarist legacy. It was founded as a bulwark against the possibility of military conflict among European nations. If there ever was to be an authentic European voice in world affairs it would likely advocate

for international law along lines similar to the foreign affairs tradition instigated by Roger Casement and demonstrated at the League of Nations by Eamon de Valera.

The neutrality policy is now being presented as a virtual dead letter, having been chipped away by various minor military initiatives and by the use of Shannon for military flight re-fuelling. But it still exists and it is regularly defended by groupings on the Irish left like the Peace and Neutrality Alliance (PANA). No political party advocates its abolition. The attention that has now been drawn to it in the context of Brexit should be taken as an opportunity to revive interest in the entire subject of Irish foreign policy. There is no reason why the Irish foreign policy tradition from which the neutrality policy derives, should not be defended

as a positive example of European anti-militarism, relevant to the defence and security deliberations of the EU.

To conclude, there are no conditions under which the abandonment of Irish neutrality should be contemplated. The case for an international order that is superior to the will of militarily powerful nations, based on the rule of law, grounded in collective security, and protected by an international organisation that has its own military resources, can be made in all times and circumstances. Anti-militarism needs to be defended regardless of its practicality as a political project.

Dave Alvey

Blythe Spirits And Some Abbey Fact And Fiction

On Saturday, 2nd September, I saw the extremely hyped-in-advance Abbey Theatre revival of *Katie Roche*, the 1936 play by Teresa Deevy. There had been a much-trumpeted packed-out free preview on Wednesday, 30th August, but, three nights later, the theatre was only 60 percent full. It is a long time since I have experienced a Saturday production at the Abbey so poorly attended. My belief that the production was in trouble was confirmed a week later, September 9th, when newspapers carried large adverts that, for its final two weeks, a sharply reduced special ticket price of €15 would operate— "*Quote 'Katie' when booking*".

I felt disappointed for the cast, especially in the case of Caoilfhionn Dunne and Donal O'Kelly, who had given excellent performances. *Katie Roche* was certainly not unworthy of a revival, having an interesting plot, characterisation and dialogue, if unduly wordy at times—in the style of Synge. I could also accept its modernistic re-interpretation, with its Beckett-style expressionist staging. But, in spite of ringing endorsements from the media's drama critics, I wondered if word-of-mouth communication on the part of those who had already seen the play had passed on the message that it was not the "*hidden treasure*" that the intellectual commentariat was claiming on its behalf.

I recognise the role of Public Relations campaigns, and I have no moral objection to exaggerated claims being made for a

product beyond its worth. But I do abhor such claims being accompanied by false history. In the *Irish Independent* on 27th August, Melissa Sihra, Assistant Professor of Drama and Theatre at Trinity College Dublin, took as her theme "*the poignancy of Blythe's silencing of Deevy's dramatic voice*". She elaborated:

"Once regarded as the playwright who would succeed Sean O'Casey as the next shining light of the Abbey Theatre, Teresa Deevy emerged with gusto in the early 1930s, but just over a decade later had fallen into obscurity. With an extraordinary body of over 25 plays, it is timely that the Abbey is currently reviving Deevy's best-known work, *Katie Roche*. Deevy made her playwriting debut at the National Theatre in 1930 with her successful play *The Reapers* and then began a period of remarkable productivity with an average of one new play per year until *Katie Roche* in 1936. A place in the repertoire seemed certain when *Katie Roche* toured the US in 1938, along with plays by Synge and O'Casey... But Deevy's joy was sadly short-lived; by 1939 she was effectively finished with the Abbey (apart from a brief production of *Light Falling* in 1948). In spite of hugely positive audience responses and critical acclaim for her work, it was the detractors in the end who sealed Deevy's fate. W.B. Yeats, co-founder and director of the Abbey, did not admire her theatrical voice. More devastatingly, it was the incoming despotic Abbey director Ernest Blythe (former Cumann na nGaedheal finance minister) who was the death-knell to Deevy's career as a playwright. Blythe flatly rejected her play *Wife to*

James Whelan and, as she wrote to her friend Florence Hackett, 'has no use for my work (and) never asked to see any more'. For Blythe, Deevy's plays did not fit into the definition of what a national drama should be—which was to serve the conservative Catholic Church and State ethos.... During this period the Church and State were fervently constructing idealised notions of women as either mothers or '*comely maidens*' (to use De Valera's 1943 phrase)."

The fact that Dev never spoke of "*comely maidens, dancing at the crossroads*"—the actual phrase, delivered in a radio broadcast on St. Patrick's Day 1943, spoke of "*the laughter of happy maidens, whose firesides would be forums for the wisdom of serene old age*"—is the least important indication of Professor Sihra's disregard for historical fact. It is her ignorant remarks regarding Ernest Blythe that are most at odds with historical reality.

Blythe is someone about whom I would normally hold back from saying a good word. He was the most ruthless of Free State executioners in 1922-23, and the most dangerous of Blueshirt Fascist leaders in 1933-34. A Gaelic Nationalist he most certainly was, but not a Catholic Nationalist. There is no evidence that Teresa Deevy, who not only was a professing Catholic but, in fact, a daily communicant as well, ever experienced any silencing on behalf of the Catholic Church. And, if Blythe is to be artistically faulted for not staging another work by Deevy, it is a travesty to maintain that the Ulster Protestant Blythe—a life-long Low Church Anglican with a Presbyterian mother—would have acted as a silencing agent on behalf of the Catholic Church. Still less was Deevy silenced by Blythe's Civil War enemy, de Valera, as will be examined in my follow-up article. Indeed, it would be the *Irish Times* that would, in time, issue a call for *Katie Roche* to be dropped from the Abbey repertoire, for "artistic" reasons.

There was indeed a silencing campaign against a work by one particular Abbey playwright, Sean O'Casey. W.B. Yeats and O'Casey were fellow-Protestants, but there was a world of class difference between them. In 1926, Yeats had been more than ready to seize the opportunity to use O'Casey's play lampooning the 1916 Rising, *The Plough and the Stars*, as a weapon in the Free State's cultural war against Republicans. But it was quite a different matter when O'Casey took the 1914-18 World War as his subject matter. I remember how I was bowled over by Hugh Hunt's Abbey Theatre production of *The*

Silver Tassie in 1972, and how powerful an anti-war drama it was, particularly its expressionistic Greek chorus Second Act. But when Yeats rejected it on behalf of the Abbey in April 1928, he condescendingly wrote that it was more of the same old O'Casey that he wanted:

"MY DEAR CASEY ... You have no subject, you were interested in the Irish civil war and at every moment of those plays wrote out of your own amusement with life or your sense of its tragedy; you were excited and we all caught your excitement... But you are not interested in the great war, you never stood on its battlefields or walked its hospitals and so write out of your own opinions."

And O'Casey responded:

"DEAR MR. YEATS... You say—and this is the motif throughout the intonation of your whole song—that I am 'not interested in the Great War'. Now, how do you know that I am not interested in the Great War? Perhaps because I never mentioned it to you. Your statement is to me an impudently ignorant one to make, for it happens that that I was and am passionately and intensely interested in the Great War. Throughout its duration I felt and talked of nothing else; brooded, wondered and was amazed... I have talked of the Great War with Doctor Pilger ... who served as a surgeon at the front. Only a week before I got your letter I talked of the Great War to a surgeon here... You say 'you have never stood on its battlefields'. Do you really mean that no one should or could write or speak about a war because one has not stood on its battlefields? Were you serious when you dictated that—really serious, now? Was Shakespeare at Actium or Phillipi? Was G.B. Shaw in the boats with the French, or in the forts with the British when St. Joan and Dunois made the attack that relieved Orleans? And, someone, I think, wrote a poem about Tir na nOg who never took a header into the Land of Youth. And does war consist only of battlefields? But I have walked some of the hospital wards. I have talked and walked and smoked and sung with the blue-suited wounded men fresh from the front. I have been with the armless, the legless, the blind, the gassed and the shell-shocked; one with a head-bored with shrapnel, who had to tack east and tack west when before he could reach the point he wished to get to; with one whose head rocked like a frantic moving pendulum. Did you know 'Pantosser', and did you ever speak to him? Or watch his funny, terrible antics, or listen to the gurgle of his foolish thoughts? No? Ah, it's a pity you never saw or never spoke to 'Pantosser'..."

See http://free-magazines.atholbooks.org/ipr/2007/IPR_November_2007.pdf—page 8—for my November 2007 *Irish Political Review* article, "Sean O'Casey's Songs Against Sommetry". For

the O'Casey songs I reprinted therein gave the lie to Yeats's assertion that O'Casey had no interest in the Great War. These were bitter satires on British and Redmondite war propaganda, ranging from one published by Connolly himself in *The Workers' Republic* in 1916, to *Songs of the Wren*, O'Casey's own 1918 anti-Conscription campaign pamphlet—all designed by O'Casey to warn his fellow-Irishmen against becoming British Imperialism's cannon fodder, either to be slaughtered or reduced to the condition of yet more "*Pantosser*".

It was in his letter of 16th July 1953 to Elizabeth Freundlich, the German translator of *The Silver Tassie*, that O'Casey gave the fullest exposition of the continuing relevance of the play's anti-war message—no less relevant today in the light of US President Trump's UN speech this September 19, threatening to "*totally destroy North Korea*", which, of course, would also result in the annihilation of South Korea, for starters. O'Casey wrote of the play's detractors (capital letters, and their absence, and the use of the term "*Pacificists*" rather than "*pacifists*", were O'Casey's own):

"They lie and the truth is not in them who say that the play has nothing to tell after the second World War; it has more to say than it ever had, and that is why they cry out against it. Its need today is not less, but more since the second World War devastated and destroyed so much of what the first World War left standing. It tells too much, and that is why they hate it. If they think a newer play is needed to depict, or even to suggest, the greater devastation of the last war, then let one of the critics write it. It is not only a Christian duty, it is a moral one to try to stop any further devastation. Even the last war has shown that the day of victory for one side or another is over forever. No one side can ever win again, so even that sombre satisfaction is lost—and a good job too. Another war would almost, if not quite, annihilate both sides; indeed it might well destroy the world utterly. Every speaker touching on war has stated that fact; it isn't said alone by those called Pacificists; it has been said by Churchill, by Eisenhower, by Bidault, by Stalin, by the man in the street of Berlin, New York, London, Moscow, Vienna, Paris, and even Dublin. My *The Silver Tassie* isn't an exposition; it has simply turned out to be a terrible prophecy. The facts of war are in the play, reduced to the size of the insignificant stage, and if these finite symbols frighten, then what should we not do to prevent the terrible reality that would destroy us all."

But what of Blythe? Blythe and O'Casey were both Protestants, although Blythe

was Low Church, while O'Casey was a High Church Anglican, with a particular attraction to Anglo-Catholic liturgy. As fellow-Protestant Republicans and Gaelic revivalists, the younger Ernest Blythe and Sean O'Casey had a shared political and cultural association and friendship. On 24th February 1975, the day of Blythe's funeral from St. Patrick's Anglican Cathedral, the *Irish Times* carried an obituary by its political correspondent, the atheist and former Communist Michael McInerney, who wrote:

"Ernest Blythe was one of the most complex personalities in the Republican movement of this century... His love of the Irish language cannot be denied. He became a farm labourer, working for his keep in the remote Kerry Gaeltacht, to learn to speak Irish. A strict Protestant by religion from an Orange area in Antrim, he was to teach young Republican Catholic prisoners how to recite the Rosary in Irish... Another positive feature of Ernest Blythe's life was his friendship with Sean O'Casey, when they were both young men, members of the IRB, the Gaelic League, the GAA, and together trying to extend the teaching of the language among their Protestant friends and organisations. It was they who arranged the first service in Irish in St. Kevin's (Anglican Church)."

It was in 1924, as Free State Minister of Finance, that Blythe initiated the State subsidisation of the Abbey Theatre. Notwithstanding a political parting of the ways with O'Casey, and Blythe's shared Free Stater politics with Yeats, he had thoroughly disagreed with Yeats's rejection of *The Silver Tassie*. In October 1928, Blythe wrote to O'Casey:

"Dear Sean, Thank you for sending me a copy of *The Silver Tassie* I have read it again and I think more than ever that it is a very moving and powerful play. I only hope I may be able to see it on the stage. If the Directors of the Abbey had said they must reject it because they were afraid of a stupid riot in which their seats would get damaged and their curtain torn I could have understood their attitude. But when they decided to have none of it because it was not good enough for the Abbey and because it was unworthy of you, their minds worked in a way that is beyond my powers of comprehension."

It was in 1935 that Blythe himself would become a member of the Abbey Board, and that the Abbey finally staged the Irish premiere of *The Silver Tassie*. In late March 1935, Yeats had fallen ill in London, and remained so for six weeks. He was visited by O'Casey in mid-May—at Yeats's own request—and they were personally reconciled. In his 2004 biography of O'Casey, Christopher Murray took up the story:

"During their conversations, Yeats asked O'Casey for permission to produce *Within the Gates* at the Abbey. Though pleased, O'Casey thought that play beyond the Abbey's capabilities and suggested the *Tassie* instead... O'Casey suggested that the Irish premiere properly belonged to the Abbey and asked for Yeats's agreement. Yeats agreed but said (2 June) that he had already written to Ernest Blythe, now a Board member, that O'Casey had given the two plays... Contrary to O'Casey's account in the autobiographies, Yeats thus got permission to do *both* plays, only one of which he really wanted to do. Soon the matter was decided for him. Brinsley MacNamara (author of *The Valley of the Squinting Windows*—MO'R), now also a Director of the Abbey, took exception to *Within the Gates* and stopped it in its tracks. Finding that Yeats had committed himself to O'Casey, MacNamara, who took very seriously his position as Roman Catholic on the Board (Blythe's former fellow Cumann na nGaedheal TD and later Irish Film Censor, Richard Hayes, was the only other Catholic; the remaining five Board members being Protestant—MO'R), also tried to prevent the staging of the *Tassie*. Directed by Arthur Shields (a Protestant Republican veteran of the 1916 Rising, and including in the cast his brother William Shields, under the stage-name of "Barry Fitzgerald"—MO'R), the *Tassie* nevertheless opened to a packed house on 12th August. Reviews, apart from the *Irish Times*, were mainly hostile... A Dominican priest, Michael Gaffney, wrote to the *Irish Press* (14 August) prophesying riots at the Abbey which would make the *Playboy* riots seem but 'a flash in the pan, a child's cracker'. Father P.J. Carton spoke from the pulpit of St. Andrew's Church, Westland Row, crying shame upon the Abbey, 'at a moment when the enemies of the Church were assailing her in many lands a scandal had been tolerated in Catholic Dublin.'

"The *Tassie*, which was booked out in advance, closed after a week, to be hastily replaced by (G.B. Shaw's) *John Bull's Other Island*. The *Irish Times* was furious, declaring in an editorial on 28 August: 'Any work which does not show Ireland as a land of saints and scholars, is condemned at once as a treacherous onslaught on the national prestige.' When F.R. Higgins, another of the new Directors at the Abbey, officially voiced support for the Sean editorial, Brinsley MacNamara noisily dissented and resigned from the Board" (*Sean O'Casey—Writer at Work*, pp 242-3).

Murray gave the impression that the *Irish Times* endorsement of the 1935 staging of *Tassie* was on a par with its response to the premiere of *The Plough* in 1926: "*The reviews on the day following the opening night were positive, the Irish Times (9 February) being especially*

enthusiastic" (p 173). This ignored the *Irish Times* moral equivocation voiced eleven days later (20 February):

"I hear that the Minister for Justice, Mr. Kevin O'Higgins; Mr. Blythe, the Minister for Finance, and Senator Gogarty, Senator Yeats, Mr. Lionel Smith Gordon, and other prominent members of the present Administration were in the stalls on the Thursday when the opposition to the play, *The Plough and the Stars*, took place. They will have some idea, therefore, of what occurred. In these notes several weeks ago we stated that there were rumours that the Censor would not pass the play. Evidently he did. Some of the passages in *The Plough and the Stars* could be cut out effectively without interfering with the play. Some of the language used on the stage, if heard by a policeman on duty in the streets, would justify him in making an arrest."

Murray's narrative was also misleading on one particular point regarding the Abbey's 1935 production of *Tassie*. It was not in response to the public furor that the production "*closed after a week, to be hastily replaced*". The minutes of the Abbey Board meeting held on 9th August show that it had already been decided in advance that a one week run is what the play would get—a common Abbey approach to new productions. This, indeed, had previously been the case—despite full houses and a cessation of disturbances by the close of that week—with the first production of *The Plough and the Stars* in 1926.

But back to Blythe, for he would be to the fore in rallying all his fellow Directors, including Hayes, to take the fight to Mac Namara (*Irish Times*, 3 September 1935) and defend the Abbey's staging of *Tassie*. In his *Irish Times* obituary of 24th February 1975, Michael McInerney further wrote:

"In later years, too, Blythe supported O'Casey in the controversy about *The Silver Tassie* with Brinsley MacNamara, and Blythe contrived at the removal of MacNamara from the Board. He recognised O'Casey as a great dramatist..."

And, in 1951, as the Abbey's Managing Director, Blythe, that "*strict Protestant*", would go on to put his money where his mouth was. As Murray's narrative records:

"When the Abbey Company moved to the Queen's Theatre in 1951, following the fire (that had destroyed the old Abbey Theatre on July 17, 1951—MO'R), the first production they played there was to be O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie*" (p 44).

But this time it was from the columns of the *Irish Times* that Blythe would be subjected to extremely venomous abuse

for so doing.

Irish Times journalist Seamus Kelly authored its "Irishman's Diary" under the *nom de plume* of Quidnunc, and its theatre reviews as K. It should be said that there was nothing vicious in the language of Kelly's review published in the *Irish Times* of 25th September 1951. He was indeed dismissive, but seemed to genuinely feel that what were the weaknesses of the play's own construction had now been compounded by a poor production:

"One of the shrewdest comments passed on the Abbey Theatre's production of Sean O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie* at the Queen's Theatre, last night, was that it was a very wrong choice of play for the change-over. Even had the production been the finest that *The Silver Tassie* ever got, its quality would have suffered to some extent from the uneasiness of an audience largely of people who came to see the Abbey Company make their first appearance in the home of (the Queen's Theatre comedians) the Happy Gang, and largely, apparently convinced that O'Casey was a glorified scriptwriter for the sketches of (the pantomime comedian — MO'R) Mr. Jimmy O'Dea. In the circumstance, a good old Abbey farce might have been more suitable. O'Casey, of course, tries the impossible in this play... Where an absolutely realistic first act is followed by a second act that swerves from symbolism to realism and back again, it is impossible... The chanting of the soldiers lacked the force and the clarity that should invest with real terror and pity O'Casey's compassionate and angry picture of the degradation of war... The stretcher-bearers in Act II marched in step—they never do!"

In an October 1951 letter to Brooks Atkinson, O'Casey referred to that last point of the *Irish Times* review:

"The other day, Ireland's No 1 critic ... triumphantly pointed out that the Stretcher-bearers, chanting in the 2nd act, kept in step, whereas Stretcher-Bearers actually never did.... That is the sort of comment we get there. The fool couldn't see that they had to march with the rhythm of the chant; or that the entire act—much more than the stretcher bearers' march—was far removed from actuality."

Two days after his initial review, however, Kelly turned more sarcastic in the issue of 27th September, and suggested surprise that two of de Valera's Government Ministers had shown up to support this *Tassie* production:

"Rarely in its history can the old Queen's Theatre have had an audience of such varied distinction as attended the Abbey's first night there last Monday. On one quick check-up around the Dress Circle I flushed a brace of Cabinet Ministers—Mr. Sean MacEntee and Mr. Frank Aiken... to see *The Silver Tassie*

which has been produced only twice in Dublin since Yeats first rejected it. Lennox Robinson, Ernest Blythe, Dr. Richard Hayes and Robert Farren completed the fullest muster of the Abbey directorate that I have seen at an Abbey first night for many moons... Whether any of the old customers of the Queen's turned up, to be bedevilled by the poses and raptures of O'Casey's symbolism, I cannot say, but I saw 'Dossie' Wright, the Abbey's stage manager, darting round the back of the auditorium, looking rather like a canary who had wandered into a cats' home."

It was another *Irish Times* columnist who produced the venom. In his "*Cruiskeen Lawn*" slot on 24th September, "*Myles na gCopaleen*" had a go even before the production would have its first performance later that night:

"Tonight's play is *The Silver Tassie* by Sean O'Casey... In this play O'Casey's theme is that war is very bad for you. Never having gone to the wars, I do not adjudicate on that proposition, but as a theme it seems to me to be a bit naive. Prussic acid is also very bad for you, but few have had the daring to keep decent people out of the pubs for two-and-a-half hours to establish this rather evident truth... Still, I suppose the Abbey is essentially a Roman foundation, despite the otherness of the main digging foot."

See <https://comeheretome.com/2013/07/26/video-footage-of-the-first-bloomsday/> for how "Myles", a Joycean *ad nauseam*, would go on to invent Bloomsday in 1954, and baptise it with something other than water. "Myles na gCopaleen" was one *nom de plume* adopted by Brian O'Nolan, another being "Flann O'Brien". In his *Irish Times* column for 3rd October 1951, "Myles" next went on to let fly with full venom, in a manner that followed on from his "*main digging foot*" coded charge that Blythe had had the *chutzpah* to stage *The Silver Tassie* as part of some nefarious Protestant project:

"At the risk of the accusation of being pig-headed—or being, indeed, a boar—it is necessary for me to revert to this theme of the Abbey Theatre. A down-to-earth variety theatre has been closed and the premises handed over, almost with awe, to an outfit that made its debut with as loathsome and offensive a 'play' that as ever disgraced Dublin boards. The second act of this affair is a perfectly plain, straightforward travesty of Catholic Church ritual. The rest is bunkum and drool... An easy answer is: 'Well, if you don't like it, you don't have to look at it.' My peculiar situation is that I have to pay for it. Ten thousand pound in taxes is paid by me and you to subsidise this shameful rubbish... If our backs must accept the merciless lash of taxation, then we are entitled to demand that the

gang in charge of the Abbey should be sent about their business... The Abbey Company has some fine players... It is insufferable that fine artists should be in the hands of this ludicrous Abbey Board, worse that they should be compelled to prostitute their talent to the playing of stuff grossly offensive to most ordinary Christian persons... As well as all that, it contains certain words. What words? I dare not attempt to print them here. The thought recurs to me that the Abbey has had a fine day, but that it has had it. It might be better for all concerned to fold it up quietly. Certainly, if it is to go on, the present gang in control, with the exception of Mr. (Lennox) Robinson, will have to be sent packing."

"Myles" was clearly irked that two of Dev's Ministers had graced that *Tassie* first night. Now he was demanding that Dev's Government should pull the financial plug on the Abbey unless it was purged of Blythe and O'Casey alike. But Dev would do no such thing, and his Ministers would make no apology to an ultramontanist like "Myles" for attending any play by the Protestant O'Casey that they might wish to see.

In a December 1951 letter to John Gassner, O'Casey commented on "Myles" and such expressions of hatred:

"It isn't all praise, though, as the enclosed cutting from an Irish daily, THE IRISH TIMES, shows. It is odd, the insistent hatred of, & opposition to, *The Silver Tassie*, especially in Ireland. There's been more shouting it down than was given to the *Plough & the Stars*. Miles na gCopaleen (Miles of the Ponies—a character in *The Colleen Bawn*) is a very clever fellow. He wrote a fine satire in Gaelic called *The Poor Mouth*, & I was one of the few (if there were any at all) who praised it. He tried his hand at a play himself, but it didn't do. I never said a word about his playwriting, in public or private; so it wasn't resentment that made him attack the *Tassie*... Miles, for some reason or another, hates the Abbey Board. There's always the envy, hatred, & malice on there... Not a single word appeared in *The Irish Times* in defence of the *Tassie*."

The next O'Casey controversy surrounded his new play, *The Bishop's Bonfire* (produced in Dublin's Gaiety Theatre by Cyril Cusack, President of the Catholic Stage Guild, who also acted in his own production). Christopher Murray related:

"Never before or since did such public excitement attend the premiere of an Irish play as was whipped up before the opening of the *Bonfire* on 28 February 1955. There is a sense that as far as the Roman Catholic establishment was concerned this was pay-back time. One

of the Catholic organs of the time was the *Standard* newspaper... The splash across page one of an attack on O'Casey ten days before the opening of the *Bonfire* was ominous. 'Mr. O'Casey flays all manner of Catholic Ecclesiastics...' ... Indeed it was easily demonstrable that O'Casey had 'drawn himself up against both Church and State in Ireland' (emphasis added): 'his bishop's bonfire is shortly to be ignited. Is it inflammable material?' ... One week later: The time had come to make a stand... Moreover, in italics, and in the knowledge of Cyril Cusack's involvement ... *Where stands the Catholic Stage Guild?*" (p 359).

On 1st March, the day following the premiere, the *Irish Times* reported:

"When the play finished boos and hisses from the gallery and parts of the upper circle persisted throughout the applause which brought half-a-dozen curtain calls. Hostility first showed itself on the part of a section of the audience when a line spoken by Dennis Brennan as 'Manus'—'When I see the Monsignor that's here and the Bishop that's coming, I'm glad I escaped the honour and glory of the priesthood'. That was hissed."

Yet that paper's own columnist. "Myles na gCopaleen", had been in on the protest arrangements. As Murray further related:

"More serious were the threatened demonstrations. *Maria Duce*, an extremist Catholic Action association, was rumoured to be mustering forces... Flann O'Brien rang up to gloat: 'You're going to have a spot of bother tonight!' He referred to *Maria Duce*" (p 360).

Among those refusing to bow the knee to the Catholic *Standard*—and, still less, to "Myles na gCopaleen" and *Maria Duce*—was Dev's right-hand man in both War and Peace, Frank Aiken, who made a point of attending that 1955 O'Casey first night, along with his wife Maud. And it can also be seen that a Trinity College Assistant Professor's narrative, charging that "*for Blythe ... a national drama should ... serve the conservative Catholic Church*", is just so much ignorant bunkum. I will next examine the role of Fintan O'Toole of the *Irish Times* in promoting a *Katie Roche* / Teresa Deevy mythology.

Manus O'Riordan

(to be continued)

The Myth Of 1960s Swinging London

As they say: 'A change is as good as a rest'. So maybe some light reading away from the tomes? When it comes to reading in this case a just-published paperback took my eye: *The Secret Life Of Freddie Mills*, National Hero, Boxing Champion, Serial Killer (ISBN -978-1-78606-445-5) John Blake Publishing.

Mills, a light-heavyweight champion of the world, was at one time everywhere in the media during the 1960s. He had TV acting parts, he was in adverts, he was on Chat Shows. The image-makers of the nation decided Mills was a national hero, now called a national treasure. It was a period of elitist English arrogance (still around) when boxers and other athletes losing to foreign competition were labelled, *Champion of Guts* in large headlines in the morning paper.

The book is written by a retired journalist who worked for *The Sun* when it was a broadsheet, which he claims succeeded the *Daily Herald*, an out and out Labour paper. The writer himself has all the bombastic display of the tabloid journalist he was to become. Nevertheless he does record a London at odds with its swinging-image.

It is a London at its most corrupt. Slum landlordism is in full swing with Rachman at its head. A Labour Government had introduced the Rent Tribunal which set fair rents on properties and which couldn't be broken during the lifetime of the tenant. Rachman and his ilk bought up these almost derelict properties for a song. But how to remove the rent-protected tenants? *Terrorism*. Rent collectors with savage dogs, the partial removal of roofs during the night, bags of rats poured through forced doors. In some cases the dog or cat of an elderly tenant would be thrown over the balcony to its death.

The Metropolitan Police feel they are not being paid enough so every opportunity is taken to bring in the money from criminal sources. One top detective belonging to Scotland Yard's CID squirrels away £30,000 from the Great Train Robber's loot (equivalent to £1,240,000 today). He will share some of it with his senior colleagues.

I remember at the time a criminal saying on TV that there was no money in crime because the cops were at your door

demanding the bulk of it after a robbery.

I myself remember being in a Soho shop and a uniformed constable asking for 20 Players cigarettes. He is given the cigarettes plus change from a five pound note (a half a week's wages then) though he hadn't produced any money himself.

Soho was said to be either *protected* by the gangs or by the police.

Here we have a London during the 1960s with two powerful criminal gangs on the rampage like the Kray Twins running the East End, parts of Knightsbridge, and moving in on Soho. The other, the Richardsons, controlled South London. At the same time the Profumo Affair is going on, with the elite who were involved in sex parties closing the door firmly on the *lower orders* involved. Christine Keeler, a teenage girl, is torn apart morally in court and is given nine months in prison for prostitution when she was merely a courtesan to a couple of the elite.

Today the tabloids treat such courtesans with pride and worn-out words like *legend*.

Stephen Ward, an osteopath, and fly-boy knew he could crash any upper-class party if he arrived with a pretty girl on each arm. In court he was charged with the rigged *living on immoral earnings*. Scotland Yard set him up at the behest of the now faceless elite. Christine Keeler's working-class background was exploited. Her family living in two old railway carriages was sneered at. People of her class and lack of money were shown as to be the equal of feral dogs. It was disgraceful class warfare.

Scotland Yard, through its corrupt detectives, made a case against Ward which sent him into a suicide spin. The book says, if he had held on, the evidence of the corrupt would have been seen through: it had been so badly put together during that drinking culture in the Met.

The lid was lifted on society for a time and then quickly dropped and fastened down.

I had heard of Freddie Mills during my teens, as a teen when so many ambitions were liable to hit us as young males. What to make of our lives outside the shipyard

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and the factory. Boxing and converting Northern Ireland to Communism were the prime motives of my life. Or was it becoming a black belt in Judo? Maybe weightlifting.

Writing? Taking advantage of the British Military Industrial Complex and being whisked around the world. Just to see the world, not to do any killing of course. Got to stick to your principles.

The author goes into the ghastly deaths of eight murdered prostitutes found near the banks of the River Thames. He goes into their backgrounds thoroughly in order to find out what made them street-girls. He has a Scotland Yard detective, on the payroll of his newspaper, giving him inside information as each murder occurs. There are many suspects and some are taken in and questioned. Then the coin drops and the main suspect is named privately, never to be known to the public until now.

Freddie Mills is a Freemason. There is a Freemason Lodge for Scotland Yard. A top detective approaches Mills and gives him the news. Mills says he will meet him at the Freemason headquarter, the Grand Lodge of England in Great Queen Street.

Attached to it is the Champagne Bar at the Connaught Rooms, part of the Freemason Halls. There is a meeting and Mills promises to give himself up. The detective accepts this as the word of a fellow Mason and leaves it at that.

Mills decides to have himself assassinated. This he does by going to the Kray Brothers, whom he knows well. A deal is reached involving £1000—half to the Krays and half to the assassin.

Mills is found dead in his car with a rifle beside him. Suicide is the verdict. He had been suffering from *depression*.

An innocent man was named as the serial killer by Scotland Yard's Murder Squad.

Because of police pressure upon him he committed suicide.

If you can bypass the author's terrible metaphors and his begorra Irishry when dealing with devoted (*Roman*) Catholics, then you could find this book interesting on *Swinging London*.

Wilson John Haire.

11 September 2017

Sean O'Callaghan, Betrayal, Informer—Smoke & Mirrors

Press Release from Richard Behal to the Editor of *The Irish Times* in reply to their report on the death of Sean O'Callaghan. 7th September 2017
It did not receive publication.

Your newspaper, in common with National & international media in general, in your reportage about the death of SEAN O'CALLAGHAN, the 'Walter Mitty' type informer, betrayer, Traitor & whatever else, unfortunately falls short in regards to questioning of statements, allegations by O'Callaghan & other suspect quarters. Many of which he later withdrew, changed or denied, —a quagmire. This was glaringly so in the case of the "Fall Guy", the unfortunate Corkman JOHN CORCORAN, murdered to cover his own treachery. He said he vainly awaited the Gardai to burst in and rescue Corcoran "so he decided" to shoot his victim anyway. What utter tripe, nonsense. Anyone with a basic understanding of Irish Republican Army disciplinary Codes accepts that a suspected spy/informer must first have a Court of Enquiry, and if there is a case to answer get a fair representative Court Martial and findings before any sentence could be enacted. For O'CALLAGHAN to make his own 'decisions' to shoot Corcoran, as he claimed, would be sheer cold blooded murder, NOT the actions of a media-hyped reformed, repentant "Terrorist" but a real 'Terrorist' in the full sense of that word.

The true measure of O'Callaghan was amply demonstrated in Dublin court when "He mockingly blew (Slab) Murphy a kiss", against whom he swore dubious evidence. The 'Kiss', a traditional sign of betrayal.

I personally knew him over many years, —having as little contact as was possible as all my basic instincts recoiled on meeting him. My role in those years was Director of Sinn Fein Foreign Affairs Bureau—principally covering Europe. During the historic H-Block Hunger Strikes I managed among other Notable successes, to address the full plenary session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, clearly outlining the factual political situation in the conflict and the heroic reasons of the Hunger Strikers. The British Representatives were furious as it exposed internationally the truth about the war in Ireland & Human Rights violations. Britain,

through O'Callaghan and other underhand methods tried to undermine, blacken, & prevent the Sinn Fein FAB peaceful, constitutional efforts to help bring about peace, justice, unity in Freedom.

Occasionally I returned home to Killarney for a break & consultations with the Movement. During one such visit I strongly disagreed with O'Callaghan for deciding himself to embark on a so-called "Solidarity Hunger Strike" in Tralee as it was detracting from the death Hunger Strike in the H-Blocks. He was very displeased with me. Whether his decision or on orders from his British 'Dirty Tricks' masters he apparently tried to set me up for jailing. Some weeks after the above incident I was home again and another Hunger Striker had died. The Kerry Committee requested me to give the oration at a huge 'Black Flag' parade & public meeting. I agreed on condition that O'Callaghan was not on the platform. However he appeared thereon & I was assured he would only Chair the proceedings, whereupon I wrote a list of order of events & thrust it into his hand. As I finished my speech he, instead of calling for the National Anthem, went into a rambling & confusing rant, and suddenly turning to me he said loudly: "Richard, hand me that Army Statement you have for to read". I was surprised & furious, as there was no such paper, only the list of meeting sequence. I pointed that out but he snatched it & announced that I had just handed him an important Statement from the Kerry Command of the I.R.A. He pretended to read it out. This purported 'to deal with anyone who allegedly falsely used the army's name to threaten any shop keeper or business that did not close their premises during the various days of mourning parades'. If charged I could have received a long term of imprisonment. Without delay I got many witnesses present to sign that sole sheet of paper that it was only a procedural list—for my own protection and that of the Sinn Fein FAB, whose peaceful, constitutional work abroad could & did help Ireland. Sean O'Callaghan's actions were NOT those of a 'penitent, reformed 'Terrorist', but of a real 'Terrorist' in the

full meaning of that word.

He appears to have had a dangerous mix of conflicting emotions that saw him callously manipulate people & events, like an evil 'Puppet Master' for his 'Highs & Lows'. All things to all men, loyal to none. He was like a Fireman who sets fires so he could dash in as a hero to extinguish them. Many of the alleged plots he claimed to have informed on were imagination or most likely instigated by himself. The 'Royal couple assassination plot' & Kidnapping etc, fit perfectly into this scenario. As a self-confessed Liar, his horror story about vile sectarian comments made by Republican Volunteers on hearing about the death of an R.U.C. female officer is just not believable—but served his & his controlling masters well for black propaganda.

In conclusion, the general media in Britain, Ireland, national & local seem to have accepted, without questioning, the glib announcement about O'Callaghan's death as 'natural causes', accidental drowning etc. O'Callaghan at 62 years & despite denials would have had some security watching over him to ensure that one of Britain's vaunted agents was not brought to account by some of those he betrayed, would be bad encouragement for other traitors & spies. However it may well have suited British intelligence for him to have an accident in far off Jamaica—how convenient. Britain in particular has always used and then abused such type of people whom they loathe really. They frequently get rid of them after they are squeezed dry, exploited to the full until of no further use but instead could be counter-productive and a danger of exposing the 'modus operandi' & contacts of their spy masters.

I seriously question whether O'Callaghan accidentally died. Was he assisted to or was a near-untraceable nerve poison of help? A hurried cremation ensures there is now no evidence. Such is the eventual price of treachery & betrayal. In death he may find the clarity and personal peace he lacked in life.

Slán,

Richard Behal

(From: **Irish Republican Marxist History site**)

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The Taoiseach's Line on Brexit

A report by Fiach Kelly (*Varadkar: Need for Brexit deal before Border plan 'common sense'*, 21 August) gives cause for concern that the Government is planning to break ranks with the EU in the Brexit negotiations.

Two statements from the Taoiseach stand out. In the first he is quoted describing as 'common sense' the opinion of British Brexit Secretary David Davis that the Border needs to be discussed in tandem with future trade relations. When asked later in the article whether he disagreed with Mr Davis's opinion which breaches the agreed EU position, the Taoiseach, according to Fiach Kelly, 'declined to say'.

By sending mixed messages regarding Brexit the Government runs the risk of encouraging the UK side in the belief that Irish interests are separate from and in conflict with those of the EU. Driving a wedge between Ireland and the EU certainly has the potential to give the UK an advantage. But it would only be a short lived advantage; it would only prolong the uncertainty.

If, in pursuit of the objective of preventing a hard border, the Government sides with the UK, the EU negotiators backed by the other 26 member-states, will still be forced to defend the bloc's external frontier. At the end of the day there will still be a visible border, but having breached solidarity at a critical time, Ireland will have damaged its EU relationships.

Given the nature of the Brexit negotiations—time-pressured with many nation states and supranational institutions involved—it is unlikely that untested proposals such as 'streamlined customs arrangements' and a 'new customs partnership' mentioned in a recent UK position paper will get serious attention, even if the border is discussed in conjunction with a future trade agreement. Because Brexit is unprecedented the solutions chosen in the talks are likely to be conservative rather than innovative.

By lending support to David Davis's argument that the exit negotiations can't be conducted in isolation from future trade talks, the Taoiseach has identified with the UK case. In going down that route he is raising a false expectation that the border will remain invisible. He is also jeopardising the EU's negotiating position.

Dave Alvey

Irish Political Review Group

Irish Times, 24 August 2017

Quantitative Easing

the explanation most commonly provided for soaring property prices and rents in the Irish market has been a lack of supply. While there can be no doubt that inadequate supply is a large part of the problem, there is another significant contributor to inflation in the property market but which has been almost entirely overlooked in public discussion, namely the European Central Bank's policy of quantitative easing (QE).

QE is the purchase by the European Central Bank of large amounts of government and private bonds. Its aim is to increase the price of those bonds, thereby reducing the amount investors can earn from them. The idea is that investors will then purchase other riskier assets (including property) instead of bonds and that people will spend more as these assets increase in value and as they grow wealthier.

Given that the most acute problem currently facing this country is runaway property prices and rents, and given that QE has a tendency, and indeed the express aim, of reinforcing these deleterious trends, it is the wrong policy for Ireland at this time, however well it may suit other countries in the euro zone. Economist Dan McLaughlin has recently argued that QE has increased the presence of investors in the Irish property market. They now account for more than a third of all purchases in the Irish market. This has contributed significantly to the recent explosion in property prices and rents.

The miseries associated with crushing rent increases and astronomical house prices are well known, as are the problems of supply in the Irish housing market. However, QE, in pump-priming investor demand for property, is also a significant culprit. This ought to be more widely known and the wisdom or otherwise of the ECB's expansionary monetary policy ought to be more widely debated. — Yours, etc,

Stephen Brittain

Irish Times, 3 October 2017

Does
It

Up

Stack

?

QUANTITATIVE EASING

Now that Brexit is moving towards happening, the conversation in the media is bringing Brexit into everything and especially into the fall in the value of the UK pound. The media continues to insist on calling the UK £ *pound* by its self-styled propaganda-name— "*Sterling*" with a capital "S". Sterling is an adjective meaning "*genuine*" or "*the real thing*", as used in "*Sterling Silver*" or in such expressions as "*he is a sterling fellow*" and, referring to money, it meant "*as good as a silver coin*". It is a long time since the UK£ pound was as good as a "*silver coin*". The reduction of the value of the UK£ pound and of the US\$ dollar in recent times has little to do with Brexit but everything to do with "quantitative easing" by the UK and USA in recent years.

Quantitative easing was the system purposely used by the Bank of England to push down the value of the UK£ pound. This process was a downright unfriendly thing to do to Ireland because it made UK exports more competitive (i.e. cheaper) in international markets and likewise it made the UK imports of Irish produce less rewarding for Irish-based exporters. And so quantitative easing is an act of economic war. It has had a devastating effect on Irish mushroom growers who are almost wiped out. Mushroom exports were worth over 100 million euros to Irish producers. There are of course serious ramifications for all areas of Irish industry/agriculture and services—particularly tourism.

And in addition, there is the knock-on effect—the mushroom industry supports very strongly the horse industry for its horse manure, the chicken industry—over 50,000 tons of chicken manure a year is used for mushroom compost and nearly half of all wheaten straw is sold to mushroom growers.

Over 3,000 rural jobs are being lost in Ireland. The individual mushroom grower can, given time, develop other markets in the EU or elsewhere. Or move production to Britain or the Six Counties but this requires a new lot of capital expenditure which is not easy to fund.

Incidentally, moving production took an

interesting twist when President Vladimir Putin banned European cheese and other imports into Russia (the Polish apple and potato growers were up in arms as were many other agri/businesses). Danone, the French dairy company, saw that their Russian market was about to take a hit and so Danone moved 5,000 Holstein cows from Germany and Netherlands to a farm near Tyumen, east of the Ural Mountains on the Siberian Plain. President Putin then made an important speech in which he said that he would make land available for tillage etc. to all comers and that he was confident that by 2010 Russia would have "*food-security*".

Production of cheese moved 4,500 kms and the problem for the EU is that the jobs also moved to Tyumen. Of course cattle husbandry and new knowledge went to Russia as well and the net loss was to the EU, which was supporting American-led sanctions against Russia for farcical reasons—sanctions which did not impact on American exports unlike those of the EU. It always amazes me that the EU does something so negative to its own interests, with the elite just nodding its head in acquiescence—though in fairness some of the political/media commentators have pointed out the absurdity of such a position, but without much impact on political reasoning: especially of Germany, a country which you'd think would know otherwise.

An enormous amount of lateral thinking is being done amongst Irish farmers and business people as a result of the quantitative easing in the UK and USA, and also because of the US led impositions of sanctions, not only on exports to Russia, but on Iran etc. Businesses which want to keep trading with these aforementioned countries have to think outside the box and they do so quite successfully, but not because they get any help from our Government—on the contrary they are often hindered by our bureaucrats aided by senior Government Ministers of all hues and none! Our former Taoiseach Enda Kenny, TD Fine Gael, loved quoting his little mantra: "*Ireland is a great little country to do business with*", but he should have *done* more to make that a reality than just offering a sound-bite!

Irish politicians must express themselves more forcibly in the EU against the US-led sanctions which are damaging the EU economies while having no perceivable effect on the US economy. Why should Ireland or any other EU country be made to suffer to support the USA's economic

Wars? People may warn that the US is too powerful to go against but, if that is truly the case—what then is the supra-national EU State good for, if not to go up against an economy that is *less* than that of the 27 Nation States of the EU?

Surely George Soros is not *that* powerful? Certainly he is using his Billions of dollars to do social engineering in Ireland and elsewhere but little Hungary has barred him from entering his country of birth and doing any business/philanthropic work (!?!) there and so far Victor Orban is doing just fine. Naturally Soros, being who he is, had taken the case to the Court of European Justice (which it is rumoured he hugely funds!) but as Hungary recently pointed out—who stood with them in 1956? That is the silence you hear echoing . . .

PENSION FUNDS

Quite apart from the effects of quantitative easing on international trade, there is a separate and hidden agenda behind quantitative easing and that is the forcing up of inflation which, if it can be forced up enough, serves to greatly devalue National Debt, and of course it at the same time devalues personal debt by making it easier to pay back debt in UK Pounds or US Dollars which are of less value than the UK Pounds or US Dollars originally borrowed.

Price and Currency Inflation has always had this effect of making it easier to pay back borrowings. For example, 250,000 Euros is borrowed to buy a house and, with inflation of earnings and inflation of house prices, there is no problem paying back the loan. As the borrower gained, the lender (ie savings and pension funds) suffered. This was in the past accepted as inevitable and more or less an Act of God—so to speak.

But quantitative easing is no chance event! The process is intentionally pursued so as to force inflation and with the expressed purpose of making debts, especially National Debts, easier to repay and therefore the perpetrators of quantitative easing are intentionally and with malice aforethought committing a fraud on Pension Funds and on future and present pensioners whose savings are being devalued.

The Pension Funds of Bankers and Politicians are so vast as to be virtually inflation-proof and so they do not care. Their conduct does not affect them. But their solution for the rest of humanity is to make workers work harder and longer—up to 70 or 75 is suggested by the well-endowed—to make up the shortfall caused by quantitative easing. It's just another process to take money from the

helpless and powerless people so as to enrich those in power.

As the US millionaire Cornelius Vanderbilt said one time:

"What do I care about the law. Haint I got the power?"

The robber-barons of old are now the politicians of today and things will have to change again. Will the politicians see the light? Will they what?

REVISIONISM IS ALIVE AND WELL —WELL-ORGANISED I MEAN!

In an *Irish Examiner* article on Thomas Ashe it was stated without further elaboration that he died of pneumonia: as if it had occurred naturally.

In the *Irish Examiner*, 25th September 2017, there is a three-quarter page article by Robert Hume in which it is stated that Thomas Ashe died of heart failure and congestion of the lungs caused by a feeding tube put in place by a trainee doctor unskilfully. Nowhere in his article does Hume say that the British were involved in any way, even though the article purports to give an account of Thomas Ashe leading the Irish Volunteers to victory against the Royal Irish Constabulary.

As far as a disinterested reader is told—Thomas Ashe could have been fighting in a civil war. Or just fighting the police? Robert Hume's article is written like a well-done conjuring trick. Now you see it, now you don't!

Then again, in the *'Atlas of the Irish Revolution'*, the propagandist Clair Wills insults our patriots of 1916 by writing a six-page article entitled *"Staging the Rising"* in which she says quite untruthfully (truth does not matter to her it seems):

"The belief that the Rising was a 'staged' affair from the outset has taken a strong hold in the Irish popular imagination and in academic circles."

No other propagandist has ever ventured to create a lie of such magnitude. This surely is the ultimate insult to those who fought and died in our War of Independence to free us from Britain's grip.

The book was launched on the 19th September 2017 with great fanfare at the Aula Max in UCC with the University President giving the opening remarks. Dr. John Horgan (DCU) officially launched it amidst an array of panjandrum on the top dais—Borgonovo, Bielenberg, O'Driscoll etc. What struck me was the announcement from the top table that the book was going to be put into every school and library in Ireland: so the State itself has given this book its ultimate endorsement with the tax-payers' money as usual.

I only opened this massive book (we had to be given bags to take them home, so huge a volume is it!) and the page that fell open was the article by Clair Wills—she of the Bowen/Trevor School in Mitchelstown (where her speech was covered in the *Irish Political Review* by my colleague Julianne Herlihy).

I can't understand her switch to History as she has purely a Literary background but

now that she has fetched up in Princeton University—she is one heavy hitter—our academy here would be battling for her attention. Because she has not only landed the big lecturing gig but she is *'Chair of Princeton's Fund for Irish Studies series of events and seminars'*. Now who wouldn't want a little financial attention from that fund—or indeed a gig here and there?

But—if her six page article is any thing to go by—what other howlers await us

Review: *The Swinging Detective* by Henry McDonald Gibson Square ISBN 97817833441177

Detecting Paedophiles

This is a 'prentice effort for Henry McDonald, at least in writing a sustained, 330-odd pages, of a fairly complex novel. It is in the form of, essentially, a 'thriller' (fair enough 'thriller' is not up there with *bildungsroman* or *novella* as a literary form, but it has some formal attributes—bear with me).

The biographical 'blurb' on the book's back-cover claims McDonald *"has a deep knowledge of Marxism"* and *"the German punk scene"*. Which means Henry was once the rising star of the Workers' Party of Ireland (formerly 'Official' Sinn Féin / the Republican Clubs) in its glazed-eyed Muscovite days. But the element of 'inside knowledge' is quite lightly handled, and while Martin Peters, the central figure of the tale, is a useful 'outsider' he knows Berlin intimately.

That is because he was a British 'spook' in the days before the Wall came down—Belfast also comes into the matter.

Peters: the similarity of the moniker to the England 'World cup' team member is acknowledged—so far as England soccer fans are concerned there is only *one* World Cup worth consideration—that of 1966; Peters is haunted by the killing of an exotically-named, female Loyalist assassin. The description of the actual killing of this unlikely person fits that of an actual UVF operative, Brian Robinson. He was a pillion passenger on a motorbike, and was shot dead by Brit (or possibly RUC) spooks. He and his driver were on an Ardoyne (north Belfast) 'Fenian'-killing expedition.

The book itself is largely about the killing of 'paedophiles'—men convicted of sexually molesting children in Thailand and Sri Lanka. There are very good descriptions of the social reaction to this series of events. The police have the

problem of having to offer some sort of protection to men who are at the bottom of just about anybody's list of worthy citizens; complicated by the fact that these men are simultaneously in dire need of protection on a 24 / 7 basis—and don't want to draw attention to themselves.

The attention comes in the form of an *ad-hoc* Mothers Against Paedophiles group, led by a loud, publicity-grabbing 'targe' of a woman. And there is an assassin who specialises in killing these men in increasingly imaginative ways. The tabloid press joins in the whipping up of social hysteria about 'paedophiles' (the numbers of whom, in society are, as ever, hugely over-inflated).

The killing of these people—generally deemed to be socially worthless human, if that, garbage—leads to all sorts of complications: the chief one being the bullying of entirely innocent elderly men, and the stretching of police resource, human and otherwise to breaking point.

Peters eventually tracks down 'St Christopher', the executioner of the men who had gone abroad to molest mostly elementary school age boys. We are spared descriptions of the 'interaction' with the children in the Third World, but the results of such things are obvious—destroyed socialisation and driving into drugs (including alcohol).

The killer of these men turns out not to be a 'moralistic' avenger. His motivation is anti-imperialist: this is just the dirtiest element in the over-all exploitation of these boys (it is implied very strongly, that girls and young women are victims too).

This is a well-written and arresting—that is the only word—novel. It is well worth some hours of your time.

Seán McGouran

Redmondism continued

point of view I hold regarding that fatalistic loyalty to a cause amongst Waterford people "..."

Redmond's complex and contradictory network of support obliged him to straddle contradictory positions. During the Boer Wars he expressed pride in the gallantry and sacrifice of the splendid Irish soldiers of the British army, while at the same time wishing that Ireland could (not would, mind!) fight on its own behalf against Britain, just like the Boers.

Davitt said:

"[We have] been told by some few croaking Nationalists in Ireland and some Liberal papers in England that [we imperil] Home Rule because of [our] warm sympathy for the Transvaal in this trouble. If Home Rule [can] be killed by sympathy with justice, with liberty, and with right, then let it die!"

ORIGINS OF THE BALLYBRICKEN PIG BUYERS?

There does not seem to be much on record about the Pig Buyers, but references to them often state that their premises in Ballybricken had pictures of Young Ireland leaders. Nicholas Whittle was also puzzled by the Ballybricken Pig Buyer phenomenon even though, as contemporary native to the place, it must have been completely familiar to him. He says he consulted the famous Decies historian Canon Power, who could not really enlighten him.

One would not want to try to second-guess Whittle or Power, but it is possible to speculate.

Historically Waterford port was home to many trades, particularly the bacon industry. It had the biggest ship-building industry in Ireland (Belfast included) at one time. By the mid-19th century the railways were superseding river transport, and capitalist factories were displacing craft industries. What happened to the master butchers when their journeymen, tradesmen and apprentices went into employment in the new bacon factories?

The factories required supplies of live pigs sold by farmers, smallholders and householders in the fair at Ballybricken. Maybe the master butchers, with their centuries of knowledge of the trade, took up the pig buyer role for Denny's and the other new bacon factories.

In any event the Pig Buyers enjoyed

a lucrative monopoly until the producers began to sell direct to the factories. To block this development, the Pig Buyers staged a strike in 1897, and sought to physically stop the supply of pigs to the factories to prevent them from dealing directly with the producers.

Ultimately the producers formed a meat processing co-operative, and by 1925 or so the Pig Buyers had lost their economic and social clout.

Later there was a similar development in the beef industry. Cattle were traditionally sold at fairs to cattle dealers who colluded with each other to prevent price competition. In the 1950s the cattle producers formed marts in which cattle were sold by public auction, where buyers had to bid against each other. The cattle dealers (or buyers) initially boycotted the cattle marts, but the farmers held out, and the marts are still in operation.

SOURCES OF REDMONDITE VIOLENCE?

Is there an explanation for the violent methods of Redmondites? Faction fighting was common in the past. In the South East, the early 19th century fighting between the Caravat and Shanavest factions was a kind of class conflict between rural labourers and farmers. It included conflict between local farm labourers and migrant "*spailpín*" labourers from Cork and Kerry who tended to undercut locally established pay rates.

Michael Davitt's movement sought to improve the conditions of both tenant farmers and labourers. But conflict between these groups continued. Creamery workers seized the co-operative dairies (formed a few years earlier by farmers scraping share funds together), raised the Red Flag and called themselves Soviets. Farmers reacted by boycotting the worker-occupied creameries, and by buying the new cream separator centrifuge machines which turned small dairy farms into small butter factories.

A major farm labourer strike in East County Waterford in 1923 involved violence by both sides, resulting in imposition of martial law by the Free State in the farmers' favour. In the 1930s the new Fianna Fáil Government restored balance by imprisoning Blueshirts.

In urban areas, before modern forms of unionisation arrived in the late 19th century, disputes within and between the many trades, crafts, and the complex gradations of pay and status, were sometimes settled by physical force.

Official and unofficial violence in human affairs, whether justified or unjustified, is not likely to disappear anytime soon. John Redmond himself said many times that Ireland was held in the United Kingdom by force, and he was happy that this should continue under Home Rule.

Nicholas Whittle attended a major post-1916-Rising speech by Redmond in Waterford, when Redmond broke his long silence and came out into the open to call for more cannon-fodder for the Great War slaughter. Pat McCarthy's book describes the ejection and violent treatment of dissenters. Whittle quotes Redmond as saying that Sinn Féin were the "*effervescent scum of the body politic*", predicting that they would "*soon run back like rats into their holes*".

Redmond cannot be absolved from the violence of his supporters. Present-day protagonists make their case on the supposed non-violence of Redmond, compared with those who opposed him. Their case does not stand up under scrutiny.

There is a problem with the portrayals of Redmond in terms of "*a man of peace standing up against violent methods, just like the quintessentially anti-violence good guy John Hume*". Whatever the defects and/or merits of Redmond and/or Hume, the two are not equivalent or even similar. Try replacing the name "*Redmond*" with "*Hume*" wherever it appears in this article.

Election results for Waterford city, December 1918:

Captain William Redmond DSO 4915 votes, Dr. Vincent White 4431 votes. By-election figures for March 1918, same two candidates: Redmond 1242, White 764.

Results for other elections of the period can be found at www.electionsireland.org

A Waterford seat was held by the Redmonds until 1952.

Pat Muldowney

The 'Cork Free Press' In The Context Of The Parnell Split, The Restructuring Of Ireland, 1890-1910, by *Brendan Clifford*. Aftermath of the Irish Big Bang: Redmondism; Fenians; Clericalism; The Land War; Russellites; Land & Labour League, and All-For-Ireland League-an Irish pluralist political development, originating in County Cork. 168pp. €15, £12

The Graves At Kilmorna: a story of '67 by *Canon Sheehan*. Appendix of extracts from

Redmondism continued

them for 50 years.

The Redmondites have a record of mob violence in politics. If Sinn Féin had conducted itself like that we would never hear the end of it. On that basis alone, and leaving aside other evidence, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Sinn Féin standards of democratic practice were on a higher level than the Redmondites.

SOME DESCRIPTIONS OF REDMONDITE VIOLENCE

The recent books by Dermot Meleady and Chris Dooley skate gingerly around the issue of Redmondite political violence, frequently mentioning "*scuffles between opposing factions*", but not explaining (for instance) that de Valera supporters were fired on in the 1917 East Clare by-election.

Here is a sample by Meleady (*Redmond the Parnellite*, page 121):

"Redmond's attitude to political violence was consistent throughout his career. On the one hand, he would always maintain, inside and outside the House of Commons, that the Irish nation had a sovereign right to use physical force to win and defend its freedom. On the other, any scenario in which such a situation might materialise was to him a construct of fantasy, at least as long as the nationalist population remained unarmed.... There was enough of the folk memory of '98 in his county to urge extreme caution in contemplating a rebellion by an unarmed people. But though advances in military technology had made a repetition impossible, the insurrections of the past could and should be respected and praised. Redmond looked on these, as did most nationalists, through the prism of the nineteenth century romantic cult of battlefield honour, courage and self-sacrifice. The other type of violence, that of the dynamiters, or that which went on in the actual Ireland of his day, the violence of the Moonlighters who assassinated landlords on lonely country roads, fired into the houses of tenants who had taken farms of those evicted, or occasionally shot and killed policemen, fell into the category of crime, was the action of 'desperate men', and was to be severely condemned, even if it resulted from great provocation. The possibility that Moonlighter-type acts would one day be harnessed to political objectives, as in the 'guerrilla days' of the 1920s, was probably beyond his powers of imagining."

To put this in context here are a few extracts from Nicholas Whittle's 1956 *Witness Statement*, which give a flavour of his comprehensive description of the

March and December 1918 elections in Waterford city. Because Sinn Féin appeared to be the party exclusively of the poor people, Whittle, as Sinn Féin Director of Elections, asked for election workers of higher social standing—teachers etc. from areas of uncontested seats—to come to Waterford for the campaign. In the event, he was sent Volunteers (IRA men) from neighbouring Counties to fend off Redmondite aggression. But these were outnumbered and outmanoeuvred by the Redmondites and RIC, and had to be skilfully extricated by de Valera.

"During this bye-election of March, 1918, the six or seven of us on the election staff were busy one night at routine election work in the election offices at Colbeck Street, Waterford. All Republican supporters were out attending a monster public meeting at the Market House on the Quay, where de Valera was the principal speaker. The only others in the building with us were two armed Volunteers who were kept on duty day and night from the time the position started to become acute. About 10.30 p.m. on this night, a procession accompanied by bands from a Redmondite public meeting, came along the street outside. Our first knowledge that they were not our party became evident when a brick crashed the window and landed on the office table. Dan McCarthy of Dublin immediately ordered all present to stand with backs to the wall between the windows. We did so and witnessed, amidst the noise of crashing glass, a shower of bricks and stones flying into the room, causing a bad mess to be made of all the clerical work which lay on the table. The barrage lasted for some minutes. Suddenly our two armed guards came downstairs and stood at the door. One of them called out to Seán Milroy, telling him that the mob were lifting a man up on their shoulders with a lighted torch in his hand and that an attempt was being made to set fire to the National Flag hanging from the upper window. "Will we fire over their heads, Seán?", asked the armed Volunteer. (Both men had drawn their revolvers at the time.) Seán Milroy replied, "Don't fire! The orders from G.H.Q. are absolute that no arms be used". I was the only Waterford born man in the group that night and I shall always remember the sense of shame I felt as the bands outside continued playing while the flag, so closely linked with Waterford born Thomas Francis Meagher, was being publicly burned.

...

We went into the Volunteer Hall. About twenty Volunteers were lying on straw there, some of them bleeding from strokes of sticks and stones and two or three wounded by gunfire. Some of the ex British soldier element amongst the mob had revolvers, and a rifle was used from the window of a house on the opposite

side to the Volunteer Hall.

...

It was at this juncture that over one hundred armed R.I.C. men, carrying rifles and fixed bayonets, sealed off the four streets leading to Thomas Street. Our position then was that we were virtual prisoners of the R.I.C. with a howling mob behind them at each street entrance."

Pat McCarthy's book describes how the Sinn Féin candidate Dr. Vincent White was attacked by the Redmondites when he attempted to cast his vote. After receiving treatment he finally managed to vote under Volunteer and RIC escort.

In fiction, *The Graves at Kilmorna* by Canon Sheehan describes an old Fenian who, disgusted by the venality of the Redmondite party, provides public support for an opposition candidate, and is mortally injured by a Redmondite mob. The motivation and methods of Redmondism, sanitised by its present-day protagonists, were no secret at the time. At the high point of his Home Rule campaign Redmond was prevented from attending a meeting in Dublin because of frantic swarms of place-seekers anticipating cushy jobs in the new regime.

Nixie Whittle was puzzled by the phenomenon of Fenian adherence to Redmondism:

"As Director of Elections both in the bye-election of March, 1918, and the General Election of December in the same year, I formed the opinion that, outside of the ex British soldier fraternity and the Ballybricken pig dealers, the bulk of the people who were supporting Redmond did so in a feeling of loyalty to a cause. The following is an example of what I mean to convey.

A canvasser of ours, who was interviewing voters in the Holy Ghost hospital, Waterford, a charitable institution for the aged, brought back to me his marked register of voters. He pointed out, in particular, the name of one old man on the register. "That man", the canvasser said, "I never saw before. He was about eighty years old and had a fine face. I remarked to him, when he told me he was voting for Captain Redmond, 'Do you know, judging by your appearance, I would say you were a member of the Fenians. You must often have heard in your boyhood days that the Fenians were drilling some place near you'." "As I spoke", remarked the canvasser, "the old man took a handkerchief from his pocket and commenced to weep. Through his tears, he murmured to me,

'I always stood by John Redmond, boy, and I must stand by his son'."

This turn of mind illustrates well the
continued on page 24

Redmondism continued

the Trade Unionist Davitt. (According to Pat McCarthy in *The Irish Revolution 1912 -23 Waterford* (2015), Redmond successfully defended members of the Pig Buyers Association for violent conduct in an 1893 strike.)

Davitt came to Waterford in January 1892 to make peace, with a proposal to leave the seat to Redmond, uncontested. After being beaten up by a Redmondite mob at the instigation of the Pig Buyers, Davitt decided to contest the seat himself. The clergy supported him, and they too were physically attacked.

Who were the good guys, and who were the bad guys? The Fenians are linked with secular anti-clerical liberal-republicans. In France at that time the traditional Catholic monarchist right was in pitched battle with the enlightened modern republican-liberal left. In Germany there was a *Kulturkampf* by the new state to bring the Catholic Church under control in order to establish a united German nation.

In Waterford, do we shout for the Fenians (and Redmond) against the Bishops (and Davitt)? It is fairly clear which side espoused unconstitutional violence. The Fenians, in their origins, were "*anti-constitutional*" by definition and by intent. There is and was no debate or disagreement about what they stood for. They had rallied to Parnell's side when, at their low point in the 1880s, he had spoken up for them when nobody else would.

REDMOND, FENIANS, AND UNIONISTS

Splits in physical force Republicanism have produced strange bedfellows. The Official IRA became allies of the Blue-shirts. Dissident Republican Mairia Cahill was made a Labour Party nominee to the Irish Senate.

The Edinburgh *Evening News*, commenting on the Waterford by-election, said:

"It was felt that if Parnellism could not win in the centre of Fenianism it was a hopeless task. Those who remember the colossal demonstration in the South of Ireland last summer in honour of Daly who had suffered for the cause of Fenianism, felt no doubt but the hillside men would strain every nerve to be revenged on Michael Davitt for his desertion from the ranks of the physical force men."

(Fenian prisoner John Daly was uncle of Kathleen Clarke whose husband Tom,

and brother Ned Daly, were executed in 1916.)

In the 1892 Waterford By-election Redmond got 1775 votes, Davitt 1229.

Thus Parnellism was salvaged at the eleventh hour, and Redmond was launched into supremacy with the support of the poor people of the back streets of Ballybricken. And, when the rest of nationalist Ireland had moved on, Ballybricken stood fast by Redmondism in 1918. Twice in 1918.

In his post-Election speech (1892), Davitt said he "*would have rather lost the fight than win it as Mr. Redmond had done, by Toryism and terrorism*". This touches on another aspect of Redmondism — the support it obtained from well-heeled and well-connected Protestant Unionists who, as business people depending on the community, could no longer afford to flaunt explicit loyalism as they might have done 50 years earlier.

In Waterford, Redmond's victory came, not just from noisy, smelly Ballybricken (which had few votes), but from posh suburban Newtown where the Tories lived. These could provide lots of money for lots of free booze; and the Catholic nationalist pig buyers, themselves a smallish group of 150 or so Ballybricken families, could inflame a mob into action against political opponents.

Despite the rhetoric, some aspects of Parnellism/Redmondism were not alien to Unionism. Parnell received financial support from the Imperialist Cecil Rhodes. Redmond's fixed idea of federation within the Empire is what Rhodes was promoting for the British colonies; a policy which looked particularly promising when, after Boer defeat, it was adopted by Botha for South Africa.

The somewhat counter-intuitive network of Parnellite/Redmondite support and alliances makes sense when looked at from different perspectives.

REDMONDITE PATTERN OF VIOLENCE

There is a consistent pattern of Redmondite political violence through to 1918. The party's 1909 National Convention in Dublin's Mansion House is called the Baton Convention because Joe Devlin's Hibernian goons from Belfast were paid ten shillings and provided with batons to silence opponents. Told to listen out for the "*Cork accent*", they targeted William O'Brien's contingent of Cork supporters. The party split again, giving rise to the All-for-Ireland League which generally

outpolled the Redmondites in the Munster region.

Devlin and his Belfast hard men also turned out for the 1918 Elections in Waterford.

Meleady's second book on Redmond quotes historian Pádraig Yeates as saying that Redmond was incapable of confronting (the violence of) his own party machine in Ulster. Meleady and Yeates should have also included Leinster, Munster and Connacht.

Forty people were hospitalised when Maud Gonne challenged the Party at a meeting about welcoming the King's visit. Redmond said, "*They got an unmerciful drubbing*", and —

"the disturbance of this meeting might have been easily and summarily dealt with, were it not that it was led by a lady, against whom we could not put in force any of the rough and ready methods which in other circumstances would be used to other disturbers."

In fact suffragettes were another target for the Redmondites, and there are many instances of women getting beaten up. In the March 1918 By-election in Waterford an attempt was made to burn down the Newtown home of Quaker suffragist and Cumann na mBan member Rosamund Jacob. (These Jacobs were related to the Dublin biscuit makers.)

When Eoin MacNeill's National Volunteers balked at a Redmondite takeover of its leadership, Redmond threatened to form his own militia. When the constitutionalist finally got control, he sent Tom Kettle (former MP and now a member of the governing body of the Irish Volunteers) to Belgium to illegally buy arms.

A few months earlier Kettle passed through Larne the day after the UVF arms landing there. Horrified at the perils which confronted the Catholic population he wrote to the *Freeman's Journal*:

"No Nationalist in Ulster can, after last night, hold his property, his civil liberties, or even his life safe... Forthwith every self-respecting man [in Ireland] should dip his hand into his pocket to provide himself and his poorer fellow with a modern rifle."

Yet present-day admirers of Redmond's and John Hume's constitutionalism are super-critical of the arming of the northern Catholics in 1969, whose submissiveness was finally exhausted after the UVF and their successors had exercised power over

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Redmondism continued

record of Redmond. As we peruse some of the circumstances of Redmond's political practice let us ask ourselves, "*What would John Hume have said, what would he have done?*"

As our pre-eminent non-violent constitutional democrat, what is Redmond's record of democratic electoral practice? What is his record on political violence?

And who on earth were the BallyRedmondismbricken Pig Buyers? If it is true to say that Redmond is the source of contemporary democratic constitutional politics in Ireland, then surely it is time to pay tribute to the ultimate source---the mysterious and forgotten group of men who put this paragon into power and kept him there.

EARLY DAYS OF REDMOND

Redmond was born in 1856 to a family prominent in Wexford banking and politics. He dropped out of legal studies in Trinity College Dublin and lived off income from rents, which he supplemented by working as a clerk at the House of Commons, and by doing some journalism. During this period Michael Davitt, Tom Clarke, and other Fenians were serving some very hard prison time.

In January 1881 Redmond became MP for New Ross in County Wexford. 'Elected' unopposed, he was not voted into this position. In the 1885 General Election he became MP for North Wexford. According to Dermot Meleady, in *Redmond: the Parnellite* (2008), Redmond "*denounced the loyal classes for forcing a contest on the constituency by putting up a candidate, Viscount Stopford, to oppose him*". So Redmond, the constitutional democrat, would have preferred to obtain his North Wexford seat by appointment, not voting.

(What "*loyal classes*"? In 1612–13 there was a plantation of English Protestant settlers in that area. Some Palatines were settled around Gorey in 1709. The 12th century settlers were from the Bristol area, who were located in the south east Wexford baronies of Forth and Bargo, rejected the English State Reformation and were absorbed into the general population, whilst retaining their distinct identity and language until the mid-19th century.)

There is no mention in the books of Dermot Meleady (*Redmond the Parnellite* (2008)), John Redmond *the National Leader* (2014)) or Chris Dooley (*Redmond: A Life Undone*, (2015)) of any electoral contest

in North Wexford in the General Election of 1886, so presumably Redmond was returned unopposed.

Though active, Redmond was not in the first ranks of the Irish Nationalist Party. This was to change after the Parnell Split of 1890. Parnell and his supporters were increasingly marginalised in a series of By-election defeats, in which the bitter North Kilkenny By-election set a pattern which was replicated over the next three decades.

Parnell had lost the support of the Catholic hierarchy, most of their clergy, most of his parliamentary colleagues, most of his party, and most of the public. To compensate, Parnell made a move towards elements outside of the mainstream—the Fenians and industrial workers in the cities.

Was this sincere? Former Lancashire Trade Unionist, Fenian prisoner and Land League founder Michael Davitt declared that it was a deceptive ploy.

FALL OF PARNELL AND RISE OF REDMOND

What is generally remembered about the North Kilkenny By-election (22 December 1890) is that the tragic hero Parnell was betrayed by his own party, denounced by a bigoted Catholic clergy and their spineless flock, had quicklime thrown in his eyes, and died soon after.

Parnell had dismissed his Party team in North Kilkenny and brought in Fenian allies instead. The campaign was violent. Parnell himself had already personally smashed his way into a party newspaper office in order to seize it from the party majority. Prominent party members opposed to Parnell had to have police protection from Parnellite mobs. Campaigning against Parnell, Land League founder Michael Davitt was beaten up.

A constant refrain in elections reports over the next decade or so was the beatings received by the one-armed Davitt—the former Mayo workhouse child pauper, the prison-weakened land reformer with a Lancashire accent.

What about the attack on Parnell himself? Parnell is alleged to have said that a "*preparation of lime*" was thrown at him. According to Parnellite James Joyce, "*'Twas Irish humour, wet and dry./ Flung quicklime into Parnell's eye.*" So a "*preparation of lime*" becomes "*lime*", then "*quicklime*". (A "*preparation of lime*" could be a solution of lime in water. Whitewash, in other words.)

Over the next few days Parnell took to

wrapping his face in increasingly bizarre bandaging. If he had lime thrown at him, it would look and feel like a handful of flour. Quite harmless. If some of it got in your eye it might cause a little irritation for a little while.

Quicklime, on the other hand, is unslaked lime. It's the stuff used to consume the bodies of executed criminals. Throwing quicklime at somebody is like an acid attack. Since quicklime powder can't be held in the hand, throwing it at somebody requires a bit of planning and preparation. If you received it in the face (never mind the eye) you would probably have to be hospitalised, and you are not likely to do any more work in any election campaigns for six months or so.

Parnellism seemed to go into irreversible decline, defeated in By-elections in North Sligo 2nd April 1891 and Carlow 7th July 1891. When Parnell died in 1891, Redmond gave up his North Wexford seat to contest the By-election for Parnell's Cork City seat. The anti-Parnellite newspaper, *National Press*, was bombed. A week before voting 108 people were hospitalised. Davitt came to Cork to try to calm the situation. Going by other such elections it can be assumed he was beaten up for his pains. John Dillon and William O'Brien (anti-Parnellites) denounced the "*conspiracy of violent intimidation and of murder*".

In a fourth Parnellite defeat in a row, Redmond lost by 3,669 votes to 2,157, with 1,161 votes going to a Tory candidate.

Both sides campaigned for the release of Fenian prisoners of the 1880s dynamite campaign, in which military locations were bombed, and also civilian sites such as tube stations. Presumably there were no telephones then, so no prior warnings? More ISIS than Provisional IRA? (This is not to make moral judgement on either of those groups. The moral problem arises for those who extol Redmond as a virtual pacifist.)

William O'Brien was scathing about "*Redmond and his party [seeking] to make some political capital out of the sufferings of these poor men.*"

The next By-election (January 1892) was caused by the death of a Parnellite MP in Waterford city. The Parnellites, including the Ballybricken Pig Buyers, had helped a recent strike by bacon workers in the city, and Redmond capitalised on this as the rebuttal of the scepticism of

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Redmondism and Political Violence

The Pig Buyers of Ballybricken: Founders of Irish Democracy?

As Ireland asserted itself in the period 1900 to 1920, there was a contest between those who adhered to democratic standards in politics and those who used violent methods to impose their point of view on others.

There was the initially small configuration of Arthur Griffith's Sinn Féin party which, along with a tiny revolutionary Republican grouping, opposed Irish involvement in the system of government of Ireland by officials in Dublin who were appointed by the British Government of the day.

On the other hand there was great political movement led by John Redmond, said to be in the constitutional tradition of O'Connell, Butt, and Parnell; stretching through the 19th century into the 20th; when it was replaced by a movement which rejected the particular parliamentary methods of Redmond.

So: peaceful, democratic, constitutional methods were overcome and displaced by men of violence; until, after hard-fought struggles in the 1920s, '30s and '40s, democracy was restored; with a further outbreak of violence through the 1970s and '80s which was finally extinguished by the non-violent, constitutional methods of John Hume and others in the tradition of Redmond, Parnell and O'Connell.

In the end Irish political violence was gradually overcome and Redmondian democratic parliamentarism vindicated.

That's one way to look at it.

But, if you look a bit closer at what actually happened in the course of Irish politics during 1890–1918, the perception outlined above is turned on its head.

John Edward Redmond died in March 1918. Because of the collapse of his reputation he could not have a public funeral in Dublin, and instead he was taken to Wexford town to be buried in the Redmond family vault.

Here his coffin was carried, not by relatives, or by MPs of the Irish Party which he led for nearly thirty years, but by stalwarts of the Ballybricken Pig Buyers Association from Waterford city. The crucial part played by the Pig Buyers in Redmond's career has been air-brushed out.

THE PIG BUYERS AND THE RISE OF REDMOND

Nicholas ("Nixie") Whittle was a Volunteer of the East Waterford IRA, wounded three times in the Pickardstown Ambush near Tramore. Prior to that he was Sinn Féin Director of Elections in the Waterford City By-election caused by Redmond's death in 1918, and in the General Election of the following December, Sinn Féin lost both times after enjoying a run of By-election successes in the previous year. At one point it looked like Redmondism could turn the tide.

The Waterford city seat was held by Redmond's son, Captain William ("Billie") Archer Redmond DSO who campaigned in British Army uniform, wearing a black armband for his father who had occupied the seat for 27 years.

In his 1955 *Witness Statement* (avail-

able online) Whittle described both of these election campaigns in detail, including the violence instigated and perpetrated on Captain Redmond's behalf by the Ballybricken Pig Buyers. John Redmond won this seat in 1892 in a similarly violent By-election campaign against Michael Davitt, and he held the seat until his death in 1918.

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In the 1892 By-election, the previously relatively unknown Redmond salvaged the Parnellite remnant after a string of defeats, establishing himself as Parnell's political heir by means of the rough methods of the Ballybricken Pig Buyers. And, when Redmond died, the Pig Buyers ensured that Redmondism was not extinguished, but held on in one constituency of the future Irish Free State. The Redmond family held a seat in Waterford until 1952.

These days John Redmond is celebrated as Ireland's lost leader, the founder of Irish democracy, the constitutional heir of Daniel O'Connell and Charles Stewart Parnell, temporarily side-lined by men of violence who spurned Redmond's constitutional path of acquiring political power by peaceful, non-violent means.

These days we know of O'Connell and Parnell (and of course Redmond) only from books. But John Hume is still alive, and is a celebrated practitioner of constitutional, non-violent, peaceful, democratic politics in a troubled Irish context.

Generally speaking, present-day Redmondites are not prepared to accept the "democratic, constitutional" credentials of the independence movement. If, for the sake of argument, we accept these neo-Redmondite terms of reference and leave Republicanism out of the reckoning as comparator, it is not unreasonable to posit John Hume's political history for comparison purposes in examining the

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