

# IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

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## Border Poll ?

Is the situation ripe for a Border Poll? And, if it is, what question should be put?

The Constitutional commitment of the Irish state to political unity was maintained from the time the Constitution was adopted in 1937 until it was deleted by referendum in 1998. It was maintained all through the war between the Northern Nationalist community and the British state, from 1970 to 1998.

The Constitutional commitment to political unification of the island was not conditional on agreement by a majority in the Six Counties to it, still less on an agreement by the dissenting Ulster Protestant community. The sovereignty claim was based on the assertion that the Protestants in the North were an integral part of the Irish nation no less than the Catholics and that they could have no right on the basis of mere religious bigotry to stand outside the state that their nation was forming.

It was clarified by a High Court hearing in 1974, when the war in the North was well under way, that the Constitutional assertion of sovereignty over the Six Counties still stood, that the British regime there was illegitimate, and that, though it was not the policy of the Government in being to act to enforce the sovereignty claim, that policy did not prejudice the right of any future Government to enforce it. This was said in the Government's Defence Pleading, in the action brought by Kevin Boland asserting that the Government's signature to the Sunningdale Agreement was in breach of the Constitution.

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## Remember, Remember, The Ninth Of November!

This is the season when the City of London annually celebrates in style the inauguration of its new Lord Mayor. It has done so for many centuries, and pantomimes have instilled the legend of the thrice elected Dick Whittington in the minds of millions. I'm sure many hundreds of thousands of babies (including my Grandson) first saw the light in the Hospital named after him. It has long been the practice for The First Lord of The Treasury (aka The Prime Minister) to give a Keynote Speech at the Lord Mayor's Inaugural Dinner in the Mansion House, but Boris Johnson was probably otherwise occupied this year.

So I'll turn to the Ninth of November 1920 when the speech was given by David Lloyd George. The then Prime Minister held the unique distinction of being found *guilty of murder* by the Jury of an Inquest in the City of Cork. Not just the murder of any

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## November Brexit Summary

## Final Outcome Hinges on UK Election

At present Brexit is on hold pending a UK General Election the result of which will be known in the days following polling day, Thursday 12th December. This article will describe developments since correspondence issued from the UK Government to the EU in late October, ending with the current state of play in the Election campaign. A final section

summarising pertinent commentaries concludes with the words of a Fine Gael researcher for the Christian Democrat-orientated European Peoples Party, encouraging the EU to follow the Anglo Saxon economic model.

### DEVELOPMENTS

Following the dispatch on October 9th

of three letters to the EU regarding a further extension of the negotiations, the European Council decided on October 30th to grant an extension until 31st January 2020. The request for an extension, in line with the Benn Act, was sent on an unsigned photocopy while an accompanying letter from Boris Johnson as Prime Minister expressed opposition to further delay.

On October 22nd the Johnson Government succeeded in passing the *EU Withdrawal Bill* to Second Reading stage,

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and other items  
have been held over to the January 2020 issue

And so the sovereignty claim remained in being for a further 24 years, until the Provisional IRA made a provisional settlement with the British Government on a 'two nations' rearrangement of the way the Six Counties were governed.

The Dublin Government, with the permission of the IRA, then called a referendum to repeal the sovereignty clause of the Constitution.

That is how it was actually experienced, though it was dressed up diplomatically to appear to be something else, and the actual terms of the Good Friday Agreement do not seem to have been taken on board by the Dublin Government which signed it, or any subsequent Government. The crucial thing about it was that devolved government under majority rule was abolished and an egalitarian apartheid system was put in its place, based on a recognition that there was not in fact a Northern electorate constituting a body politic, but two national electorates, each with its own parties.

The dominant parties in the North at the time were the Ulster Unionist Party and the SDLP, led by David Trimble and Seamus Mallon. Neither of them was willing to see the Agreement for what it was and operate it. They overloaded it with reservations and wishful thinking's. It was not until they were displaced by Dr. Paisley and the Chief of Staff of the IRA, Martin McGuinness, that the Agreement was made to work.

Neither of the Governments ever presented it to its public for what it was. Bertie Aherne to this day actively dissimulates it. It came as a shock to hear the truth of it blurted out on BBC's *Question Time* by an American black writer, Bonnie Greer, who said the Good Friday Agreement was a "Truce".

With regard to a carefully structured Truce that has taken the place of a war, and is "a continuation of the war by other means", the prudent thing to do is let sleeping dogs lie. But it was probably

inevitable that the decision of the British electorate to leave the EU should lead to the sleeping dogs being poked at.

The Constitutional claim on the North was repealed in 1998 but was not replaced by any definite view of what Northern Ireland was. The view that it was a piece of the Irish national territory illegitimately held by Imperialist Britain was dropped and it was left at that.

But what is called "*The Troubles*" by the squeamish did not arise from Partition. It arose from the Northern Ireland system by which Westminster enacted Partition. Northern Ireland was not governed within the British political system, but neither was it in any substantial sense a state separate from the British state. It was an undemocratically-governed part of the British state, and was given a form of government that could only function by the conflict of 'Parties' which were in fact all-class communities.

The party-system by which the state was governed excluded the Six Counties from its sphere of operation. Communities denominated by religion filled the vacuum left by the withdrawal of the parties of the British state. And Dublin Governments, while condemning the fact of Partition, approved of the exclusion of the Six Counties from the democratic system of the British state. They always lobbied strongly at Westminster against any move to bring the North within the democracy of the state. In practice, therefore, they preferred the system of local communal aggravation denominated by religion. And that was the system which fuelled the War.

The state was governed by the Tory and Socialist parties. There were plenty of Tories and Socialists in the Six Counties, but they could only be cerebral Tories and Socialists. They were excluded from the Tory and Socialist parties.

The danger of British politics in the Six County region of the British state was that it would erode the strict communal division which oriented the Catholic community on Dublin.

One of the difficulties about political unification is that the party-system of the Republic is quite specific to it and there are no latent Protestant Fine Gaelers or Fianna Failers in the North who could see themselves in it.

Party organisation capable of maintaining a state by overcoming the anarchy that is implicit in democracy is a vital element in modern political life around the world and is one of the most difficult things to achieve. Michael

McDowell, of the erstwhile Progressive Democrats, an eminent barrister and former Attorney-General, has written many things about the North over the decades but has never come to terms with this aspect of it.

We recall his sensible attitude towards the burning of the British Embassy in Dublin in 1972 in response to the Bloody Sunday massacre. It served as a necessary release of popular anger which did minimum political damage. It contrasted strongly with the hysterical view of Dermot Keogh (then on the *Irish Press*, later a domineering Professor in Cork University), who saw it as marking the emergence of a Fascism that would take over the state. (A few years earlier, in August 1969, Ambassador Sir Andrew Gilchrist lightheartedly wrote of the prospect of the Dublin Embassy being burned: “if I were a fire insurance company I would not like to have the British Embassy on my books. (Fortunately, though highly inflammable, it isn’t ours...”, see Thomas Hennessy, *The Origin Of The Troubles*, p246.)

McDowell had an article about unification in the *Irish Times* (Nov. 20) on the matter of holding a referendum. The article is entitled, “*Groundwork For Any Form Of Irish Unity Has To Be Laid North And South*”. He is against a referendum until the groundwork is laid. Without a groundwork laid in advance a vote would be for “*a vague concept*”. He says that “*The UK Brexit referendum showed us how futile it is to vote for concepts in total ignorance of the concrete reality that flows from such concepts...*”

Unfortunately the consequences of that kind of decision cannot be known in advance of the decision being made.

Britain launched total war on Germany in 1914, amidst great popular approval, having carefully made plans for it over at least a decade. The plans went awry very quickly. But the will to war was there, and Britain persisted until the enemy was crushed. If it could have known in advance what the consequences would be—the undermining of the Empire under the appearance of extending and strengthening it, the wrecking of such European order as there had been in 1913, the launch of Communism, and the crumbling of the great Liberal Party—it would probably not have made war on Germany, or at least not that kind of war.

But, after the war, Britain was not going to say that it made a wrong

## Anti-Semitism in *The Times* ! ?

On 1st September 1920, the Bolsheviks convened the famous Congress of the Peoples of the East at Baku, broadcasting the message that the Soviet State stood with the world’s oppressed against Western Imperialism. The largest delegation to it came to the capital of Soviet Azerbaijan from Turkey. Enver Pasha was a prominent guest. According to Bolshevik sources, nearly 2,000 delegates attended, representing a wide range of Asian countries and movements. There was a much greater attendance in Baku than had attended the first All-Russian Congress of Moslems in November 1918. In his opening address, Zinoviev, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, launched an appeal to the peoples of the Tsarist Empire in Central Asia and the Caucasus, to join the Russian revolution and wage a jihad against British Imperialism.

Many in Britain saw the Baku Congress as another manifestation of the International Jewish conspiracy. First, the Jews had supported the Germans and Ottomans and now they were backing the Bolsheviks in their efforts to set the Moslem world ablaze against British India! *The Times* in its editorial, ‘*Red Flag in the East*’, for instance, put strong emphasis on the Jewish origins of the Bolshevik leaders in Baku:

“Apfelbaum (Zinoviev) is a Jew, like his associate Bela Kun, or Cohen, from Budapest, who was also at Baku; and of all the strange things that have happened in the last few years, none has been stranger than this spectacle of two Jews, one a convicted pickpocket, summoning the world of Islam to a new Jihad.”

*The Times* analysis followed that coming from the British Foreign Office. Eyre Crowe had stated at the close of the War that “*the heart and soul of all revolutionary and terroristic movements have invariably been the Jews, the Bolsheviks and the Turkish Committee of Union and Progress.*” This was a reference to the theory emanating within British diplomatic circles before the War that the Young Turks were “*crypto-Jews.*” Other officials claimed that there had never “*been a dividing line between the CUP and bolshevism*” and “*the CUP-Jew-German-Bolshevik combination*” was behind “*the Pan-Islamic offensive of Bolshevism throughout the East, primarily directed against Great Britain.*”

Pat Walsh

decision in making war, or in conducting it as it did. It still celebrates that war as an exercise of will. And *will* remains important in Britain. Cost-accounting is no substitute for it. Man does not live by bread alone. Where there is no vision the people perish. All the old clichés still have currency in England.

Brexit was not a vote for a concept. “*Concept*” is a business term. It was a decision to do something: restore British freedom of action in the world. The cases for and against doing it were put with the usual extravagance. The electorate decided to do it, to find out how in the doing of it, and to endure whatever adverse consequences there might be.

There was a time when such a thing could be understood in Ireland. But that time seems to have passed. What seems to exist now is the structure of a State which was constructed and made to work by the will of earlier generations. Its only semblance of a purpose is cost accounting.

National purpose has seeped away.

Sinn Fein/IRA, representing Northern Nationalism, fought a war. Without the actual support of the Nationalist community, it could not have sustained a war. Southern Governments condemned the war as a murder campaign, and pictured the IRA as a rogue element within a hostile Nationalist community. Sinn Fein came South and made great gains on the strength of being a party that had been engaged in the successful conduct of a war. It was poised to take over from Fianna Fail, which was denying its own heritage. It threw away the opportunity and went in for the trivial politics of fashionable causes. Its new leader has to declare of herself that she is a Fenian, lest it be thought that she wasn’t. She does not insist that ‘The Troubles’ were a war and that its victims were war casualties. On the *Pat Kenny Show* (Newstalk, 22.11.19), she accepted his characterisations of killings as *murders*



and therefore would not go down “*the rabbit hole*” of discussing them.

If Dublin treated the “*Troubles*” as what they were—a war in which Britain deployed an army of 26,000—and would not discuss them on any other terms, Britain would respond. It came close to closing the matter with an ‘Act of Oblivion’ in 1998, but Dublin, out of an incongruous sense of virtue, would not have it so—possibly thinking it would do it some good with the Unionist community.

The gist of McDowell’s article is as follows:

“The people of the Republic will not vote for any form of Irish unity in which the unionist and loyalist people of the North are dragged against their wishes into an all-Ireland republic by an *Anschluss* plebiscite. This would be a recipe for repeating the Troubles or even civil war...

“What might be very worthwhile is for a consensus to emerge among political parties in the Republic that the form of unity to which we aspire is a confederal rather than a unitary state...

“If that consensus emerged south of the Border, it could feed into a transformation of attitudes north of the Border—and an end to the unionist fear of absorption into an alien state.”

In a Confederal Ireland “*the need for accommodating the British identity of unionists would have tangible meaning. The North could even retain a Canadian-type link to the crown...*”

The *Anschluss* reference is absurd. Austria had sought unity with democratic Germany long before 1938 but Britain and France had forbidden it under the Versailles system. And in 1938 there was no resistance by fascist Austria to unification with fascist Germany.

Stormont Government is clearly dispensable in the arrangements of the British state and, even if it was restored, it would not be constitutionally equivalent to the Dublin Government. The latter is the Government of a state, the former isn’t and never was.

Unless the state was remade comprehensively on the lines advocated by Rory O’Brady (devolution to Four Provinces), there could be no prospect of the Ulster Protestant community just fitting into it.

And what is the community in question? If it is Unionist, it cannot be accommodated outside the British state. Its identity as Unionist is that it identifies

with and is part of the British state in a range of matters, though excluded from its political life.

McDowell says that Sinn Fein—

“are not emotionally committed to powersharing or reconciliation. Their political strategy thrives on crisis and impasse—as long as they are in the thick of it. And that lack of emotional commitment to powersharing and reconciliation is more than matched in the ranks of the DUP. We need reconciliation and normality based on mutual respect and understanding. We also need prosperity”

Polarisation is integral to democratic politics, even to pseudo-democratic politics, which is the only possible kind in the undemocratically-governed region of the British state.

Reconciliation is a will-o’-the-wisp, a Jack O Lantern. That is how we treated

it fifty years ago.

Power-sharing failed long ago. Power-dividing worked for a while with McGuinness and Paisley, and it the only thing that has ever worked.

Normality in the relevant sense is not based on detached feelings, but on the feelings generated by the political routines of a functional state.

The starting point for Southern Nationalists in this matter is to ask the question they have never asked: *What is Northern Ireland?* And take due account of the evolution of the Ulster Plantation, And take due account of the evolution of the Ulster Plantation, and of British handling of the Six Counties as the major cause of the War, and of whether there now exists in the southern body politic a sufficient remnant of national will to enable any decision to be made and carried through.

## Remember continued

citizen, but of its First Citizen, Lord Mayor Tomas MacCurtain, in March of that year. Inquests were then suppressed by the British and Inquiries taken over by their military, the forces engaged in a murder campaign. Not only were Crown Forces engaged in murder but in the wholesale destruction of homes and businesses, especially Co-operative Creameries, which had brought prosperity and comfort to the first generation of the indigenous aboriginal workers to own their own farms after the confiscations of centuries.

During the Great War British Recruiting Posters in Ireland depicted prosperous and comfortable farms and urged farmers' sons to enlist under the Union Jack to keep Germans from arson, rape and pillage there. The great organizer of the Co-Operatives was the Unionist Sir Horace Plunkett, and he publicly protested at the lawless rampage of the Crown Forces.

Terence MacSwiney succeeded the murdered Tomas MacCurtain as Lord Mayor of Cork, and had died after a long Hunger Strike in London's Brixton Prison a fortnight before the Lord Mayor of London's Banquet. Many Mayors of London Boroughs, amongst them Clement Attlee, marched at his funeral. Lloyd George in his speech praised the conduct of the Crown Forces, sneered at Sir Horace Plunkett, “*who didn't even speak for his own Creameries*”, and boasted that his nocturnal assassination gangs had “*murder by the throat*”. Perhaps I should explain that neither Lloyd George nor his Ministerial colleagues were found by the Inquests to have held the gun which killed MacCurtain, but were guilty as the prime movers in the crime. Lloyd George has the reputation amongst British writers of being a physical coward. Churchill was found guilty of murder by the jury. But he was never a physical coward.

**Donal Kennedy**

## The Forgotten Remembrance

November Remembrance season is over for another year. Readers may not have noticed the rather inconspicuous ceremonial which took place on Sunday, November 17th, hidden away in the serene Wicklow mountains.

There were about 150 present at this, including the German Ambassador and some Embassy staff, a couple of German armed services personnel, some Irish Army

people with blue UN service caps, a couple of American armed services people, and three or four British Legionnaires---from Dublin by the sound of them.

The closing ceremony consisted of Addresses and wreath-laying in the German military graveyard. This is located in the quarry where the stone for the bleak and depressing [Glencree British military](#)

[barracks](#) was dug out after 1798, making an unsettling contrast between military grimness and ethereal natural beauty — a fitting location, perhaps, for the *Deutscher Soldatenfriedhof*. (Glencree was one of a string of such barracks, connected by a military road through the mountains, built to combat the surviving United Irish forces led by the formidable Michael Dwyer and fellow-Presbyterian Joseph Holt.)

A lone piper stood beside a Celtic Cross overlooking the quarry-graveyard, and played some kind of military salute from an elevation of about 50 metres in the heather above, followed a few bars from Sibelius with variations. (Both sounded under-rehearsed.)

But the choir in the preceding church service was excellent. The service was conducted in English, German and Irish, and was presided over by an African

Catholic priest in full liturgical bling, along with an ultra-plain, sombrely-clad, German Lutheran minister.

There were military costume types from Dublin in attendance, some with pointy helmets and curled-up moustaches, and women bustling about in expansive German military nurse outfits.

The event started with a "circle discussion" on Reconciliation. The Germans mostly talked about their "peaceful reunification" process in 1989-90. (How "peaceful" would all that have been without Afghanistan, Gorbachev, etc.?) An American army officer gave a speech which sounded like it might have been about American race relations or something. Hard to understand, he was a black guy from Mississippi or thereabouts, with strong ethnic-regional accent.

Amidst all this uplifting stuff, there

was some welcome relief from numbing blandness when a set-piece "poppy-scrap" broke out among the Irish in the audience, between British-army-connected individuals of the pro- and anti-Haig-Poppy persuasions:

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.*

Not a lot of Reconciliation there!

The Germans provided their remembrance emblem, little blue forget-me-not badges. Rather than chauvinist heroics, the overall tone was thoughtful compassion.

**Pat Muldowney**

**A Protest on 'Remembrance Sunday:  
John Sheehy, Somme Front, 1918.  
Buried in Ham British Cemetery,  
Muille-Villette, France.**

## **Commonwealth War Graves Commemoration In Dublin**

On 31st July 2014, to mark the centenary of the First World War, Britain's Prince Edward, the Duke of Kent, in his capacity as President of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, attended the dedication of the Cross of Sacrifice in Dublin's Glasnevin cemetery, which contains the graves of 200 of Britain's war dead. Out of respect for the dignity that should be accorded those dead, and their relatives who were present, I attended that ceremony in silence. At the close of the ceremony, I raised two placards in memory of the First World War dead, not least my maternal grandfather's first cousin, John Sheehy of Clonakilty, who perished on 15th February 1918 on a Somme front that had changed little in two years:

*Remember the dead buried here with  
sympathy and respect, but curse  
Britain's Imperialist War Lords who  
sent them to their deaths.*

*In memory of my cousin John Sheehy,  
sacrificed on the Somme Front in 1918,  
Cannon Fodder in Britain's Imperialist  
1914-1918 War*

**Manus O'Riordan**

See [HYPERLINK "http://ballingearyhs.com/journal2004/michael\\_o\\_leary.html"](http://ballingearyhs.com/journal2004/michael_o_leary.html) [http://ballingearyhs.com/journal2004/michael\\_o\\_leary.html](http://ballingearyhs.com/journal2004/michael_o_leary.html) for my views on the "Great" War, including the death of my maternal grandfather's first cousin John Sheehy, on an unchanging Somme front, on February 15, 1918.

## ORPHAN

For the BBC she stood up in a punt,  
around 1991 cursing Saddam Hussein  
as a runt.

On the waters of Shatt-al-Arab,  
scurrying arrogantly as the divine beetle  
scarab.

This privileged Englishwoman,  
to Imperial Britain and her allies summons  
all wrath on the head of Iraq,  
for the treatment of the Shia after their attack  
that was meant to split the nation.

Napalm caused an inhuman creation  
no doubt

but in her shout  
the barbarous beast  
ripped open the flesh of Iraq  
with its innards hacked  
until a million lay dead,  
then as Mesopotamia still bled

there came an orphan  
who wasn't an orphan,  
but stolen  
and his story swollen  
through the kindness of strangers  
who took him out of their deliberate  
danger.

One day, in 2019, physically healed and speaking  
Devon,  
it was back to mama as an adult,  
among the concrete blocks of instant heaven.

But what big cemeteries you have!  
Not to worry the cow still  
calves.

**Wilson John Haire**  
15.5.2019

# Brexit Summary

continued

but lost its proposal for an accelerated timetable for debating the Bill. This meant that the Bill could not be passed into law before the October 31st deadline.

Johnson's third attempt to call a General Election was defeated on October 28th, having failed to achieve the 434 votes (two-thirds majority) needed under the ludicrous terms of the Fixed-Term Parliaments Act (FTPA). Following that defeat, the Lib Dems proposed changing the FTPA to allow an Election to be called, a proposal that had Johnson's support.

By that stage the debate had shifted to the question of the date on which the Election should take place, with the Lib Dems pressing for 9th December when students would still be at University. As the Lib Dems and Scottish National Party had both moved from the position of preventing Johnson from dissolving Parliament, the Labour Party came under pressure to do the same: the unity of the anti-Government majority that had forced Johnson to remain in Government without the power to govern was well and truly broken. On the fourth attempt, Johnson succeeded in dissolving Parliament, setting December 12th as polling day.

## FARRAGE'S TACTICAL MOVE

A development that may have a decisive effect on the Election result was Nigel Farage's decision that the Brexit Party would not contest the 317 seats won by the Tories in 2017. This was reported on RTE television news by Sean Whelan on November 11th as having been caused by pressure from the financial backers of the Brexit Party. Farage's expressed rationale was that his party might split the pro-Brexit vote, allowing dozens of Lib Dem candidates to gain seats.

Farage said he had been reassured by a statement from Johnson that he would not assent to an extension of the transition beyond the end of 2020. He also welcomed an undertaking from Johnson that he would aim to achieve a "super Canada plus" trade deal without political alignment with the EU in the trade negotiations that are to follow the implementation of a Brexit deal. Regarding the Election campaign Farage said:

"We will concentrate our total effort into all the seats held by the Labour Party, who have completely broken their manifesto pledge in 2017 to respect the

result of the referendum, and we will be taking on the rest of the Remain parties." (Guardian, 11 November)

This was clearly an important move by Farage but it does not guarantee a Tory majority. An *Irish Times* editorial questioned whether the initiative would be decisive.

"A more far reaching move – one Farage has so far resisted but not ruled out – would be for the Brexit Party to withdraw from Labour-held constituencies in the midlands and north of England. That would turbo charge Johnson's push to seize Labour-held seats in areas that voted leave in 2016 – the most obvious route back to power for the Tories" (IT, November 12).

## BRITISH ELECTION CAMPAIGN

An interesting analysis from James Forsyth in the Tory *Spectator* magazine entitled, "*Remain's last stand: the collapse of the anti-Brexit campaign*", highlights some key issues in the Election campaign. He argues that, if the Remainers could organise themselves into a single political force, "*they would be almost unstoppable*". He goes on:

"But the Remain side has been unable to unite behind any one party or leader. This is a particular problem for them now that Boris Johnson is the Tory leader. He has largely succeeded in the mission for which he was elected: to make the Tories into an indisputably Leave party and to crush support for Nigel Farage's Brexit party. Every Tory candidate is now signed up to leaving the European Union with Boris Johnson's deal, while the doubters have been rather brutally cast out. An extraordinary 71 per cent of those who backed Brexit in 2016 are now voting Tory. Yet on the Remain side, no party can command the support of half of those who voted to stay in back in 2016. In our first-past-the-post electoral system, this asymmetry could prove fatal to Remain."

Forsyth believes that, notwithstanding the Tory lead in the polls, Remain tactical voting could still cause Johnson to fall short of the numbers he needs. But he sees little prospect of Remain unity. The very fact that the Election is taking place and that Johnson was able to break out of the cage in which Parliament held him captive highlights the divisions in the Remain camp.

Referring to Lib Dem Leader Jo Swinson, Forsyth states that, if she indicated support for Corbyn as Prime Minister she would lose key marginals like Cheltenham and Winchester. He says:

"Of the Remainers who voted Tory last time, three in four regard a Corbyn premiership as worse for the country than

Brexit. About a quarter of those who voted Lib Dem take that view too."

Crucially he identifies Jeremy Corbyn as the main obstacle to Remain unity. Corbyn's economic policies he sees as problematic for many Remainers—"*Yet vastly more difficult than this is his attitude to anti-Semitism*". Forsyth concludes his article holding out hope for Remain:

"The last election showed that in Scotland, voters are capable of working out how to vote tactically without any great central direction... If English Remainers prove as adept at tactical voting, then the Tories can forget their hopes of a majority."

Going by Forsyth's analysis, this historic Election in Britain is likely to remain unpredictable right up to the end.

## BREXIT COMMENTARIES

Before noting some recent commentaries in the Irish media, it is instructive to look back at an Editorial in last month's *Irish Political Review* in which the EU decision to grant a further extension was put in context. The Editorial was headed *Some Guidance for the EU* and stated—

"The Spanish Government has many internal discontents, and it is faced with a democratically-based national rebellion which it is treating as Britain treated the Irish democratic rebellion in 1919. The EU does not interfere. If it did, it would be undermining itself. But it is interfering in British politics. It has allowed itself to be drawn into British politics by putting a Parliamentary majority which refuses to govern on a par with the Government which the Parliamentary majority opposes but refuses to bring down. It is treating the British state as being under a dual system of authority, and being without a Government."

This aspect of the EU response to Brexit passed unnoticed in media coverage but future historians may question why the European Council backed an incoherent and mischief-making parliamentary majority rather than the UK Government. And the matter remains live. Johnson refused to appoint a UK candidate for the European Commission prior to the Election campaign during which such matters are placed in abeyance, and the Commission is reported to be in the process of referring the matter to the European Court of Justice.

A most thoughtful and informative article from *Irish Times* Political Editor Pat Leahy was published on October 26th under the title, "*How Ireland turned*



its back on Remainers". Here are some excerpts:

"Some time in the last few months, the Irish Government turned its back on Remainers in the UK. It decided that Brexit was going to happen and that it should work with the new British government to achieve the best type of Brexit for Ireland. That required making a deal with the Boris Johnson government in a way it never did with Theresa May's doomed administration.

This is both entirely proper and yet disappointing for lots of people who understandably hoped that Brexit could be stopped and that the Irish Government could have a role in stopping it.

Many campaigners for a second referendum in the UK took the view that 'Ireland is the key', as one of them told me during one of his visits to Dublin. By sticking to the backstop, the Remainers believed, Ireland could ensure that the deal would never be passed in Westminster. Parliament would stop a no-deal (they were right about that). And so a second referendum – possible and winnable, they thought – would become inevitable. And that might still happen. But it looks ever more unlikely.

...To see the world as it is, not as you would rather it were, is a facility that evades many in politics, as it does in life. Recognising that Johnson's ascension to power had changed British politics profoundly was a clear-sighted judgment by the officials and politicians who have led Ireland through the unfinished maelstrom of Brexit. Once this judgment was made, they moved to act on it.

...Boris Johnson's 19th-century predecessor, Lord Palmerston, observed that nations do not have permanent alliances; only permanent interests. It is surprising the UK has not been able to appreciate the fact that Ireland has national interests, and will act to defend them. First Ireland's clear-eyed independence surprised and confused the Brexiteers; now it has done the same to the Remainers, who have been lately venting their anger at Dublin.

'They're not happy,' says one Government insider. "'But we were never going to fix Brexit for them.'

Shrugs another, 'Look, we deal with the British government'."

Leahy's article is clearly informed by close contact with Government sources but it reflects a perspective that is significantly ahead of the pro-British rump in the Irish media, which is still desperately grasping at straws so as to resuscitate the Anglophile mindset of pre-Brexit days.

A relatively new presence in the Irish Brexit debate, offering a somewhat novel view (in Irish terms) of the possibilities opened up by Brexit, is Eoin Drea, "a researcher at the Wilfried Martens Centre, the official think tank of the European

People's Party which includes Fine Gael". Drea has had a number of articles published in the *Irish Times* this year and, unlike many Irish commentators, likes to focus on the positive side of Brexit. He favours an Atlanticist, socially liberal, pro-market worldview and wants Ireland to align with other small EU Member States (like the Netherlands) that have embraced economic liberalism and free trade. He backed Taoiseach Leo Varadkar when Varadkar actively supported the European People's Party candidate for the Presidency of the European Commission, Manfred Weber, as against the German candidate, Ursula von der Leyen. ■■■

In his most recent article, "*UK must suffer knockout blow if EU is to thrive*", he argues that the EU leadership has no reason to be feeling smug about the political turmoil in Britain. He states:

"Put simply, Europe continues to underestimate British abilities to adapt, and possibly even thrive, in a post-EU environment. Brexit may well be an obscene act of economic self-harm, but that does not preclude the probability that Britain will remain a powerful economic and political actor on the world stage. In so doing, Britain will be a most serious competitor for Europe irrespective of what kind of Brexit actually occurs" (IT, 20 November).

There are a number of valid points here, but the problem with the analysis is that he has not come to terms with the implications of the 2008 Banking Collapse. He is right to expose the weaknesses of prevailing EU orthodoxies but his basic point, as expressed in the final sentence of the following paragraph, is asserted without evidence and is ultimately unconvincing.

"Ultimately, the dawning obsession in Brussels about the nature of the future EU-UK trading relationship is irrelevant. It is based on an image of Britain viewed solely through the lens of the legalistic and technocratic EU single market. It also underestimates the global aspirations of the Anglo-Saxon economic model and the advantages Britain retains in its quest for a global niche. Brexit will have a detrimental impact upon Britain, but the longer-term impact of a successful Britain on Europe may be just as serious. That is why, for Europe to thrive, Brexit Britain must fail (and fail badly)."

What Europe needs to embrace is a model based on the traditional mixed economy that challenges the Anglo Saxon model. Singing the praises of free market fundamentalism after the experience of the Great Recession is flogging a dead horse.

Dave Alvey

## British Intelligence — A World Of Fantasy? And A Nest Of Vipers?

Did British Intelligence invent Saddam Hussein's hoard of Weapons of Mass Destruction, threatening imminent annihilation of the United Kingdom? Or did it actually believe in their existence? Or that of the Zinoviev letter of 1924? Or that Harold Wilson and Michael Foot were Soviet Agents? Do they believe that Jeremy Corbyn is anti-Semitic? *The Times* still apparently believes that Michael Foot was a Soviet Agent. And its connections within British Intelligence do not seem to have advised it that the slur on Corbyn originates with other spooks. *The Guardian* on 1st November 'reveals' that GCHQ began spying on Britain's Soviet Allies in 1944. But MI5 and MI6 agents in Berlin in 1933 spent about ten days transcribing lists of non-Fascists, while the Nazi's *Horst Wessel Haus* 'guests' could be heard being "Interrogated 'in Depth'" there. Only the outbreak of war in 1939 stopped a senior Scotland Yard Officer (an Oxford Graduate) from renewing his acquaintance with Reinhard Heydrich (architect in 1942 of The Final Solution) and prevented a visit to inspect the accommodation of prisoners in Dachau.

*The Times* (Oct 30) describes how Ian Fleming worked for British Naval Intelligence in Gibraltar, planning for an Allied invasion of Franco's Spain if Franco joined the Nazis, The putative invasion was called *Operation Backbone*. Franco had got help from Hitler and Mussolini when Churchill had words of admiration for one and support for the other; and Musso poured money into the coffers of Britain's Suez Canal as his men and materiel made their way to the rape of Abyssinia. Franco did not feel a debt of gratitude to Hitler or Mussolini. (Hitler, for his part, was loyal to Mussolini and sent Otto Skorzeny to airlift him from captivity.)

It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that Franco was grateful to Britain. For, when he was posted to the Canaries by the Republican Government, to keep him from creating mischief, he was airlifted by the British Agent, Hugh Pollard, in his private plane, to Spanish Morocco – which he used as a springboard for his treason. Pollard was MI6's man in the British Embassy in Madrid when Ian Fleming was working on *Operation Backbone*. Ian Fleming won fame for his Fantasy - James Bond. Pollard, a far more successful fantasist, is largely forgotten.

In 1920, Captain Pollard arranged with Pathe News to film a fake encounter between the IRA and the Crown Forces, circulated under the guise of a 'newsreel from Tralee'. In fact it was filmed on Dublin's Vico Road, about 200 miles from Tralee! Dublin filmgoers recognised the fake at the time. But stills from the footage have continued to appear as genuine historical evidence. One of Robert Kee's books reproduces Pollard's work on its front cover, Robert Kee, like Hugh Pollard and Ian Fleming was a British Agent.

Oh! Oh! I almost forgot, *The Irish Times* used some of Pollard's work to illustrate a feature a week or two ago.

Donal Kennedy

## LEST WE FORGET (12)

**THE FOLLOWING ARE ACTS OF AGGRESSION COMMITTED IN IRELAND BY THE MILITARY AND POLICE OF THE USURPING ENGLISH GOVERNMENT - AS REPORTED IN THE DAILY PRESS, FOR THE WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 6th, 1919.**

### S u m m a r y.

December:-	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Total.
Raids:-	10	4	2	1	2	505	524.
Arrests:-	1	-	2	-	-	4	7.
Sentences:-	-	-	2	1	-	-	3.
Proclamations & Suppressions	-	-	-	-	2	-	2.
Armed Assaults:-	-	-	2	-	1	-	3.
Courtmartials:-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3.
Daily Total:-	11	4	8	2	6	511	542

The Sentences passed on political offenders in the six days mentioned above totalled 2 years and six months.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1st, 1919.

#### **Raids:-**

Armed police raided the residence of Mr. Crowley of Nadd, Donoughmore, Co. Cork. Military and police raided three private houses at Fermoy, Co. Cork. In the Castlelyons district, Co. Cork, armed military and police searched six houses. The residence of Mr. A. O'Shea, Secretary of the Sinn Fein Executive of South Kerry was forcibly entered by armed police and searched. Police and military raided the house of Mr. Michael O'Connell, Thurles.

#### **Arrests:-**

At Thurles, Co. Tipperary, police and military arrested Mr. Michael O'Connell on a charge of assisting in the rescue of a Republican prisoner.

#### **Provocation:-**

The London "Times" commenting upon the ferocity of the militarist regime in Ireland says:- "Our fear is this, that the Irish Executive are being used, whether with the connivance of members of the Cabinet or not in order to arouse in Ireland a state of feeling if not a state of Rebellion in which settlement may become impossible".

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2nd, 1919.

#### **Raids:-**

At Keady, Co. Armagh, armed police raided the houses of Mr. J. Morgan, Mr. P. McKnight, and Mr. P. Cassidy. The Sinn Fein Hall was also raided.

#### **Militarism:-**

Lt. Col. Sir Samuel Hoare, M.P., writing on Ireland in the "Nineteenth Century" refers to the Government of the Irish people as - "A Union that is held up by detectives and police and censors".

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3rd, 1919.

#### **Raids:-**

Armed police raided and searched the Sinn Fein hall, Chapel Square, Fermoy, Co. Cork. At Clady, Strabane, Co. Tyrone, the residence and out-offices of Mrs. O'Flaherty, were forcibly entered and searched by a large body of armed police.

#### **Arrests:-**

At Clonoulty, Cashel, Co. Tipperary, Michael Davern and Michael Ryan were arrested by a police patrol and were handed over to the military on an unknown charge.

#### **Sentences:-**

Mr. Christopher P. Lucy of Pembroke Street, Cork, was sentenced by courtmartial held at Cork on November 19th, to twelve months imprisonment with hard labour for having in his possession a loaded revolver. Mr. Timothy A Noonan also of Cork was sentenced by the same courtmartial to twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour, on a charge of possessing explosives and ammunition.

#### **Armed Assaults:-**

Michael Davern and Michael Ryan, above mentioned, were set upon by the police on the public highway at Clonoulty and were overpowered, searched and arrested. At Fermoy, Co. Cork, armed military and police forcibly entered the Sinn Fein Hall and dispersed, at the point of the bayonet, those whom they found on the premises.

#### **Militarism:-**

Referring to the further repression of the National Movement in Ireland, the London "Evening Standard" says:- "It is generally expected that strong patrols of soldiers will be distributed over the streets from dusk onwards". The London "Times" of this date says in an editorial:- "An important count in our indictment of the present system of Irish administration is that this system has failed to secure the law and order which were its avowed objects. It has tended rather in the opposite direction".



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

Armed police raided the Town Hall, Ballybay, Co. Monaghan, where Rev. P. Murphy was giving a lecture on Irish History, to a large audience.

**Sentence:-**

Mr. Patrick Devane of Killarney, was sentenced by Courtmartial, held at Cork on November 26th, to six months' imprisonment with hard labour, for having in his possession a copy of the official journal of the Irish Volunteers.

**Militarism:-**

The London "Globe" says:- "A lurid light is thrown upon the condition in Ireland by the report that during the past twelve months over 10,000 private houses have been raided by military and police".

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

Armed police and military raided and searched the residence of Dr. Thos. Daly, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan. The City Hall, Waterford was raided and occupied by armed police.

**Proclamation:-**

Police at Dundalk, Co. Louth, have warned the members of the recently proclaimed National Organisations, that if any meeting of Irish Language Class is held it will be suppressed by force. At Waterford a Christmas Fair for the Sale of Irish goods only was proclaimed and suppressed by the English armed forces.

**Court martial:-**

Mr. Edward Shannon, of Lisnaskea, Co. Fermanagh, was courtmartialled at Victoria Barracks, Belfast, on a charge of having in his possession "documents which if published might cause disaffection."

**Militarism:-**

**THE FOLLOWING ARE ACTS OF AGGRESSION COMMITTED IN IRELAND BY THE MILITARY AND POLICE OF THE UNSURPING ENGLISH GOVERNMENT - AS REPORTED IN THE DAILY PRESS, FOR THE WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 13th, '19.**

**S u m m a r y.**

Date, December:-	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th	Total.
Raids:-	-	8	5	53	121	11	188.
Arrests:-	4	4	3	6	9	6	32.
Sentences:-	5	4	-	1	1	-	11.
Proclamations & Suppressions:-	-	2	3	-	1	2	8.
Deportations:-	-	-	-	-	9	-	9.
Armed Assaults:-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1.
Court martials:-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.
Daily Totals:-	9	18	11	60	131	20	249.

The sentences passed on political offenders during the above six days totalled 3 years, 4 months and 2 weeks.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8th, 1919.

**Arrest:-**

Mr. Asquith, ex-Premier of England, in a public letter says:- "Ireland is being governed with the worst possible results under a system of what is practically military rule. . . . We are back, in a word, in the worst days of coercion. . . ."

**Armed Assaults:-**

When English troops who were being brought from Kilworth Camp, Co. Cork, reached Mallow Station, they proceeded to wreck everything breakable. Automatic machines containing sweetmeats, etc. were broken open and their contents stolen. Waiting rooms at the Station were completely wrecked. This is the fourth occasion upon which organised sabotage by English troops has occurred at Fermoy within the last three months.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

At Killybegs, Co. Donegal, armed police raided the residence and offices of Mr. P. J. Ward, member of the Irish Parliament. At Thurles, Co. Tipperary, armed police and military raided two private houses. At Nenagh in the same county, police raided two houses. Throughout the County of Clare large bodies of military and police raided some 500 private houses. The troops were aided by aeroplanes.

**Arrests:-**

Armed police arrested Mr. Martin Breen and Mr. Robert Condon, both of Thurles, Co. Tipperary. At Nenagh, Mr. W. Hoolan and Mr. John O'Brien were arrested on a charge of making public speeches at the release of Mr. John O'Brien and his brothers who were tried three times and kept in prison for two years on a spurious charge of murder.

**Court martials:-**

Mr. Edward Malone, Dunbrin, Queens Co., was tried by courtmartial at Ship Street Barracks, Dublin, on a charge of having in his possession, arms and ammunition. Mr. J. Cannon, of Bluebell, Co. Dublin, was tried by the same Courtmartial on a charge of possessing ammunition.

Mr. Daniel O'Sullivan of Adrigole, Co. Cork, was arrested on his way home from a fair at Bantry. Messrs. Patrick Kelly, Thos. Flaherty and J. M. McCarthy were arrested on a charge

of endeavouring to obtain arms.

**Sentences:-**

Mr. Daniel O'Sullivan, above mentioned, was sentenced by crimes court to one month's imprisonment for having in his possession documents "which if published might cause disaffection". For unlawful assembly consisted in welcoming prisoners released after a long imprisonment on a false charge, Mr. Wm. Hoolan of Nenagh, Co. Tipperary and Mr. John O'Brien of Silvermines in the same county, were sentenced, Hoolan to six months imprisonment with hard labour and O'Brien to two months similar imprisonment. Mr. James Hunt of Ballymote, Co. Sligo, was sentenced by crimes court to one month's imprisonment for unlawful assembly. Mr. John Hannon was at Sligo sentenced by crimes court to three months' imprisonment with hard labour for unlawful assembly.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

Armed police raided the residence at Ballykillanman, Co. Wicklow, of Mr. C. M. Byrne, Chairman of the Rathdown District Council. They carried a warrant for his arrest, but Byrne was not at home. The residence of Rathkeale, Co. Wicklow of Mr. David Naughton, District Councillor, was forcibly entered by armed police who searched it. In the same district, Calway House, the residence of Mr. Naughton's aged mother, was also similarly raided. The residence and farm premises of Mrs. Margaret Doyle of Coolree, Co. Wexford, were raided by armed military a police. At Cork, armed police raided four private houses.

**Arrests:-**

Messrs. Peter Young, Owen Jackson, Edward Horgan and W. Barry, all of Cork City, were arrested on a charge of attempting to obtain arms.

**Sentences:-**

Messrs. Thos. Gilchrist, Joseph Burns, Thos. and Michael McGowan, all of Co. Roscommon, were sentenced at the Ulster Assizes each to six months' imprisonment with hard labour for attempting to obtain arms. The execution of the sentence was delayed, the Judge ordering that it they were to be re-arrested and compelled to serve the sentences passed upon them. This is the revival of the system of hostages.

**Suppressions-**

At Tempo, Co. Fermanagh, a Concert in aid of National Funds had to be abandoned in consequence of the threats of the military and police to suppress it by force if any effort was made to hold it. Police, armed with revolvers, entered the Council Chamber of the Mayo Co. Council when the members were in session and sought to overawe the meeting. It was only after angry declarations by the Councillors that they would not be "Prussianised by policemen" that the armed force withdrew from the floor of the Chamber to the public galleries.

**Confiscation:-**

Armed military and police raided the garage of Mr. Eugene O'Sullivan, J.P., Chairman of the Killarney Urban Council, and removed the principal parts of the machinery of his motor car. They notified Mr. O'Sullivan that if he had not disposed of the car in one month's time it would be confiscated. Any attempt to replace the dismantled part of the machinery would

be followed by instant seizure. Mr. O'Sullivan's Offence was his refusal to apply to the English Military Authorities for permission to use his own car

**Militarism:-**

Mr. Herbert Samuel, ex-Cabinet Minister, speaking at St. Albans said:- "Ireland is now being governed under military law. If what is going on in Ireland had been going on in the Austrian Empire, all England would be ringing with denunciation of the tyranny of the Hapsburgs and of denying people the right to rule themselves".

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

Fully armed Military and Police raided the Motor Garage of Messrs. Cotter of 14 Rutland Place, Dublin and dismantled every car on the premises, those left for repairs as well as those owned by the firm itself. The offence of this firm was that it refused to apply to the British Military Authorities for permission to use its own cars. At Tuam, Co. Galway, the residences of Mr. Patrick McHugh and Mr. Bartly Walsh were raided by armed police and searched. Two houses were raided at Ballaghaderreen, Co. Mayo.

**Arrests:-**

Messrs. Tom MacDonagh and T. Quinn of Clonlee, Co. Mayo were arrested on a charge of endeavouring to prevent the police from removing Republican posters from the local dead-walls. Mr. John Farrell one of the strike pickets operating in Dublin in connection with the strike against the Motor Permit Order was arrested by armed police. He was detained for three hours and then released without any charge being mentioned or explanation offered.

**Suppressions:**

An order has been served by the police on the Republican leaders ordering the closing of the National Government's headquarters - 76 Harcourt Street. A similar order has been served on the occupiers of 6 Harcourt Street, the Headquarters of the Sinn Fein Organisation. Throughout the town of Kilkenny armed police stopped all motor cars and questioned the drivers.

**Militarism:-**

The London "Times" says:- "Ireland is in a vicious circle. The community refuses to support the English Government because it rests on force not on willingly delegated authority. The English Government uses force and is daily drive to use more force because it cannot get support from the community."

THURSDAY DECEMBER 11th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

The Motor Garage owned by Messrs. Cotter, 14 Rutland Place, Dublin, was again raided and magnetos and carburettors were carried away in large numbers by the and 100 police descended suddenly upon the town and attended by armoured cars and tanks held up all pedestrian traffic and searched over fifty houses. At four a.m. at Tullamore, King's Co., military and police forcibly entered the house of Mr. P. Daly and Mr. M. Lynam.

**Arrests:-**

Mr. C. O'Mahony, Ahiohill, Co. Cork, a member of the District Council, was arrested and handed over to the military authorities. At Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan, Messrs. John McAree, Patrick Christie and Bernard McNally were arrested on a charge of disarming a police constable of his rifle. At Tullamore, King's Co., Patrick Daly and Malachy Lynam were arrested on an unknown charge.

**Sentences:-**

Mr. Philip Cassidy of Lisnaskea, Co. Antrim, was sentenced by courtmartial held in Belfast on 28th November to 14 days imprisonment for having in his possession a seditious document.

**Militarism:-**

The London "Times" says in reference to the police force in Ireland:- "The force is concentrated; its distribution is governed by military considerations; it has ceased to be employed as an ordinary police force".

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

In the City of Dublin large bodies of military and police raided, in the early morning, the houses of prominent Republicans. In all some ten houses were visited including the residences of Alderman T. Kelly, M.P., Mr. Cathal Brugha, M.P., Count Plunkett, M.P., and Countess Markievicz, M. P. Over a hundred fully armed troops accompanied by eighty police raided the official residence of the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and entered and searched every room in it. Raids took place in many parts of the country, and in the provincial cities. Full details have not appeared in the press, but it is probable that at least a hundred raids were made on private houses in the provinces.

**Arrests:-**

Ald. T. Kelly, Member of Parliament for the Stephen's Green constituency in Dublin, was arrested. No charge was made against the Alderman. Mr. S. Irwin of Bride Street, Dublin was also arrested without any charge being preferred. Outside Dublin seven other arrests were made of men the publication of whose names has been prohibited [words unclear]

**Deportations:-**

These nine men were brought under a strong military escort to Kingstown, Co. Dublin, where they were placed upon a British War-vessel and deported to an unknown destination. During the three hours which elapsed between the transfer of the first of these persons to the war-vessel and that of the last, great numbers of English troops fully-equipped for war held up all the approaches to the Kingstown waterways and turned back workmen who endeavoured to reach their places of employment.

**Sentences:-**

Mr. Daniel J. O'Sullivan of Moyderwell, Co. Kerry, was sentenced by courtmartial, held on 3rd Dec., to three months'

imprisonment with hard labour for having in his possession "seditious documents".

**Suppression:-**

Military and police entered the Dublin Mansion House, the residence of the Lord Mayor, and suppressed an industrial Fair of Christmas Goods made in Ireland. They took possession of the approaches to the Mansion House and trained Lewis guns on to the building.

**Militarism:-**

The London "Daily News" of this date says:- "Not since the black days that preceded the Union, has Ireland been ruled so nakedly by the sword".

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

Armed police and a large force of Military in war-equipment raided the residence in Clarendon Street, Derry, of Mr. Joseph O'Doherty, Member of Parliament for North Donegal. Mr. O'Doherty was just able to make his escape from the raiding party who held a warrant for his arrest. Police raided the house occupied by Dr. J. P. McGinley, at Letterkenny, and arrested him. The Headquarters of the National Government, 76 Harcourt Street, Dublin, were raided by a strong force of military and police who searched the premises, exhaustively, in an effort to arrest Mr. M. Collins, M.P. Minister of Finance. Police raided the newsagents shop kept by Miss O'Mahony at Washington Street, Cork. At Belturbet, armed police raided some six houses.

**Arrests:-**

Mr. Patrick Portor of Buncrana, Co. Donegal, was arrested on a charge of advocating the Irish National Loan. Mr. Owen Hand was arrested by armed police at Belturbet. No charge has been preferred. At Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Dr. J. P. McGinley, Mr. Andrew McGinley and Mr. Charles McBride, were arrested on a charge of advocating the Irish National Loan. Mr. Edward McDermott president of the Pearse Sinn Fein Club, Derry, was arrested on a charge that has not been stated.

**Suppressions:-**

A force of armed police entered the Tara Hall, Nenagh, where an Irish Language class was being held and threatened to disperse the class. At Toomevara, Co. Tipperary, armed police raided the parish hall and suppressed by force the teaching of Irish dances.

**Armed Assault:-**

At Belturbet a strong force of police attacked a crowd who were showing sympathy towards Mr. Owen Hand who had been arrested. They savagely beat many members of the crowd some of whom were severely injured.

THE FOLLOWING ARE ACTS OF AGGRESSION COMMITTED IN IRELAND BY THE MILITARY AND POLICE OF THE USURPING ENGLISH GOVERNMENT, AS REPORTED IN THE DAILY PRESS FOR THE WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 20th, 1919.

S u m m a r y .



Date:-	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th	Total.
Raids:-	2	102	-	4	-	12	120
Arrests:-	1	2	-	2	1	-	6.
Sentences:-	6	2	3	-	1	6	18.
Courtmartials	-	-	-	-	-	1	1.
Proclamations & Suppressions	1	2	-	-	-	-	3.
Armed Assaults:-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2.
Daily Total:-	11	108	3	7	2	19	150.

The Sentences passed for political offences in the above six days totalled 11 years and 10 months.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

Armed police raided a Hall in Waterford in which the Irish Language was being taught. At Youghal, Co. Cork, armed police raided the Sinn Fein Hall.

**Arrest:-**

Mr. Phelix Connolly, Coldwood, Co. Cork, was arrested for having seditious literature in his possession.

**Sentences:-**

Timothy Spillane of Castleblayney, Co. Kerry was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment with hard labour for attacking and with the same offence, Ml. Spillane, and Ml. Flynn were sentenced to 18 months with hard labour; Ml. Maunsell to 15 months with hard labour, and M. Griffin to 9 months with hard labour. The five prisoners who denied the jurisdiction of the Court refused to call witnesses but protested their innocence of the offence. Mr. John Gannon of Bluebell, Co. Dublin, was sentenced by courtmartial held on Dec. 5th, to one year's imprisonment with hard labour for having in his possession revolver ammunition without a permit.

**Suppression:-**

Armed police raided and suppressed an Irish Language Committee Meeting in Waterford City.

**Armed Assault:-**

Police, fully armed, raided the local Sinn Fein Hall at Youghal, Co. Cork and overpowering all persons found on the premises, searched them.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

Close on 100 houses were raided by military and police at Kilbrittain, Co. Cork, and neighbouring districts. Armed police reinforced by military in full war equipment raided and occupied the Parish Hall at Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. The premises of the "Freemans' Journal" were raided by Military and Police.

**Arrests:-**

Mr. Thos. W. Coughlan was arrested at Skibbereen, Co. Cork, on a charge of having in his possession seditious documents. Mr. P. Fitzgerald of Gorey, Co. Wexford, was arrested on a similar charge.

**Sentences:-**

Messrs. Coughlan and Fitzgerald mentioned above were each sentenced at Skibbereen and Gorey respectively to one month's

imprisonment, on the charges stated.  
Suppressions:-

Armed police and military entered the offices of the "Freeman's Journal", the oldest daily paper in Ireland and suppressed it, dismantling and carrying away vital parts of the machinery. A play in the Irish Language was suppressed at Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, an attempt to hold the performance resulting in the calling out of large bodies of military and police who held all the approaches to the Play House.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17th, 1919.

**Sentences:-**

Daniel Allis, of Doon, Co. Limerick, was sentenced by Courtmartial held on December 8th to six months imprisonment with hard labour, for having in his possession a seditious document. Ml. Fitzmartin of Cree, Co. Clare, was sentenced by Courtmartial held on December 2nd, to 84 days imprisonment, on a charge of marching in military formation, and with having in his possession revolver ammunition. Ml. Prendergast of Cree, Co. Clare, was sentenced by Courtmartial held on December 2nd, to 28 days imprisonment for marching in military formation.

THURSDAY, THURSDAY 18th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

Armed military and police raided the residence of Professor Dillon of Galway University. Police raided the residence of Patrick Barry, Cork. Large bodies of fully armed police raided the residence of Padraig MacCormac, Irish Language Teacher, of Cappamurra, and Mrs. Dwyer of Clenkelly, Co. Clare.

**Arrests:-**

A young man whose name has not transpired was arrested in Dublin and was brought to Nenagh where he was put on secret trial. The Press was excluded. Patrick Barry of Cork City was arrested on a charge of being engaged in a raid for arms.

**Armed Assault:-**

At Birr, King's Co., police, armed with rifles and fixed bayonets forcibly dispersed an Irish Class.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19th, 1919.

**Arrest:-**

Mr. J. Joyce, Irish Teacher, was arrested at Menhaugh, Co. Galway, on an unknown charge.

**Sentences:-**

Mr. Ed. Malone of Dunbrin, Queen's County, was sentenced by Courtmartial held on December 3rd, to one

year's imprisonment with hard labour for having in his possession arms, ammunition and seditious documents.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

Armed police raided upwards of a dozen houses in Co. Tipperary in an effort to arrest the occupants.

**Sentences:-**

Mr. J. Hennessy, William Street, Fermoy, Co. Cork, was sentenced to two months imprisonment for having in his possession seditious documents. Mr. Edward Shannon, of Lisnaskea, Co. Fermanagh, was sentenced by

court martial held on December 4th, to six months imprisonment for having in his possession an advertisement for the Irish National Loan. Mr. Patrick Porter of Buncrana, Co. Donegal; Mr. Ed. McDermott, of Derry; Dr. J. P. McGinley, of Letterkenny, and Mr. Sean Milroy of Dublin, were each sentenced at a Crimes Court at Burnfoot, Co. Donegal to five months imprisonment for attending a meeting at which the Irish National Loan was advocated.

**Court martial:-**

Mr. Patrick Molloy of Murragh, King's County, was tried by court martial at Ship Street Barracks, Dublin, on a charge of possessing ammunition and seditious documents.

**THE FOLLOWING ARE THE ACTS OF AGGRESSION COMMITTED IN IRELAND BY THE MILITARY AND POLICE OF THE USURPING ENGLISH GOVERNMENT - AS REPORTED IN THE DAILY PRESS FOR THE WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 27th, 1919.**

**S u m m a r y**

Date:-	22nd	23rd	24th	27th	Total.
Raids:-	4	-	7	60	71.
Arrests:-	1	-	2	4	7.
Sentences:-	-	1	-	-	1.
Court martials	1	3	-	-	4.
Suppressions:-	-	-	1	-	1.
Armed Assaults:-	-	-	-	1	1.
Daily Totals:-	6	4	10	65	85.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22nd, 1919.

**Raids:-**

The residence of Mr. Ml. Hegarty of Dublin, was raided by armed police. Police raided and searched the house of Mr. C. McCarthy, Killarney. The rooms occupied by Mr. P. J. Ryan at Coleman's Hotel, Claremorris, were raided and searched by the police. Police raided the public reading rooms at Garrancore, Co. Cork.

**Court martial:-**

Mr. Phelix Connolly of Clonakilty, Co. Cork was court martialled at Cork City on a charge of possessing a copy of the official journal of the Irish Volunteers.

**Arrest:-**

Mr. Michael Hegarty of Dublin, recently released from Mountjoy Prison, Dublin, in broken health was re-arrested.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23rd, 1919.

**Sentence:-**

At Enniskillen, Mr. Thos. Corrigan, Accountant of the Fermanagh, Co. Council, was fined £10 for having in his possession documents which if published might cause disaffection.

**Court martials:-**

Mr. P. Shiels of Derry was court martialled in that city a charge of possessing arms and ammunition. At Ship Street Barracks, Dublin, Mr. Malachy Lynam, Tullamore, was court martialled on a charge of possessing a revolver. At the same Court Patrick Daly also of Tullamore was charged with having in his possession a revolver and ammunition

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

Armed police raided some half dozen houses at Ballyhaise. Armed police raided the Grave Yard at Ballisodare, Co. Sligo, and occupied it for several hours.

**Arrests:-**

At Ballyhaise, Philip McCaffrey and Edward Harte were arrested on a charge of taking part in a raid for arms.

**Suppressions:-**

The Urban Council of Thurles, Co. Tipperary, applied to the English Military Authorities in the district for permission to hold fairs and markets. The permission was refused.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27th, 1919.

**Raids:-**

Police raided twenty newsagents' shops in Dublin and seized copies of the "Watchword of Labour". Armed police assisted by military raided over 40 houses at Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, and the outlying districts.

**Arrests:-**

John Foley, Thos. Cuddihy, Harry Bush and Patrick Drew, all of Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, were arrested on a charge of unlawful assembly.

**Armed Assault:-**

At Killarney, armed police attacked a crowd which was resenting the action of English troops in the town.

"Ernest: That, my dear Algy, is the whole truth pure and simple.

Algernon: The truth is rarely pure and never simple."

'The Importance of Being Ernest' Act 1. Oscar Wilde.

"The last thing which we want to do is to embark on any plan, such as the plans in totalitarian states, of propaganda either in this country or in the Dominions or in the US. There is no question of propaganda. It will be publicity and by that I mean straight news."

Sir Samuel Hoare, House of Commons, 11th October, 1939.

"There is nothing whatever improper in propaganda and the sooner it is realised that we are indulging in propaganda, the sooner it will be recognised that it will be better for that propaganda to be good rather than bad."

Henry Strauss, House of Commons, 12th October 1939.

## Clair Wills And The Story She Tells

### Part 14

Before I continue my analysis of Wills and her book *Lovers and Strangers*, I would like to write about the events of the last few weeks in the UK, where the propaganda of the poppy was something to behold. In the last issue of *Hello* magazine 18th November, 2019 under the cover title 'Royals Remember', there were many pages devoted to enshrining 'the poppy' as an almost holy symbol and in its midst was the Sovereign and her Royal Family, the political elite, the present military and those of the past. It was an impressive show and to an outsider like me a rather disturbing one, as I thought there was something of the fascist rally about it all. The Monarch and her Family all wore black as did the politicians all festooned with poppies.

Those royals who had been in the military (or had military associations like the Princess Royal and others) wore astonishing peacock-style uniforms with gold braiding and lashings of medals, including the now disgraced Prince Andrew, the Duke of York. They too had poppies attached to their uniforms and with slow gait marched to lay 'poppy wreaths' at the Cenotaph and other memorials. Queen Elizabeth II thanked an entity I had not heard of before—that called the 'Royal British Legion Industries' which, she stated, was formed in 1919 "to support sick and wounded soldiers returning from the First World War".

Before the 'poppy' mania kicked off

### It Is Time

properly—and it starts earlier and earlier every year—it seems to me, especially with TV people and *their guests* all wearing their poppies on every show, there was a news item about at least ten military charities being very rich, to the tune of hundreds of millions of pounds, and yet the returning injured soldiers are living hand to mouth mostly, with quite a number committing suicide. It was a very shocking story and I thought, given how the British love their military, that it would cause quite an outcry. But the story was stillborn, killed by someone in the British State deciding that this was not to their taste and the poppy circus continued unabated.

And then a young English pop-star Lily Allen tweeted from the USA that she was very unsettled to put it mildly about the words of '*Rule, Britannia!*' and wanted to know, did anyone else consider the lyrics as unacceptable as she did. Her request was mostly censored and very few in the UK were privy to her deep misgivings. In one news item, two British people were asked their opinion; one was an English UKIP member and the other a black professor. The latter was brilliant and said it—the song—should be "*dumped in the dustbin of history as it was an anthem for empire*": that those days were well and truly over. Naturally the UKIP guy thought it was part of his "*British culture and was loved by the masses*". The professor was having none of it and again reiterated it should not be sung as it was an ode to slavery.

I was by now intrigued and looked up the words and was properly shocked by

the vileness of them, especially the lines that had so offended the singer Allen:

"...This was the charter, the charter of the land.

And guardian angels sang this strain:

Rule Britannia!

Britannia rules the waves

Britons never, never, shall be slaves..."

The professor rightly stated that, while Britons were never slaves, they had made it part of their imperial capitalist system and that Britain should still not be celebrating such appalling history. But the UKIP guy said that Britain was the first to abolish slavery and William Wilberforce was to be commended. The professor argued that long before Wilberforce acted—the sugar plantations were no longer profitable and that was why slavery started losing its attractions commercially.

Of course we all know that as Britannia did rule the waves, the French under Napoleon needed their sugar which they couldn't access due to this fact. Napoleon commanded his scientists to produce another means of extracting sugar and they came up with sugar beet, which could be grown anywhere. Which is what really caused the decline of the huge sugar plantations and made their slaves uneconomical. So anti-slavery became an issue then in Britain and people like Wilberforce *et al* found it an unacceptable practice and were able to successfully challenge it. It could be said they were pushing an open door! And then Britain could manufacture their history to show that *they* were the ones who abolished this most cruel and savage system.

I contend that the propaganda of 'the poppy' needs 'Rule Britannia' and the up-scaling of both in the tribal symphony of the 11th Day of the 11th Hour is a symptom of a deeper and darker malaise that runs deep in the British psyche which has always had a militaristic bent. They – the British – talk of *Prussian militarism* but *who is really talking the talk and walking the walk!* And *the show* keeps getting bigger – last year it was the field of ceramic poppies around the tower of London and this year it was the spilling of *two million poppies out of an aircraft over the white cliffs of Dover* – if that is not symbolic then I don't know what is? I would like to know what happens to Lily Allen's career or has she quietly learnt the cost of even questioning Britain's ever-lasting shibboleths?

In the last issue of the *Irish Political Review* (November 2019) my colleague



Wilson John Haire wrote a very good article headed 'Working Britain in the 1950s', in which he questioned some of the contentions written by me with regards to Clair Wills and her analysis of those post-war days. An article written from the perspective of 'experiential knowledge' has, in my opinion, always an edge over those written from a 'notional angle'. Haire's experience working in those days added to and indeed aided my understanding of the working conditions of immigrant people amongst the British locals whether English or Scottish.

But the piece was paternalistic—indeed almost maternalistic towards the young Irish lads who landed in Britain looking for work. Of one 15 year old, Haire wrote movingly:

"... we were all his father, and maybe his mother sometimes!"

My question is simple—how many Haire's were there in a foreign country for the Irish immigrant who were not really wanted but who were never-the-less needed for building a post-war country shattered by war?

To give Wills her dues, she researched her subject well and incorporates the voices of the following:

Dónall Mac Amhlaigh's 'An Irish Navy: The Diary of an Exile', trans. Valentine Iremonger, Collins Press, Cork, 2003 (1964),

Oliver Reilly's 'A Worker in Birmingham', *The Furrow*, 9,4 (1958),

Richard Power's 'Apple on a Treetop', Poolbeg Press, Dublin, 1980,

Tom Murphy's play 'A Whistle in the Dark', 1961,

Brendan Behan's 'The Dubbalin Man', A&A Farmer, Dublin, 1997,

Philip Donnellan's documentary 'The Irishmen' 1965, BBC,

John B. Keane's 'Self-Portrait', Mercier Press, Cork, 1964,

and, last but not least, the Catholic Church's 'Radharc Films', RTE,

and she uses many other sources as well.

Wills used only two stills from 'The Irishmen' and they were pretty raw and heart-breaking. One on page 138 shows "a man digging a trench" and on the opposite page 139 there is a picture of two men "laying cables". According to Richard Power, or Ristead de Paor as he liked to term himself, "he was a graduate from Trinity College, Dublin who had spent a year living on Aran Island in the mid-50s perfecting his Irish" who took

"labouring jobs" in Birmingham "for a season" to investigate "the conditions of the Irish labourers". Another man investigating was Charles Parker whose take was completely different to a report done by Oliver Reilly in 1958 who accepted that: "England offered a varied landscape of licence and dissipation, but the Irish weaved their way through it with everyday sense and tact."

Reilly

"had gone to work as a labourer in order to report 'undercover' on conditions of the Irish in Birmingham. He found Irish men and women living in the same lodging houses while waiting to get married, and was told he was 'old-fashioned' for raising an eyebrow; in the pubs and clubs he found 'Wine, women and song'.

"The people talked sex with a candour that would truly shock our toughest egg at home. Nothing is sacred and it is considered broadminded. Young men and girls in their teens fraternised freely in the many Youth Hostels throughout the city. ...hundreds of unmarried live together for years. At the same time he found that huge numbers of Irish emigrants kept going to Mass..."

In this account given by Oliver Reilly (who he?) I immediately noticed that false note, the one that alerted me that this account might not be what Wills thinks it is. I know for a fact that the mere mention of "egg" referring to people—was never used by the ordinary Irish but posh ones—now that is a different matter. Is Reilly over-egging (groan) his account? After all what could be more natural than that the Irish would congregate in the same lodgings, start courting and eventually marry? What never seems to have crossed Oliver's mind was that the Irish were having him on and we all know that Irish courtships were notoriously long during that time span. Getting money together to start up their own homes took time and hard effort by both partners.

But—however Oliver Reilly tried to spin it—he couldn't deny the mass-going fervour of the Irish immigrant. And he ties himself up in knots wondering if the Irish priests at home were "snobs" by comparison to the Irish priests in England? As he wrote:

"All the emigrants I have met and they were many seemed to have the notion that Church and State combined against them at home, and that the opposite prevails in England."

Even Wills wonders here if there "was some kind of reverse emigrant nostalgia, or was it true that priests were more human across the water?"

What she does have to acknowledge was *the kind of work* the priests did for their people in England:

"...lonely and isolated emigrants did need the kinds of help the priests could offer—finding lodgings, or getting the children into schools. The liberal priest Eamon Casey was well liked among his parishioners for his support of young Irish emigrants, and in particular the mortgage-loan scheme he started up, partly modelled on Caribbean savings plans, which helped get young families out of lodgings. The chaplains who worked among the labourers building the M1 wrote letters home for them, and assisted them with forms and taxes, as well as saying mass in huts along the route of the motorway."

Wills seems to think that 'Order' priests "were from similar backgrounds to the rural poor to whom they now ministered". But the priests were secular—that is, from the diocese structure according to the 'Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants', whose statistics Wills herself uses. And it was through these channels that Fr. Eamon Casey was able to build and open the Irish Centre in Camden in 1955—a great achievement from this most amiable of men. That he went back there and worked just as tirelessly after his fall from bishopric grace—again in my opinion—only attests to his great attributes. Now at this Irish centre: "...new arrivals could find cheap accommodation, support in looking for jobs and lodgings, and legal advice".

But the dancehalls and the craic continued, as Dónall Mac Amhlaigh "who was living in Northampton in the mid-1950s", wrote when he came down to London for a Gaelic football match and afterwards went drinking and dancing:

"We moved off to dance in the Garryowen (in Hammersmith) when the pub closed. Big as the hall was, it was full and I met as many there that I knew as I had met in Mitcham. The Irish in London, I'd say, have a great life, plenty of their own people all around them, galore Irish dances and somewhere to go every night of the week."

Wills is right to suggest that "Mac Amhlaigh's published diary reads like an attempt to recreate west-of-Ireland village life in London, a local communication written to be read by the neighbours and friends of the people he named". And now many of the dancehalls "were owned and run by Irishmen".

Julianne Herlihy ©

To be continued – work conditions.

## Casement And Photographic Evidence

In the debate with Tim O'Sullivan over Paul Hyde's book which establishes that the diaries now available in the British National Archives did not exist during Casement's lifetime, I was struck by the lack of evidence so far provided to refute the Hyde thesis. If the Diaries then existed, the question is not only why they were not shown, but also of why *photographic copies* were not made. Like many aspects of Irish history-writing these days, I felt the need to revisit events that I had put out of my mind, hoping that I would never suffer from a *déjà vu* feeling again.

I went to the trouble of revisiting the Casement Trial and rediscovered that *photographs* were a key part of the Prosecution Exhibits, put forward as evidence. That can only highlight the point that Hyde makes.

The Tralee RIC who arrested Casement were able to supply Scotland Yard with a series of photographs quite promptly: the File contains a photograph of the strand at

Curraghane, presumably to confirm its existence; of a boat to confirm it existed; of a German train ticket; of a torn page of code; of two damaged pages of a document from a black bag that was found, pages written in code with entries such as 'Willie's yacht', which presumably stood for a German submarine (Kaiser Wilhelm); of a single piece of paper with 4 uncoded words found on Casement; and last, but not least, of the wrapping paper of a sausage — Exhibit No. 15!

The RIC in faraway Kerry were thorough. In other words, every scrap of paper they could find was diligently photographed as evidence. That allowed Birkenhead to refer at the trial to a 'diary' that was found. And that was all that needed to be said to confirm the well-orchestrated smear campaign then in play. Birkenhead later claimed in his autobiography that it was THE infamous Casement diary. The miracle of its survival on Casement during his turbulent preceding years across seas,

continents and war zones did not seem to need any explanation for him!

The Tralee RIC were diligent with their photographs but at the same time we are asked to believe that the Diary volumes, detailing alleged rampant homosexual behaviour by Casement were available in Scotland Yard. But, mysteriously, the CID made no photographs of them. Instead the Metropolitan Police went to the trouble of creating lengthy typescripts—which we are told are copied extracts from the unseen diaries.

If the volumes existed at that time, Birkenhead was ingenious enough — and he was nothing if not ingenious — to find a valid legal reason to introduce photographs of diary pages, e.g. on the pretext of verifying the handwriting of the paper fragments from Tralee.

There is only one rational explanation for the complete absence of CID photographs of the bound diary volumes allegedly held in police custody!

If a photograph of a sausage wrapping was a valid exhibit at the trial, surely at least a single photograph of one page from these alleged volumes would have been even more valid.

Jack Lane

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### A Meeting At Skibbereen, Part One

## The Subjective Side Of History!

Nationalist Ireland has in the course of the past forty years been constructed into a country without a written history, while at the same time it is caricatured by the master historians put in place over it as a country that is so obsessed with its history that it is unable to "move on" and live in the present.

Insofar as anything has survived from its past to form part of the present of its would-be intellectuals it is a couple of fragments from Joyce: the Parnell scene at the dinner table in the *Portrait Of The Artist*; the creation of conscience by exile and cunning; history as a nightmare from which there was no escape; and the notion that the Irish kept out the Jews.

I first heard of Joyce in a rapturous BBC programme about him in the mid-1950s. (BBC Radio was always easily accessible in Slieve Luacra, though there were times when Radio Eireann—broadcast from Athlone—failed to reach it.) I heard that Joyce was the greatest novelist in the

world in the 20th century, and possibly the greatest of all time, so I went looking for him.

There was German literature available locally—acquired, I imagine, in the Young Ireland period—English literature, and some French, and even Russian. But there was no Joyce.

However, I got by post through a Cork City bookshop a collection of short stories, *The Portrait Of The Artist*, and the entertaining gobbledygook called *Finnegan's Wake*. But *Ulysses*, the greatest novel ever written, was not to be got through either Cork City or London bookshops.

*Finnegan's Wake* was a kind of mood music in words which hinted at ideas without ever forming one. The others seemed to have the purpose of achieving total precision in the use of words to make perfect sentences in the telling of stories about lower-middle class life in Dublin, about which I knew nothing—and was not made interested in it by the stories.

I gathered that the making of perfect sentences had been a preoccupation of Flaubert, but since I could not read French fluently I could not tell if it was so. But it was the case with Joyce, and I found it interesting. But his stories were trivial compared with the story told by Flaubert.

I had come across Goethe's *Elective Affinities* locally, and read it with interest, even though its subject matter was far removed from my experience. And Dostoevsky's *White Nights* likewise. But I found *Ivy Day In The Committee Room* utterly meaningless. I had never heard of *Ivy Day* (when Parnell refused to stand down as Commons leader of the Irish Party, while remaining leader in the country). The post-Parnell Parnell cult had left not a trace in the culture of Slieve Luacra—which, as I found out later, had discarded Redmondism comprehensively long before 1918.

And Dublin had no resonance in Slieve Luacra, beyond being the place where Croke Park happened to be. And I later came across some Dublin comment that Croke Park was where the countrymen sometimes came, carrying their lunch and dinner in their pockets.

Some people had gone there in 1932

for the great display of the Eucharistic Congress. But what they went to was the Phoenix Park, which was hardly in Dublin at all.

I first saw Dublin in the mid-1960s. It struck me as alien. Cork City and Limerick City had already struck me in the same way. There could be no doubt that I was a peasant—but a peasant with European literature in his make-up because it had been in his surroundings as he grew up.

And Joyce was alien. But not interestingly alien. And the reason for that was that what he expressed was a sealed moment in middle class life in post-Parnellite Dublin before it was shaken up by developments in the country.

And it was a peculiar middle class. It was a middle class without an upper class. And it lacked an upper class, not through having overthrown an upper class, but through an upper class—with which it had never been organically engaged—having been marginalised by others. If it had arrived where it was through having been in conflict with an upper class, it would not have been the empty thing that it was.

It was over-educated, was professional not industrial, and it engaged in exceptionally learned disputes about scholastic abstractions. And the country seems to have been as alien to it as it was to the country.

I could understand how it became a nightmare world to Joyce. But he took it with him into his 'exile', where he mulled it over again and again, escaping from it only in that he broke up the language in which he described it and escaped from the narrative of intelligible sentences. But it had nothing to do with history. The history, which was happening in the country, by-passed it.

When I went to London in the late fifties, I found a copy of *Ulysses* in a dirty bookshop in Finsbury Park, which probably survived by corrupting the local police. It rented books by the week on a large deposit. I read it through, even though I found it tedious, and faintly unpleasant, and fragmentary.

The analogy with the *Odyssey* was an absurd formality. The *Odyssey* was a story of the Greeks, for the Greeks, and was read by the Greeks. The Irish are absent from *Ulysses*, except for the vacuous, post-Parnellite Jesuit-educated, Dublin lower middle-class intellectual coterie. Odysseus was the resourceful man, particularly favoured by Athena in his difficulties. The central figure in *Ulysses* is a Jew in Jesuitical lower middle class Dublin. And there was no Athena.

An *Odyssey* without Athena!! But there was no need for Athena, and indeed no place for Athena, because there were no adventures. There was just the routine of life of a thin social stratum in the course of one day which was just like all other days. What part could Athena play in a story about the drab routine of daily life? From the little I remember of the Greek gods, I would have thought that Hera was the goddess of routine. She hated Athena. And I do not recall that she played any part in the *Odyssey*.

Of course *Ulysses* does get home again after a little sexual adventure and a bit of voyeurism, and Penelope is waiting for him, and perhaps they settle back into a domestic routine that was interrupted by the Trojan War, and Leopold Bloom comes home in the evening after going out in the morning. And coming home after being out, for however short or long a period, and regardless of what was done in between, is what is common to the *Odyssey* and *Ulysses*.

I remember Philip Orr telling an uncomprehending Radio Eireann interviewer that, from the Ulster Unionist viewpoint, the 1st World War was an incident within the Home Rule conflict. And so it was. But I don't think it is quite in the spirit of the *Odyssey* to see the Trojan War as an incident within the domestic life of Odysseus and Penelope.

And why in our greatest novel is Odysseus Latinised into *Ulysses*? Has it got something to do with the Jesuitry that seems to have been Joyce's cultural medium of existence?

Anyhow, the cult of *Ulysses*, the Latinised Greek, which seems to me to have nothing to do with Greece as a source of what is called European culture, is the Enlightenment of the would-be bourgeois intelligentsia, into whose hands the national culture fell when Fianna Fail went into denial about the North and the 'Treaty' a few years after the Second Vatican Council abolished Irish saints wholesale and degraded the Mass by Anglicising it.

(If the Mass is a mystery, it should surely be celebrated in a mysterious language!)

*Ulysses* is the great national novel as well as being the great universal novel. The nation needs special training and much coaxing to be able to read it. It is all about a day in the life of a sliver of lower-middle class Dublin in 1904.

The great national event of 1904 was that the Act enabling the abolition of

landlordism throughout the country had been passed and that action under it was beginning to be undertaken. A class of independent small farmers, peasants, brought itself into existence under the provisions of that Act, and dominated the course of events over the next two or three generations.

The Dublin social stratum depicted in *Ulysses* was abolished as a significant political influence before *Ulysses* was published. Remnants of it were possibly still about in the early twenties, and were living in withdrawal from the vulgar events that were marginalising them, and they found the depiction of their bygone world in *Ulysses* fascinating. But, for the peasantry who had come into their own as a property-owning democracy, *Ulysses* was a total irrelevance.

Tom Kettle would probably have appreciated *Ulysses* if he had not got himself killed fighting for the Empire against the Hun. He was a Jesuitically-trained intellectual of the post-Parnellite generation of Redmondite nationalism. His father had been a Land Leaguer, was a successful farmer on Land League terms, and that was sufficient to enable him to produce a son who would be a premature bourgeois-intellectual of a bourgeoisie that did not yet exist.

In 1914 he acted as if Ireland had actually become a partner in the Empire. He went off to make war for the cause and appealed to others to follow him. In the Summer of 1916 he went home on leave and made some nasty remarks about Connolly to Robert Lynd, who recorded them in his Introduction to a re-print by Home Rule publisher, Maunsel, of Connolly's *Labour In Irish History*. The gist of it was that Connolly was a simple-minded working class type whose capacity of understanding was wrecked by the European War and who collapsed into a wild, chaotic anarchist.

Connolly sat in his chair to be shot, content with what he had set in motion. It was Kettle's world that was wrecked. Things had gone beyond the reach of his understanding. He took his body back to the trenches, to be done away with, and wrote a sonnet in which he imagined himself to be in an utterly different war than was being fought, in a war for "*the secret Scriptures of the poor*".

The precocious, excessively-intellectualised, bourgeois-intellectual world of *Ulysses* disappeared from Irish national life with Tom Kettle.

The property-owning democracy swept Redmondism away in 1918, asserted



national independence, and fought in defence of it. It then had its own preoccupations, which Jesuitry had no part in, and therefore *Ulysses* had no part in them. The Jesuits were the benders of doctrine for the bourgeoisie in France. On the other hand, the Irish property-owning democrats were men of the world who were Catholic because human life did not have the completeness of animal life and needed a supplement, and because Protestantism, quite aside from the fact of the colonial expropriation connected with it, was excessively religious.

I lived into my twenties in that property-owning Catholic democracy, as part of a family that did not own property, and I found that I was irreligious by nature at the age of 13 or 14, when I stopped being an altar-boy and moved from the stage-management of religion to the audience. The claustrophobic clericalism described by so many writers in recent decades is something I never experienced. It is something I can understand only as an adaptation to British assumptions about Ireland, or as a city phenomenon, connected with the management of social masses disconnected from property.

The property-owning democracy was not illiterate. It was more thoroughly literate than any urban society I have experienced, but its literacy was very slightly connected with education. It was avidly interested in the world at large. And it had its own novelists, the chief of which was Canon Sheehan, who was an intellectual steeped in European culture, and a land reformer, as well as having the knack of writing stories.

The Jesuits decreed in 1917 that he was not a suitable novelist for independent Ireland. He was excluded from intellectual discourse, and is not mentioned at all in Colm Toibin's *Penguin Book Of Irish Fiction*. But he continued to be widely read for at least another forty years.

Donnchadha O Dualaing, the Radio Eireann personality, wanted to do a degree in Literature at Cork University. He had it in mind to 'do' Canon Sheehan. He was told authoritatively that Sheehan was worthless and was pointed to Elizabeth Bowen as the great (though unread) North Cork novelist. A thesis on Sheehan would have been ground-breaking. Another book on a fashionable English novelist would have been of no consequence.

Literary development from the actual literature of the democracy was suppressed in academia. Sean Faolain—I assume on a hint from Joyce—laid down the doctrine

that Irish writers should write on foreign subjects, and that they could only produce worthwhile Irish literature by first writing European literature. I could never see how that would work. There is no European literature as such. Flaubert does not write about Germany. Goethe does not write about France. Manzoni does not write about Austria. Dostoevsky does not write about Italy. Each of those components of European literature is intensely national.

Joyce wrote obsessively, in voluntary exile, about a fraction of Dublin around 1900, in a Jesuit ideological medium. What he wrote got a European following in the chaotic disorder of Europe brought about by Tom Kettle's war. And it seems to be more readable outside Ireland than in it, possibly because it fits stereotypes better than actuality.

But, though it is not read in Ireland—and the Irish therefore cannot get their "created consciousness from it—it has overshadowed intellectual life in Ireland since city life began to gain precedence over rural life, and education began to displace experience as the source of ideas.

\*

I began to write this as an introductory remark to an account of a meeting in Skibbereen that I took part in a couple of months ago. I had never before been in Skibbereen. My experience of Irish affairs comes from two vantage points: North-West Cork and West Belfast—which I experienced as very similar places. West Cork was a closed book to us. Ballydehob, in our imaginative view of the world, rivalled Timbuktu as the remotest and most obscure region of the Earth.

(PS: Since the above was written, a book by a Dutch academic on Joyce has come my way: *Joyce, Derrida, Lacan, And The Trauma Of History: Reading, Narrative and Postcolonialism* by Christine Van Boheemen-Saaf (Cambridge University Press, 2011). Her opening paragraphs put me in mind of something said, in plainer language, by Desmond Fennell in a discussion I had with him in Rome ten or fifteen years ago:

"This book argues the cultural-historical importance of James Joyce's Irish modernity. His projection of a traumatized discursivity encapsulating the life-in-death experience, his syncretic manner of representation, his paradoxical approach to Irish nationalism, his complex attitude to language and cultural memory anticipate insights which we are only beginning to grasp at the end of the century. Joyce, an Irish Catholic born in 1882, grappled with the realities of colonial experience and the hegemony of the English language; and this struggle

entailed an engagement with the evaporation of the presence of the material, and the devaluation or dissolution of art and truth, problems besetting contemporary culture. Not surprisingly, Joyce's writing has had an informative impact on contemporary theory...

...

"...Separated from an original meaning, the postcolonial subject can only mourn the gap that divides himself from the possibility of interiority and self-presence that might have been had history been different. In the case of an Irish writer growing up with English as his first language, the aspiring artist is forced to allude allegorically, and in the *sermo patrics* of the oppressor's language, to what can never be voiced with immediacy: the loss of a natural relationship to language, the lack of interiority of discourse and coherent selfhood. In his texts, Joyce gave material presence to that nothingness which Adorno and Lyotard... would later locate in World War...

...

"...Although Gaelic was all but extinct at the time Joyce was born, ...his life and his works nevertheless trace the symbolic event of the entry into language as a disruptive and violently fracturing moment splitting body from discourse... In other words, Joyce's work demonstrates an attitude to language which highlights the presence of a void or a gap opening up within representation and memory...

...

"...Joyce increasingly opened the void gaping between the 'foreign' and the 'familiar' to end up giving the materialisation of that void a local habitation and a name in *Finnegan's Wake*, published on the eve of World War 2, which inscribes the darkness and dislocation of discursive death as a blot upon the screen of history. I use the word blot, because *Finnegan's Wake* is both intensely funny and utterly unreadable in conventional narrative terms. But what seems important is not just that Joyce published an unreadable work. The point I want to make rests on the fact that this unreadable text, notwithstanding its unreadability, or perhaps entirely owing to its hermetic nature, became part of the cultural history of Western Europe as a recognised masterpiece...

"Joyce achieved this by inventing a curiously hybrid and covertly double strategy of storytelling in the oppressor's language, which unweaves its very texture as it narrates... Writing in the English language, Joyce refused to identify with the structure of predication of language, and points to the presence of an absence, a lacuna at the heart of his linguistic subjectivity. Instead of a story about the young Stephen Dedalus, we end up 'reading' (experiencing) a texture which, like Philomel's web, indirectly betrays the muted violence of its occasion..."

It is interesting that Professor Foster, who tells us that England brought to Ireland

"the priceless gift of the English language", and who is "our cleverest historian", and who writes his 'history' as literature, gets no mention in this book, nor does Professor Margaret O'Callaghan, who holds that the Irish language died a natural death.

The structure of Gaelic civilisation was broken up by a series of military conquests. An entirely alien structure of state was based on the final conquest. The widespread hangover of Irish language was then eroded over a century and a half by strict administrative exclusion from the life of the imposed State, which gave the English colonial stratum a monopoly of politics, property and the professions, and was given the *coup de grace* by the event called 'The Famine'.

The Irish were then made into one of the "English-speaking peoples". They were given a basic education in the English language. Pearse called it the *Murder Machine*. It seems, in mathematics and abstract literacy to have been superior to basic education for the masses in England (due to factors within Ireland). But it did not carry subjective Englishness with it.

The Irish became highly articulate in a foreign language, while few of them had more than the *cúpla focail* in their own, but the language they spoke remained a foreign language. They remained native in a foreign language.

At the age of 13 I could have functioned in either Irish or English. To the extent that I had written anything, I wrote it more easily in Irish than in English. When I had some reason to write some things a few years later, it was in English, but I wrote it, not in what might be called the spirit of the language, but with a sense of logical detachment from it. It was un-English English, but in the opposite direction from Joyce — not tending towards representing the incoherence of the objective situation, but towards unrepresentative coherence. I take this to have been due to the vastly different circumstance of life in Slieve Luacra and lower-middle class Dublin.

I can only take it on trust that, for the would-be lower middle class intelligentsia of Dublin in 1904, history appeared as a trauma and nightmare. And I can see grounds for it. Redmondite Parnellism did not know where or what it was. It did not know what history it was in. There is no general history. There is only the histories of the various social subjects.

When I was drawn, in the early 1970s, into giving an account of history in Ireland in order to understand what was going on

in Northern Ireland, it seemed obvious to me that there had been three peoples in Ireland in modern times: the Irish, defined by Britain as Papist; the Ulster Colony, which was Dissenting Protestant; and the Anglican colony, which had been set up as the ruling class over the others by the Williamite settlement of the 1690s. (I later found that an English administrator sent by Pitt to survey the country for the *Act of Union*, had seen the same thing.)

Each of these had its own history and its own interest.

The Anglican colony proved to be entirely parasitic. Its destiny, as seen by Grattan, was to encompass the others in a general *West British* national development, but it refused to undertake that venture.

It had little influence on the Ulster Colony, but it had considerable negative influence on the native population, over which it had total power by virtue of its monopoly of political power, land ownership, and the professions.

Its structure of power, the Irish Parliament, was abolished by its creator, the British Parliament, because its use of it had provoked rebellions — a minor one in the North and a major one in Wexford.

Soon after the abolition of the Irish Parliament, the native population, after a century of intimate subjugation, began to gather itself together, disentangle itself from Anglican political ideology, and formulate its own interests. It gained entry to the professions, acquired the right to own land, forced its way into Parliament, and established its own schools. But this was a long drawn-out process, and there were reasons why it was done largely within the general ideological system of the 18th century Parliament.

For example, the abolition of the Irish Parliament, which liberated it by subverting the Ascendancy, continued to be seen by it, as it was seen by the Ascendancy, as an act of subjugation. And, even in very recent times, Irish historians have criticised the 19th century national development for not being a development of the kind that Grattan proposed to the Ascendancy Parliament (e.g., S.J. Connelly).

This means that the colony which the Irish Parliament represented, and the people that was suppressed by that colony, are taken to have been a single social subject. The attempt to comprehend the history of the 19th century in those terms does lead to nightmare.

The major history of Ireland in the 18th

century was written by an Anglican rationalist, Lecky, from whom it seems Joyce got much of his history. But the blend of colonial and native, spiced up with Jesuitry and rationalism, is essentially unstable in practice and cannot serve as an ideological framework for coherent thought.

But, "*In the beginning was the deed*". The nightmare history was not ended by giving it eloquent literary representation. It was ended by the action of countrymen who had come into their own by re-possessing the land, who had shrugged off Redmondism, and who were untouched by Jesuitry.

The "trauma" element, of course, is the 'Famine'. But what struck me about the 'Famine', which I was told about chiefly by my grandmother, was the lack of trauma connected with it. It was remembered matter-of-factly.

The great difference between it and Auschwitz (which is central to Boheemen-Saaf's argument) is that it was not shocking to the Irish that the British could behave like that, as it was to some Jews that the Germans could behave like that. The Jews were at home in Germany, and according to a character in *Ulysses*, the British problem in Germany in 1904 was a problem with the Jews. But the Irish were never taken to be English, and nothing the English did to them could shock them.

And it seems to me that it was not the Jews who were most traumatised by Auschwitz, but the Germans themselves. The Jews who were substantially Jewish lived within the Gentile world while being at odds with it, assuming that it was hostile to them. They were stimulated by the extermination to intensive military/political activity which involved them in doing to others what others had done to them.

It was the Germans who were shocked to the point of disablement by what they did. As a national state, they were not quite seventy years old when Britain declared war on them for the second time in 1939. They were not skilled in these matters, as the British were. The relaxed culture of the petty kingdoms was still widespread amongst them. They had begun the Ref-ormation, but had not made it an instrument of State, as the British had. German Protestantism only became nationalist under Hitler.

Germany was internally viable after 1945 only because of the persistence of Catholic structures which, as international, could see things in perspective and relativise them.

Needless to say, the British were never

traumatised by any of the things they did to the Irish—or to any other peoples—and it was no moral problem to them to hold Irish fecklessness responsible for the 'Famine'. Or, as the sympathetic Englishman in *Ulysses* put it: "*It seems that history is to blame*".

"History" in English culture is a very flexible instrument. In some instances, it is the "determinist" illusion of "historicism", which has no actual existence, but which is believed in by the Irish and leads them to do absurd things. Or else it is something entirely objective, which is responsible for things which slovenly minds might attribute to British activity in the world.

Joyce presents the Englishman's statement as ridiculous, but I don't know where he stated a contrary view.

In the world of nightmare, the world of lower middle class Dublin in 1904, everything is ridiculous. There is nothing to be done about it, except picture it as a world of incoherent fragments. And that makes it a classic of the European shambles of the 1919 Peace Settlement in which it was born—and an irrelevance to the Ireland in which the countrymen who were absent from *Ulysses* had acted. Action is alien to this Ulysses.

"Lyotard is fascinated by Auschwitz as a deadlock of signification. Not only did the Germans exterminate the Jews, they also destroyed a large quantity of the records... necessary for a validation of that fact... Should we then have to conclude that history has no means of establishing its occurrence? Though it cannot be quantitatively measured it would still impress upon survivors the overwhelming presence of the emotional force of the event. The experience would be recorded as a 'feeling' aroused by the negative presentation of the indeterminate. *Mutatis mutandis*, the silence that the crime of Auschwitz imposes upon the history is a sign for the common person. Signs... are not referents to which are attached significations validatable under the cognitive regimen, they indicate that something which should be able to be put into phrases cannot be phrased in the accepted idioms" (Lyotard: *The Defferend...*). We can... transpose this situation to Irish history. Though the autochthonous language, and with it the directly transmissible cultural memory of destitution, starvation and slavery has been suppressed, that situation lives on in two ways: there is the sign of the absence of the language, and the non-figurative feeling, which travels through history divorced from referent. In other words, the lapsing of the language... is a sign that something which ought to be or to have been expressed cannot (yet) be uttered discursively. Neither the revival

of the Irish language—with its illusion that interiority has been regained by restoring the ancient speech, repressing the painful lapse in its own history—nor the turn to cosmopolitanism copes with, or addresses, the historical sign of the loss of the language and what that means: a muted history of suffering which works its effects on everyday life in the generation of nomadic affect disproportionate to the present occasion. Affect, no longer attached to story, no longer embodied in knowledge, hence no longer controllable, travels randomly like a will-o'-the-wisp... neither... to write in cosmopolitan English and become rich, or to write in the Gaelic language with a reclaimed interiority attempts to articulate and address the *feeling* attending the historical suppression of cultural memory. Unless that experience is confronted and mourned, however, it will keep haunting the present..." (p14-15).

OK!!

The will o' the wisp character of revivalism is demonstrated by *Cre na Cille*. I could not even attempt to read it. But I gather that it is an argument between corpses in a graveyard conducted in the style of *Finnigan's Wake*.

With regard to Auschwitz, what is it that "*cannot be phrased in accepted idioms*"? Presumably it is the reason why the Nazi elite decided to get the Jews out of Germany, and to exterminate them when they could find no other way of doing it.

Fascism was a compromise between Capitalism and Socialism which warded off Communism, and thus preserved something of the pre-1914 European social and political order that was undermined by the 1919 settlement imposed by Britain and France. It was on that ground that Churchill supported it and declared that in Italy he would be a Fascist.

Socialism, insofar as it gripped the masses, expressed a yearning for social stability against progressive disorder. This required that, within the compromise, the Progressive element in Capitalism should be restricted—the element that made it necessary for it always to upset its own applecart. The National Socialist Party identified that element as usury, money-lending.

Money-lending, called by the name of *credit*, was playing an ever greater part in the functioning of Capitalism. Jews were particularly associated with it by many others besides the National Socialists.

Racialism was not invented by Fascism, and was not general to Fascism. It was

a product of Enlightenment culture and science, and was rejected dogmatically by reactionary cultures like Catholicism.

In Nazi Germany the Jews were characterised as a race, and it must be said that this came close to their own characterisation of themselves taken as a whole. And, as a race dedicated to money-lending, they were seen as an economic solvent which made stability impossible.

It seems to have been common to progressive circles in Britain before 1914 that the world was made up of superior and inferior races, and that the inferior races must be exterminated in the cause of Progress. And a very senior Liberal politician boasted in a famous book that the Anglo-Saxons were the greatest exterminating race the world has ever seen. And he classified the world into "*dear*" and "*cheap*" races.

At Nuremberg the German leaders were tried under laws that did not exist—and which have not since been generally applied—and they were not allowed to plead in their defence the precedent of what their prosecutors and Judges had done. The Nuremberg Trials therefore were Kafkaesque. They were in the nature of a nightmare.

The Germans are not allowed to wake up from the nightmare. They must apologise for ever more, and not know what they are apologising for because they must not reason about it. They can be asked *Why?* for ever more, but they dare not answer, because they must believe that their actions were not *caused*—causation in this regard being seen as justification.

What they did was a free act—an act without cause or reason—the kind of thing French existentialist novelists looked for in vain.

They were in a somewhat similar situation in the 1920s, after a weak, Anglophile Social Democratic Government made a false confession of War Guilt in order to get the Starvation Blockade lifted.

National Socialism broke the spell then. What will break it now?

It is hardly conceivable that the Germans will carry on indefinitely as they are, making things mindlessly, afraid to think, in spiritual thrall to Britain, a mental morass at the heart of Europe, in an existential situation expressed by *Finnegan's Wake*.

Well, that concludes the preliminary remarks. The article about Skibbereen may follow next month!

**Brendan Clifford**



## Historical Misdirection

Jack Lane said that it was important to call historical events by their proper names. Otherwise it can be impossible to assess their real significance. But this was done all the time as a shorthand way of explanation. But such sloppiness can lead to Humpty Dumpty’s way with words: “*When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less*”. And that has obvious problems if we want to speak sensibly about anything.

For example, it is quite misleading to talk of a *Famine* here in the 1840s. By doing so, the substance of the atrocity is totally and inevitably distorted. Another example is the Stormont regime being called a *State*, which it never was nor could be; or the peoples there being merely *two traditions, two cultures, two tribes*, etc. etc. when *two nations* would be the most apt description.

It is similar with the *Articles of Agreement* signed on 6th December 1921. This was quite simply *not a Treaty*, no matter how often it is described as such. It could not be a Treaty as only one party was recognised as an independent state, the UK, and the other was treated as a Dominion, a subordinate, and it was signed under threat of renewed war by one party on the other. It could hardly even be called an unequal Treaty as the Chinese call forced Treaties because the subordinate government was not even consulted before it was signed.

The event known as the civil war could not be such as both sides agreed on the form of state they claimed to want - a Republic. One side wanted to preserve the Republic that existed and the other side believed that they had to destroy it under the threat of renewed war in order to re-establish it again! It was not freedom to achieve freedom but the destruction of the freedom that existed. It was claimed to be a stepping stone but stepping stones can take you in two directions - backwards or forwards and this was a stepping stone back into the British Empire.

It was in effect a continuation of the War of the Independence whose whole *raison d’être* was the establishment and defence of the independent Republic that had been voted for, established and defended in arms for 3 years.

Because of the description of the war over the *Article of Agreement* being called a civil war we are told that the two parties that emerged are *civil war parties* are thereby rendered inappropriate and redundant as political entities because that particular war no longer

exists. This is how a misleading description of an event gives a misleading description of what exists today and has done so for nearly a century. It assumes that the very nature of our political structure is misguided and irrelevant. The assumption is that society has lived in a false political consciousness for a century with irrelevant political parties. Our politics are in a permanent time warp.

But the origin of party division that reflected the division over the acceptance or not of the *Articles of Agreement* encapsulated at that point a fundamentally different approach to relations between Ireland and the UK. The relationship between the two countries was the defining and substantial issue for Ireland over centuries and continues to be so to the present day as the war in Northern Ireland showed and as Brexit has shown.

It is quite natural therefore that the political parties of any country represent different approaches to the societies’ essential, consuming issue which was and is the relationship between the two states and the level of independence/subservience between the two. That relationship obviously changes but as the French say, *plus ça change plus la meme chose*.

But a person such as Maurice Earls in a recent talk says “*My argument then is that the war between the Treatyites and Anti-treatyites was not especially significant either in itself or in its afterlife.*” That approach permeated his talk and is an attempt to explain away most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century history of Ireland or at the very least gives all politics here for the past century an air of unreality. (*Small Potatoes and Civil War*, September 20th, 2019.) This view permeates all Liberal/left thinking about Ireland’s last century of politics. Many, especially those on the Left, regard it all as matter of mass delusion on the part of the electorate for the past century as they insist on treating any deviation from a left/right split as unreal and misconceived. But it is they who are misconceived in trying to impose a structure that is simply not appropriate and this is the main reason the Left has been left behind by the electorate though Connolly showed the way out of this for the Labour movement. But only lip service is ever paid to his work and the substance of it and he is just given a perfunctory acknowledgement by the Left.

Martin Mansergh takes another approach. Writing in the *The Irish Catholic*,

31 October, he warns about the “*Dangers of a constant revolutionary mentality*” and the Irish ‘civil war’ was a result of people who wanted to continue this revolution. The problem with this is that there was no revolution in Ireland. The one and only successful revolution in Ireland had already happened – the tenant farmers after decades of war had got rid of landlordism – a successful class revolution.

The war that began after 1916 was a war for political independence, no more and no less and as it was known to everyone who participated in it. I knew some of them – they were determined, capable and courageous – but they were not revolutionaries. They had got what they wanted in most ways but not political independence. They wanted to govern themselves and to continue doing what they were doing in every other way. Moreover the whole world agreed with them. They were told that a world war had been fought for the freedom of small nations by British Empire, that the US had entered the war to ensure national self determination across the world, and that the Russian Revolution supported all efforts at the self determination of all subject nations. It was the *zeitgeist* of the age. Nobody was against it!

After voting overwhelmingly for this the Irish found to their great surprise that they had to fight a war to actually get it. They fought the war to a standstill by July 1921. The effort was then stymied in December 1921 by the British government successfully splitting the Sinn Fein leadership and under the threat of renewed war getting them to accept a so-called Treaty and abolish the Republic.

Mansergh describes the situation then as: “*There is no question that the public at large post- Treaty wanted a return to normality.*” What normality? The pre-Treaty normality was an Independent Irish Republic and that was exactly what the ‘*anti-Treatyites*’ were fighting for. It was THEY who wanted a return to normality. They were the conservatives in this situation - not the ‘*revolutionaries.*’ What other pre-treaty normality was there that anyone wanted to return to?

The new abnormal (revolutionary?) element was that created by those who had to set up a new mercenary army to terrorise and crush the volunteer army that had created the independent Republic.

Mr . Mansergh is another person who should use words to mean what they actually mean and not be another *Humpty Dumpty*.

There was no revolution, there was no Treaty and there was no civil war.



## Beyond Our Ken!

SYNOPSIS: This article brings to a conclusion a series that began in the July 2018 issue. The series was prompted by the *Irish Times* publication in June of that year of transcripts, edited by Ronan McGreevy, of a series of post-retirement interviews given by Lemass in 1967. Even though the very texts provided by McGreevy contradicted the mythological spin he put on them, certain myths still persist, regurgitated by some who should know better. I here continue my earlier rebuttals of the mythology. I argue that what are regularly described as "disastrous" Dev policies of pre-Second World War and wartime protectionism were in fact necessary and beneficial to most. Moreover, I point out that they were, in fact, Lemass policies. The *Irish Times* 'school of history' attempt to establish a gulf between Dev and Lemass is not borne out by the evidence. Dev always gave Lemass his head on economic policy, including the move away from Protectionism, and it was with Dev as Taoiseach that Ken Whitaker's *Economic Development* had been fast tracked in 1958.

This article concludes with debunking some mythology surrounding Whitaker himself, not least contained in the hagiography which he himself shamelessly sponsored. The "*Whitaker economic miracle*" —of opening up the economy to multinational investment in establishing unskilled assembly line operations—had no greater a successful life span than the protectionist era that preceded it. If Lemass had been astute enough to run with Whitaker at his best, he was no less astute in humiliating a Whitaker who had atrophied to his unimaginative worst, when Lemass backed Donogh O'Malley's free secondary education revolution, in the face of Whitaker's obdurate obstructionism.

Part 6 of this series, in July, took issue with the bad history of the 1930s Economic War contained in an *Irish Independent* editorial on February 22nd. In the *Irish Independent* of July 8th we had a repeat of bad history from Dan O'Brien:

"War made the state and the state made war.' This is the pithy theory of one historian on the role of conflict in creating the sort of modern states in which we in Ireland live today. That theory is contested, but what is not contested is the fact that the number of wars between countries has fallen dramatically since 1945. But if there has been a decline in hot wars, there has been a lot more talk recently of economic wars. Ireland had one such war with Britain in the 1930s. Among other things, it clobbered Irish farmers by closing off their main market. It is not much of an exaggeration to say that the way things are going with Brexit, something akin to another economic war between the two sides of the Irish Sea could erupt in the coming months."

O'Brien was charging that the War of

Independence created a State that, under de Valera, had chosen to wage Economic War on Britain. Who exactly were clobbered in the Ireland of the 1930s, and who experienced social progress during that decade, I will address presently. But in the meantime, to repeat what historian T. Ryle Dwyer pointed out in the *Irish Examiner*, 4th March 2014: "*The de Valera government did not start the Economic War with Britain... but did welcome the opportunity it afforded to introduce tariffs against British imports. Lemass was the driving force of this protectionism*".

In the *Irish Times* this July 26th, Stephen Collins went further than anybody else since the Blueshirts in his denunciation of Irish democracy for having enthusiastically embraced what he categorised as the "*unmitigated disaster*" represented by Dev:

"Eamon de Valera was elected to lead this country in 1932 on a promise to tear up the provisions of the treaty of

1921. The economic war with Britain instigated by his decision to abolish the oath and default on our national debt by ending payment of land annuities was an unmitigated disaster for this country. Far from undermining support for Dev, the economic war galvanised a majority of people behind him in a do-or-die battle with the British, and it cast WT Cosgrave and the former leadership into the role of aiding and abetting the enemy."

This is the *Irish Times* columnist who, as guest speaker of the Collins/Griffith Commemoration Society, gave an oration at the grave of Michael Collins in August 2017 where he denounced President Michael D. Higgins by name for "*simplistic analyses*", and whose remarks were so over the top that his own "*paper of record*" chose not to report them. As an antidote to that columnist's hysteria, it is worth taking a further look at the facts of actual economic history. In his 1994 book, *Ireland: A New Economic History 1780-1939*, Cormac Ó Gráda was derisive about the rhetoric of Fianna Fáil during the 1930s, but was so thoroughgoing in his analysis of what unfolded as to spell out the economic facts exactly as he found them:

"The 'Economic War' was a phoney war: no blood spilt, no diplomatic relations severed. In an era when trade warfare was commonplace throughout the world, this particular Anglo-Irish row received scant attention outside Ireland and the UK. Yet the term 'Economic War' was a boon to the new Fianna Fáil administration. The 'war' began with the refusal of Fianna Fáil to continue paying certain 'land annuities'... a tax levied on Irish peasant proprietors to pay for the cost to the (British) exchequer of compensating Irish landlords... Fianna Fáil questioned the fairness of the annual payment of £5 million on both legal and moral grounds... On rhetorical grounds, Fianna Fáil's case that Britain should have been more understanding at a time when Britain was seeking favours—in respect of its own debt repayments—from the USA, was a stronger one. For Ireland the annuities represented a considerable drain, about 3 per cent of national income. Moreover, thousands of militant farmers had been forcing the Irish Government's hand, by refusing or being unable to make their payments to the Irish exchequer. Still, when the Irish Government failed to honour the July 'gale' in 1932 the UK

**The so-called 'Treaty' and the so-called 'Civil War' by Jack Lane**

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Due to pressure of space, Part Two of Jack Lane's *The so-called 'Treaty' and the so-called 'Civil War'* has been held over to the January issue.



immediately imposed special duties of 20 per cent on livestock in order to raise the money. When the rates originally set proved too low, they were raised to 40 per cent on livestock and 30 per cent on other agricultural products, enough to bring in the disputed £5 million per annum. Fianna Fáil retaliated by imposing special duties on British imports and export bounties on certain Irish agricultural products... Ireland suffered much more in economic terms than Britain during the 'Economic War'. Though those worst affected were a minority of strong farmers (never noted for their support of Fianna Fáil), all farmers were affected... The timing of the settlement is best explained by British eagerness to end the conflict. If the Irish 'won' the war it was for political reasons. There were other more important things to worry about in 1938" (pp 411-12 and 416).

"For de Valera and Fianna Fáil, the settlement of the 'Economic War' proved a boon. The chief architect of tariff protection in the 1930s, Industry and Commerce Minister Seán Lemass, quipped that it didn't matter who started the 'Economic War', 'the main thing is that we won it'. Another minister (Seán T. O'Kelly, later to become President) bragged that 'we had whipped John Bull' and would 'do it again'. In the tense and heavy atmosphere of the 1930s, such rhetoric counted for much. But if nationalist fervour favoured Fianna Fáil, so did the economic effect of their policies, at least in the short run. Industrial workers and businessmen gained from protection, as did those who were entitled to Fianna Fáil's more generous social welfare. The notion that Fianna Fáil backwoodsmen 'neglected' the cities, especially Dublin, is a myth. Lemass and O'Kelly both represented largely working-class constituencies, and Fianna Fáil's share of the Dublin vote increased considerably during the 1930s. Small farmers, who were prepared to make temporary sacrifices, were shielded from the worst effects of the 'Economic War' by tillage subsidies, dole payments, and land transfers. Together the coalition of small farmers, the new bourgeoisie, and urban workers were numerous enough to give de Valera the greatest victory of his long political career in the General Election of 1938. While Fianna Fáil had successfully targeted 'the urban poor and the twenty-five acre farmer', a prominent Cumann na nGaedheal spokesman (Desmond FitzGerald) was left to lament at the height of the 'Economic War': 'One of the misfortunes of the present situation is that the economic war is hitting most severely the very section of the people most favourable to the English connection, they are suffering relatively far more than the bulk of those on whose votes the fates of governments depends.' The policies of the 1930s were not thus quite as irrational, politically or economically, as most commentators insisted at the time. The problem lay less with the pursuit of

such policies in a context of world-wide trade destruction and unemployment than the determination of both Fianna Fáil in 1945 and the Coalition Government in 1948 to continue with them in the altered post-war circumstances. Their limitations should have been obvious by then" (432-33).

Ó Gráda illustrated from Census of Population data how, at 199,000 in 1936, total industrial employment had reached a level that was as much as 26 percent above its 1926 level of 157,000, notwithstanding the Great Depression afflicting capitalist economies world wide. Total employment in those industries enjoying tariff protection expanded from 45,000 in 1932 to 80,000 in 1939 and to 89,000 in 1947. And he took issue with Garret FitzGerald's arguments that sought to minimise the employment achievements of Fianna Fáil during the 1930s:

"The Census of Industrial Production implies virtual stasis in industrial employment in the 1920s and a substantial rise in the 1930s. It reported... (that in transportable goods industries) employment rose from 57,758 in 1926 to 62,608 in 1931 and 99,656 in 1937. However, critics have interpreted the population censuses of 1926 and 1936 as implying no net improvement in employment. In Garret FitzGerald's view, the extra employment reported in annual industrial censuses was a mirage, a reflection of better statistical coverage over time. Mary Daly, on the other hand, has argued that the population census reports of 1926 and 1936 are consistent with an increase... Yet whatever the change over the 1926-36 decade as a whole, the contrast between the pre- and post-1932 periods remains. After all, if better coverage accounted for some of the alleged increase in employment after 1931, it must have equally concealed a decline in industrial employment before then" (p 397).

In the *'Irish Times'* this September 6th, in effectively recognising what half a century ago Brendan Clifford described as *"The Economics of Partition"*, Professor John FitzGerald, grandson of Desmond and son of Garret, differed from both of them in highlighting the comparatively positive outcomes of 26 Counties protectionism in the 1930s, until a War economy subsequently brought about a 6 Counties revival:

"A century ago, when the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland were established, the North had a strong manufacturing base, unlike the rest of the island. However, the economic conditions between the wars were such that Northern Ireland grew very slowly in its first 20 years, even more slowly than the South. The second World War saw a major increase in demand for ships and other industrial

output from Northern Ireland. As a consequence, the Northern Ireland economy performed very well between 1938 and 1960." ("Northern Ireland's economy is threatened by more than Brexit").

This series began in response to Ronan McGreevy's collection of articles in the *'Irish Times'* on 2nd June 2018, where his commentaries patently misconstrued the transcripts of the Lemass tapes he produced, as he sought to build a wall between—rather than a road from—de Valera to Lemass:

"The 1950s was the darkest decade, marked by emigration of nearly 50,000 people a year. One of the great what-ifs of Irish history is what would have happened if Seán Lemass had become taoiseach earlier. Would much of the stagnation of the 1950s have been avoided if the economic plan published by Lemass a year after he took over from Éamon de Valera had been introduced earlier?... The plan, entitled *'Economic Development'*, published in 1958 and drawn up mostly by civil servant Ken Whitaker opened Ireland up to foreign investment and sought to dismantle the protectionist nature of the Irish State."

And, 15 months on, McGreevy was still at it, at the Kennedy Summer School in New Ross, as reported for the *'Irish Times'* by Harry McGee this September 7th: *"Mr McGreevy said it was clear from the recordings that Lemass was getting increasingly frustrated with an ageing De Valera in the 1950s. He thought he was 'losing his grip and no longer the man he was'."*

*"A man is not primarily a witness against something. That is only incidental to the fact that he is a witness for something."* So said Whittaker Chambers, one time editor of *'Time'* magazine, a former CPUSA activist and later Soviet spy, who subsequently became a stool pigeon, and whose 1948 appearance before the House of Un-American Activities Committee unleashed a wave of McCarthyite witch-hunts in the USA. His utterances were a mixture of fact, fiction and fantasy. Despite the similarity in names, Whitaker/Chambers is a wholly Irish phenomenon, where it is extremely difficult to distinguish between biography and autobiography. And 'our own' Whitaker (1916-2017), while primarily a witness on his own behalf, also sought to 'bear witness' against de Valera.

*'T.K. Whitaker—Portrait of a Patriot'*, by Anne Chambers, was published in 2014, and her hero is referred to by the more familiar name of Ken throughout the body of the book. In his *Foreword* to the biography/hagiography that he himself had sponsored, Whitaker wrote:

"Pressed many years ago to write an autobiography, I offered the excuse of some forgotten cynic that 'no man's reputation was ever enhanced by his autobiography'... Since I was responsible for starting Anne on her writing career... I thought it was right she should be encouraged to repay the compliment!"

Chambers's own Introduction began: "In 2001, in a countrywide ballot, outpolling historical icons, politicians, celebrities, footballers and pop stars, an 85-year-old former civil servant was voted 'Irishman of the Twentieth Century' by Irish television viewers."

As close to an autobiography as could be got, it would not be stretching it to describe the book as having been authored by Whitaker/Chambers, but I will stick to the convention of formally distinguishing between direct quotes from Whitaker himself and his echo throughout Chambers' hagiography, and whose narrative described the protectionist phase as follows:

"The election of a Fianna Fáil government in 1932 heralded a major change in economic policy, ushering in what Ken later referred to as 'a phase of lavish and indiscriminate industrial protection'. This was to last until the mid-1950s, when the revolutionary strategy devised by the former clerical officer from Drogheda would finally offer the people of Ireland an alternative to almost four decades of despondency, isolation and poverty. In 1932, however, self-sufficiency was the goal of the government, pursued by means of a system of protective tariffs... At the time, however, the drive towards economic protectionism in Ireland was approved by no less a person than the noted economist John Maynard Keynes... in 1933, who commented: 'If I were an Irishman I should find much to attract me in the economic outlook of your present government towards self-sufficiency.' Keynes's advice, as Ken noted many years later in 2000, 'in my opinion was the worst advice an influential economist ever gave to Irish policy-makers. It confirmed the then government in persisting in a futile attempt, for a small and poor country, to reach full employment, at acceptable incomes, by protecting domestic production'. The reversal of that policy in 1958 would become Ken Whitaker's outstanding national achievement" (pp 31-33).

"The protectionism and self-sufficiency promoted by Arthur Griffith and (Griffith's) Sinn Féin were abandoned by the first Free State government in favour of free trade, the most generally accepted and widely practised economic philosophy of the day... In 1931 Britain changed tack and embarked on an economic protectionist policy that threatened the fragile Irish industrial sector. The abandonment of the gold standard revived protection-

ism everywhere as each country strove desperately to limit the impact of the Depression on its own economy... Unemployment increased and uncertainty prevailed worldwide" (pp 30-31).

But Chambers' own narrative contradicted her assertion that 1930s Ireland constituted "a decade of despondency" under Dev's Government:

"The lack of private capital and the reluctance of the Irish banking system to invest in the new state led to the establishment of state-run monopolies, such as the Industrial Credit Corporation, Aer Lingus, Aer Rianta, the Irish Life Assurance Company and Ceimicí Teo (Irish Chemicals), all under the direction of the energetic minister for industry and commerce, Seán Lemass... A major building programme, which delivered thousands of new homes, was also initiated" (pp 31-32).

Notwithstanding Whitaker's quibbling on the margins, Chambers' narrative further illustrated how no other policy but protectionism had been feasible in the 1930s:

"This change in national economic policy was further marked by the refusal of the Irish government to pay the much-resented land annuities, constituting almost 18 per cent of the state's badly needed funding, to the British government, which reacted by imposing a 20 per cent duty on imports from the Free State. De Valera in turn retaliated with duties on British imports, and an 'economic war' of retaliatory tariffs and quotas between the two countries commenced. Britain's initial 20 per cent duty applied to all agricultural produce, including the vital exports of live cattle, and the Irish Free State was also excluded from the preferential tariff rates offered to other Commonwealth countries at the Ottawa Conference in 1932. As Ken observed, it was political as much as economic factors that fuelled 'the heated atmosphere of retaliation... not conducive to any careful adjustment of aid to need'. The new government's policy of self-sufficiency was promoted, he feels, 'with more political zest than economic calculation', protection being granted 'rather freely and with little scientific measurement of need'. It was a miscalculation he ensured would not be repeated when it came to the formulation of his alternative economic plan" (p 32).

But neither could there be any alternative to the Dev/Lemass economic policy during the 1939-45 World War. While it is not at all clear whether or not Chambers and/or Whitaker were frowning on Dev's refusal to yield up the State's ports for Britain's war, their narrative nonetheless more or less conceded that Dev's Government had laid the economic basis for

being able to effectively defend Ireland's wartime neutrality:

"The outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 came as little surprise. 'We were perhaps better prepared for the war than the countries actually fighting in it', Ken recalls, 'but it gave a physiological defence (did she/he/they mean 'psychological'—MOR?) for all the difficult things the government had to do and it put the focus very firmly on the economy.' The resultant shortage of supplies caused a sharp rise in inflation, a rapid increase in the cost of living, the inevitable rationing and black marketeering and, later, a marked increase in infant mortality from tuberculosis. The worst effects of the tariff war with Britain had eased on the signing of an Anglo-Irish Agreement in April 1938, but de Valera's refusal of access to Irish ports for the British fleet, meanwhile, invoked additional retaliatory embargoes on essential imports. To oversee the effective importation of supplies and services throughout the country during the 'Emergency', a new Department of Supplies was established with Lemass as minister. He and his departmental secretary proved a formidable team. The position endowed Lemass with an extraordinary degree of control and over every department of state, including Finance" (p 59).

Chambers might have added that Dev always gave Lemass his head, as soon as he wished to raise it, but she chose not to. And that this remained the case in 1957, as soon as Lemass decided that the time had come to change course, can also be inferred by the discerning reader, notwithstanding the nasty, snide, and vainglorious tone now taken by the Whitaker/Chambers narrative:

"By 1957, nowhere in the public arena was the difference between the worn-out policy of protectionism and the energising policy of free trade better exemplified than in the age profile and economic insensibility of the country's newly-elected 75-year-old Taoiseach Éamon de Valera. Though by then almost sightless and increasingly remote, 'The Chief' retained his legendary aura and still clung to the levers of power, ruling his cabinet through ties of loyalty and awe. Unseeing and indifferent to the practicalities of a collapsing economy and a despondent people, de Valera 'lacked the capacity to act on the economic challenge...' (quoting from Treatyite Tim Pat Coogan's hostile biography—MOR)... He had become, as Ken succinctly puts it, 'a symbol of *Éire passé*'..." (pp 120-21).

And yet, behind Chambers' highly personalised abuse of that Taoiseach, her narrative could not avoid revealing that it had been none other than "blind" Dev himself who would give Whitaker the green light, as soon as he was ready to



come up with and propose an alternative economic policy:

"More than an unsighted political leader, however, stood between the economic survival of the Republic and the doomsday scenario with which it was faced. Between June 1951 and March 1957 there were three changes of government, with no fewer than four different ministers at the helm in Finance. There was little opportunity to develop an alternative economic policy that didn't involve merely clinging to protectionism. With an overall majority, however, the new Fianna Fáil government that took office in March 1957 looked set to run the distance and, despite the physical and philosophical impediments of its leader, it had the political freedom to tackle the economic impasse. Already there were signs of more positive intent... Ever the consummate politician, he (Dev) listened to the advice of his trusted lieutenant and confidant, Seán Lemass, and realised that the time had come to set out on a different economic path... Seán MacEntee was adroitly sidelined in the new government. James Ryan, a close ally of Lemass, was appointed minister for finance instead... In a departure from the protectionism of which he was principal architect, minister for industry and commerce Lemass promised a state-financed capital programme, amendments to the Control of Manufactures Act, abolition of import tariffs, provision of capital investment and the modernisation of agricultural practices..." (pp 122-23).

"It is significant that the now famous 1958 plan, which was to become synonymous with Ken Whitaker's name and which perhaps did more than anything else to win him the accolade 'Irishman of the Twentieth Century' did not suddenly emerge as a blinding light illuminating the darkness... From early 1957, in what Ken refers to as 'this dark night of the soul', what would become 'Economic Development' began to take shape... On 17 December the cabinet considered his request to continue the study to completion... Although he had secured his own minister's approval, Ken's proposal had yet to run the gauntlet of other ministers, including the 'chief architect of protectionism', the Tánaiste, Lemass, and the Taoiseach, de Valera. Where Lemass was concerned, Ken found he was pushing an open door. 'You could not ask for a better minister if you wanted to put new ideas forward. After all, he was the apostle of protectionism, so if you could convince him that it was time to move away from it, there was nobody else in the cabinet who would defend it.' De Valera 'withdrew from the whole thing and left it to Lemass', but not before later claiming, as Ken good-humouredly recalls, 'that free trade had been his policy from the beginning... He sort of claimed it retrospectively!' With full cabinet endorsement secured, Ken lost no time..." (pp 125 and 136).

But Dev had never been a dogmatic Griffithite when it came to economic policy. He had "*left it to Lemass*" from start to finish in their common political enterprise. Lemass himself may well have been a Griffithite true believer to begin with, but whether or not he had held fast to it as an ideological creed, he saw protectionism as the only appropriate policy to pursue in the real economic world of the Great Depression and World War Two, and Dev pragmatically accepted Lemass's judgement in that regard. As soon as Lemass came to a conclusion that protectionism had run its course and reached a dead end, and now needed to be dismantled, Dev did not demur and was quite content to "*Let Lemass Lead On!*" — to quote what would become the Fianna Fáil slogan for the 1965 General Election. In spite of all the spiteful and supercilious nature of the Whitaker/Chambers commentary on Dev, their narrative could not mask the fact that as soon as Whitaker began producing what was deemed worthwhile, it was the "*blind*" Taoiseach who had ensured that it would be fast-tracked:

"By May 1958 the first draft of the 249-page document 'Economic Development' was completed. On 29 May a proof copy was presented to the government, whose rapidity of response must surely have set a record. The day following its presentation, the cabinet recommended 'as a matter of urgency' that the document be examined by all state and semi-state bodies, with observations to be forwarded to the minister for finance no later than 20 June... On 22 November 'Economic Development' was finally published, bearing an acknowledgement written by Ken Whitaker: 'This study of national development problems and opportunities was prepared by the Secretary of the Department of Finance (TKW himself), with the cooperation of others in, or connected with the public service....' (pp 137 and 143).

Chambers quoted Whitaker's own 2002 self-evaluation:

"It had become clear by the 1950s that the economic policies pursued up to then were ineffective and inappropriate. The reversal of these policies—the decision to abandon protectionism in favour of competitive participation in a free trade world and to welcome foreign investment instead of virtually prohibiting it—was the greatest change of my time as a public servant" (p 120).

She further quoted his 1978 boast:

"... 'Among the salient features of the 1960s are an arrest of the population decline, an increase of over 4 per cent in GNP... The Republic, indeed, for most of this decade enjoyed what has been described as 'a virtuous cycle of growth'..." (p 168).

It was a proud boast, and I will not take it from him, although others have. In a book review for the 'Irish Independent' on 5th June 2016, Dan O'Brien elaborated:

"Sean Lemass was an over-rated Taoiseach. Lauded mandarin TK Whitaker was a 'neo-liberal' who had less influence on this republic than is commonly thought. Ireland's economy and society changed much less after the dismal 1950s than is often believed. These claims are contained in what may be one of the most profoundly revisionist histories of recent decades. They would be taken with a shovel of salt if they had been written by a young academic out to make a name. But they are not. Mary Daly is the grande dame of academic historians, now retired from UCD and currently head of the very august Royal Irish Academy. Her new book — 'Sixties Ireland' — looks afresh at what most see as an inflection point in this State's history. The conventional wisdom is that in 1958 Whitaker, then a young secretary-general of the department of finance, single-handedly penned the masterplan for Ireland's opening to the rest of the world. This led to the end of the protracted and chronic economic underperformance that had raised questions about the very viability of the independent Irish State. A year after writing this plan, Eamon de Valera retired as Taoiseach and Sean Lemass took his place. The new leader was a moderniser who embraced Whitaker's proposals for ending the protectionism of the previous three decades. With these two dynamic men in charge, the accepted narrative goes, the economy began to turn around as the swinging Sixties started to swing. Daly is having none of this. Her new book aims to up-end this conventional wisdom. She makes a very convincing case that the 'long 1960s' — the period from 1957 to 1973 — was much more about continuity than change..."

"If the book will cause some questioning of Whitaker's legacy, it will also make some think again about his politics. Although Daly unwisely describes his original proposals as 'neo-liberal' (a silly term normally used only by the left), she is right in saying that many of his original proposals were indeed of the kind that would have today's usual suspects shrieking charges of 'neo-liberalism'. In his blueprint, Whitaker proposed tax cuts funded by reducing spending on subsidies. He advocated tight control of public spending, an end to regional incentives for industry and the abolition of rent controls. Above all, he wanted one objective — economic growth — to override all others. Such a stance would involve 'ignoring goals to create jobs, promote regional development or preserve small farms', Daly writes. Having established that the first big exercise in economic planning marked no great rupture with the past, it is easy for Daly to take the next step and claim that the notion of boom times

arriving in the 1960s is largely wrong. It is even easier, given all the available data from the time, to support her conclusion that there was no dramatic growth surge. She points out, for instance, that there was no increase in employment over the entire decade between the censuses of 1961 and 1971. What Daly doesn't say is that because the population rose, every person at work was supporting more people who weren't. This is reflected in the data on Ireland's GDP per capita that she cites. In 1960 it was 61 per cent of the average of 15 peer European countries. By 1973 it had slipped to 59 per cent..."

As I have said, I will not take the economic recovery of the 1960s from Whitaker, for which the go ahead had been given by Dev no less than by Lemass. But the Whitaker model could only go so far before running out of steam. The USA's Whittaker Chambers had written: "*I am a man of the Right because I mean to uphold capitalism in its American version. But I claim that capitalism is not, and by its essential nature cannot conceivably be, conservative.*" Change "*American*" to "*Irish*" and the same could be said of 'our own' Ken Whitaker. I disagree with O'Brien's rebuke to Daly for "*unwisely*" describing Whitaker's original proposals as "*neo-liberal*". For what else were they? The abandonment of Protectionism and the opening up to multinational investment did achieve results in the 1960s but, when the economy once again began running into trouble, it found TKW devoid of the capacity for any further strategic thinking. He jumped ship. The Chambers narrative related:

"Why Ken Whitaker left the Department of Finance in 1969 (moving over to become Governor of the Central Bank), at the relatively young age of fifty-two, remains a matter of speculation... Diplomatically, he sought to assuage public disquiet or controversy regarding his departure. 'As far as leaving the Department of Finance is concerned', he told a reporter in February 1969, 'many of the things I played a part in are now well established and the department is well equipped technically and administratively to carry on without me'. Nevertheless, it is obvious, both from the available personal record and from the opinions expressed to this author, that the Department of Finance represented for him, not merely 'the best years of my life' but also, as he candidly admits, the pinnacle of his public service: 'I never thought the Central Bank, a more remote although respectable institution, was as important an institution as the Department of Finance.' For him, Finance represented the heart of the public service... Despite media comments at the time, which hinted at a contretemps with (Minister for Finance) Charles Haughey as a reason for his retirement, Ken is

emphatic that he 'was not pushed' but left having accomplished all he could do at Finance. Even so, he readily admits that it was a difficult decision to walk away from so crucial and fulfilling a position. With the economy experiencing a dangerous dip, a third 'Programme for Economic Expansion', to cover the years 1969-72, was announced just three weeks before his departure... Yet the 'very high and lonely responsibility', as he described it, of the governorship (of the Central Bank) seemed an odd choice for someone with a proven preference for being a 'team player'. His departure perhaps points to more personal reasons" (pp 191-92).

At which point, a bewildered Chambers could only revert to an attempt to scapegoat Haughey.

As the 1970s unfolded, it became increasingly obvious that the Whitaker legacy of an industrial policy with such a liberal *laissez faire* approach to multinational investment was no longer fit for purpose. In July 1980, during the period of Office of the first Haughey Fianna Fáil Government, the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) commissioned the Telesis Consultancy Group to undertake a '*Review of Industrial Policy*'. In the '*Irish Independent*' on 24th June 1999, its then Economics Correspondent Brendan Keenan reminisced:

"One still remembers the fuss created by the Telesis report of 1982. Its thesis, from the American consultants of the same name, was that Ireland's strategy of attracting foreign multinationals with generous tax breaks and grants was not delivering the goods. Telesis had, of course, been commissioned because of a general feeling of precisely that. Unemployment was stubbornly high, economic growth had been below trend for most of the 1970s, and the public finances were in a mess. How things change! Now the strategy championed by the IDA is hailed as the cornerstone of Ireland's economic success. Instead of the low-skill assembly plants dismissed by Telesis in the 1980s, Ireland is home to sophisticated operations by the blue-chip names of high-tech industry, most of them run by Irish managers who learnt their trade with those same multinationals."

Part 6 of this series concluded with this quotation from Kieran Kennedy in '*The Economic Development of Ireland in the Twentieth Century*' (1988):

"Since independence two interventionist strategies have been tried; both produced quick results but in neither case were the results lasting. The protectionist phase ran out of steam because of the small size of the home market and the inability of the protected enterprises to enter export markets. The impressive initial gains during the outward-looking phase depended

heavily on attracting an increasing stream of new foreign enterprises, and when this stream largely declined in the 1980s, there was insufficient impetus to sustain expansion."

So, of Whitaker's "*outward-looking phase*", it is no less true that, to quote again what Kennedy had written of the earlier protectionist phase: "*Nevertheless, because the strategy lacked a longer-term vision of the evolution of Irish industry, and because of indiscriminate implementation, the nascent industrial base remained weak and vulnerable.*"

Kieran Kennedy (1936-2013) served as Director of the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) from 1971 to 1996. "*Served*" is indeed the most appropriate description. Never a seeker after high drama headlines, the incisive critiques of the drawbacks of the Whitaker strategy that came from this modest and dedicated (and, I might add, kindly) public servant were all the more effectively to the point, precisely because they did not try to deny what it was that Whitaker had achieved for the 1960s. In a 1975 paper on increasing employment in Ireland, Kennedy began:

"The current recession has focussed widespread attention on the employment problem. The present difficulties are evidenced by the very high rate of unemployment, the falling level of employment in manufacturing, and the curtailment of many of the normal job opportunities for school-leavers."

He pointed out:

"The total number of net new manufacturing jobs created in the five-year period 1969-74 was only 5,500, or only about 1,000 per annum and equivalent to only one-tenth of the required number. Admittedly, this five-year period ends with 1974, the first year of the present depression. Even if we drop 1974, however, and take the four-year period 1969-73, the average net number of new manufacturing jobs was only 2,500 per annum, or one quarter of the required target. Thus, the inadequate rate of progress pre-dates the current depression... Despite the vast increase in job approvals, the average number of net new jobs from 1969-74 was only 1,000 per annum compared with 4,000 per annum from 1959-69. It is highly relevant to the future to inquire why, even before the current depression, employment performance in manufacturing was so poor in recent years, and much less than in the 1960s, despite the enhanced level of activity under the industrial development programme."

In a 1983 paper, "*The Design of a New Industrial Strategy*", Kennedy stated:

"The publication of the Telesis Report (1982) occurs at a critical time for the Irish



## Britain—a country divided

I've lived on this island for 25 years and have got used to the ways communities identify themselves and each other. It might be through names, towns or suburbs, the odd letter placed or pronounced in a word, football teams or football codes, or flags.

But I was back over in England recently and couldn't easily figure out who were the Free Brexitarians or who the Holy Roman Remainers. They all looked the same to me.

**Philip Jordan** (Giant's Causeway, Co Antrim)  
*Irish Times* (26.10.19)

economy. Over the next few years the growth of domestic and foreign markets is likely to be sluggish... Such circumstances suggest the need to concentrate relatively more than in the past on the development of domestic enterprise. It is important to emphasise, however, that the development of a new industrial strategy must also look beyond the years immediately ahead. For one thing, a major re-orientation of industrial strategy cannot be accomplished overnight, a point that will become clear when we come to look at the difficulties in translating the Telesis strategy into an operational blueprint. It is well to recall that the major elements of the present strategy had to be worked out over a number of years in the period 1952-58, but once in place it continued for nearly a generation. I believe that it is in the nature of an industrial development strategy that its broad framework must remain in place for a considerable time if it is to be effective...

Here I think it should be acknowledged that for all the criticisms that can be, and have been, levelled by critics (including myself) against the present strategy, it has nevertheless contributed much to Ireland's economic progress, and in the words of the Telesis Report constitutes 'a truly remarkable accomplishment'... The Telesis Report states that its 'recommendations are offered as amendments to current Irish industrial policy rather than as a fundamental reshaping of that policy'. This claim maybe too modest, however, since its proposals contain significant modifications to some existing policies, as well as superimposing on the existing framework a new strategic direction...

The new strategic dimensions to be superimposed on the modified existing framework, would seek to be (i) more selective, (ii) more directive, and (iii) more integrative. Selectivity itself would involve a number of dimensions—priority would be given to the development of indigenous industry and foreign companies incorporating major characteristics important to the long-term strength of Irish industry..."

"While I believe that in the longer-term industrial development strategy should move in the broad direction outlined by Telesis, I also believe that much work needs to be done before that strategy can be applied. In particular, we need to know much more specifically the precise nature of the constraints on indigenous industry (private and public sector)—constraints which are likely to vary from one type of activity to another... Some elements of the Telesis strategy can be implemented more quickly than others. A case in point is the replacement of tax-based lending, which rests on the accident of tax loopholes, by a more purposeful scheme... The fact that it will take time to develop a new operational strategy for manufacturing, however, should not detract from the urgency of initiating the task. If it is

not begun now, it will still remain to be begun five years hence. In the meantime, however, we must face the fact that efforts to expand manufacturing output and employment in the next few years will still depend heavily on what existing policies can generate and on the success of general policies (like pay restraint) in improving our competitive position."

In a 1984 paper on "*Labour Market Policies and Employment Growth*", Kennedy again argued that the economic problems of that year could not just be put down to yet another world depression, and he continued:

"By the end of this year close to 17 per cent of the labour force will be registered as unemployed. This is an exceptionally high level, whether viewed in relation to our own past experience, or the current experience of other OECD countries... (Some) commentators seem to take the view that the unfettered operation of the market constitutes the best recipe for successful economic development in Ireland. Surely there is a case for toning down a bit the rhetoric of the free market... The ESRI study takes the view that pay restraint could best be achieved through a broadly-based negotiated incomes policy... Given the prospective situation in the world economy, nobody has yet been able to establish convincingly that the market sector in Ireland, no matter how much primed by incentives, grants etc., will itself provide enough jobs to bring down unemployment."

Here, Kennedy was also arguing for a voluntary incomes policy, negotiated with the Trade Union movement, but he opposed statutory wage controls. In contrast, Whitaker had a profound distaste for any Government partnership with the Trade Union movement. Chambers related how, asked for his advice, Central Bank Governor Whitaker had privately lectured Cosgrave's Fine Gael / Labour Coalition Government in 1974 on how NOT to engage with the Trade Union movement, arguing against "*allowing the unions to set the tone of the negotiations*".

"Instead, he argued, it should be for the government to take the initiative in securing, either by agreement or, failing that, by statutory enforcement, a limit on income increases... The trade unions should agree to this course of action in advance of any tax or price concessions granted in the budget... And, as he later explained, he considered the promotion of sectional interests reprehensible".

Chambers proceeded to quote how, in 1993, Whitaker had written in his private papers: "*It may be unpopular now to praise Mrs Thatcher but her most creditable and enduring achievement was to re-establish the supremacy of Government and Parliament over sectional interests*" (pp 240-41).

Charles Haughey had nothing but contempt for such a Thatcherite perspective as espoused by Whitaker. Shortly before the close of his life in June 2006, Haughey both recalled and reflected:

"The contribution of Social Partnership to initiating and sustaining the transformation of our economy from a near-disaster type situation in 1986 to a prosperous and progressive economy, the envy of many, is well recognised. There were, of course, other factors which assisted that transformation but Social Partnership from its inception and for twenty years has provided the essential bedrock on which sound public finances and progressive fiscal, social and economic policies could be firmly based. Should any proof of its basic soundness be required, it must surely be the number of individuals and bodies who have laid claim to its parenthood. The stimulus and need for Social Partnership arose directly from the near-disastrous state of the public finances caused both by adverse economic trends—the oil crisis of the 1970s for instance—and the application of unsuccessful policies during the 1970s and 1980s... (as) growing unemployment rose from 90,000 in 1980 to 227,000 in 1986..."

See [www.charlesjhaughey.ie/social.php](http://www.charlesjhaughey.ie/social.php) for the full Haughey memorandum, which continued:

"I vividly recall the occasion that, in all probability, was the first time I began to think along the lines of this concept of Social Partnership. A European Summit in Brussels on 28th./29th. June 1982 had just concluded and Chancellor Schmidt of Germany and I were chatting together when I asked him what he would spend the forthcoming week-end on. He said: 'This week-end is the most important one in my annual calendar—I meet with the employers and the Trade Unions to hammer out an agreement on the rates of pay and salaries appropriate for the coming year in the light of the economic situation anticipated'. I was immediately struck with this commonsense approach and began, in my mind, as I listened to Chancellor Schmidt, to develop and expand the concept. Earlier that year I had arranged for a Cabinet Committee of economic Ministers, chaired by myself, to prepare a National Economic Plan... The plan was published as *The Way Forward*."

But Haughey's Government had fallen by year end, to be followed by the dismal years of the Fine Gael/Labour Government. However:

"The formation of the Fianna Fáil Government in 1987 renewed the opportunity to return to the principle of a comprehensive and balanced series of measures as outlined in the 1982 plan, 'The Way Forward', including putting the public finances on a sound basis. I had included a commitment for such a National Economic Plan in our election manifesto... In October 1986, the NESc under the chairmanship of Pádraig Ó hUiginn published 'A Strategy for Development' that envisaged necessary reductions in public expenditure accompanied by measures to increase employment and improve taxation and social equity. That report had the support of all social partners represented on the Council i.e. Trade Unions, employers and farmers. In a broad sense, this strategy reflected the approach advocated in the 1982 Plan.. In discussions I had with Mr. Ó hUiginn before taking up office in 1987, I was assured by him that there was a full commitment by the Social Partners to the NESc strategy and he was confident that a new National Plan could be negotiated based on that strategy...

At this time of crisis, Ireland had the good fortune to have probably the most enlightened trade union leadership we have ever had. Our Trade Union leaders at that time were fully aware of the economic and financial difficulties we faced and the abyss into which we were all staring. They could, also, clearly see what needed to be done, what action was urgently necessary if national bankruptcy was to be avoided. The real question was: could it be done and by whom could the crucial decisions be taken and implemented? The trade union leadership knew that, in taking and implementing these decisions, they

would have to play a decisive but difficult role. History records that they were not found wanting, but they played their part; they carried their members with them; and they took the difficult decisions that saw us through."

In his 2001 paper, "*Reflections on the Process of Irish Economic Growth*", Kennedy acknowledged how critical that Partnership had been for the spectacular employment achievements obtained by the time the twentieth century had come to a close:

"The most remarkable feature of the so-called Celtic Tiger has been the extraordinary growth in employment. In a short period, this has transformed the economy from a situation of chronic labour surplus to one with labour scarcity. Table 1 shows the growth rates of... (total) employment in Ireland over various periods since 1926. (Zero change overall 1926-46, the gains in industrial employment being offset by the decline in agricultural employment; then an average annual decrease of 1.3 per cent 1947-60; an average annual increase of 0.5 per cent 1960-80, but followed by zero change 1980-93; and, finally, an average annual increase of as much as 4.7 per cent 1993-2000—MO'R). I take the last period, 1993-2000, (Kennedy continued) as the Celtic Tiger phase. In 1993, total employment was just back to the 1980 level after the large fall in the first half of the 1980s during the worldwide recession following the second oil crisis, and the 1993 level was still 7 percent below that of 1926. It is essentially since 1993 that Ireland has experienced the wholly novel phenomenon of rapid and sustained growth in employment."

"I believe we are still a long way from a full understanding of the causes and timing of the Celtic Tiger. There is no great difficulty in compiling a list of plausible factors, but insufficient research has yet been done to enable us to specify with confidence the necessary and sufficient conditions of Ireland's remarkable expansion, and to quantify their relative contribution. There is also need for scepticism arising from the fact that many of the factors commonly advanced to explain the Celtic Tiger (such as the growth of human capital, or the restoration of order in the public finances) were already in place in 1993—yet no one predicted that they would bear fruit so soon and on such a massive scale... The huge rise in the profit share is not something that should be overlooked in considering the causes of the Celtic Tiger. Ultimately the growth of an economy is constrained by the willingness of society to accept the costs of growth, such as a fall in the wage share of national income. That Ireland has been willing to accept such a large fall in the wage share for a comparatively long period, has almost certainly been important in sustaining the high growth rates of the Celtic Tiger phase. Although many

of my economic colleagues are sceptical of the part played in this by the successive national partnership agreements, I believe that it is unlikely that such a prolonged shift to profits would have been tolerated without the partnership mechanisms. Whether it will be possible to sustain partnership much longer is of course a different matter. Indeed I do not think we understand fully why it has been sustained so long. One might speculate that the savage job losses of the first half of the 1980s so burned itself in the minds of the trade unions and the general public, that they were willing to accept prolonged pay restraint once it was seen to be translating into more jobs."

In a "*Where are they now?*" profile penned by Charles Lysaght in the '*Sunday Independent*' on 17th September 2006, just three months after Haughey's death, and ten years on from his own retirement as ESRI Director, Kieran Kennedy was determined to give credit where credit was due:

"He (Kennedy) was recruited by Taoiseach Charles Haughey in 1982 as an outside expert to help formulate his economic plan 'The Way Forward'. Although not adopted at the time, it was the blueprint for the remedial measures taken by Haughey when he returned to government in 1987. Kennedy never encountered a person with as incisive an intellect. And, unlike some others, the Taoiseach listened to his suggestions."

The '*Irish Times*' of 6th February 2013, in reporting on Kennedy's own death, essentially lifted that '*Sunday Independent*' profile of seven years previously:

"Mr Kennedy (77) was director of the ESRI from 1971 to 1996, and in 1982 was recruited by Taoiseach Charles Haughey to help formulate the economic plan 'The Way Forward'. Although Haughey was not returned to Government in the subsequent general election, 'The Way Forward' was credited as being the blueprint for remedial measures taken when Haughey did return to power in 1987. Of his experience working with the politician, Kennedy is reported to have said he never encountered a person with such an incisive mind and intellect as Haughey."

But, in repeating this paragraph in its obituary a week later, on February 13th, the '*Irish Times*' made sure it axed that last sentence of Kennedy's tribute to Haughey!

When the centenarian, T.K. Whitaker, passed away in January 2017, the neo-liberal Des O'Malley regurgitated the line of the Whitaker/Chambers autobiography/biography in seeking to scapegoat Haughey for TKW jumping ship half a century previously. In the '*Irish Independent*' of 15th January 2017, O'Malley opined:



"TK Whitaker's career at the top level of Government ended just as my career in frontline politics started. I first sat at the Cabinet table, as chief whip to the Jack Lynch-led Fianna Fail government in July 1969. Whitaker had retired some months earlier as secretary of the Department of Finance. This was a highly unusual decision at the time, as it was customary for secretaries to remain in post until the age of 65. Finance was then the most important government department. Whitaker was still in his early 50s when he chose to retire to become governor of the Central Bank. The governorship of the Central Bank in those days was not an exciting position, or even a terribly important one. Unlike in recent times, Irish banks were innately conservative and so didn't require much regulation... The Irish pound was still pegged to sterling, so there was no monetary policy that the Central Bank could really effect. The Central Bank was then seen as a retirement home for competent civil servants... My suspicion at the time, and one that historians appear to believe, was that he had fallen out with Charles Haughey, the minister for finance from 1966. There was a good chance that Haughey would retain his job for the foreseeable future...

For although Whitaker appears as a somewhat radical figure, he was actually quite a proper civil servant... His proposals to end protectionism and open the Irish economy to trade might have been radical if they had been proposed in the 1930s, but in post-war Europe they only appeared radical when the backdrop was De Valera's Ireland... It was only when Sean Lemass took over from the aging Dev that Whitaker's ideas had a chance... There are suggestions that Whitaker was pushed out of Finance, but I think it unlikely that he could have been, and he certainly would have had the support of Lynch if there had been any attempt to force him out. Jack Lynch and he had grown close when Jack was minister for finance. I know they were both appalled at the decision of Donogh O'Malley to pre-empt Cabinet and its procedures in announcing free secondary education. Procedures mattered to both men."

Ouch! What contempt Des O'Malley displayed for the memory of his own late uncle, Donogh O'Malley. Haughey probably had little time for TKW's self-admiration as a sage, so much in contrast with the modesty of Kieran Kennedy, but no evidence has been produced of any clash with TKW during Haughey's period of Office as Minister for Finance. It is, however, necessary to examine the Whitaker/Chambers narrative of the clash with Des's Uncle Donogh.

Chambers could not avoid admitting, when singing the praises of TKW's 'Economic Development' (1958): "*One noticeable omission was any reference to*

*investment in education (with the exception of agricultural colleges)*" (p 140). This is how the Whitaker/Chambers narrative chose to describe the 1966 rectification of that omission:

"The report, 'Investment in Education', published in 1965, did for education what 'Economic Development' had done for the economy: it highlighted the inequality and deficiencies in the system and recommended gradual changes and improvements. In July 1966 the mercurial, charismatic and hard-living Donogh O'Malley was appointed minister for education... Shortly after his appointment to Education... O'Malley 'started and thrilled the nation', and guaranteed himself instant national media coverage, by publicly announcing the introduction of free secondary education and a free transport system for students. 'My impression', Ken recalls, 'was that it was a deliberate decision on his part to announce it in such a way and in such a public forum, while also knowing that he would be reprimanded from both above and below!'...

As 'keeper of the public purse', he (TKW) had overriding priorities: and the facts that O'Malley's proposal had been neither discussed at cabinet nor costed by his department, that no provision had been made for it in the financial estimates, and that it had been sprung on the public while the minister for finance (Jack Lynch) was out of the country, startled him enough to reach for his pen. 'It is astonishing', he informed the Taoiseach (Lemass), 'that a major change in educational policy should be made by the Minister for Education at a weekend seminar of the National Union of Journalists... If substantial commitments are to be introduced by individual Ministers without the consent of the Department of Finance (TKW himself) or the approval of the Government, we shall have a situation which is the negation of planning!'...

O'Malley claimed that he had cleared the full text of his pronouncement with Lemass, but, from the tone of his subsequent reprimand, this appears unlikely, although, as evidence also indicates, Lemass himself was not averse to 'flying political kites'. As for Jack Lynch, whom O'Malley had somewhat disdainfully wrong-footed, on his return he warned his cabinet colleague that any further proposals would have to be framed with strict regard to financial possibilities and in such a way as to avoid a considerable addition to the total estimates in any one year, words that bore the hallmark of Lynch's departmental secretary (TKW)" (pp 176-78).

There was a re-enactment of that historic 1966 speech of Donogh O'Malley (1921-1968) by his actor son Daragh O'Malley (See <https://youtu.be/eqV1JRHwCs> and [www.allianz.ie/blog/one-mans-courage-changed-lives-and-economic-landscape-of-](http://www.allianz.ie/blog/one-mans-courage-changed-lives-and-economic-landscape-of-ireland.html)

[ireland.html](http://www.allianz.ie/blog/one-mans-courage-changed-lives-and-economic-landscape-of-ireland.html)).

The Allianz production of the speech elicited a holier-than-thou column from UCD Professor Diarmaid Ferriter in the '*Irish Times*' this [May 4th](#), with Allianz responding [on May 14th](#).

Dan O'Brien does write up some good news stories for the '*Irish Independent*'. This [June 30th](#) he wrote:

"Ireland has become the best-educated country in Europe. According to Eurostat, half of Irish adults aged 25-64 have a third-level qualification. That is higher than any other EU country. It is still rising... Part of the reason for our high levels of educational attainment has less to do with the existing system and more to do with deep culture. Irish society puts considerable emphasis on education."

And on January 31st he had already quoted Eurostat:

"Another strikingly positive trend recorded in the figures is the dramatic collapse in the share of the population with the lowest level of education. Just 17 per cent of people in their prime in Ireland are educated to Inter/Junior Cert level or lower. A mere quarter of a century ago it stood at 58 per cent. It is hard to exaggerate the enormity of this change given how transformative education is to how people live their lives. And it gets better—progress looks set to continue. More than half of Irish 24-34-year-olds now hold third-level qualifications and only 8 per cent left school early—one of the lowest rates in Europe."

Yet the beginnings of that transformation had to be kickstarted by Donogh O'Malley in the face of Lynch/Whitaker obstructionism. As John FitzGerald pointed out in the '*Irish Times*' this September 6th,

"As we discovered here, it takes a generation to achieve a major improvement in the education level of the workforce, but investment in human capital brings major long-term economic dividends."

When the Whitaker opening up of the Irish economy to multinational investment in low-skilled basic assembly operations eventually ran out of steam, and as such footloose operations migrated to countries with significantly cheaper unskilled labour, it was necessary to have had a highly educated workforce to attract and develop more sophisticated investment projects. Even Chambers had to concede that the O'Malley reforms began with a bang, before taking that generation of development to be in a position to reap the benefits of the Haughey/Kennedy '*Way Forward*' in 1987:

"In the event, O'Malley's 'free' education scheme pressed ahead with notable

public acceptance and a spectacular increase in the number of pupils attending secondary school, from 104,000 in 1966 to 144,000 in 1969" (p 178).

But there was a significant omission from this biography/autobiography of an account that Whitaker had given on a previous occasion of his clash with O'Malley, and of how Lemass had responded. In the *'Irish Examiner'* on 29th November 2016, under the heading of "O'Malley 'bombshell' most effective measure by any minister ever", T. Ryle Dwyer related:

"Fifty years ago Donogh O'Malley, then education minister, formally outlined to the Dáil his plans for free secondary education in this country. This was arguably the single most effective initiative ever taken by any Irish minister. Just 6 per cent of the population ever went beyond a primary education while this country was part of the United Kingdom. For the next four decades of independence, the various Irish governments considered a primary education sufficient for all but a tiny minority... O'Malley had forewarned Seán Lemass of his plans. When the Taoiseach did not object, O'Malley took this as approval. TK Whitaker, the influential secretary of the Department of Finance, protested to the Taoiseach that O'Malley had not consulted the department. 'While he did not expressly say so, I deduced from what he said (and the smile on his face) that he had personally authorised Donogh O'Malley to make this announcement', Whitaker noted."

Ronan McGreevy is valiantly endeavouring to develop a new *'Irish Times'* narrative of "Irish history". But a report by that paper's education correspondent, Carl O'Brien, this May 10th, slipped in under the radar to further undermine the McGreevy line on how the Lemass "dependence" on Whitaker should ultimately be viewed. Under the headings of "Department of Finance fears on free education not justified" and "Policy initiative paved way for decades of prosperity despite resistance by mandarins", Carl O'Brien related:

"Not all doom-laden Department of Finance warnings over ambitious public spending plans necessarily come to pass... Then Fianna Fáil minister for education Donogh O'Malley announced his intention to introduce free secondary education on September 10th, 1966, in the following school year without the knowledge or sanction of the Department of Finance. While now seen as a milestone in Irish history, the department's then secretary, TK Whitaker, was incensed. In a scalding memo to the then taoiseach Seán Lemass shortly after the announcement, he raged against the proposal... Emeritus professor of education at UCC Áine Hyland, however, said it was likely Lemass knew in advance that O'Malley was planning to make the announcement.

She said Whitaker subsequently said in an interview that when he met Lemass to discuss the matter, he deduced from the smile on the taoiseach's face that he had personally authorised O'Malley to make the announcement. As for whether the investment was justified, it is now widely accepted that free education helped pave the way for a transformation in not just the education system but the economy and society as a whole. At the time, one-third of all children were dropping out of school after finishing primary level and fewer than 50 per cent were still in full-time education by the age of 15. Within a decade of the policy change, participation rates in second-level doubled. Today, Ireland has one of the highest rates of second-level completion in the EU—90 per cent—and has one of the highest proportions of school-leavers going on to third-level education."

"While the free education announcement was criticised by the department on the basis that it was not subjected to a detailed financial examination, this was not strictly true. A key precursor to the announcement was an influential OECD report, 'Investment in Education' (1965), the first detailed analysis of the Irish education system. It highlighted marked inequalities based on social class and geographical location. Hyland, a member of the team involved in putting the report together, recalled that the report laid the foundation for O'Malley's subsequent announcement. It ended up providing a template and a development plan for a nationwide system of post-primary education that would be accessible to all... 'The statistics and the analysis carried out by the Investment in Education team provided crucial evidence on the need for expanding post-primary provision', said Hyland. She feels that, ultimately, the timing of O'Malley's appointment as minister for education in July 1966 could not have come at a better moment. 'O'Malley proved himself willing and able to ride roughshod over the innate caution of some of the senior civil servants and to overrule their advice', she said."

In the concluding page of her own narrative, Chambers wrote of TKW:

"He remains sanguine about reputation, jocosely noting that 'if you live long enough 'you would either be canonised or found out—the worst fate being to be found out after you were canonised'." (p 392).

The Whitaker/Chambers biography/autobiography/hagiography sought to confer such canonisation in 2014, and chose to omit that other account from Whitaker's own mouth on how the grin on Lemass's face had confirmed to him that Donogh O'Malley had the full backing of the Taoiseach. Ryle Dwyer's article, and now Carl O'Brien's report, have seen the

Whitaker hagiography found out.

If Lemass, with Dev's blessing, is to be applauded for recognising what were Whitaker's talents in 1958 and for giving TKW his head at that juncture, surely Lemass should also be applauded for, in his last couple of months as Taoiseach, recognising TKW's blind-spots and knowing when to cut him loose by giving Donogh O'Malley that 1966 victory over him. "Beyond Our Ken" was the name of a BBC radio comedy programme (1958-1964), and TKW's stubborn refusal to recognise the urgency of O'Malley's revolution in education underscored what was indeed a case of "Beyond Our Ken".

*Lemass in the Age of de Valera* grew into the *Age of Lemass* himself, one who recognised the investment in education prerequisites for further economic progress, and thus—to borrow the language deployed by TKW to dismiss Dev—the need for him to render "Whitaker passé" by taking the strategic decision to back O'Malley in 1966.

**Manus O'Riordan**

(Series concluded)

## O'Connell

### Concluded

1848, that in Dublin they had grown so strong and so hostile to O'Connellism that at one time negotiations were in progress for a public debate between the Liberator and a representative of the Dublin trades. But upon the arrest and imprisonment of O'Connell, he continues, the Working Class were persuaded to abandon their separate organisations for the sake of presenting a common front to the Government, a step they afterwards regretted.

To this letter John Mitchel, as editor, appended a note reminding his readers of the anti-labour record of O'Connell, and adducing it as a further reason for repudiating his leadership.

Yet it is curious that in his *History of Ireland* Mitchel omits all reference to this disgraceful side of O'Connell's career, as do indeed all the other Irish 'Historians'. If silence gives consent, then all our history (?) writing scribes have consented to, and hence approved of, this suppression of the facts of history in order to assist in perpetuating the blindness and the subjection of labour.

(James Connolly,



# Does It Up

# Stack ?

## A New City for Ireland

It has been announced by Bórd na Móna that it's two Electricity Generating Stations in Ireland which burn peat are to close down. These are at Lanesborough and at Shannonbridge and it is a severe blow to the hundreds of workers who will lose their jobs.

It must have seemed like a good idea to someone at the time when these generating stations were built but they have been catastrophically bad for the environment of the Midlands of Ireland. To start with, the enormous constructions used huge volumes of concrete and reinforced steel. Extensive drainage works were constructed to drain the midland bogs so that the huge turf-cutting machines could operate. Vast tonnages of milled peat were required to feed the boilers which provided the power for the generators. This all required great financial resources at the time to be expended, and all to produce only 5% of Ireland's electricity. We are left now with thousands of hectares of cut-away bog and with two enormous concrete and steel plants.

Maybe it looked like a good idea at the time but widespread destruction has been caused in the midlands environment. It did not stack up. Jobs were needed in Offaly and Laois and should have been enabled by means of productive development. Now, with the closure of these two generating stations – a new opportunity is afforded to us to begin again and provide long-lasting and good quality jobs.

Firstly, the cut-away bogs should be encouraged to revert to their natural state by blocking the drains put in by Bórd na Móna. I understand that a certain amount of this work is being done already and it should be continued.

Scenic lakes should be created and stocked with trout so that fishing and boat-ing tourism can be encouraged.

The State should purchase the freehold title to say, 1300 acres of land (about two square miles) in County Westmeath somewhere in the triangle between Longford and Athlone and Mullingar. This is the geographical centre of Ireland. A new city

should be built there in which the principal buildings would be a Dáil building and a Senate building linked together, a spacious National Library of Ireland building, a National Archives building, a Supreme Court building and a group of buildings to house Government Departments.

The new city could be laid out with wide streets in the form of a Celtic Cross with a central station in the centre over which would be built two hundred and twenty five apartments for use by sitting TDs and Senators in the Swedish model. Restaurants would be provided for at Central Station level. Each apartment would have a double bunk in one bedroom, a small kitchen and bath/shower room. (This is how all French national assembly members are catered for in Paris – and probably in other countries as well.)

So as to emphasize the separation between the Courts, the Legislature and the Executive, the four areas between the four main streets forming the cross-shaped city plan would be allocated to each function e.g. the Supreme Court and accommodation for Judges in N.W. ward, the Dáil, Seanad and representatives accommodation in N.E. ward, the Government Departments in S.E. ward and the S.W. ward would have the National Library, National Archives, and a National Theatre and any other culturally related buildings.

This National City would bring much needed employment to the Midlands area and would at the same time relieve Dublin from the congestion on its roads and services and housing.

The Central Station of the proposed New City should be made a transport hub. New railways should be laid down as follows:

1. New City to Sligo and Letterkenny.
2. New City to Co. Donegal near Strabane and to Donegal side of Derry City.
3. New City to Armagh and Belfast.
4. New City to Dublin's Houston
5. New City to Portlaoise, Kilkenny and Waterford
6. New City to Tullamore, Roscrea and Thurles
7. New City to Limerick
8. New City to Galway
9. New City to Roscommon and Castlebar.

It has been shown internationally that rail travel is the quickest, safest and most economical way to move large numbers of people from one town centre to another. If the political, legal and cultural powers were to be established in a new city in the centre of Ireland, it would be of

incalculable benefit to the economy. Not only that, but if the New City is designed to the highest architectural standards as a unified whole new city – it would become, and should be designed to become a major international tourist attraction such as Washington DC, with wide gracious boulevards containing Ireland's equivalent of the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Memorial.

Nothing is impossible for us as a Nation and if we put our minds to it: it can be done. Let's do it now. We need the jobs and the houses. The cost of finance is at an all-time low and not likely to rise for a long time to come. Now is the time for a New City in Ireland. ....

## New Engine Technology

Mazda Cars has come up with a new technology in its latest Mazda 3 Sky – Active S saloon. The inventor James Watts was idly looking at a cast-iron kettle of water as it boiled. The pressure of the steam was lifting the cover of the kettle. He invented the steam engine as a result. Steam is injected into the cylinder and the expanding pressure of the steam pushes out the piston and thus the power is delivered to the wheels. Steam engines are very, very powerful but the action is slow and not suitable for the sort of speed we like to travel at. Also, you would have to stoke a fire and carry lots of coal and water. Then in 1892, Rudolph Diesel registered his patent for the "compression ignition" engine now known simply as the diesel engine. It works by injecting a mixture of diesel oil and air into the cylinders where they are compressed to the point of ignition and explosion. No electric spark is needed.

In a petrol engine, the petrol and air are injected into the cylinder and an electric spark is introduced to fire the petrol into an explosion which drives out the piston.

Now Mazda engineers have combined the diesel with the petrol technology. The petrol fuel is compressed to its limit and a relatively tiny spark-plug emits a tiny spark which ignites part of the fuel next to the spark and this causes the rest of the fuel to explode violently which causes the piston to be forced out of the cylinder. All this happens at great speed. "Why bother" you may ask? Well it uses the compression ignition principle of the diesel engine together with the tiny spark, and so the efficiency of a diesel engine is got using petrol. So there is a saving in fuel. Will it be a success? Well – time will tell.

Michael Stack ©

continually on duty, and so many people were killed that the coroners ceased to hold inquests. Such was the state of England — misery and revolt beneath, and sanguinary repression coupled with merciless greed above — at the time when O'Connell, taking his seat in Parliament, threw all his force on the side of capitalist privilege and against social reform.

In 1838 five cotton-spinners in Glasgow, in Scotland, were sentenced to seven years' transportation for acts they had committed in connection with trade union combination to better the miserable condition of their class.

As the punishment was universally felt to be excessive, even in the brutal spirit of the times, Mr. Walkley, Member of Parliament for Finsbury, on the 13th of February of that year, brought forward a motion in the House of Commons for a "*Select Committee to enquire into the constitution, practices, and effects of the Association of Cotton Operatives of Glasgow*". O'Connell opposed the motion, and used the opportunity to attack the Irish trade-unions. He said: —

"There was no tyranny equal to that which was exercised by the trade-unionists in Dublin over their fellow labourers. One rule of the workmen prescribed a minimum rate of wages *so that the best workman received no more than the worst*. Another part of their system was directed towards depriving the masters of all freedom in their power of selecting workmen, the names of the workmen being inscribed in a book, and the employer compelled to take the first on the list."

He said that at Bandon [Co. Cork] a large factory had been closed, through the efforts of the men to get higher wages, ditto at Belfast, and "*it was calculated that wages to the amount of £500,000 per year were lost to Dublin by trade-unions. The combination of tailors in that city, for instance, had raised the price of clothes to such a pitch that it was worth a person's while to go to Glasgow and wait a couple of days for a suit, the difference in the price paying the expense of the trip.*" He also ascribed the disappearance of the shipbuilding trades from Dublin to the evil effects of trade unions.

Because of O'Connell's speech his friends, the Whig Government, appointed a committee, not to enquire into the Glasgow cases, but to investigate the acts of the Irish, and especially of the Dublin,

trade unions. The Special Committee sat and collected two volumes of evidence, O'Connell producing a number of witnesses to bear testimony against the Irish trade unionists, but the report of the committee was never presented to the House of Commons.

In June of the same year, 1838, O'Connell had another opportunity to vent his animus against the working class, and serve the interest of English and Irish capitalism, and was not slow to take advantage of it. In the year 1833, mainly owing to the efforts of the organised factory operatives, and some high-spirited philanthropists, a law had been enacted forbidding the employment of *children under nine years of age* in factories except silk-mills, and forbidding those under thirteen from working more than forty-eight hours per week, or nine hours per day. The ages mentioned will convey to the reader some idea of how infantile flesh and blood had been sacrificed to sate the greed of the propertied class. Yet this eminently moderate enactment was fiercely hated by the godly capitalists of England, and by every unscrupulous device they could contrive they strove to circumvent it. So constant and effective was their evasion of its merciful provisions that on the 23rd of June the famous friend of the factory operatives, Lord Ashley, in the House of Commons, moved as an amendment to the Order of the Day the second reading of a *Bill to more effectually regulate Factory Works*, its purpose being to prevent or punish any further infringement of the Act of 1833.

O'Connell opposed the motion, and attempted to justify the infringement of the law by the employers by stating that "*they (Parliament) had legislated against the nature of things, and against the right of industry.*" "*Let them not*", he said, "*be guilty of the childish folly of regulating the labour of adults, and go about parading before the world their ridiculous humanity, which would end by converting their manufacturers into beggars.*"

The phrase about regulating the labour of adults was borrowed from the defence set up by the capitalists that preventing the employment of children also interfered with the labour of adults — freeborn Englishmen! O'Connell was not above using this clap-trap, as he on a previous occasion had not been above making the lying pretence that the enforcement of a *minimum* wage prevented the payment of *high* wages to any specially skilled

artisan.

On this question of the attitude to be taken up towards the claims of labour, O'Connell differed radically with one of his most capable lieutenants, Fergus O'Connor. The latter, being returned to Parliament as a Repealer, was struck by the miserable condition of the real people of England in whose interests Ireland was supposed to be governed, and as the result of his investigation into its cause, he arrived at the conclusion that the basis of the oppression of Ireland was economic, that labour in England was oppressed by the same class and by the operation of the same causes as had impoverished and ruined Ireland, and that the solution of the problem in both countries required the union of the democracies in one common battle against their oppressors. He earnestly strove to impress this view upon O'Connell, only to find, that in the latter class-feeling was much stronger than desire for Irish National freedom, and that he, O'Connell, felt himself to be much more akin to the propertied class of England than to the working class of Ireland.

This was proven by his actions in the cases above cited. This divergence of opinion between O'Connell and O'Connor closed Ireland to the latter and gave him to the Chartists as one of their most fearless and trusted leaders.

When he died, more than 50,000 toilers marched in the funeral procession which bore his remains to his last resting-place. He was one of the first of that long list of Irish fighters in Great Britain whose unselfish sacrifices have gone to make a record for an 'English' Labour movement. That the propertied and oppressing classes were well aware of the value of O'Connell's services against the democracy, and were believed to be grateful for the same was attested by the action of Richard Lalor Shiel when, defending him during the famous State trials, he claimed the consideration of the Court for O'Connell, because he had stood between the people of Ireland and the people of England, and so "*prevented a junction which would be formidable enough to overturn any administration that could be formed*".

But, as zealous as O'Connell and the middle class repealers were to prevent any international action of the democracies, the Irish Working Class were as enthusiastic in their desire to consummate it. Irish Chartist Associations sprang up all over the island, and we are informed by a writer in the *United Irishman* of John Mitchel,

concluded on page 30



the peasantry in this fight, and to their activities the victory is largely to be attributed. The politicians gave neither help nor countenance to the fight, and save for the advocacy of one small Dublin newspaper, conducted by a small but brilliant band of young Protestant writers, no journal in all Ireland championed their cause. For the Catholic clergy it is enough to say that while this tithe war was being waged, they were almost universally silent about that "grievous sin of secret conspiracy" upon which they are usually so eloquent. We would not dare to say that they recognised that, as the secret societies were doing their work against a rival priesthood, it was better to be sparing in their denunciations for the time being; perhaps that is not the explanation, but at all events it is noteworthy that as soon as the tithe war was won, all the old stock invectives against every kind of extra-constitutional action were immediately renewed.

Contemporaneously with this tithe-war had grown up the agitation for repeal of the Legislative Union led by Daniel O'Connell, and supported by the large body of the middle classes, and by practically all the Catholic clergy. At the outset of this agitation the Irish working class, partly because they accepted O'Connell's explanation of the decay of Irish trade as due to the Union; and partly because they did not believe he was sincere in his professions of loyalty to the English monarchy, nor in his desire to limit his aims to repeal, enthusiastically endorsed and assisted his agitation.

He, on his part, incorporated the trades bodies in his association with rights equal to that of regularly enrolled members, a proceeding which evoked considerable dissent from many quarters. Thus the *Irish Monthly Magazine* (Dublin), a rabidly O'Connellite journal, in its issue of September, 1832, complains that the National Union (of Repealers) is in danger because "there is a contemporary union composed of the tradesmen and operative classes, the members of which are qualified to vote at its sittings, and who are in every respect put upon a perfect equality with the members of the National Union". And in its December number of the same year it returns to the charge with the significant statement that "In fact we apprehend great mischief and little good from the trades union as at present constituted".

The representative of the English King in Ireland, Lord Lieutenant Anglesey, apparently coincided in the opinion of this follower of O'Connell as to the danger of Irish trade unions in politics, for when the Dublin trade bodies projected a mammoth demonstration in favour of Repeal, he immediately proclaimed it, and ordered the military to suppress it, if necessary, by armed force. But as O'Connell grew in strength in the country, and attracted to himself more and more of the capitalist and professional classes in Ireland, and as he became more necessary to the schemes of the Whig politicians in England, and thought these latter more necessary to his success, he ceased to play for the favour of organised labour, and gradually developed into the most bitter and unscrupulous enemy of trade unionism Ireland has yet produced, signalling the trades of Dublin always out for his most venomous attack.

In 1835 O'Connell took his seat on the Ministerial side of the House of Commons as a supporter of the Whig Government. At that time the labouring population of England were the most exploited, degraded, and almost dehumanised of all the peoples of Europe. The tale of their condition reveals such inhumanity on the part of the masters, such woeful degradation on the side of the toilers, that were it not attested by the sober record of witnesses before various Parliamentary Commissions the record would be entirely unbelievable.

Women worked down in coal mines, almost naked, for a pitiful wage, often giving birth to children when surprised by the pains of parturition amidst the darkness and gloom of their places of employment; little boys and girls were employed drawing heavy hutches (wagons) of coal along the pit-floors by means of a strap around their bodies and passing through between their little legs; in cotton factories little tots of eight, seven, and even six years of age of both sexes were kept attending machinery, being hired like slaves from workhouses for that purpose, and worked twelve, fourteen, and even sixteen hours per day, living, sleeping, and working under conditions which caused them to die off as with a plague; in pottery works, bake-shops, clothing factories and workrooms the overwork and unhealthy conditions of employment led to such suffering and degradation and shortening of life that the very existence of the working-class was endangered.

In the agricultural districts the suffer-

ings of the poor were so terrible that the English agricultural labourer — the most stolidly patient, unimaginative person on the face of the earth — broke out into riots, machine-breaking, and hay-rick burning. As in Ireland, Captain Rock or Captain Moonlight had been supposed to be the presiding genius of the nocturnal revolts of the peasantry, so in England, Captain Swing, an equally mythical personage, took the blame or the credit. In a booklet circulated amongst the English agricultural labourers, Captain Swing is made to say: "I am not the author of these burnings. These fires are caused by farmers having been turned out of their lands to make room for foxes, peasants confined two years in prison for picking up a dead partridge, and parsons taking a poor man's only cow for the tithe of his cabbage garden."

So great was the distress, so brutal the laws, and so hopelessly desperate the labourers, that in the Special Assize held at Winchester in December, 1830, no less than three hundred prisoners were put upon trial, a great number of whom were sentenced to death. Of the number so condemned, six were actually hanged, twenty transported for life, and the rest for smaller periods. We are told in the *English Via Dolorosa*, of William Heath, that "a child of fourteen had sentence of death recorded against him; and two brothers, one twenty, the other nineteen, were ruthlessly hanged on Penenden Heath, whither they were escorted by a regiment of Scots Greys." As to whom was responsible for all this suffering, contemporary witnesses leave no doubt: The *London Times*, most conservative of all capitalist papers, in its issue of December 27, 1830, declared: —

"We do affirm that the actions of this pitiable class of men (the labourers) are a commentary on the treatment experienced by them at the hands of the upper and middling classes. The present population must be provided for in body and spirit on more liberal and Christian principles, or the whole mass of labourers will start into legions of *banditti* — *banditti* less criminal than those who have made them so; those who by a just but fearful retribution will soon become their victims."

And in 1833 a Parliamentary Commission reported that: "The condition of the agricultural labourers was brutal and wretched; their children during the day were struggling with the pigs for food, and at night were huddled down on damp straw under a roof of rotten thatch."

In the large towns the same state of rebellion prevailed, the military were continued on page 32



**LABOUR**

# Comment

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## A Chapter Of Horrors:

### Daniel O'Connell And The Working Class

**James Connolly, 1915**

For both Ireland and Great Britain the period between the winning of Catholic Emancipation (1829) and the year 1850 was marked by great misery and destitution amongst the producing classes, accompanied by abortive attempts at revolution in both countries, and the concession of some few unimportant political and social reforms.

In Ireland the first move against the forces of privilege was the abolition of the Tithes, or, more correctly speaking, the abolition of the harsh and brutal features attendant upon the collection of the tithes. The clergy of the Episcopalian Church, the Church by law established in Ireland, were legally entitled to levy upon the people of each district, irrespective of religion, a certain tax for the upkeep of that Church and its ministers. The fact that this was in conformity with the practice of the Catholic Church in countries where it was dominant did not, of course, make this any more palatable to the Catholic peasantry of Ireland, who continually saw a part of their crops seized upon and sold to maintain a clergy whose ministrations they never attended, and whose religion they detested. Eventually their discontent at the injustice grew so acute as to flare forth in open rebellion, and accordingly all over Ireland the tenants began to resist the collection of tithes by every means in their power.

The Episcopalian clergymen called on the aid of the law, and, escorted by police and military, seized the produce of the poor tenants and carried it off to be sold at auction; the peasantry, on the other hand,

collected at dead of night and carried off the crops and cattle from farms upon which the distraint was to be made, and, when that was impossible, they strove by acts of violence to terrorise auctioneers and buyers from consummating the sale.

Many a bright young life was extinguished on the gallows, or rotted away in prison cells, as a result of this attempt to sustain a hated religion by contributions exacted at the point of the bayonet, until eventually the struggle assumed all the aspect of a civil war. At several places when the military were returning from raiding the farm of some poor peasant, the country people gathered, erected barricades, and opposed their passage by force. Significantly, enough of the temper and qualities of the people in those engagements, they generally succeeded in rescuing their crops and cattle from the

police and military, and in demonstrating that Ireland still possessed all the material requisite for armed rebellion.

In one conflict at Newtownbarry, [Co. Wexford] twelve peasants were shot and twenty fatally wounded; in another at Carrigshock [Co. Kilkenny] eleven policemen were killed and seventeen wounded; and at a great fight at Rathcormack, [East Co. Cork] twelve peasants were killed in a fight with a large body of military and armed police. Eye-witnesses declared that the poor farmers and labourers engaged, stood the charge and volleys of the soldiers as firmly as if they had been seasoned troops, a fact that impressed the Government more than a million speeches could have done. The gravity of the crisis was enhanced by the contrast between the small sum often involved, and the bloodshed necessary to recover it. Thus, at Rathcormack, twelve peasants were massacred in an attempt to save the effects of a poor widow from being sold to pay a sum of forty shillings due as tithes. The ultimate effect of all this resistance was the passage of a *Tithes Commutation Act* by which the collection of tithes was abolished, and the substitution in its place of a *Tithe Rent Charge* by means of which the sums necessary for the support of the Episcopalian clergy were included in the rent and paid as part of that tribute to the landed aristocracy. In other words, the economic drain remained, but it was deprived of all the more odious and galling features of its collection.

The secret Ribbon and Whiteboy Societies were the most effective weapons of

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