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Judges: EU Double Standards!

"*EU lacks teeth in its promotion of the rule of law*", according to an article in the *Irish Times* on November 10th. The Rule of Law in question refers to the appointment of judges in national Courts by the elected national Governments. Hungary and Poland are held to be in breach of the rule of law because their nationally-elected Governments want some influence on the way national law is applied in the national courts.

Ireland has been to the fore in insisting that the Polish Courts should be sealed off from the influence of Polish Governments. At the same time Irish politicians are discussing whether, by action in the Dail, they will throw off the Bench a Judge who has broken no law.

There is no doubt that the Dail has the Constitutional authority to unmake him as a Judge, and that no other institution of the state has the authority to do it.

Irish Judges are appointed by the Government and are removable by the Parliament.

And, if we use the language being applied to the Poles, we must say that that is a complete Populist-nationalist subversion of the principle of the rule of law in the form asserted by the EU in recent years.

Double standards? Not according to an article in the Summer issue of the Jesuit magazine, *Studies*, by Senior Counsel and former Attorney-General Paul Gallagher. (And, by the way, the Attorney General, who is a politician, has by convention the right to make himself a Judge by taking any seat on the Bench that falls vacant during his period in political office).

Gallagher writes:

"The CJEU [Court of Justice of the European Union] held that national law passed by a Member State after entry into the European Community could not be given effect

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A Polish Solution To An Irish Problem?

With the refusal of Supreme Court Judge Woulfe to resign though asked to do so by Chief Justice Clarke over the Golf-gate scandal, a rather ironic problem has been created for the Irish Government. It appears obliged to intervene and make clear to the judiciary who is in charge. And quite right too. Where does the buck stop when the judiciary can't sort out its own problems—it stops where it begins—with the Government? Because it is its constitutional duty to govern.

A couple of years ago the Government allowed itself to support a maverick politician, Shane Ross, who proposed—in contravention of the Constitution—that Judicial appointments be taken away from Government and be given to an 'independent' body. Independent of what? It was an attempt to outsource another vital part of governance. It was about as responsible as proposing the same for the Civil Service or the Army. Of course the Government has almost done so with its police, outsourced to a reprehensible M15!

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Brexit: Insights from the Oireachtas

Two Debates in the *Oireachtas* occurring on Wednesday, 11th November 2020, reveal much about the Irish approach to Brexit. The first was a Debate on the *Withdrawal of the UK from the EU (Consequential Provisions) Bill 2020*, an omnibus Bill drafted to cover all eventualities if there is no deal. The second had the title, *Conference on the Future of Europe* and was held by the *Joint Committee on*

European Union Affairs.

The first Debate dealt with practical matters although high politics came into it; in the second a cross-party group of Deputies, along with invited EU experts, grappled with the question of how the EU can go about debating its future. Notwithstanding the central position of Ireland in the four and a half year Brexit

saga, and notwithstanding a degree of pragmatic competence shown at Government level in preparing for Brexit, both Debates highlight a fatal weakness in the Irish political class.

Having been forced to side with the EU against Britain by the brute reality of the EU's importance to the Irish economy, too many in the elite still hanker for the pre-Brexit relationship with London; as Britain and the EU ready themselves for their inevitable division into competing

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had the experience of establishing a viable State. They had lived within Empires, with brief periods of independence that were anarchic or erratic. They had been effective at protest against government but not at conducting government itself.

Gallagher observes:

"Nationalism is a device of political mobilization in post-communist societies. Accession to the EU was permitted in order to consolidate the democratic institutions in those states. However the new democracy in these countries relies partly on the nationalistic idea which is in tension with accession",

—and this challenges the rule of law.

The gist of this evasive comment is that the nationalist development of Poland and Hungary as capitalist democracies lay in the future when they joined the EU, and that this is problematical for the anti-nationalist rule of law developed by the EU.

But Poland and Hungary were not so much "*permitted*" to join the EU as recruited into it. The purpose was to consolidate their detachment from the Soviet system. They were part of the Soviet system after 1945 because it was the Soviet system—and not internal democratic forces in Western Europe—that had demolished the Nazi system by defeating it in war.

Western Europe, which became the European Union, was constructed in the medium of the Cold War antagonism of the American-hegemonised capitalist system with the Soviet communist system.

The propaganda of the West European states directed towards the East European states was designed to encourage nationalism in them. When the Soviet system began to break up the concern of the EU was to consolidate the nationalist antagonism of Poland and Hungary towards Russia. National independence was the effective meaning of democracy then for the EU, as far as Poland and Hungary were concerned. And the EU continues to encourage hostile nationalist attitudes towards Russia from these countries in various ways.

However, at the same time, the attitude of the EU now is that Poland and Hungary, having been saved from Russia by the incitement of nationalist passions, must cease to be nationalist, and must accept sophisticated democratic arrangements from the EU which do not apply in the older states of the EU. ■

to, if and in so far as it was contrary to European law. This affirmation of the supremacy of EU law was central to the development of the supranational legal order, which in turn was essential to the development of the European Union as we know it today. This development was based on a teleological interpretation of the law rather than on a strict textual interpretation. The text of the Treaty was silent on the supremacy of EU law" (Studies. *Peter Sutherland And The European Project*).

(The Cambridge Dictionary, under 'teleological' says: "*The European Court's method of interpreting Community legal text is primarily teleological, that is to say the interpretation of a provision on the basis of its object and purpose*".)

Gallagher comments:

"This month the CJEU ordered Poland to suspend the disciplinary apparatus introduced by Poland to discipline judges..."

Ireland demands that Polish judges should be placed out of reach of Polish democracy, even though it establishes arm's length disciplinary procedures, while the Irish democracy can sack judges by a vote in the Oireachtas.

But that is in order, because the supremacy of politicians over judges was established in Ireland before it joined the EU. The Poles had neglected to make such an arrangement before joining the EU and it would therefore be a breach of the rule of law—according to a ruling of the European Court—if they made it now!

How could it have happened that the Poles failed to establish political supremacy in their democracy before joining the EU?

It happened because they were in the process of leaving one system of political culture and entering another, and they had in their history over many centuries never

A Polish Solution To An Irish Problem?

continued

But this Government proposal was later strongly opposed and the Government itself had to withdraw its support and it died a death. And it had to do so for the clear reason described by ex-Attorney General and all round legal eagle, Michael McDowell:

“That proposal is unconstitutional, in my opinion. And the Bill currently before the Seanad is designed to undermine the clear constitutional function and duty of the elected government to make appointments to the High Court, the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court in accordance with the governments’ own discretion and judgement as to the composition, balance and outlook of those vital constitutional courts” (Sunday Business Post, 20.9.18).

Mr. McDowell’s statement would bring nodding agreement in Warsaw. And there’s the rub.

The chorus of criticism of the Polish Government and its attitude towards its judiciary has been deafening across Liberal Europe and the Irish Government has been a leading voice in the chorus, a cheerleader in fact. Its judiciary representative marched in the streets of Poland against the Government. Its embassy there is openly provocative and is a focus for seeking to change government policy—which must be a breach of all diplomatic protocols.

And the alleged Polish crime is political interference by the Government in its Judiciary!

The Polish Government would be unique in the world if it followed the demands made. The USA, self-proclaimed leader of the free world, has its Supreme Court appointed by the President. It is an independent country and it apologises to nobody for that and it does not occur to anybody to query it. And the point of it is that the Court reflects the prevailing political views of the Government of the day in a most blatant way. The same thing, done openly in the US, is done more discreetly elsewhere but the result is the same. No state is not, and cannot be, indifferent to who is in charge of its judiciary.

The chorus against Poland is interesting in many ways. The usual cry against many foreign governments is that they do not meet Liberal Europe’s democratic

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Moslems: Triple Standards?

My French nephew sent me a quote from a Finnish Foreign Minister in which he asks some pertinent questions.

Why is it that when you insult blacks it is racism; when you insult Jews it is anti-semitism; women it is sexism, but when you insult muslims it is freedom of expression.

On returning from their mid-term break French teachers were required to read an essay by Jean Jaures on freedom of speech and then have a debate on the subject with their students. My sister who teaches in a French school with a large number of Muslim students suggested that this was just about the last thing that she needed to do.

John Martin

Minks In Donegal!

[It is reported that the Government is considering a 120,000 mink cull, as a Covid Safety measure—but how did mink farming start in Ireland?]

I am sorry to say that many decades ago my father was responsible for introducing mink farming to Donegal. He’d had a go at trying to get Glencolumbcille farmers growing spuds on contract for the Irish Sugar Company, which built a crisp factory in Letterkenny, the farmers couldn’t do it—just went for the immediate market, the spot price in the jargon of economics. Himself and Fr McDyer (and General Costelloe) just gave up in the end.

He then tried mink farming—brought in the Finns, who control the game, globally, they run the annual Hudson Bay Company (yes, the Imperialist charter company!) Auction Market as far as I know. My memory is that the auction happens in the Autumn (northern hemisphere). I do recall that the market outcome was always awaited—it meant annual profit or loss at the farm.

The Finns came in, loved it. They set up out of Killybegs—the trawlers had so much fish and species that they were dumping. Dad’s idea was the Finns can bring in the mink and the dump fish will feed them (creating a market outlet for the boats and their ‘waste’ catch).

The funny thing is the Finns were all Swedish, and Swedish-speaking (hadn’t a word of Finnish). They were a minority in Finland but also a ruling elite as I understand it (and hated by the Finnish Finns). They controlled the mink business—and were also obsessed beyond belief about Russian invasion. They all went on to, or secured, South African citizenship for whatever reason (it was their preferred bolthole). But they also had a policy of having a second bolthole, thus the attraction of the *Roimn na Gaeltachta* proposition—bring in the mink farms and we will give you the fish feed and we’ll give you a grant as well (and of course citizenship). They absolutely loved it—and were very nice people actually.

I have looked up the outfit and found this from last year (fascinating):

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/irish-fur-farmers-feel-the-chill-as-ban-phased-in-across-eu-1.3943287> [Also see:] <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ireland-fur-farm-ban-mink-farming-jobs-ispca-animal-welfare-a8972546.html>

Fergus O Rahallaigh

Trump Editorial A Disgrace!

I’m having to restrain myself as I type....as I was shocked at the front page article *The Election*.

Who wrote this Editorial?

I am sorry to say it struck me as a one sided propaganda.

And to quote a Nazi Political Theorist!!!

Just wanted you to know, but ‘d like a brief feedback.

I enjoy *Irish Political Review* generally: although I’ve had one or two issues with some articles. But I believe in seeing other points of view. But never before have I read anything as unfair and obvious anti liberal democracy as this.

One can have a different political persuasions ...but this! And to candidly by same show support for what I believe may be an attempted Coup! [This reminds me of a] Central African genocidal type administration or,...classic Sth American anti left junta!

Brian

norms in elections. But that cannot be said of Poland so that argument is set aside and the state is criticised for its value system. Democracy by its very nature is conservative. People vote for whom they know and trust which is based on what they have done and are known for and how they plan to improve what exists. Revolutions are not voted into existence.

The European project itself was not voted into existence. It was and is a revolutionary concept—the replacing of the Europe nations with a single political entity or demos. The basic reality of that new entity has to be created, recognised and trusted before a government of that entity can be seriously voted for. Debating chambers like the present European Parliament are a world removed from that and discredits the objective.

To create that new European entity the Commission was created and has in a formal sense what is pejoratively called a 'democratic deficit': but it is not anti-democratic, it is just ademocratic for the purpose it was

created to achieve and has to be so.

The project was created by the Christian Democracy of Europe—and not by the Liberals of Europe, who have since pushed themselves to the fore. And the more the latter dominate, the more problematic the project becomes.

Poland is a test case of where Christian Democratic Europe meets the value system of Liberal Europe, a system which finds the traditional values to be an anathema.

These contradictions illustrate anew the very issue the European project was conceived to resolve – the acceptance of national differences in Europe and how and why they could be integrated into a new political entity.

The conflict with Poland shows that the jury's still out on a resolution of that issue. One thing is certain; the Poles do not consider themselves less European than anybody else whatever others may think of them.

Jack Lane

the rioting in connection with the setting up of the Northern Ireland system, and the Anglo-Irish War, but Dudgeon does not do so.

The closest he gets to political comment is this:

"The assassination of the Woodvale MP, William Twaddell, in May 1922 in Belfast and of Sir Henry Wilson MP and former chief of the imperial general staff, in London, in June accelerated the introduction of the Special Powers Act and internment. It was effective then but not in the 1970s. However, as the History Ireland editorial points out, northern nationalists were essentially abandoned in the 1920s, not least by Michael Collins, and again in 1969, when Jack Lynch's broadcast promise to not stand idly by turned out to be a hollow, if destabilizing statement. The Civil War ultimately put paid to the northern IRA's campaign and the 1920s troubles came to an end". Though their memory lingered on.

The Northern Ireland Catholics were not merely abandoned by Collins. They were called upon to rise up by him, before he abandoned them to launch the 'Civil War; on Whitehall instructions, leaving them at the mercy of the Ulster Unionist forces.

And they were not abandoned only by him. They were abandoned much more consequentially by the British State in which they were required to continue to live. And that was what led to the War in the 1970s against which Internment proved to be ineffective—a fact which Dudgeon once seemed to understand.

He says nothing about what caused the Protestants to go on that killing spree in the early 1920s.

It was clearly connected with the politicking of the 1920 Bill which set up Northern Ireland.

Carson had in his 1918 Election campaign demanded the exclusion of the Six Counties from whatever arrangements were made by the Government for the rest of Ireland. In 1916 the Ulster Unionist Party had withdrawn its opposition to the Home Rule Act on the Statute Book on the condition that the Six Counties were excluded from it and were governed as an integral part of the British state.

When the 1920 Bill was published, it was an all-Ireland Bill, but with a provision enabling the Six Counties to secede from all-Ireland Home Rule by setting up of a Home Rule Government of its own.

Carson said that Ulster Unionists did not want a Government of its own in which they would have to govern a large Catholic minority. What they wanted was to be governed along with the Catholics

Northern Ireland Centenary—A Celebration?

We are on the eve of the centenary of the setting-up of part of Ulster as a very unusual form of devolved government within the British state. Preparations to celebrate the event are hard to find.

On its half-centenary Northern Ireland was a battlefield. It had also been a battlefield in the year of its birth. It had been founded in war and it led to war. Between these two wars there was an interval of about forty-seven years which might be called peaceful.

If peace is unconditionally better than war—and there is a widespread bias which says that it is—then tribute should be paid to Lord Craigavon and Lord Brookeborough for maintaining Northern Ireland in a peaceful condition for so long. They achieved this by stifling political activity, reducing it to a routine in which nothing happened. They understood what Northern Ireland was and they governed it accordingly.

That routine has been ignorantly dismissed as "tribalism" by commentators who would not trouble their heads to understand what Northern Ireland was. One of the things it was a war that was waiting to happen. It happened when a Northern

Ireland Prime Minister came along who thought he was governing a democracy in which the electors were, for some peculiar reason, failing to participate as they ought to, and a Taoiseach came along who encouraged him in this attitude, and the established routine of inactivity was broken. Then things began to happen.

We gather that Lord Bew has been appointed expert adviser on historical matters for the Centenary Celebrations, but we have not seen what advice he is giving, or who he is giving it to.

Meanwhile we notice that there is a letter in the academic pop-history magazine, History Ireland, by Jeffrey Dudgeon OBE, a former Ulster Unionist Party Councillor, on the 1920 Belfast pogroms.

Dudgeon OBE, like Lord Bew, is a fundamentalist upper class Unionist. His letter is about whether the early 1920s random killing of Catholics is rightly called a pogrom, what the numbers were, and whether the number of Catholics killed in the rioting was disproportionately high, given that there were twice as many Protestants as Catholics there to do the killing.

It would have been relevant to discuss

as an integral part of the British state. But Westminster insisted that the Six Counties could only be excluded from Irish Government if they operated a Home Rule system of their own, which would be connected with the Dublin Government by a Council of Ireland.

If Westminster had conceded Carson's demand for a simple Six County exclusion from the Bill, it is improbable in the extreme that the 'pogrom' of the early 1920s would have happened. The Protestants would have had no reason for it.

But, instead of doing that, Westminster created uncertainty in the minds of the Protestant population of what was in store for them. This climaxed in assurances given to Collins by his new friend Birkenhead — the famous Galloper Smith of the 1912-14 agitation — that if he signed the Treaty, the Northern Ireland body would be whittled away by the Boundary Commission.

The setting up of Northern Ireland had nothing whatever to do with 'good government' in the Six Counties. The best possible government of the Six Counties would have been government within the political system of the state.

Around 1973-4 Athol Street arranged for a number of meetings to be held at the Students Union in Belfast to discuss the 'pogroms'. We produced documents with detailed information about engagements in the Anglo-Irish War which, combined with the political uncertainty produced by State arrangements in 1920-22, seemed to give sufficient reason for the blind rage that drove Protestants on a Catholic-killing spree. We were hoping for what might be called a secular discussion of the matter. But next to nobody turned up. Lord Bew didn't.

Possibly he had already enlisted in the Official IRA by then. He subsequently became an expert adviser, along with Eoghan Harris, to the Ulster Unionist Party Leader, Lord Trimble.

Jeffrey Dudgeon probably was at those meetings. At that time, and for many years afterwards, he appeared to agree that erratic Protestant behaviour resulted from the uncertainty caused by the 1920 arrangements. He was a member of the cross-community Campaign for Labour Representation which, under the direction of David Morrison, was steadily increasing pressure on the British Labour Party to end its boycott of the Northern Ireland region of the state.

Then, around 1990, he acted with Kate Hoey to break up the CLR on sectarian lines. Hoey was a London Labour MP

of Ulster Protestant origin who joined the CLR and became its President. In 1990, with Dudgeon's assistance, she attempted to siphon off Protestant members into an organisation called Democracy Now, which was launched with lavish expenditure, backed by a London newspaper millionaire.

It had purportedly the same purpose as the CLR, but being clearly Protestant Unionist in style, it subverted that purpose. For a couple of years it put on well-funded events on the fringe of Labour Conferences.

The CLR disbanded. Hoey was rewarded with a Junior Ministry in the next Labour Government. Dudgeon joined the Ulster Unionist Party and was elected local Councillor, and was awarded the OBE. He appeared to be satisfied with his success in getting a number of Protestants to free themselves from Fenian enchantment and return to their roots.

We will be interested to see how he and Lord Bew celebrate the centenary of the event that took 'Ulster' out of the political life of the British state by giving it its catastrophic little statelet. It does not seem that any Catholic body, not even the remnant of the SDLP, is willing to celebrate it with them.

Brexit: Insights

continued

blooms, and as the EU contemplates its future without the debilitating influence of British Euroscepticism, the current Fine Gael/Fianna Fail leadership continues to cast Ireland in the role of piggy-in-the-middle — an entity pulled in two directions — probably a minor irritant to both.

DEPENDENCE ON THE UK 'LAND BRIDGE'

It is sometimes the case that problems at the level of high politics are only revealed in the way that practicalities are handled. That seems to be what is happening in Government efforts to develop an alternative to use by Irish road haulers of routes through Britain as a land bridge to the Continent. Using trucks to transport goods to and from Europe via Britain is cheaper and quicker than the direct route to France by sea, but after Brexit there will be too many hold-ups and checks for the British route to be viable. This was quickly recognised in the Irish Brexit debate, and indeed has been consistently highlighted in this journal beginning with an editorial in early 2017 (*Brexit: Irish fudge*

undermines EU solidarity, Irish Political Review, March 2017).

Superficially it looks as though the Irish Government has made the necessary arrangements through capital investments in Dublin and Cork Airports and in the ports of Dublin and Rosslare. In his introduction to the debate on the omnibus Bill, Foreign Affairs Minister Simon Coveney stated:

“Our ports and airports are well prepared for the new realities. Provision has been made for some 1,500 additional staff to support and carry out customs, sanitary and phytosanitary, SPS, and food safety checks and controls. The State has spent over €30 million making Dublin Port ready and fit for purpose for the new realities of 1 January next year. The decision of the European Council to approve the €5 billion Brexit adjustment fund is also welcome. We are working closely with the European Commission to ensure the fund targets the sectors and member states most disproportionately impacted by Brexit.” (Dail Debates, 11/11/20.)

However, that statement provides little concrete information about the adequacy of shipping capacity for replacing the UK land bridge. As the Debate progressed contributions from a number of Deputies gave grounds for doubting Government claims on the issue. The first came from Brendan Howlan (Labour Party, Wexford), who had held discussions with a body that the Government is depending on, the *Irish Maritime Development Office (IMDO)*.

“I have received from the Department of Transport the Irish Maritime Development Office analysis report to the Department of Transport on a reassessment of Ireland's maritime connectivity in the context of the Brexit and Covid-19 challenges. I have discussed this report with the Irish Maritime Development Office since its publication last week. I have to say I am not entirely convinced. Its basic conclusion is that we have enough capacity, even in the event of there being a fundamental disruption of the land bridge, to continue to import and export. The mechanism that is envisaged is that vessels that are currently used on the Irish-UK line will simply be repurposed to European ports. I am not sure that is as simple as is believed and set out in that process. In any event, it would have implications for our exports directly into Britain if those vessels were no longer available to bring our biggest trading partner, the goods from Ireland, to the United Kingdom. The same vessels cannot be used on two separate routes at the same time; that is not possible” (Dail Debates, 11.11.20).

Deputy Howlan's view was that relying on the word of the ferry companies that all will be well falls short of proper contingency planning. Concern about the

reliability of the report from the IMDO was echoed by deputy Cian O’Callaghan of the Social Democrats (Dublin Bay North). He welcomed the additional direct routes to mainland Europe promised by the ferry companies, but referred to statements from both the Irish Road Haulage Association and the Freight Transport Association of Ireland that companies will need access to ports closer to key markets in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany as well as either Calais or Dunkirk. He said:

“I am concerned that the report from the Irish Maritime Development Office does not deal with those concerns in depth and that the assurances given by the ferry companies do not meet the expectations of those closely involved on a daily basis in logistics, moving goods, ensuring quick supply of food and imports and exports” (ibid).

The next speaker on the question was one of the new Sinn Féin TDs, deputy Darren O’Rourke (Meath East) whose family has connections with the road haulage industry. His entire speech focussed on road haulage. He referred to a Copenhagen Economics report commissioned by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation which found that two thirds of Irish goods exporters, or 150,000 heavy goods vehicles, make use of the UK land bridge to access Continental markets every year. Like other deputies, O’Rourke disputed the findings of the IMDO report and stated there is currently a clear deficit in roll on roll off services to Europe. Expressing the position of his party he stated:]

“Sinn Féin believes that the Government should prepare contingency plans for State-supported shipping routes, including public service obligation routes. These should be focused on roll-on, roll-off services where vehicles that currently use the land bridge have the option of using new, frequent and direct routes to the Continent that reduce the time at sea to the bare minimum” (Ibid).

The reference here to reducing time at sea to a minimum is apposite, as the speed of ships travelling between Ireland and Europe would need to be at least 24 knots to meet the time requirements for some perishable goods. It’s unclear whether the existing vessels on Irish routes have that speed capacity. Regarding the reliability of the ferry companies, it should be pointed out that Stena Line is not only a British company but a company that upholds an explicitly pro-British culture—it refuses to sell Irish newspapers on its vessels and it part-funded the restoration of a controversial Queen Victoria Fountain in Dun Laoghaire in the early 2000s.

The final and most informed contribution on the issue of connectivity to Europe came from Independent Deputy, Verona Murphy (Wexford) who is also President of the Irish Road Haulage Association. She spoke solely on the topic and a large part of her speech is worth reproducing.

“I am certainly not in the habit of correcting colleagues but the reality is the review released this week by the Irish Maritime Development Organisation, IMDO, has certain cohorts under the illusion that extra ships have been brought on and I would like to correct this miscommunication. At this point in time, no extra ships have been brought on to service land bridge traffic. The review included factors such as an overview of freight volumes through Irish ports, focusing in particular on land bridge traffic, which is roll-on, roll-off traffic, with trucks and drivers, as well as lift-on, lift-off traffic, with no trucks or drivers. It is a minuscule amount of what would be regarded as land bridge traffic. It took into account demand factors and supply factors as well as a case for State intervention in the shipping market.

The report states freight demand will be lower than normal in 2021. As a word of caution I state the review was carried out in the second quarter of 2020, in the middle of a pandemic when most of Europe was in lockdown from a manufacturing perspective. This means there would not be a true reading of movements during this time. Another conclusion of the report was that supply capacity will be higher than normal in January 2021. Again, this is not true with regard to land bridge traffic. Land bridge traffic will not be catered for on lift-on, lift-off routes, where the IMDO states the capacity exists. Furthermore, Rosslare Europort, which is the most strategic port and provides the shortest crossing to mainland Europe, does not have the facilities required for lift-on, lift-off container ships. Therefore, any extra capacity is on much longer sea routes than a direct 18 hour roll-on, roll-off service. In some cases, the capacity we are expected to use as an alternative requires a 38 hour shipping journey.

This is at a time when the Minister, Deputy Coveney, said the Government could subsidise it but it is not currently required. The report states that State intervention is problematic and the case has not been made that it is necessary at this time. This is not true either. The case has been made continually by the customers of these shipping providers and the Irish Road Haulage Association, IRHA, but the IMDO did not ask the IRHA nor did it ask any of the pharmaceutical companies or major food producers to whom I spoke. From what I can tell, it only asked the current shipping providers, which is the equivalent of asking turkeys to vote for Christmas. A move to direct routes from the land bridge will increase shipping costs by 30% in one fell swoop to the supply chain and its service providers. This is detrimental in most cases

and far too much to bear in this climate. Neither Covid nor Brexit are of our making and a subvention to eliminate this cost until the dust settles on Brexit is a must or jobs will be lost.

The Taoiseach told the house yesterday the IMDO is informing Government policy, so the reasons I have outlined, and the misinformation provided by the IMDO’s report, can only mean the Government’s policy on shipping and ensuring that the land bridge traffic suffers the least interruption will also be flawed. The Government’s policy should be ensuring that an efficient and effective daily service is put in place now. This service requires extra ships to be chartered and placed in service from a port that is the closest in line time wise to the current land bridge service of 13.5 hours. This means Rosslare Europort must have a daily service. This may require a subvention from the Government. We were told at the outset that the EU would support Ireland if it was disproportionately affected by Brexit. That time is now. We are disproportionately affected. The Connecting Europe Facility, commonly known as the EU connectivity fund, is available for infrastructural investment in transport aimed at greater connectivity between European Union member states and must be drawn down to prepare Rosslare Europort to be the direct access port to mainland Europe. This must happen in the national interest. . . .” (Dail Debates, 11.11.20)

BRITAIN’S FOOL IN BRUSSELS

Why is the Government relying so heavily on the existing ferry companies? Partly for ideological reasons. It has long been a watchword in Irish public policy—in line with neoliberal thinking—that the State should stay out of services that can be provided by market forces, but a question must also be asked of the present Fianna Fail/Fine Gael/Green Coalition, and its Fine Gael predecessor, as to the seriousness of their commitment to EU membership. In the Debate on the omnibus Brexit Bill, repeated statements mainly but not exclusively from Fine Gael TDs about the need to preserve the relationship with Britain post-Brexit raise questions as to whether the reality of the British exit has fully sunk in. A sample of such statements follows

Simon Coveney (Fine Gael Cork):

“The Government remains committed to protecting and strengthening the Ireland-UK relationship following the end of transition.”

Brendan Howlin (Labour, Wexford):

“There are other issues that will need further work including maintaining regular parliamentary and ministerial contact when the United Kingdom no longer attends European Council meetings and there are not normal bilateral meeting between Ministers. Many of us have

had the privilege of attending European Council meetings on a monthly basis and understand the personal relationships that can be forged and the importance of them. As we have said on other occasions, we need to explore mechanisms between parliamentarians and Ministers to ensure that those personal interactions are not only maintained but also that they are developed into the future. One of the ideas that has been posited is that we might consider having direct meetings with UK Ministers in and around the time of Council meetings if they are willing to do that.”

Alan Farrell (Fine Gael, Dublin Fingal):

“In January 2021, things will change dramatically. We cannot escape that fact. The relationship, so long fostered, between our country and the UK will experience major changes.”

Neale Richmond (Fine Gael, Dublin Rathdown):

“We talk about Ireland as the bridge into the European Union for the US. Who will be the bridge for the UK into the EU going forward? This is where Ireland must stand up. We are a small member state, but we are an established member state, a respected member state, a member state that believes in the rule of law, that believes in the power of the European Union, and a member state that crucially has benefited so much from European membership. Using the institutions of the Good Friday Agreement, that agreement that successive Ministers have worked so hard to protect and implement in this jurisdiction, we use those institutions, the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference, the North-South Ministerial Council and the British-Irish Council, and all Members of this House and, indeed, of the Upper House use the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly. We need to be inventive. We need to be imaginative. We need to have the discipline and the structure so that those institutions will ensure that Ireland and the UK can continue to work together because we have that unique position. We are the only European member state that has that opportunity within the rules of the European Union.”

Of these statements that from Neale Richmond is of most interest. In December 2016, when the Irish Brexit debate was at a critical juncture a contributor to *Irish Political Review*, Jack Lane, responded to information about a leaked official policy document relating to Brexit by saying that the Government wanted to be “*Britain’s fool in Brussels*”. Richmond’s bright idea that Ireland should be a bridge between Britain and the EU is worthy of a similar response. The Anglophiles in the elite simply can’t fully adjust to the new reality that this country must now decouple from Britain and ramp up its connections with Europe.

Analogies are always inaccurate and

sometimes dangerously so, but the predicament now facing this country regarding the need to replace the UK land bridge is in some ways akin to that faced in the early stages of the Second World War when the absence of a merchant shipping fleet threatened Ireland’s supply of necessary imports and exports. De Valera’s Government responded by forming *Irish Shipping* as a State-owned deep sea shipping company. Under the administrative leadership of Sean Lemass, John Leydon and J.J. McElligott, a merchant fleet was assembled and the crisis, not without sacrifice, was averted. One important difference between that Government and the present one is that it understood its own historical origins and the nature of the international order it faced.

At the present time the leaderships of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael are in hock to a contrived narrative of the State’s history which boils down to a wish to be a satellite of Britain.

It remains to be seen whether the Government’s faith in the ferry companies will turn out to be warranted. If it is not, and a major disruption to the flow of goods between Ireland and Europe occurs after January 1st, or when the pandemic restrictions end, as is feared by members of the Opposition, an investigation into the matter will be justified.

On top of the obvious folly of relying on market forces, another cause will need to be looked at: the Government’s unwillingness to upset the long term relationship with Britain by copper-fastening its alignment with the EU in tangible, practical ways.

In its characterisation of Irish history between the 1920s and the present as a ‘*counter revolution*’, Sinn Fein is hamstrung by basic misconceptions, a mirror image of Fine Gael/Fianna Fail disavowal of the tradition associated with 1916 and the Proclamation. But, in the context of Brexit, at least Sinn Fein can see that the State needs to be directly involved in creating new sea connections with the Continent.

DEBATING THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

Earlier on the day that the Brexit Omnibus Bill was debated, a session of the *Oireachtas Joint Committee on European Union Affairs* was given over to the Conference of the Future of Europe, an EU initiative that has been dragging on since 2017. The project remains at a preparatory stage for a debate that may not even commence until 2022 or 2023 and is supposed to be concerned with developing new ideas on further European integration.

The format of the session was that three experts—Professor Federico Fabbrini (EU Law) of Dublin City University, Dr. Cath-

erine Day, former head of the civil service of the European Commission and Professor Gavin Barrett (European Constitutional and Economic Law) of University College Dublin—answered questions about the initiative. Looking on the bright side regarding a debate that has been long-fingered repeatedly, Dr. Day opined that the delay was probably a good thing in that a meaningful debate about the EU’s future would be difficult until the dust has settled on Brexit.

While the proceedings of the Joint Committee did not deal directly with Brexit, some of the contributions brought the spotlight back to the problem of the pro-British leanings of sections of the Irish political elite. Choosing her words carefully Dr. May stated the following:

“Returning to Ireland after so long in Brussels, I am really struck by how much Ireland is in an Anglosphere. We hardly ever discuss what happens on the Continent either in terms of politics, issues or even how they do things yet everyone is an expert on the United States, Australia or Canada. Why is that? It is because we are caught in an English-speaking environment.”

How could someone knowledgeable of EU affairs and, one presumes, of the Ireland-EU relationship, get it so wrong regarding the cause of the elite’s attachment to the Anglosphere? Far from it being a consequence of the English-speaking environment, it is the result of a carefully nurtured, if sometimes shaky, political agenda dating back to the *Arms Crisis* of 1970. Historical revisionism and the related cultivation of a close London-Dublin relationship have been pushed relentlessly through official, academic and media channels for fifty years. While making progress inside the political elite and among the upper echelons of society that agenda has been much less successful at the level of public consciousness.

If we go back just a few years to the commemoration of the 1916 Rising, the anti-national policy is plain to see. The then Government approached the commemoration by launching a DVD barely mentioning the leaders of the Rising. Under pressure from the ensuing public outcry a rapid about-turn was effected in which grants were made available to local groups around the country to properly mark the centenary, grants that were enthusiastically availed of.

Fast forward to 2020 and the then Government attempted to host a State Commemoration for the RIC, the paramilitary force used by the British to suppress the

democratically elected first Dail. Again, the Commemoration had to be cancelled due to a public outcry, this time expressed through the channel of the Local Authorities.

So the problem of the Irish elite's Anglophile infatuation is not a product of cultural-linguistic affiliation, but Dr. Day need not have looked very far to see evidence of that. A statement from Senator Michael McDowell at the session gave clear expression to it. Before quoting him, another statement from Catherine Day in which she spells out clearly how different the EU will be without Britain is worth quoting:

“There is, however, a fundamental difference between the new EU when compared with from where we have come. I think that as long as the UK was in the outer layer, it was more acceptable and easier for other, smaller countries also to be outside. Now that the UK is not there and that the core of the EU is always going to be in the first tier, there will be real consequences for countries that choose to stay outside.”

Here is the relevant extract from McDowell's contribution showing the Senator in full Anglophile mode:

“Professor Barrett referred to the justice and home affairs opt-out and the question of whether we were missing out on something. Are we missing out on something? I know of no sense in which Ireland is missing out from not being involved in the Schengen arrangements. I do not believe we are, but maybe I am wrong. [The 1985 Schengen Agreement is an EU initiative aimed at dismantling internal borders while strengthening external ones. It regulates internal border controls, procedures for issuing a uniform visa, the operation of a single database for all members known as SIS—Schengen Information System—as well as the establishment of a cooperating structure between internal and immigration officers.]

This brings me to a second point on which I would like a contribution from any or all of our guests. Post Brexit, Ireland will have a peculiar and unique relationship with the UK because we have a common travel area. This means that, on migration, customs control and so on, we will have to remain integrated in some respects with the UK. We cannot pursue a different approach of an open border, free movement and citizens' rights being mutually agreed as if we were Sicily. We are going to have our own set of issues. This feeds back into the question of home affairs because we and the British have a fairly similar justice and home affairs arrangement. In light of Northern Ireland and the South, diverging our systems gratuitously or unnecessarily would pose significant issues. I hope I do not sound reactionary or too conservative. I am just saying that we should not cod ourselves.”

Despite McDowell's commendable pressing of the experts for a response,

his points were not coherently answered by either the experts or by the other Parliamentarians present. On the contrary, Professor Fabbrini, himself a member of the EU elite with a sound understanding of the present problems of the Union—he has correctly identified the increased the power of EU Governments as against that of the supranational Commission as a key problem—seems to harbour illusions about the role that Ireland will play in the post-Brexit dispensation. He stated:

“I am evermore convinced Ireland is destined to play a leading role in the European Union after Brexit. Ireland remains the only English language country in the European Union and has strong ties with the United States. Only two weeks ago, the Brexit Institute hosted a conference with a leading advisor to Mr. Joe Biden and he basically said the United States will expect Ireland to take up the role the UK usually played in bridging Europe with the United States.”

This loose talk about Ireland being a bridge between the US and the EU and fulfilling the role formerly played by Britain takes no account of the problem of the pro-British orientation of many in the Irish political class; it also raises a number of questions.

Firstly, the EU as a political entity has much to gain from the departure of an obstructionist Member State as described above by Catherine Day. Is this benefit to be jettisoned by getting Ireland to play the role formerly played by Britain?

Secondly, would Ireland in the role of broker/mediator between the US and EU have the function of preventing the EU from evolving independently of the US?

Thirdly, if, accepting the point that Ireland could become a US-EU bridge, might not this work better if Ireland took a step back from the Anglosphere and a step closer to the EU?

Fourthly, would there be tangible benefits for Ireland if it joined the Schengen arrangements?

Lastly, in the scenario mapped out by Senator McDowell involving a continuing close Anglo-Irish relationship, would not Ireland be used as a pawn in British manoeuvres against the EU?

As institutions, the Houses of the Oireachtas have their flaws, but their proceedings can also shine light where it is needed. Opposition Deputies performed a useful function in the Debate on the omnibus Bill, particularly in relation to the land bridge problem. Likewise, the Joint Committee on the EU performed a service by inviting some well qualified experts to stimulate discussion on the EU as we approach the eve of Brexit. Overall, the message I took from these Debates is that, four and a half years on from the British referendum, the politicians at the centre of power in Dublin in company, along with some elements of the EU elite, are still struggling to take on board the full implications for Ireland of the British exit.

Dave Alvey

Communing With The Departed!

I think that some English people's grasp of the history of Ireland might have arisen from reading graffiti written on the bog walls in the 'Bull' in Ambridge. Indeed, a review of the *Cambridge History of Ireland in History Ireland* a couple of years back suggests that the reviewer's opinion of that book differs little from mine in this matter.

In the village of Combe Martin in Devon the yokels spend from Friday to Monday over the Spring Bank Holiday hunting the “*Traitor Earl of Rone*”, an old tradition, revived in the 1970s after a break of 100 years. The “*Traitor*” a.k.a. Aodh O'Neill died peaceably in his bed in Rome in 1616 but in this charade he dies, to put it as politely as possible, by a thousand cuts, as each yokel in turn shoots him dead, but the “*traitor*” miraculously revives, so all can share the glory.

It's perhaps significant that the custom

was revived in the 1970s. When I arrived in London 56 years ago this week it seemed to me that Anglo-Irish quarrels were buried forever.

Newspapers, radio, TV were friendly, jokes about the Irish did not depict us stupid, but the reverse. Dave Allen was probably the favourite comedian, Val Doonican the favourite easy-listening singer, and the Beatles were proud of their Irish roots.

Sharing the surname, charm and irresistibility of the late occupant of the White House was no disadvantage either.

At Easter 1916 British media were unstinting in their praise of the 1916 Insurgents, and when they turned their attention to the IRA of 1966, they did not demonise them. The IRA had called off border war four years earlier, though a maverick had just blown up Nelson Pillar in Dublin—a crazy stunt that might have killed some of its citizens.

The *Daily Telegraph* and *The Sunday Times* saluted 1916 Insurgents, such as President de Valera and Taoiseach Sean Lemass, Cabinet Ministers and Opposition leaders. Apparently the only hostile comment, by an Irish Jesuit Professor, was wisely suppressed by the Order's Journal "*Studies*".

Between 1921 and 1970 not many British veterans of the Black and Tan War cared to write memoirs. Apparently they were not proud of their conduct, or there was no market in Britain for their stories. Britishers were embarrassed at what had been done at the time.

Irish accounts—Dorothy Macardle's magisterial chronicle covering the years 1912-25, *The Irish Republic*, veteran Ernie O'Malley's *On Another Man's Wound*, and Tom Barry's *Guerilla Days In Ireland* were bestsellers in Ireland and went into many editions, apparently unchallenged by British veterans or academics.

The events arising from the RUC bludgeoning the pro-democracy Civil Rights demonstrators of 5th October 1968 in Derry (which you may check on *YouTube*) utterly changed media and academia in Britain and Ireland.

Truths which were known to all who lived through the War of Independence, and the immediately succeeding generation were denied. Lies put out by Dublin Castle during the Tan War, and nailed as lies at the time, were recycled and continue to be recycled in Britain and in Ireland.

While Ernie Malley and Dorothy Macardle (and Frank Gallagher and Robert Brennan) were alive there was no chance that Dublin Castle's old lies would gain any traction, or attract the unprincipled hacks in Irish media, academia and politics.

Major Tom McDowell of MI5, a Director of *The Irish Times*, British Ambassador Sir Andrew Gilchrist and Harold Wilson's crooked fixer, Lord Goodman, managed a great *coup*, establishing the secretive, oathbound 'Irish Times Trust' to ensure that *The Irish Times* would serve the interests of the British Establishment.

In 1970 an Irish Government arrangement to import a handful of light weapons to defend Catholic areas from armed onslaughts of Royal Ulster Constabulary, B "Specials" and Orange mobs was botched and Taoiseach Jack Lynch treacherously dismissed senior Ministers and tried to have them, and a conscientious Army Officer acting under orders, convicted of crime. The jury, quite rightly found the accused not guilty.

The teaching of history in Irish schools and universities was abandoned and charlatans with crazy theories established lucrative careers while British troops and their friends made many a killing.

Tom Barry died in 1980. His reputation as a brilliant and honourable soldier in the War of Independence—The Twentieth Century's First War for Democracy—was unassailable.

It was another eight years before Peter Hart claimed to have interviewed a veteran who had taken part, under Tom Barry, in the Kilmichael Ambush of November 28 1920.

Peter Hart claimed to have interviewed the last of the Irish survivors of the Ambush, 97 year-old Ned Young on 19 th November 1989, whereas Ned Young had died on 13th November 1989.

Ned Young's son claimed that Ned had had a stroke in 1987 and have been unable to conduct a conversation, even had he been alive on 19th November 1989.

Peter Hart argued that Tom Barry was a murderer and a liar and that the IRA were sectarian fanatics engaged in ethnic cleansing. Half the Pricks on the Make and Elizabeth's Irish Whores still swear by him.

I don't know whether they commune with him often, for he died in his forties, about 10 years ago. He came from Newfoundland and his work proven to be historically worthless, though, I would assume, lucrative.

The American Minister in Dublin during

WWII, Edward Gray, was equally anti-Irish. He lived in what had been the Chief Secretary's residence in the Phoenix Park during the British regime. He sought advice on how to deal with de Valera from Arthur Balfour, who had been Chief Secretary in the 1880s. The fact that Balfour had been dead since 1930 was no more of an obstacle to Gray, than the demise of Ned Young was to Peter Hart.

Back to the Yokels hunting "*the Traitor Earl of Rone*". The revival of the custom in the 1970s was not mere coincidence. The insulting 'Irish' jokes, the poisoning of the media, the bought treachery of Irish institutions happened together and has not abated.

The Yokels of Combe Martin aside, the anti-Irish media campaign in England appears to me to have been a complete failure. I have not encountered it outside the media.

I have never felt the need to hide my identity, nor, if asked, my opinions in 56 years in England.

P.S. The Rebel Earl of Tyrone features in "*Elizabeth's Irish Wars*" by the late Cyril Falls. Elizabeth's Irish Whores seems a good description of many of today's hacks.

Donal Kennedy

Why The Armenians Made War

Pat Walsh interviewed by
Deutsches Zentrum fur Sudkaukasu

Question: What are the real reasons for the current escalation? Would the war have been avoidable?

PW: The second Karabakh war was probably unavoidable. Such an injustice and moral blow was dealt to the Azerbaijanis in the early 1990s by the Armenian take over of Karabakh and subsequent occupation of nearly a fifth of Azerbaijan, that a response was inevitable one day. The ethnic cleansing of around 750,000 Azeris, the massacres at Khojaly and other places, by the Armenians, compounded the enormous hurt inflicted by the territorial loss on Azerbaijan.

The mistake the Armenians made was that their victory was too complete and they proved incapable of trading land for peace as the first Armenian leader, Ter-Petrosyan, wanted to do. He knew the problems, including isolation, that the failure to do this would bring to Armenia, but he was ousted when he attempted a settlement. After that the Armenians obstructed every effort made for a diplomatic solution and their attitude to any compromise actually hardened, both in the

occupied territories and in Armenia itself. The sheer intransigence of Armenian nationalism left the Azeris little option but to accept their humiliation or attempt to regain their territory by armed force one day. For this eventuality they developed their economy, improved their military capacity and prepared a plan of campaign utilising the latest military technology. But first they put their faith in the Minsk Group and International Law to right the wrong they had suffered without resort to war.

Question: In your view, what responsibility does the Armenian leadership under Nikol Pashinyan bear for the dramatic worsening of the situation?

PW: The new Armenian Prime Minister, Nikol Pashinyan, was undoubtedly the trigger for the second war. He came to power in a Colour Revolution against the Karabakh Clan who had dominated Armenian politics since the victory in 1994. Pashinyan unbalanced Armenia through his promise of reform and peace which he retreated from when he met with opposition from the former ruling elite. Pashinyan decided to save himself by attempting to outflank the opposition by becoming a bellicose nationalist and out Karabakhing the Karabakh Clan. He did this to save himself and to avoid the fate of Ter-Petrosyan.

So Pashinyan proceeded to engage in a series of provocations that effectively detonated the conflict. These included, among other things,

promising “new wars for new territory” signalling a further advance into Azerbaijan’s territory; holding illegal elections in the occupied territories; demanding representation for ‘Artsakh’ in the peace negotiations, effectively ending them; and bombarding Azerbaijan with artillery at Tavuz in July, inflicting military and civilian casualties.

This led to a popular upsurge of anger that was directed against the government in Baku for its seeming inaction. The Aliyev government could not respond effectively to the Armenian military provocation because it took place on the national border between the two countries, rather than the line of contact with the occupied territories, inviting a potential Russian intervention if its ally, Armenia, was counter-attacked. But the writing was on the wall for Pashinyan and when the Armenians mounted more military attacks in September the war kicked off. It seems that the reckless Pashinyan overplayed his hand with disastrous consequences.

For almost 28 years, the OSCE Minsk Group with Russia, USA and France are unsuccessfully attempting to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by peaceful means. Why did these efforts fail so far?

The OSCE Minsk Group failed because its makeup was always weighted against Azerbaijan. Russia, France and the US chairs all had various degrees of Armenian influence upon them within their societies that made them unlikely to engage in meaningful action against the Armenian occupation, despite International Law supporting the Azerbaijan position. They therefore went through the motions of peace making for over two decades and tolerated the Armenian prevarications and refusal to engage in meaningful negotiation toward a settlement.

It was probably believed that Azerbaijan would never risk a military operation to liberate their territories and it would be stopped in any case. That proved a mistaken assumption and it only increased Azerbaijan’s frustration, resulting in a decline in faith in the Minsk group. It also emphasized the unfortunate fact that International Law is impotent without the use of force. In the end, because the international community failed to deliver, it took Azerbaijani military action to provide the impetus to implement International Law and the four UN Security Council Resolutions of 1993. The war and peace deal have really made the Minsk Group defunct now and Russia and Turkey are the new power brokers. If the US and France had planned to guide the “Artsakh Republic” gradually and stealthily to independence that objective has been destroyed.

Question: To what extent will Armenia’s military defeat affect Russia’s dominant power position in this country?

PW: Armenia’s defeat will probably strengthen Russia’s hold over the country, at least in the short term. Prime Minister Pashinyan had flirted with the West and this was a bad mistake. Russia, in the final analysis, is the only reliable support

Armenia has in the region. Historically Tsarist Russia made an Armenian state possible through its colonisation policy that concentrated the dispersed Armenian population around Yerevan as frontiersmen. Bolshevik Russia saved Armenia in 1920 from complete collapse after the disastrous Dashnak mismanagement of the state.

President Putin would have not been amused by Pashinyan’s Colour Revolution and his subsequent courting of the West. The Russian President would have determined to let Pashinyan suffer the consequences of his provocations and ignore pleas for assistance when he triggered a war in Russia’s backyard and then started to suffer serious defeats. After Armenia shattered two Russian brokered ceasefires by bombarding Azeri cities, Putin bided his time knowing that a rescue of Armenia from itself, at the right moment (such as the fall of the strategic centre, Shusha) would put the country firmly back in Moscow’s pocket.

The Russians were able to implement the Lavrov Plan, the essence of which was that there would be a phased withdrawal by Armenia from the occupied territories around Nagorno-Karabakh, and a Russian peacekeeping force in the region guaranteeing the security of the Karabakh Armenians. This had been resisted by the Armenians before the war in favour of making the much larger “Republic of Artsakh” permanent. But now the Lavrov plan has been imposed on a more favourable basis to Azerbaijan, with a third less territory left to the Armenians. This has frustrated the aims of France, the US and some Europeans who desired a multilateral solution to the conflict and an international peace agreement. Paris and Washington were rendered impotent by the sudden appearance and acceptance of the Russian plan.

Armenia is now totally dependent on Russia’s goodwill, having used up its Russian supplied armed forces and decimated its Russian-subsidised economy by provoking its neighbour. And what’s left of ‘Artsakh’ is a small protectorate of Russia, completely dependent for contact with Armenia on Russia and for its continued existence on Moscow. Azerbaijan controls the key strategic centre of Karabakh, Shusha, which is recognised on all sides as the key to controlling Karabakh.

According to the agreement reached on 10.11.2020 the Russian peacekeeping forces are to be deployed in some parts of Nagorno-Karabakh to ensure the security. What do you think of this mission? What does this development promise for the entire region?

The fairly small Russian peacekeeping mission (under 2000) is primarily there to secure continued Moscow influence in the region. The rump of Nagorno Karabakh, the territory it will operate within, is of little interest to Russia in itself. It is the leverage the Russian military presence can exert upon Yerevan and Baku that gives it significance. If Russia had chosen to support Armenia earlier in the war it could have lost all influence over Azerbaijan. If it had waited for a total rout of the

Armenians (which was imminent) it risked a very dangerous situation in which Armenia collapsed and Russia could not pick up the pieces of the state containing its military bases. Russia’s long term objectives in the remnant of Karabakh are unclear. But it will be there for five years at least exerting strong influence over the actions of both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

There is naturally hostility toward the Russian presence in Azerbaijan but Moscow’s forces can certainly be useful to Baku in the short term. Russia, in moving in to maintain geopolitical influence, has also taken on responsibility and it will probably be blamed by both sides if things start to go badly wrong. The Russians have committed themselves to managing the Armenian defeat and withdrawal from the occupied territories. Over the next month Russia has agreed to facilitate this rapid Armenian withdrawal from the Azerbaijani regions Armenia has held for nearly three decades. There are hundreds of Armenian settlers in these areas who might put up resistance.

Azerbaijan has gained Lachin, Kalbajar and Aghdam without having to sacrifice blood and treasure to win them. The peace plan saved Azeri forces from having to assault Stepanakert which would have been bloody and difficult and perhaps turned into a Sarajevo, damaging Azerbaijan’s international reputation. The illegal Armenian settlers and their settlements will now be ushered out of the Azerbaijan provinces by Russian power and influence while Azerbaijan can concentrate its resources on re-homing its internally displaced people on lands, many of which have been won without a fight. At the same time the Russian forces will form a ring around the Armenians remaining in the rump of Nagorno Karabakh, with the armed forces of Azerbaijan in an outer ring around them. Any Armenian resistance to the deal will have to be directed at Russian forces.

One unexpected development of the war has been a second corridor forming an overland route between Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan. For the first time in 30 years there’s going to be a direct road connecting Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan, and Turkey, as a consequence. This has the potential to develop into the busiest transport artery in the Southern Caucasus with Russia-Azerbaijan-Turkey trade going through a slice of Armenian territory, protected by the Russian forces. So Azerbaijan has gained direct access to Nakhchivan and Turkey in the most important geopolitical outcomes of the war.

It is difficult to predict the prospects for the region in the longer term. If Armenian nationalism can be chastened, after it absorbs the enormity of the defeat, increased stability could be possible through the Russian/Turkish security partnership. However, instability in Armenia and further reckless behaviour perhaps encouraged by the geopolitical enemies of Russia and Turkey (who are many) might unravel the whole settlement and ignite a more limited form of conflict that could persist for years. □

For the past two years we have been making available the weekly lists of “the Acts of Aggression committed in Ireland by the armed Military and Constabulary of the usurping English Government, as reported in the Daily Press” with the help of the daily newspaper of the First Dáil, the *Irish Bulletin*. It should be noted that these weekly summaries are not by any means the full content of the Irish Bulletin which also contains daily accounts of all significant developments in the war and not just these specific events.

We are concluding the weekly series with instalments 48-50 (page 1 below) which will be sent to online subscribers. All are available on our dedicated Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FrankGallagher1919/>.

Of course such acts of aggression continued and got more intense after leading up to the Truce on 11 July 1921 and they are recorded in a different format in the Bulletin. In fact they become almost the total content of the paper. The first four volumes are available and the two remaining volumes are in preparation.

LEST WE FORGET (48)

The following are the Acts of Aggression committed in Ireland by the armed Military and Constabulary of the usurping English Government, as reported in the Daily Press for the week ending SATURDAY, JANUARY 8th 1921.

SUMMARY.

<u>DATE:-JANUARY</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>4th</u>	<u>5th</u>	<u>6th</u>	<u>7th</u>	<u>8th</u>	<u>Total.</u>	
Raids	146	156	695	49	65	1182	2,293	
Arrests	158	13	296	23	10	535	1,035	
Courtsmartial:	8	-	9	2	3	4	26	
Sentences:	2	5	-	4	5	-	16	
Proclamations:	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	
Suppressions:	-	1	3	1	1	-	6	
Floggings, Torture etc.:	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	
Woundings:	-	3	6	2	-	1	12	
Attempted Murders:	-	1	1	3	-	-	5	
Murders:	1	1	1	-	1	-	4	(a total
Assassinations:	-	-	-	1	2	-	3	of 10
Prisoners Murdered:	-	2	-	1	-	-	3	murders)
Buildings Destroyed:	11	2	-	9	1	-	23	
Acts of Terrorism:	5	8	13	5	3	4	38	
Sabotage and Looting:	9	1	2	5	3	-	20	
Internments:	-	-	-	-	-	95	95	
Deportations:	-	2	-	-	-	9	11	
<u>Daily Totals:-</u>	341	197	1027	105	94	1830	3,594	

The sentences passed for political offences during the above six days totalled

TEN YEARS AND NINE MONTHS.
MONDAY, JANUARY 3rd 1921.

RAIDS:-

Co. Cork.

Twenty five houses at Mohana, Skibbereen; eight houses at Bantry; Cork Workhouse and private residences of six attendants; Kinsale Hotel, Cork City.

Co. Kerry.

Ten houses near Listowel; 2 shops in Tralee.

Co. Waterford.

Six houses in Waterford City.

Co. Antrim.

Derry train raided on arrival Belfast Station.

Co. Clare.

Fourteen houses in Ennis.

Offaly.

One house in Banagher.

Co. Tipperary.

Fifty houses in Cauteen district.

Dublin.

Vaughan's Hotel and five other houses in Parnell Sq.; nine houses in Fairview; Terenure College; 2 houses in Drumcondra and the flat in Dawson St. of Miss. E. McGrane, M.A. In the same building the Pharmacy of Mr. Ashmore and The Dawson Picture Gallery were searched.

Muriel MacSwiney In The News

A PROFILE

Muriel MacSwiney was the wife of Lord Mayor of Cork Terence MacSwiney who died on Hunger Strike in 1920, undertaken in protest at being illegitimately arrested by British troops. Terence was determined to prolong his Hunger Strike for as long as possible. To that end, he conserved his energy and made no unnecessary movements. This self-discipline added to the pain and discomfort he endured.

Muriel was amongst those who kept vigil with him in Brixton Prison, during the fearful 75 days of his body wasting away. She kept herself strong during this ordeal, but collapsed afterwards and wasn't able to attend the funeral.

After Terence's death Muriel was denied a period of mourning with her daughter, Maire: instead republican leaders asked her to campaign in the United States. It was a duty she performed unwillingly but very successfully. She was the first woman to be granted the Freedom of the City of New York.

On her return she tried to re-establish a family life with her daughter while also furthering the cause of Irish freedom. It was around this time that she took Maire with her on a short visit to Germany to receive medical treatment. This was at the time of the Treaty negotiations.

Back in Ireland politics again overtook her. She took the republican side in the 'Treaty' split, helping in any way she could, including addressing public meetings around the country on behalf of the republicans, and encountering vilification in some areas from those who saw the deal with England as the only practical way forward.

She was sent to campaign in America a second time by the republicans, to try to bring Irish America over to their cause. Again, this was a task she performed out of a sense of duty.

In America she also campaigned for the left-wing Trade Unionist, Jim Larkin, who had been imprisoned. He was released in the Summer of 1923 and came home. Some time after this, Muriel addressed a socialist meeting with him in the Mansion House, Dublin.

It was in December 1923 that Muriel went to Germany again with her daughter,

Maire and then decided to stay on.

Muriel's vision of independence was that of the Democratic Programme and the Declaration of Independence: an independent Ireland devoted to social justice. When she saw that was not to be, she moved to the Continent, but never gave up on Ireland. She continued to follow events closely, and particularly took an interest in the life and conditions of the working people. For her, independence was a means to an end.

BEGINNINGS

Muriel made contact with my comrade Dennis Dennehy during his 1969 Hunger Strike for the Homeless: and he put her in contact with me.

(A profile of Dennis can be found in the *The Dubliner: The Lives, Times And Writings Of James Clarence Mangan* by Brendan Clifford (1988).)

A correspondence then ensued, and her letters were eventually published in 1996 (*Letters To Angela Clifford*). Here is an extract from the Introduction:

"Muriel first contacted me in 1969 when I was living in London. She was then living in France, and was following Irish affairs as closely as she could. One of the striking events in the 26 Counties in the Winter of 1968-9 was the homeless agitation led by the late Dennis Dennehy, which culminated in his Hunger Strike in Mountjoy Jail around the time of the 50th anniversary of the first meeting of the Dail, in January 1969. Her imagination caught by a Hunger Strike on a social issue, Muriel wrote to Dennis, and he put her into correspondence with me.

Dennis Dennehy's sacrificial political gesture for a social purpose made a great impression on Mrs. MacSwiney, whose life had been marked by the death of her husband on hunger-strike, and it explains why she approached us with such confidence.

As Dennis was preoccupied with ensuring that his victory was followed through with actual remedies for the problem of homelessness, and with recovering from the effects of his twelve days on hunger strike, and she did not see her way to going to Dublin, he put her in contact with me in London. (Dennis and I were in politics together in the Irish Communist



Organisation, later the British & Irish Communist Organisation, BICO.) Following some correspondence, she came to London and we met in Lyons' Tea Shop in Holborn. On subsequent visits she came to my rented room in Hilldrop Road, close to Holloway Prison.

I encountered a very cheerful, spry and active old lady who did not look anything like her age. Her face was still lovely. She attributed her energy and good health to her long-held vegetarian eating habits. She spoke with a soft Irish lilt, not with a Cork middle class accent. Her white hair was pinned up around her face. She always wore black. At the time I was not particularly surprised that she travelled between the Continent and England on her own, and managed to get around London with no fuss and bother. But, looking back, I realise what an achievement that represented.

Despite the very great difference in our ages and backgrounds, we found that we were very much on the same wavelength. What was even more surprising was that, despite her status (as the widow of a world-renowned Republican martyr) and her age, she was still open to the discussion of new ideas. Her manner was entirely unaffected. Meeting her was not a one-way experience: it was an encounter between people. There was nothing about her of the air of a Very Important Person. She had not been fixed by her past into a kind of icon or idol, but had an open-minded interest in contemporary situations or people. She was not Terence MacSwiney's Widow holding court, but Muriel MacSwiney, getting on with her life in her seventies as she had done in her twenties.

If she had been more self-important, or if we had been a more affluent or settled group of people, perhaps I would have more in the way of momentoes or

relics of her. But the members of ICO were all wage-workers living in rented rooms, without a house between us, and living unsettled lives because we were immersed in political agitation. And, as she did not behave as an icon and we did not try to treat her as such, I have no relics to display.

I corresponded with her regularly for a couple of ears, not keeping copies of my letters to her. During the seventies I spent most of the time in Belfast and, whilst there, others kept in communication with her. Falling property values in Belfast enabled BICO to acquire a house there. Mrs. MacSwiney's letters lay there in a box in a concealed compartment in the attic for twenty years, surviving a number of British Army searches of the house, a number of Republican bombings of adjacent businesses which blew in the windows, ripped off slates, and produced bulges in the walls, and a great fire in the factory directly across the narrow street which raged for twenty-four hours.

By the early nineties, the phase of Northern Ireland politics into which we launched ourselves after the events of August 1969 was drawing to a close and we began to regroup. Mrs. MacSwiney's letters came to hand. We had put the basic information about the kidnapping of her daughter into the public domain in a number of publications, in Brendan Clifford's book on Mangan (*The Dubliner, The Lives, Times And Writings Of James Clarence Mangan*, Athol Books, 1988), in some issues of Pat Maloney's *Labour Comment*, published in Cork, and in Eamon Cronin's *Secular Sonnets...* I thought that Feminist writers in the seventies and eighties might have been interested in her case and sought out more information about her for sympathetic presentation. But I found that it wasn't so. The attitude towards her adopted by Desmond Greaves carried over into the Feminist movement. I decided therefore to publish her letters to me, along with some other material she had given me, so that she would at least have a listing in library catalogues and have something about herself in print in her own words.

In the following Chapters I attempt to piece together a biographical sketch of Muriel, giving some political context to the events, from what she told me and from I have been able to find out. It is by no means complete. Also reproduced is Muriel's fascinating evidence to the American Commission On Conditions In Ireland, given in 1920. She gave me a brief autobiographical sketch (type-written) to explain the circumstances of the kidnapping of her daughter: that is reproduced here, together with a French newspaper article on her plight. Finally, I could not let the character assassination against her, which came into the public domain in 1995, pass. The things, which had been said about her privately by

those who wished to justify the kidnapping of her daughter, have started to be made public. They deserve a reply.

While preparing this book, we came across a criticism of Mary MacSwiney by Bishop Cohalan of Cork and her reply. As the matter is of some relevance, these items are reproduced in an Appendix.

All of this biographical material makes rather a long accompaniment to the letters, but I consider that the matter contained is politically and historically important and that it gives a vital context to the letters, which are published here for the first time."

...

What I failed to mention in that Introduction was that Muriel offered me her Archive: a trunk full of documents. At the time she was visiting us in our rented furnished

room in London. We had no room for a trunk in that room, nor did we know where it could be stored while we were away in Belfast. We had to refuse the offer. It is a source of continuing regret that we could not take care of the documentary inheritance which she offered us.

IRISH TIMES

This past month Muriel featured as asides in two newspaper articles in this Decade of Centenaries. The more substantial of these references was by Frank McNally in his *Irish Times Irishman's Diary* of 30th October, which was mainly about Judge Meredith, a (Protestant) Republican who was appointed to the judiciary of the Irish State formed after 1922. McNally wrote that Meredith made a—

"landmark judgment in a family law case, in 1932... [in the case of] Máire MacSwiney, 14-year-old daughter of the late Terence, whose hunger strike of 1920 had left her without a father. She had since been raised, mostly in Germany, by her mother Muriel. But theirs was not a close relationship, either. "History deprived me of my father," Maire would write in her memoirs. "My mother deprived me of herself."

Terence MacSwiney must have foreseen such problems because in his will, he appointed his sister Mary as Máire's joint guardian. But then Muriel brought the child with her to the continent, fleeing family connections and Catholicism and replacing them with communism, a cause for which she had more time than she did her daughter.

The end came in 1932, when Mary visited from Ireland at a time when Máire was facing an unwelcome move to a new school. Muriel subsequently claimed it



to be a "kidnap". But as Mary Leland wrote in this space some years ago, it was more of an escape, as the teenager "chose to go with the aunt on a breathless dash across the Austrian border from the German village of Grainau onto Geneva and Ireland".

Back home, it was into Meredith's lap that this delicate case, involving a daughter of the revolution, and fought bitterly over several months, fell.

His judgment was Solomon-like but simple. As Frank MacGabhann summarised it in an essay on Meredith for the *Dublin Review of Books* earlier this year: "[He] decided to speak with the girl privately in his chambers. By then she understood some English. He asked her with whom she would like to live. She replied 'my aunt'. Meredith awarded custody to the aunt'."

I replied to the calumnies as follows:

"Frank McNally (*Irishman's Diary*, 30.10.20) criticises Muriel MacSwiney for her unconventional family arrangements and radical devotion to the oppressed, taking the standpoint of her neglected daughter, Maire. Of course Maire did not have a normal family life. Her father, Terence, sacrificed himself for Ireland in a way that was devastating for his devoted wife and comrade, who had to sit with him in prison and watch his life painfully ebb away—and then see the independent Ireland he sacrificed himself for compromised by erstwhile comrades.

At a time when the masses lived in abysmal conditions, Muriel then embraced the Communist vision, abandoning the narrow Catholicism then in the ascendant: a fact Nally disapprovingly notes when considering the position of their daughter, Maire. Muriel was opposed, as Canon Sheehan was, to the Catholic ascendancy

but was not anti-Catholic.

Judge Meredith was later to set aside the law for reasons of State in his judgment over-ruling Muriel's custody, after the child had been kidnapped by Terence's sister. Minors did not have the right in law to leave their parents.

As for Maire: a normal family life is not possible when your parents are revolutionaries, and it is understandable that she pursued a different destiny.

Some of us in the old Irish Communist Organisation met Muriel after she got in touch during Dennis Dennehy's hunger-strike of January 1969, highlighting the plight of homeless families. When I knew her, she was the most soft and gentle lady, still absolutely committed to the rights of the downtrodden. Muriel's side of the story can be read in her *Letters To Angela Clifford*.

Yours faithfully
Angela Clifford

This letter received no acknowledgement, nor was it published. That is hardly surprising!

As for the charges of mental problems: undoubtedly Muriel was subject to depression in her younger years, and possibly post-natal depression—which is more widespread than is realised. I have no information about that.

But what I can say is that she was there when it counted. She was there for the Republicans, she was there for the anti-Treatyites—even cooking for them!

As Manus O'Riordan was to write in *Irish Political Review* in April 2006:

"Muriel MacSwiney had the stoicism and courage to sit by her husband Terence MacSwiney's bedside during the course of his long hunger strike, right through to his agonising death. She had the stoicism and courage to serve alongside Cathal Brugha in combat and, when he had been fatally wounded, to sit in vigil at his death-bed as well. And she also sat in vigil, providing both comfort and solidarity to the Boland family, during the agonising death of Harry Boland."

HYPERLINK "http://free-magazines.atholbooks.org/ipr/2006/IPR_April_2006.pdf" http://free-magazines.atholbooks.org/ipr/2006/IPR_April_2006.pdf

EOGHAN HARRIS

The other reference to Muriel was by Eoghan Harris a few days before this, in the *Sunday Independent* (25th October). In a television review entitled, *Last Week RTÉ Showed A Rounded Film On The Life And Death Of Terence MacSwiney*, Mr. Harris turned his attention to Muriel, writing:

"... But to my mind the major weakness of 74 Days was its failure to even briefly follow up the tragic story of Muriel

MacSwiney—which Donal Byrne did superbly.

Muriel was heiress to the Murphy distilling empire, which had done well out of the Famine, but her family cut her off when she married Terence MacSwiney.

Muriel never saw eye to eye with MacSwiney's ultra-nationalist sister, Mary MacSwiney, known to all Cork republicans as Mary Mac.

None of the women contributors on 74 Days were willing to break feminist solidarity by criticisms of Mary Mac.

But the record shows she was a fanatical nationalist of the most toxic sort, a bitter ideologue who spat at Michael Collins, and later started a private school in Cork famous for turning out fanatics like herself.

Toward the end of Terence's hunger strike, his wife Muriel wanted to call it off but his sister Mary Mac strongly opposed her.

On 74 Days, Tomás Mac Conmara, one of its more intense contributors, assured us the idea that Mary Mac would push Terence into continuing the strike was "ridiculous".

What is ridiculous is his delusion that Mary Mac would act like a normal human being - as Muriel did—and attempt to spare her brother suffering.

Muriel MacSwiney stood by her husband to the bitter end, then moved to France where she seemed to disappear from history.

Far from it. She became a communist, worked heroically as an anti-fascist activist and had a child by an equally heroic Marxist professor who died in Buchenwald. But the rumours of Muriel's socialist activism in France outraged Mary MacSwiney.

A conservative Catholic, she felt a socialist was no proper parent for Muriel's 14-year-old daughter Máire. In 1931, she secretly travelled to Germany and persuaded Máire (who was unhappy at a boarding school) to abscond with her to Cork.

Anyone who studied Mary Mac's fanatical character would be certain she continued to give Máire a negative view of her mother.

But Muriel did not reject Máire. She fought for custody of her in the Irish courts. But a communist like Muriel never had a chance.

Proof that Muriel MacSwiney was a socialist with no time for narrow nationalism can be found in the files of the Sunday Press where she wrote to Angela Clifford condemning the Provisional IRA campaign.

Amnesia—or ignorance—airbrushed this heroic woman's hatred of Provo-style nationalism out of the narrative of 74 Days."

There was much in this article which I would take issue with, however there was no way that the *Sunday Independent* would accept a correction from me of the

all the distortions which Mr. Harris threw out like confetti.

I think it is a calumny on Muriel to suggest that she tried to put personal pressure on her husband to abandon his fight for Ireland and give up his Hunger Strike.

At the same time some correction was called for. The letter below was submitted to the *Sunday Independent* and it was published in the print edition of 25th October. However, Alan English, the new Editor, did not see fit to publish the correction in the online edition of the *Sunday Independent*. English is gradually turning around the *Sunday Independent* and it has shown some improvement under his hand—but perhaps he is not ready to take on Harris yet! In any case, here is the letter which did appear in the print edition of 1st November—

"Eoghan Harris in his Column of 25th October says that Terence MacSwiney's widow, Muriel, "in... the Sunday Press... wrote to Angela Clifford condemning the Provisional IRA campaign".

This suggests that I was connected with the Sunday Press in some way, which is totally off the mark.

Muriel was inspired by Dennis Dennehy's heroic Hunger Strike for the Homeless in January 1969, she got in touch and a correspondence ensued, which was to appear as Letters To Angela Clifford (1996, still in print).

The Provisional IRA does not feature in those letters—and Muriel certainly never 'condemned' it in conversations with me or in her letters. If she had said anything along those lines, I would certainly have referenced it in the Introduction to the book.

Angela Clifford"

RADIO ARCHIVE

The two links below are to two Radio Eireann programmes on Muriel, summarising some archive interviews. It cannot be known how long they will be available.

HYPERLINK "https://www.rte.ie/radio/radioplayer/html5/\\" \ " /radio1/11247859" \t "_blank"

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The Human History Of A Shipyard

With an overwhelming workforce of Protestants in heavy industry, it was difficult for the Trade Union movement to bring up the plight of the Catholic worker, mostly kept out of it. Some Union bosses, and members of the Communist Party, NI, kept quiet, and could be hostile to the matter being raised at meetings. The General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers and his counterpart, head of the Fire Brigade Union, both members of the CPNI, were more sympathetic but could do very little.

The ASW head did get some Catholics work in the shipyard. If H&W refused to take them, then he would call a strike of the joiners. Ironically, a Protestant workforce would go on strike, as ordered. You didn't question the order, you went out. People who refused, like some born-again religious people, would be told by their foremen to strike. If they refused the foreman's orders, then they were literally carried out and dumped on the road.

One man the ASW head got a job was the joiner, Joe Cahill, one of the founders of the Provisional IRA. He worked in the shipyard for a number of years and found his Protestant workmates affable. He was soon into dodging his way to the cinema—during the odd workday, an old shipyard tradition. He was to suffer from asbestosis, which got him £30,000 compensation from H&W. He died from it and not from the bullets of his enemies.

Sometimes there were so many ships on the order books, that H&W were forced to look for skilled labour from other shipyards in England and Scotland. When they couldn't entice them over to Belfast, they would have to recruit joiner/carpenters from the Catholic community.

And what about the other Catholics from the Falls Road who worked in the shipyard? That this happened was mostly denied up the Falls, but then, why did the trams that travelled deep into the shipyard have the signs Falls Road lit up on them? Certainly those who covered the raw steel ship in red lead were mostly Catholics. They also painted the outside of the ships. It was an unhealthy job, especially in the bowels of the ship where there was little air, and dangerous on the outside of the

ship when standing on a single scaffold board held by steel cables maybe fifty feet in the air. There were accidents when the staging broke and it was into the water. In one incident the staging around the ship broke and six red-leaders fell into the water. They had been painting the ship blue and were rescued and blue paint covered their canvas protective clothing: Someone nearby quipped:

"They were Celtic supporters but came out of the tide as Blue-men."

(The Blues were the Protestant Linfield football team.)

It was the middle of winter and it was sleeting. The rescued men were seated in the shipyard ambulance and each given a tot of whiskey and a cigarette before being driven off to hospital for examination. One made it known it was the Mater Hospital and not the Royal Victoria Hospital they preferred.

The Catholic red-leaders were quite a subdued group. When they came asking for firewood they usually asked a Protestant to speak for them. I cut plenty of firewood for them and I was annoyed they didn't ask me personally but I didn't want to blow my cover by saying I was one of them.

I was a silent witness to a number of Catholics being abused verbally, usually by the iron (or black) trades who seem to have more than their share of loyalist militancy.

I had a paternal aunt married to a riveter and both their views were 'Fuck the Pope', though I was treated well as boy when I stayed overnight in their house. They just carried on with their sectarian banter, knowing my faith, but would say: "*Never mind your auntie and uncle, this is just us.*" They just couldn't help it.

During lunch-time (dinner time) the shipyard would be invaded with all sorts of evangelists, some riding old ice-cream tricycles with loud speakers announcing: "*The Wages of Sin is Death!*"

Then telling you that death was preferable, as you went to heaven and that the shipyard was a taste of hell to come. The ambition with most of them was to start up their own sect. There was fierce

competition among them, leading to fist fights and wrecked tricycles. They did have a few adherents but mostly the men just carried on gambling on rub-a-dub boards, sometimes called Crown and Anchor boards, and pitch-and-toss, and card games, during their break.

The apprentices would be out on the decks of the ships throwing everything that came to hand at the Portuguese-Man-War jelly fish that invaded the Musgrave Channel. They could be the size of bin lids. We emptied numerous buckets of huge rivets to cut them to pieces, plus teak decking planks. The adults were inside the cabins too busy to care as they played cards or slept. The break over, nothing was ever said about the enormous expensive waste we had caused. It was just order more from the stores as a flotilla of expensive teak planks made their way down the Lough to the open sea. There must of tons and tons of large rivets lying at the bottom of the Musgrave Channel, thrown there by generations of apprentices.

I still don't understand why we weren't stopped from doing that. We weren't the type of teenager who would attack what we saw as adults. We were mostly respectful towards them. They were our tutors, as apprentices. For example, we began throwing things at the seagulls. It was only then there was intervention by a joiner near retiring age: "*That seagull could be an old joiner come back*". That did the trick. No more throwing at them.

I am still in contact with a former shipyardman—one who made his way to Trinity College, Dublin, and became a minister of religion and then a university lecturer of literature in the University of British Columbia in Canada. He also threw rivets at the jellyfish and he, like me, still feels guilty at the enormous waste of it all.

Women manual workers in the shipyard? There weren't a lot. Maybe a hundred, kept well away from the heavy brigades in a secluded upholstery shop.

The other women manual workers were on a Soviet ship delivering grain to Belfast.

It had developed engine trouble and was being repaired in the shipyard for its return journey to Odessa. There were maybe four women deck hands among the male crew, with two women officers. The ship's tannoy system continued to play Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov for two days with

the Hammer-and-Sickle flying aloft. The shipyardmen were generally fascinated by the scene and the music playing. Some of the men started dancing together to the music on the jetty and attempting the Cossack dance as joke, while some of the crew on the Soviet ship cheered them on. Other than that, only the repair team could board the ship. When the ship was leaving and the dock labourers were removing the mooring cables they began to sing the *Volga Boat Song*, again as joke. The song is about the serfs pulling the boats along the canals. There had been a Hollywood film in the cinema recently and that's where they must have learnt it.

The other women in the shipyard were the office workers in what was called the Main Office—a marbled affair with rows of typists clattering away in one section and the draughtsmen and administrators, working in other sections. The women came in at nine and left at five, a half-hour before the deluge of up to 35,000 male workers pouring out to catch the trams. Except, as an office boy, when I was awaiting to start my apprenticeship as a 14 year old, and when I had to take the timekeepers' wages-reckoners to the Main Office, did I see the office girls.

One job the office boys had to do was cancel the National Insurance stamps with a self-inking spring-stamper. With thousands of employees, this meant hundreds and hundreds of sheets. It was the same story from our male overseers—tales of having been in Canada and the US, bitten by bears, stone-deaf because of the intense cold of a Canadian Winter, shot in Little Rock, USA—almost taking his shirt off to show us the wounds, to overawe us. One of the clerks would arrange fights between the boys in the string-room, if we fell out with one another. He was a former professional wrestler and it seems he was now a talent scout for a boxing club.

Then at 16 we went to serve our apprenticeships at our various trades, and in that vast shipyard we never saw one another again.

At our benches we encountered men from the 19th century with huge tool boxes full of 19th Century tools, and a bad-tempered lot they were in their discipline of the young. They also had tales to tell—how the joiner/carpenter once wore a uniform that identified his trade, how he served a seven-year apprenticeship, how he was once injured and was taken to hospital, strapped on the bonnet of a car of its time, and, how he had to dye his hair black as a young man when it was

beginning to turn grey, or he would get the sack for being too old. (The same reminiscences of Gorky about manual workers in the first volume of his autobiography *My Childhood*.)

To even lift his razor-sharp chisels was to get a whack across the knuckles with a stick he kept for apprentices. One day with him was enough, for the apprentice of the 1940s wasn't going to put up with it. A kick in the shins was the answer to that, with what we called *the old blurt* following that apprentice with his stick—asking the apprentice to stop and take his medicine. No more apprentices for him, nor no more anybody at his bench. Times had moved on.

One day, when working on an intricate mahogany handrail, which twisted and turned to a shape intended for the first class lounge of a passenger ship, he made a mistake. There was no way the mistake could be repaired. A long handrail he had been working on for weeks was now ruined. So he sat down, lit his pipe, and waited for the chargehand to approach—when sitting down wasn't allowed nor was smoking. So he was sacked for sitting down and for smoking. He also tore up his ASW card on the spot to prevent a Union investigation into his sacking. But he was already five years past retiring age.

His reputation in the books as a skilled tradesman was saved. Maybe that kick in the shins caused that mistake, when he realised the world had changed.

Basically the top management were not sectarian. It was the Protestant work-face who ruled. There were an incredible number of working-class dynasties, almost like warlords who kept their generations in work. Topping that were the Protestant-led, communist-led Trade Unions who kept order through their shop stewards. They also dished out most of the jobs, much like the old communist-led Electrical Trade Union in England. A H&W of the 1920s wouldn't have wanted the pogroms against the Catholic workers and the anti-sectarian Protestant workers.

During the situation of the 28 year war H&W finally spoke out and threatened anyone practising sectarianism with the sack and being banned for life from working in the shipyard.

Shop stewards had the option of carrying personal weapons like pistols, after threats and the killing of a Catholic welder—not by the workforce, but by assassins outside the shipyard but had

obviously received inside information. But then the shipyard was in decline, with the order books almost empty. Margaret Thatcher, whether she knew it or not, was destroying Protestant power in NI through her anti-industrial policies.

Certainly the world, as interpreted in NI, was changing drastically. British mainland influences on the Catholic population was showing and many of the young Provo fighters were choosing to support the Manchester United football team in admiration of the young Protestant footballer George Best. They also followed the rock stars of the period, English and American. The fathers and grandfathers had been brought up on WW2 boys comics like Hotspur and the Wizard. They were full of gung-ho British militarism, figures like Rockfist Rogan, RAF. I myself was insatiable in reading such stuff during WW2, so much so that I traded a precious penknife for a bundle of old Wizard and Hotspur comics. I was reading these one late evening when the

British influence in Carryduff, County Down, began stoning our house in a sectarian attack!

Pat Walsh puts forward the idea that PIRA got its the idea of commando raids from the gung-ho attitude of British militarism rather than a jihadist attitude, thankfully.

I agree with that statement.

Now the Belfast shipyard is reduced to a few hundred repairing the odd oil rig, with the nearby Titanic theme park making more money with its images of the drowned dead. (Before Covid-19). There was a past industrial age when the two shipyards of Harland and Wolff and Workman Clark represented Protestant power, a power that ruled to exclude the Catholic community through designs from Whitehall. In some ways Northern Ireland is now a better place, but in other ways it is worse. Serious crime and drugs are rampant with domestic murder a regular thing. Under totalitarian Unionist rule for fifty years, non-political murder maybe happened every five years.

Someone I knew lived in Saudi Arabia for a few years, He said you could lose your wallet and come looking for it fifteen minutes later and see it still lying in the street.

Is that through the goodness of the human heart or fear?

Wilson John Haire.

Casement: 'Insider Knowledge'?

In his mammoth 7-page article in November 2020's Irish Political Review entitled '*Insider Knowledge*', Paul Hyde inflates a second-hand remark from one Sidney R. Clipperton: that Captain Blinker Hall of Naval Intelligence fabricated the Casement diaries.

His 'proof' is a document listing Room 40 operatives—wherein Clipperton does not figure—a list originating, according to Hyde, from Admiral William James, occasional deputy to Captain Hall. It was typed by Kevin MacDonnell from his notes of talking to Clipperton in 1965, which in 1998 he sent to Angus Mitchell whom he had recently met.

The list was headed with the words, "*B. R. Clipperton MVO, DSC, RA eventually commanded H.M.S. Violent*".

This is trebly unconvincing. The first initial in that heading is wrong as Paul acknowledges, while the RA may be a mistake for RN. However the other two decorations are senior and quite distinctive. An MVO is a personal award from the King. The Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) was a military decoration awarded only to officers. Clipperton retired in 1938 as a chief petty officer, a rank equivalent to sergeant major, and could not have been so decorated. Anyway, both would have shown up in the 'UK Naval, Medal and Awards Rolls' in Clipperton's record. They don't.

He was a Leading Telegraphist on HMS Violent in 1918 when he was only 20, not then in command of the ship, nor later, it not being mentioned in 'Forces Records', as Hyde admits. But by twisted, circular logic he also writes that, "The reference to HMS Violent refers to his command of that vessel, albeit perhaps nominal, as confirmed in the copy list obtained from Admiral James."

In the event, it all boils down to a remark in 1965 by someone who at best had tenuous connections to Naval Intelligence, indicating Hall fabricated Casement's diaries but who added he was about to charge his son with homosexual offences before he was killed in a 1942 German air raid in Aberdeen.

There is a whiff here of modern public health practitioners devoted to evidence-based medicine when we know they only seek out evidence that justifies their existing opinions. In this case, Hyde believes he has proved all parties are otherwise

telling the truth and in Clipperton's case he had the ability to be aware of fabrication. Ergo, fabrication occurred.

Paul makes much of proving the likelihood that Kevin MacDonnell did speak to Clipperton, who then said what he said, but that is hardly worth bothering about when what Clipperton said was so insubstantial and unevicenced.

On a couple of points I can confirm Hyde's speculations, 'Essie' in Hall's letter on the death of his son was Blinker's wife, Ethel Abney, the mother of their three children. The 'Mary' mentioned was indeed divorced from their son, John Abney Hall, so Blinker was effectively his young grandson's nearest Hall relative and had therefore to arrange John's burial.

Hyde seems unaware that a new biography, '*Blinker Hall – Spymaster*', written by David Ramsay was published in 2008, although as I wrote in my book's 3rd edition it was something of a hagiography with a less than accurate segment on Casement.

I had come across the Clipperton material in the NLI and wrote this in 2002:

"When de Valera was told, third-hand, in 1966, of one Commander Clipperton who could attest to Naval Intelligence fabrication (by Blinker Hall), he wisely replied 'the important thing is to get some positive proof. Nothing else will suffice.'" None appeared. (NLI MS 18776).

Clipperton's story that "*much later on in the last war Intelligence put me on the job of bringing a charge against Hall's son who was mixed up with a group of other young officers*" and which involved phone tapping is all wrong for several reasons. Lt. Commander John Hall was 44 and not 'young'; he was based far away in Aberdeen when killed; and hunting down gay sailors would have been a naval or possibly civilian police job, yet Clipperton was in the Home Guard in the south of England during the war, not the police or intelligence.

The only mystery is why Clipperton should have been so aware of the death of Hall's son.

That Hyde on the strength of his legalistic and mechanical deductions can announce there is "no reasonable doubt that the Black Diaries were fabricated and that Hall was the mastermind behind the plot" is masterful nonsense.

The words of George Bernard Shaw in a 1934 letter to Gertrude Parry, Casement's

cousin, on similar efforts are advice that should be followed:

"I have read Dr Maloney's book (*The Forged Casement Diaries*). It is a monument of zealous industry; but it does not clear the ground: it rather overflows it. It takes more trouble to put the British Government in the wrong than to put Roger in the right."

Maloney, he wrote, uses Casement—

"as a stick to beat a regime which has been extinguished by the establishment of an Irish Free State, and which is consequently regarded by the reading public as a back number. The book that is needed to rehabilitate Roger must be written on a carefully cleaned slate. Dr Maloney has written his on one crowded with old sums." (NLI MS 17601-12-3)

Jeffrey Dudgeon

(author of Roger Casement: *The Black Diaries—With a Study of his Background, Sexuality, and Irish Political Life*), 6.11.2020

Paul Hyde Replies

I am grateful to Mr. Dudgeon for drawing more attention to *Insider Knowledge*, published in November *Irish Political Review*. His inevitable dudgeon will convince many that my rigorous research is impartial and sound.

I will respond to three irrelevant points first. I read the Hall biography by Ramsey some years ago, found it disappointing and gifted it to a friend.

I cannot understand Mr. Dudgeon's reference to public health officials.

His citation of Shaw's perceived shortcomings of Dr. Maloney's 1936 book have nothing to do with the Clipperton story about which Shaw knew nothing.

Mr. Dudgeon has identified the nature of the offences alleged against Hall's son in 1942. I was unable to identify these and did not speculate. Mr. Dudgeon may well be right in saying they involved what he has described in his own book as "*vigorous anal sex*". I cannot say because I lack experience, not being an old naval man. But, whatever the offence, it is axiomatic that, when it is of a criminal nature, the evidence gathered must be presented to the police for possible prosecution. That evidence must convince the police that a crime has been committed. In this case, Naval Intelligence had no power to prosecute offences already covered by the criminal law of the state.

Mr. Dudgeon writes that Clipperton "...was a Leading Telegraphist on HMS Violent in 1918..." This is not true because his service record lists several onshore establishments and vessels covering 1914 to 1920, wherein there is no mention whatsoever of HMS Violent. Clipperton's record shows that in 1918 he was on HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Mr. Dudgeon questions the document which lists Clipperton as MVO. I merely reported the document as typed and cannot prove the award. That it does not appear on his naval record is curious but that record is incomplete in other respects. Concerning the DSC award also listed on that page, Mr. Dudgeon states that Clipperton "could not have been so decorated" because he was not an officer. This is incorrect. Clipperton was a warrant officer, a leading telegraphist, a communications specialist. Research into the DSC reveals that in October 1914 eligibility for this award was extended to all naval officers (commissioned and warrant) below the rank of lieutenant commander. During WW1 officers of the Merchant and Fishing Fleets were awarded the DSC. Therefore Clipperton was indeed eligible.

I have demonstrated that the source of the information on that typed page was Admiral James, Hall's biographer, and Mr. Dudgeon has not questioned that attribution. Therefore he insinuates that Admiral James provided false or unreliable information to MacDonnell concerning the awards and Clipperton's rank as commander of HMS Violent. This is simply not credible.

Mr. Dudgeon writes "He was a Leading Telegraphist on HMS Violent in 1918 when he was only 20, not then in command of the ship, nor later, it not being mentioned in 'Forces Records', as Hyde admits." However, Hyde admits no such thing. On the contrary, he writes "Forces War Records online provides the following information: 'Sydney R Clipperton J.31169 1914 Royal Navy Leading Telegraphist 1918 Hms Violent". Since Clipperton was on the Queen Elizabeth in 1918, it follows that he was not on HMS Violent at the same time.

Mr. Dudgeon agrees that Clipperton stated that Hall fabricated the diaries but claims this is insubstantial and without evidence.

The statement rests on Clipperton's word and there is no evidence he was lying. Without proof that Clipperton was lying, the revelation statement entails that he was in a position to be aware of the fabrication. But fabrication did not occur because Clipperton was in that position as Mr. Dudgeon claims.

Mr. Dudgeon questions Clipperton's remark that Hall's son "was mixed up with a group of other young officers" and claims that, at age 44, he was not young. Clipperton was aged 67 at the time and a 44 year-old is certainly young to a pensioner of 67. But the locution can also mean other officers who were young and younger than 44. That Mr. Dudgeon seizes on such a feeble point demonstrates that he is unconvinced by his own position. He also accuses me of "twisted, circular logic..." I do not accuse Mr. Dudgeon of logic at all, twisted, circular or shapeless. Mr. Dudgeon is in dudgeon because he is confused and shaken by *Insider Knowledge* and justifiably so.

For 5 years I have hunted for evidence of Casement's authorship and I have failed to find any. I did find abundant deception, innuendo and manifest lies. Since publication of my book, *Anatomy Of A Lie*, I have completed four research articles which expose further deceit (www.decoding-casement.com). I suggest Mr. Dudgeon takes stock of his indefensible position and reflects on the following.

The present attribution of authorship would not stand in a court of law because:

- 1 – there is no witness evidence to support the attribution,
- 2 – there is no scientific evidence to support the attribution,
- 3 – there is no evidence of any kind which proves the material existence of the bound diaries during Casement's lifetime.

It follows that reasons for the present attribution lie outside rational and impartial analysis and belong to the grey zone of opinion-making and political-historical priorities.

Attribution of authorship implies uncertainty and is therefore provisional rather than a statement of fact. Such an attribution can be amended in the light of new research and new facts. In the present case there is new research and new facts have been presented which demonstrate that there are no good grounds for the present attribution. Chief among these new facts is number 3 above.

This fact is supported by HM Government papers and by all of Casement's numerous biographers.

In the extensive literature of decades not a single instance is cited of the bound volumes being shown to any independent witness in 1916.

Official papers cite no such instance and officials at UK National Archives confirm they have no knowledge of any such showing.

It follows that there are no grounds which prove that the bound diaries existed during Casement's lifetime. The present attribution is a prejudicial statement of belief, not of knowledge and, as such, it inevitably conditions the individual's freedom of belief. The fact is that no-one knows who wrote the diaries. Therefore the attribution is self-evidently unsafe and it follows that the diaries are of unknown authorship.

Part Three

In Defence Of Dorothy Macardle

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH CONTINUED

After the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty on December 6th 1921, the national movement began to fracture between pro- and anti-Treaty camps. The division eventually erupted into violent conflict on 28th June 1922 when, under pressure from the British Government and with artillery borrowed from that Government, Free State forces bombarded the Four Courts then occupied by anti-Treaty IRA forces under Rory O'Connor. The conflict ended less than a year later on May 24th when, following an earlier cease fire instruction, Frank Aiken commanded the anti-Treaty IRA to dump arms.

As a Republican opponent of the Treaty,

Dorothy Macardle was imprisoned by the Provisional Government from 9th November 1922 until sometime in May 1923. From the time of her release right up until the completion of *The Irish Republic* in 1937 and later, the Treaty division remained a main focus of her political writing. A firm ally of de Valera, she expressed the Republican view but she did more than articulate a partisan position. She brought an intellectual rigour to the anti-Treaty case such that it could not be easily dismissed or misrepresented.

Among her writings on the Treaty division, some are well known like *Tragedies of Kerry*, a short pamphlet published in 1924, and *The Irish Republic*—both still in print and highly regarded—but other

articles are also important. In an essay entitled, *Our "Irish" Press*, published in the Fianna Fail weekly, *The Nation*, on 10th May 1930 (not mentioned by either of her biographers), she described the propaganda methods used by the pro-Treaty press and how, at the moment of crisis when the Four Courts was attacked, the Republicans faced a critical disadvantage in not having a commercial daily paper. The article helped prepare the ground for the launch of the *Irish Press* the following year.

She also answered the anti-democratic phrase-mongering of Blueshirt leader Eoin O'Duffy in a series of opinion pieces published over three days in the *Irish Press*, beginning on 18th October 1933. Entitled, *The Irish Nation and Majority Rule*, the series was a dry run for the case she was to make in *The Irish Republic*. In a nutshell, she defended democratic parliamentary government, citing the example of the Provisional Government's treatment of the Dail and its refusal to maintain the Electoral Register, as anti-democratic, and contending that due to the complexity of the situation "*the democratic principle seemed divided against itself*". Her view was that a fair and democratic way of resolving the dispute, as proposed by de Valera, was possible but had been squandered by the pro-Treaty leaders with the result that it was unnecessarily "*put to the arbitration of war*".

Her last commentary on the Treaty divide was contained in an essay published in the US magazine, *Commonweal* in 1945 and republished (by Gill and Sons) in Dublin the following year as a pamphlet. *In Without Fanfares: Some reflections on the Republic of Eire*, Macardle defended both Ireland's Neutrality policy and the manner in which the 1922 Constitution and the Treaty had been quietly undermined by de Valera, using parliamentary methods. She argued that all sections of the nation had sacrificed some preferences and that, as a result, a reconciling consensus had been achieved.

For reasons of clarity this article focuses on Macardle's involvement in Irish national politics. Next month's article will conclude the biographical sketch and will cover her journalism and participation in feminist campaigns. It will also contain the story behind her 1949 book, *The Children of Europe*, and outline her beliefs as an internationalist. Regarding her literary output, I would direct readers to the critical evaluation of Professor Luke Gibbons, available on the internet at <http://www.drb.ie/essays/no-homes-to-go-to>. At the least, the essays of Professor Gibbons on Macardle make a good starting point.

PRISON EXPERIENCE

Macardle was one of an estimated six hundred female prisoners incarcerated by the Provisional Government during the Treaty War. Initially kept in Mountjoy, she was moved with other inmates to Kilmainham in early February 1923. In late April of that year she was among a group of women forcibly transferred to the North Dublin Union, a former workhouse in which the conditions were considered worse than in the other prisons. She was released on health grounds in May 1923.

During the conflict and for a period afterwards the Provisional Government maintained a large prison population estimated at between twelve and thirteen thousand. It is unlikely that the following summary that she provides in *The Irish Republic* would be widely disputed:

"The organisation of the prisons was inadequate to receive such large numbers, and remained inadequate to provide proper accommodation. Deplorable conditions developed. In many jails an attempt to treat these uncharged prisoners as criminals produced the old unhappy cycle of ever more strenuous resistance by the prisoners and increasing callousness on the part of the military guards" (Third Edition, p. 775).

The position of the relatively large number of women prisoners requires explanation. At a *Cumann na mBan* (the organisation for Republican women) convention on 5th February 1922, a motion to reject the Treaty was passed by 419 votes to 63 and pro-Treaty members were requested to resign. Most of the important women activists supported the Republican side. For their part the pro-Treaty leaders were aware, from the experience of the War of Independence, of the supportive role that female activists could play in political and military events. So Republican women were described as '*deviant*', and placing as many of them as possible behind bars was high on the agenda of the Provisional Government. In April 1923 W.T. Cosgrave, answering a letter pleading for leniency for a female prisoner, stated that it was not possible to consider these women as ordinary females (Lane, p. 73). Most guards in the female prisons were male soldiers.

Macardle believed, judging by excerpts from her jail journal quoted by Leanne Lane, that her experiences while in prison—negative and positive—had the effect of making her a stronger Republican. Lane relates that Maude Gonne brought news to her, shortly after she entered Mountjoy, that the house they shared had been raided and that Free State soldiers had made a bonfire of her papers on the

outside street. Her college lectures, a play she had written and a book on the language of poetry almost ready for publication were all destroyed. Dorothy reckoned the eight years of work thus lost could never be recovered as she had disposed of every scrap of the rough work. The burning of her papers was a blow comparable to the loss of her teaching post at Alexandra College, both events stemmed from her opposition to the Treaty.

An entry in her journal regarding the raid reads:

"And I remembered that allegiance to the Republic had cost me nothing at all, this was my baptism perhaps. I had to learn to be an Irish Republican. What sort of loss is this compared to the loss of a brother? [this is a reference to Mary McSwiney's brother, Terence] ... I felt ashamed and then it became a little enough thing" (Jail Journal, 16 November 1922) (Lane, p. 40).

The execution of Erskine Childers a week later on 24th November was a further blow. A journal entry reads: "*Every moment of my memory of him is splendid with the worth of his work ...*" (Jail Journal, 24 November 1922) (Lane, p.41). That she held him in the highest regard throughout her life is shown by a letter she wrote to Frank Gallagher in April 1944. Discussing efforts by the US and Britain to engineer Ireland into the war on the side of the Allies she wrote: "*I keep thinking how Erskine would have hated this situation*" (Lane, p. 98). Despite the stream of bad news reaching her concerning the war, and despite the privations she suffered while in jail, it is clear from her later writings that she maintained a political discipline in the feelings of antagonism she allowed herself towards the Free State side.

Three aspects of her time in prison are noteworthy, in the sense that they may have influenced her later writing: her opposition to the aggressive stance of Brigid O'Mullane; her agonising over use of the hunger strike weapon; and her participation in the seventh anniversary commemoration of the 1916 Rising in Kilmainham Jail. O'Mullane had been a member of the Executive of *Cumann na mBan* since 1918, with a record of improving its organisational efficiency. Her authoritarian and militaristic style of leadership won favour with the younger prisoners. Macardle aligned with the older women and described the differences between the factions in her journal:

"We think them vastly pugilistic, too ready to be aggressive... they think us willing slaves. We think the military... should serve—they think it should com-

mand.... There are two acutely opposite points of view as to what should be our attitude here. We would fight but only for our rights within the prison; they would find pretext for fighting all the time. We want to study, write & debate..." (Jail Journal, 26 November 1922) (Lane, p. 56).

This division echoes the tension between de Valera and some of the IRA leadership during the Treaty war, and prefigures the later split between Fianna Fail and Sinn Fein. On the Hunger Strike question, Macardle was a firm friend and supporter of Mary MacSwiney, and backed her Hunger Strike in November 1922, but in February the following year, when Mary's sister, Annie, went on a similar strike in the expectation that some of the younger women prisoners would follow her lead, she was indignant, not wishing to put her mother through "picturing the long horror of it". In her journal she wrote of Annie:

"She is not a great Republican, a member of the Dail like her sister: the work that was to be done by a sister of Terence MacSwiney, hunger striking in an Irish gaol, has been vigorously accomplished by Mary — why must this dreadful agony be the death or the broken health for years of young girls." (Lane, p. 67)

Macardle vacillated in her attitude to the Hunger Strike weapon, but her stance shows her having the substance to dissent from the prevailing group-think; she was unwilling to follow a particular tactic in an unthinking manner.

In a piece headed, *A Letter from Kilmainham*, published in the anti-Treaty paper, *Eire*, Macardle described how the anniversary of the Rising was marked by nearly three hundred female prisoners who, following a Requiem Mass, walked in procession to the yard where the executions were carried out. Having described speeches from Lily O'Brennan on Eamon Ceannt's skill as a piper and from Grace Plunkett on her late husband, Joseph Plunkett, she stated:

"Then Nora Connolly spoke. She read the Proclamation and James Connolly's last statement—it was as if the voices of our dead leaders were speaking to us again—no one who was here will forget. Then we took the Republican oath."

By the time of her release from prison Macardle's apprenticeship as a Republican was fully served.

One other incident from this time should be mentioned, in the context of the Treaty conflict. In January 1923 Liam Deasy, a representative figure in the Cork IRA, was captured and, having already concluded that further military action was futile, was

allowed by the Free State authorities to issue an appeal to the anti-Treaty forces to sue for peace. Dorothy recorded in her journal that she alone in the whole prison (Mountjoy) agreed with Deasy. At that time even Dev viewed the initiative as "a blow" (Lane, p.142).

TRAGEDIES OF KERRY

As the conflict ended in May 1923 Republicans faced demoralisation, exclusion from the political system, exclusion from public sector employment, emigration and, for at least 10,000 of them, continuing imprisonment. Some, like Brighid O'Mullane, finally gave way to exhaustion and ill-health, having been involved in militant activity for as long as seven years. Yet prospects for the future were not all bad. In the General Election of August 1923 Sinn Fein won 44 seats compared to 63 achieved by Cumann na nGaedheal, out of a total of 153; the remaining seats were divided into Farmers: 15; Labour 14; Independents: 17 with 1 Independent Labour. The Treatyite party was well short of an overall majority and formed a Government only because the Oath to the British monarch prevented the Sinn Fein members from taking their seats. Republicanism remained popular with sections of the electorate; after his release from prison in 1924 de Valera embarked on a tour of Munster where he was warmly and sometimes rapturously received.

Future prospects for Macardle at this time were also both challenging and positive. Her teaching career over, she began working full time for Sinn Fein. She contributed to Republican organs like *Eire* and *Sinn Fein*, concentrating on prisoner issues like the hunger strike of her friend, Maire Comerford, and the treatment of Republican prisoners in the North; alongside Maude Gonne MacBride, she was active in the Women Prisoners Defence League. As one of a trio of political propagandists associated with de Valera—the others were Frank Gallagher and Robert Brennan—she rose rapidly through the ranks of the Sinn Fein organisation. It would, however be a mistake to see her in the early 1920s as a Fianna Fail-type moderate before the party was formed: Lane states that the two living Republicans she admired most then, were de Valera and Mary MacSwiney (Lane, p. 100).

In the Spring of 1924, with the assistance of members of the Kerry IRA, she researched stories of reprisals and atrocities that had taken place in that county; *Tragedies of Kerry* was published

that June. As noted by a reviewer, 'PB', writing in *Sinn Fein* (19 July 1924), the overriding impression left by the narrative is one of restraint. In the pamphlet Macardle confines her attention to just one category of reprisal, the road-side murder of unarmed prisoners. She explains in the Foreword that the stories have been gathered through "intimate questioning of witnesses" (p. 4).

Under a heading, 'War of Brothers', she refers to the subtle British tactic of divide and conquer—in her words, "a motto as old as Rome"—as the underlying cause of the violence. On the volunteers who joined the Free State army, she posits that they were duped into believing they were joining the Republican army, and that when the truth of their purpose became apparent resignation was no longer an option. Debauchery and drunkenness became the only refuge from the work they had to do (p. 6). Apart from these necessary points to the Introduction, she steers clear of political argument.

Under the next heading, 'Kerry', she describes the character of the rural mountainside communities from which the prisoners came: "There is grace and kindness in their homes, and they give hospitality as their forefathers gave it in the days of their chieftainship in the land" (p. 7). Two generations later, similar characteristics are ascribed to the same communities in the fiction of John B. Keane. In recognition of the culture of the area, two inscriptions at the beginning of the pamphlet are from Gaelic poets; a third is from Padraic Pearse, translated from the Irish by Thomas McDonagh.

Tragedies of Kerry was the subject of a dispute conducted in letters between then Chief of Staff of the IRA, Frank Aiken, and Macardle. In a manner that echoed pressure brought to bear on the Editors of the *Irish Bulletin*, pressure that was resisted by Desmond FitzGerald and Erskine Childers, Aiken wished that more blame had been heaped on the British and the Free State leaders in a way that might evoke an emotional response from readers, and that a fuller account of the atrocities should have been given. Dorothy replied that she would continue to work on the book (presumably in future editions, although these contained no changes) until she got it right (Smith, p. 47). The above-mentioned review by 'PB' (which some might suspect was penned by Macardle herself, since it contains an apposite quotation from Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and an allusion to Aristotle on the subject of tragedy) may have served as an indirect reply. PB states: "Tales of atrocity told without

truthfulness, or even without restraint, as they often were during the European war, as they often are in Ireland, only make the minds of those who believe them warped and clouded and bloodshot..." (Sinn Fein, 19 July 1924, p. 5).

WRITING FOR FIANNA FAIL AND THE IRISH PRESS

In March 1926 De Valera led a split from Sinn Fein on the point that Republican TDs should sit in Dail Eireann if the Oath was changed. Macardle supported that position and was one of six women elected to the Executive of the new party, Fianna Fail. The other women were: Kathleen Clarke, Linda Kearns, Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, Constance Markievicz and Margaret Pearse. Dorothy was appointed Director of Publicity in the party. In 1927 the Cosgrave administration introduced a legislative proposal to ban TDs who refused to take their seats from standing in future elections and pressure built up inside Fianna Fail to find a solution. While Dev remained conflicted, pragmatists like Robert Brennan and Gerry Boland were impatient to end parliamentary abstention. A reference in the first volume of David McCullagh's biography of de Valera (2017) on this question says a great deal about Macardle's relationship with the Chief and her position in Fianna Fail at this time. It reads:

"Boland claimed that, before he arranged a meeting with the Labour Party, he went back no less than three times to get de Valera's confirmation that he wanted to proceed. But on his way out of head office, Boland says, he saw Dorothy Macardle going in. 'I had an instinctive fear that she was going to upset everything.' Sure enough, the following day he found that de Valera had changed his mind. 'He said that he had given Miss Macardle a solemn promise not to enter the Dail while the Oath was there and he was reminded of this and was going to keep his promise' (McCullagh, p. 366).

In political matters Macardle respected Dev's opinions but, as the above example shows, the influence could also run in the opposite direction. Dorothy's concerns regarding the Oath were shared by Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, who resigned from Fianna Fail over the issue, and by Linda Kearns who decided to remain a member. Due to ill health as well as political disagreement, Dorothy resigned a week after Hanna. In the event, history showed that the decision to enter the Dail was correct and, in a letter to the *Irish Press* in November 1933, Dorothy acknowledged that England's influence in Ireland had been undermined in "the Privy Council, the Sen-

ate, the Veto, the Governor Generalship as well as in the matters of the Annuities and the Oath" (Lane, p. 160) (*Irish Press*, 7 Nov 1933). Regarding the Treaty, the differences between Macardle and de Valera were not substantial.

Outside of party politics, Macardle had more time for research on *The Irish Republic* that Dev had commissioned her to write in 1925, and for her literary work. She was also able to contribute articles and reviews to *The Nation*, a Fianna Fail weekly. One such article, mentioned above, dealt with the anti-Republican bias of the existing Irish newspapers.

A section describing instructions from the Free State Military Censor to the press that had been intercepted by IRA Intelligence in 1922, is especially interesting. In it journalists and editors are cautioned not to use words like 'Republican', 'insurgent' or 'rebel' (*The Nation*, 10 May 1930, p.6). Anti-Treaty soldiers are to be called, 'irregulars', 'bands', 'bodies' or 'armed men'. Instead of the term 'Provisional Government', 'the Government' or 'The Irish Government' are to be used. The Free State army is to be called the 'Irish Army', the 'National Army', 'National Forces', 'National Troops' or simply 'The Troops'. These instructions, Macardle notes, emanated from a 'political brain'; she contemplates the part played by the bid-dable organs of the *Irish Independent*, *Irish Times*, *Cork Examiner*, *Irish News*, *Belfast Newsletter* etc. in destroying the Republic and concludes, with an eye to the impending launch of a Fianna Fail-orientated daily, asking "is it a dream there will be a great newspaper at the service of those who are honest and patriotic?" (*Our 'Irish' Press*, *The Nation*, 10 May 1930, p.6).

When the *Irish Press* launched on 5th September 1931 Dorothy was aboard as a contributor of occasional articles as well as being the paper's drama critic. In *Fianna Fail, the Irish Press and the Decline of the Free State* (Aubane Historical Society, 2007), Brendan Clifford describes the launch of the *Irish Press* as "a watershed event in the life of the Irish state" (p. 7) and fills in the political context. At the end of the book he provides a selection of quality articles, reviews and features published during the remainder of 1931 and the early part of 1932; a review by Macardle of the theatrical works of Karel Capek, a Czech playwright, is included. Dorothy was to the fore in the group of gifted writers contributing to the *Irish Press* in its early years when Frank Gallagher was Editor, writers whose work might be summarised as expressing the opposite of a provincial mentality.

Her three articles on the subject of majority rule and democracy, published two months after the launch of the Blueshirts, crystallised much of what she had to say about the Treaty division. The following from the first article states her message in a nutshell:

"Are we temperamentally unsuited to the system of parliamentary government, as General O'Duffy would have us believe? It is agreed that our temperament is highly individualist, so that neither obedience nor solidarity is easy for us for long; and experience of democratic institutions is not inherited or traditional for us. ...

In 1918 we asserted that [democratic] principle for ourselves. The English fought savagely to frustrate its application, then cunningly to destroy its effect... By the Black and Tan Terror and threats of its renewal they induced a large section of our people—at one time a majority—to vote for a Treaty involving an oath of fealty to the English King. A majority has now abolished that oath, asserting the democratic principle once again" (*Irish Press*, 18 Oct 1933).

THE IRISH REPUBLIC AND WITHOUT FANFARE

Macardle's major work, *The Irish Republic*, is an intellectual monument of the de Valera era. Running to over a thousand pages and containing a detailed account of Irish history in the tumultuous years from 1916 to 1923 and beyond, it is a study to which no mere newspaper review could do justice. Adding to the anti-Treaty case, it provides voluminous evidence from speeches made in the British House of Commons celebrating the war between Republicans as an achievement of British statecraft; in the same way it contains numerous statements from independent political voices concerning how the Provisional Government undermined the Dail. In the sense that de Valera had a hand in deciding its treatment of major political issues, it is an authoritative expression of the Republican position and a patient answer to the avalanche of lies and distortions that stemmed from the Treaty position. At the same time, reflecting Macardle's determination to heal rather than aggravate the acrimony, it represents an honest effort to be fair and generous to the contending parties.

Released in March 1937 by the Victor Gollancz company, the book was a publishing success in Ireland and Britain. Gollancz found it so much in demand among the 40,000 members of the British-based Left Book Club with which he was associated that he brought out a cheap edition in October that year.

The book was the product of a long and arduous labour. With her research assistants, Florence O'Byrne and Fiona Con-

nolly, Macardle had driven across Ireland conducting interviews. In a speech to the Irish Women Writers' Club, she relayed how difficult had been the task of shaping the mass of oral and written material into a coherent whole (Smith, p. 81). Smith states that Macardle was aided by a network of women friends, including historians Rosamond Jacob and Mary Hayden, and that she followed the example set by women historians Alice Stopford Green and Helena Concannon (Ibid, p. 83). Smith also quotes a leading academic historian of the time, Robin Dudley Edwards, that, "*Miss Macardle has performed a very great service for her subject*" (ibid, p. 82).

Most negative criticism of the book focused on what some might see as a source of its strength, Macardle's close relationship with de Valera; a reviewer in the *Irish Independent* lamented how the author constantly forced upon readers "*Mr de Valera's infallibility*" (ibid, p.81). On that point, in an *Irish Press* review, Macardle decried the tendency of modern biographers to pepper their work with "*derogatory touches*" to avoid being labelled hero-worshippers (*Irish Press*, 16 April 1935). She clearly believed that where the course of history had been altered through the intervention of individuals, such contributions needed to be chronicled and acknowledged. In discussions with Dev, Dorothy kept her own counsel.

(Criticism of *The Irish Republic* from modern historians will be examined in Part 5 of this series, the book in that way will get an article to itself.)

I will conclude this article with a quotation from *Without Fanfare*, an essay that might deserve to be reproduced in full. This is the essay in which, following the Second World War, she looked back on how the Republic had been achieved in all but name. Central to de Valera's achievement, she believed, was his openness to compromise and his pragmatic achievement of a national consensus, "*without fanfare*".

"He had advocated this policy as one of reconciliation: as an attempt to secure a line on which all sections of the Irish nation can stand, each making some sacrifice of its preferences, in order to advance as one. Presented in this spirit, the idea has been quietly accepted by the Irish majority, but it calls forth none of the fervent devotion which was given to the pure republican cause. Reconciliation is not an ideal for which slogans are shouted, bells pealed and bonfires lit" (Lane, p. 206).

Dave Alvey

To be continued

Pearse, A Prussian Prince, Connolly, And The Kaiser

[In Part 2, Manus O'Riordan explained the he had re-assessed his own position on Connolly's wartime championing of Kaiser Germany in a paper called *Connolly Re-Assessed*, delivered at *Comhdháil an Chraoibhín*—the Dr Douglas Hyde Conference.]

In 2001 that paper, I argued as follows:

"Connolly should neither be deified nor have myths constructed around him. But what of Connolly's stand on the First World War? His 1961 biographer C.D. Greaves (of the Connolly Association and the Communist Party of Great Britain) maintained that "Connolly's thought ran parallel with Lenin's".

But this was simply not true. Twenty five years previously (in 1976), a controversy raged in the columns of the *Irish Times* during which I challenged the Greaves School on that issue and, in particular, the prevailing view that Connolly's position in respect of the First World War had been one of neutrality. I also pointed out that it was not Lenin who appealed to Connolly, but rather the Russian Bolshevik leader Lenin's life-long opponent, the Polish Socialist leader Josef Pilsudski. Connolly in fact applauded Pilsudski's Polish Legion for fighting alongside Germany against Russia, as a contingent of the Austrian army. (*The Workers' Republic*, April 15, 1916)."

In 1976, while holding that the 1916 Rising had been justified, I had nonetheless also gone on to criticise Connolly for not ideologically differentiating himself to a sufficient degree from his allies and for violating the 'pure' socialist principle of neutrality in respect of the Imperialist War. A re-assessment of Connolly on my part also involves a re-assessment of what I myself, as a then Communist, had previously written about him. The more I re-read Connolly the more convinced I am that I got it right as to where he had stood on the First World War. It was, however, when I held Connolly to have been wrong for taking such a stand, that I myself got it wrong. The more I now read Connolly, in conjunction with the actual history of the First World War itself, the more I appreciate his reasons for rejecting neutrality in that conflict, and for preferring a German victory over a British one.

Those who wish to remain convinced of Connolly's neutrality always allude to a particular slogan of his — "*We Serve Neither King nor Kaiser but Ireland*" — that

Connolly hung as a banner from Liberty Hall and used as the masthead of *The Irish Worker* from the end of October until early December 1914. This, in my view, was little more than an example of a Connolly pose, a device that he sometimes adopted as a public stance in order to enable him to operate more effectively with a different agenda. One has only to read the detail of what Connolly actually wrote from 1914 to 1916 to realise that his supposed wartime neutrality was such a pose.

An early collection of such writings, edited in 1941 by P.J. Musgrove under the title of *A Socialist and War*, made this perfectly obvious, even though it censored from Connolly's very first article on the outbreak of that War, "*Our Duty In This Crisis*" (*The Irish Worker*, August 8, 1914), what the following sentence explicitly stated: "*Should a German army land in Ireland tomorrow we should be perfectly justified in joining it, if by doing so we could rid this country once and for all from its connection with the Brigand Empire that drags us unwillingly into this War*".

James Connolly Re-assessed: The Irish and European Context was subsequently published as a pamphlet by the Aubane Historical Society in March 2006, with the addition of an extensive introduction, as well as the inclusion of commentaries on Connolly's championing of the alliance with Kaiser Germany written by Donal Nevin and the Dublin Jewish Republican Robert Briscoe, the latter having been no less an enthusiastic champion of the Kaiser than Connolly himself.

James Connolly Re-Assessed, The Irish And European Context by Manus O'Riordan. ISBN 1 903497 26 4. 60pp. AHS, Feb. 06. €6, £5 [Order from: <https://www.atholbooksales.org>]

See also www.indymedia.ie/article/76008?userlanguage=ga&save_prefs=true for *The Justification of James Connolly*, an Easter Rising 90th anniversary lecture which I delivered as part of the Cork Council of Trade Unions May Day 2006 celebrations. In September 2006 this lecture was included in *James Connolly, Liberty Hall and the 1916 Rising*, by Francis Devine and myself, an Irish Labour History Society pamphlet sponsored by SIPTU—the Services, Industrial, Professional & Technical Union.

Here again, I challenged the type of spin put by Martin Mansergh and others on the "We Serve Neither King Nor Kaiser" Connolly pose. While Mansergh did accurately characterise Pearse as pro-German, he had nonetheless gone on to pour scorn on Desmond FitzGerald's first hand account of Pearse's position.

Ireland In the World: Further Reflections was the title of a 2005 book of essays by former Fine Gael Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald, in which he wrote frankly of the Treaty War executions for which his father Desmond FitzGerald, as a Free State Government Minister, had shared responsibility:

"In late September 1922, the government introduced in the Dáil an Army Emergency Powers Resolution, which resulted in the setting up of military courts with the power to sentence to death. After the rejection by republicans in mid-October of an amnesty, the first four executions of arms-carrying republicans occurred; these were followed shortly afterwards by that of Erskine Childers, publicist for the anti-Treaty movement... Childers was found guilty of what had been made a capital offence—being in possession of a small revolver that had been given to him by Collins long before this. It is difficult to acquit the government of prejudice against Childers, an Englishman who had, absurdly, been suspected by Griffith of being a British agent, engaged in fomenting a civil war in order to give the British a chance to bring their troops back to Ireland to restore peace in the country! Immediately after those executions, the republican military leader, Liam Lynch, issued an order for the killing of fourteen categories of people—including Dáil deputies... After the implementation of this order with the killing of Deputy Sean Hales, the government, under pressure from the army, ordered the execution without trial of four IRA prisoners. It is very hard for us to accept or justify these acts. But theirs was a very different world from ours—one where the death penalty was universally accepted, although the four executions without trial were, of course, widely condemned. The government firmly believed that only by means of such executions could the State be saved from anarchy... As far as I am aware, none of the ministers who took these decisions ever expressed any doubts or regrets about them..." (pp 95-96).

Garret was prepared to wrestle with contemplating the Free State war crimes of his father, but he was also damned if he was going to let Martin Mansergh get away with questioning the historical integrity of Desmond's account of his 1916 Rising conversation with Pearse and Plunkett, particularly Mansergh's dismissal of it as mere "speculative banter". In another

essay in his book, FitzGerald wrote:

"For a short period in the 1790s (and, less strikingly, at certain points in the nineteenth century), Irish republicanism was, at least theoretically, inspired by French-style republicanism: it was momentarily secular and anti-confessional as well as nationalist. In a very attenuated form, that tradition survived to the 1916-21 period. It is there in the 1916 Proclamation and in the Democratic Programme of 1919. Although a republic had been proclaimed in 1916, this did not reflect as absolutist a commitment to this particular form of government as people today are inclined to believe. Rather it reflected the practical reality that the only way in which Irish independence could be expressed at that time was by declaring a republic. This fact was attested to by my father, Desmond FitzGerald, who wrote that, when Patrick Pearse and Joseph Plunkett discussed the matter with him in the GPO during the Rising, they thought that in the only circumstances in which a Rising could possibly succeed (i.e. with German support and a German victory in the War), Ireland would inevitably become a monarchy—as of course were all European states at that time, except France and Switzerland—probably with the kaiser's sixth son, Prince Joachim, as king. That conversation is recorded in my father's 1913-16 fragment of autobiography, written during the 1940s, and was confirmed by Ernest Blythe's recollection of a discussion he had with Bulmer Hobson, secretary of the Volunteers" (p 216).

"The idea that these accounts should be dismissed—as, for example, Martin Mansergh has sought to do—because they might be used by partisan opponents of 1916 to discredit the Rising is simply *anti-historical* (my emphasis—MO'R). Of course, Pearse and Plunkett were not (GF's own emphasis) such an outcome—they did not wish it—but they were realists who knew that, if the Germans won the war, following a successful Irish rising, Ireland would suffer the same monarchical fate as had Bulgaria, Romania and Albania, and as the Germans sought to impose on Lithuania and Finland two years later. It does Pearse and Plunkett no credit to try to perpetuate a myth—and I use this word deliberately—that they were unrealistic fantasists who thought that the Germans would allow a republic in Ireland, when in fact these two leaders of the Rising were hard-headed patriots, fully aware of the realities of the world they lived in, and concerned to make the best of those realities." (217).

At this juncture, FitzGerald might also have confronted Mansergh with the realism of Connolly, but he didn't. A bare month before the Rising, Connolly had argued as to what was at stake in the War, and what were Ireland's interests in its outcome:

"Every Socialist who knows what he is talking about must be in favour of freedom of the seas, must desire that private property shall be immune from capture at sea during war, must realise that as long as any one nation dominates the water highways of the world neither peace nor free industrial development is possible for the world. If the capitalists of other nations desire the freedom of the seas for selfish reasons of their own that does not affect the matter. Every Socialist anxiously awaits and prays for that full development of the capitalist system which can alone make Socialism possible, but can only come into being by virtue of the efforts of the capitalists inspired by selfish reasons. The German Empire is a homogeneous Empire of self-governing peoples; the British Empire is a heterogeneous collection in which a very small number of self-governing communities connive at the subjugation, by force, of a vast number of despotically ruled subject populations. We do not wish to be ruled by either empire, but we certainly believe that the first named contains in germ more of the possibilities of freedom and civilisation than the latter" ("*The German or the British Empire?*", *The Workers' Republic*, March 18, 1916).

In other words, Connolly's ultimate objective was a Workers' Republic, and he had also proclaimed a democratic Irish Republic that Easter of 1916, but, if it came to the crunch in terms of the possible outcomes of the World War, he too would prefer to see Ireland as part of a German Empire rather than endure continued British rule.

Garret FitzGerald's defence of his father's Easter Rising account continued:

"The myth of republicanism being somewhat incarnate in 1916 has been sedulously fostered, but in fact that is not what people felt at the time. In my father's papers, there is a letter from Erskine Childers to him written in March 1918, in which Childers asserts that 1916 had not been about creating a republic but about self-determination. Childers added that he would be happy with self-determination within the Empire, remarking that he thought my father would also be satisfied with that. Childers was tragically executed as a republican by the government of which my father was a member in 1922... We know, of course, that in the end the anti-monarchist version of nationalism prevailed here, strengthened no doubt by the collapse of various empires and monarchies in 1918, and by the consequent emergence of many republics in Europe. Given the importance the British still attached to their monarchy—their emphasis on it as the lynchpin of their Empire, in fact—and the extent to which the British forces were referred to by them as the Crown forces, this Irish nationalist

reaction against monarchy was probably inevitable" (pp 217-18).

It is here that FitzGerald forgot that, while Childers in 1922 was prepared to support Dev's proposed compromise of External Association on the part of an Irish Republican form of government with a British Commonwealth headed by the King of England, his argument against the "Treaty" was that it denied self-determination within the Empire, and fell very much short of even the Dominion Status accorded to Canada et al. Nor had Childers understood Desmond FitzGerald's mindset as it would have been in March 1918.

In June 1922, in opting to wage the "Treaty" War against Republicans, for fear of Britain deploying its forces to directly wage its own war yet again in the 26 Counties, Desmond did indeed support a Free State Constitution proclaiming the British King to be the source of its executive power. But Childers was oblivious of the fact that a very different monarchy

would have been in FitzGerald's mind in March 1918, coinciding, as it did, with Germany's Spring offensive and the then still strong possibility of its victorious outcome. This was precisely the set of circumstances which would have placed the German Prince scenario—as envisaged in the GPO by Pearse, Plunkett and FitzGerald—back on the agenda as a practical possibility, and very far from being the "bizarre" caricature painted by Ronan Irish Times McGreevy.

Germany's defeat in November 1918, of course, put paid to all of this, followed by the December 1918 General Election vote to endorse the Irish Republic proclaimed in Easter 1916. But the usually Anglophile Garret FitzGerald had excelled in this dispute with Martin Mansergh regarding Desmond's War. For Garret, in arguing that a 1916 Rising had been required in the first place, had also followed through with the realpolitik logic of that Rising's necessary alignment with Kaiser Germany.

Manus O'Riordan

defence. That was done despite it being said night and day on the media that he was a dangerous Anti-Semite.

When the National Executive considered his suspension from the Party by the Leader, it found that there were no legitimate grounds for it, and restored his membership: that was dismissed as an action by his cronies, who were Anti-Semites, or were under his Anti-Semitic spell.

Dame Margaret Hodge—a Jewish MP—gave the Leader an ultimatum: either Corbyn would be excluded from the Parliamentary Party or she would resign from the Party the following day. The next morning the Leader did what she demanded.

The determining influence on the Party Leader seems to be the Jewish Board of Deputies, and a number of Jewish associations in tune with it. The Leader has said that his primary object is to make changes in the party which will make "*the Jewish community*" comfortable. By "*the Jewish community*" he appears to mean the Board of Deputies.

There is a Jewish organisation which is affiliated to the Labour Party (which the Board of Deputies isn't): the *Jewish Voice For Labour*. It is very rarely heard on the British media, and its voice is scarcely heard through hostile interventions by the interviewer.

On November 17th (the day of the National Executive's restoration of Corbyn's membership and Dame Hodge's insistence on his exclusion from the PLP), Jenny Manson, Co-Chair of Jewish Voice For Labour, appeared on BBC's *Newsnight*, and, despite the hostile interviewing of Kirsty Wark, managed to get some words in edgeways. Wark asked why Corbyn did not apologise for saying that the EHRC Report on Anti-Semitism in the Party had been dramatically exaggerated:

Wark: Why didn't he apologise? I'm asking you that straightforward question.

Manson: Because many of us knew that these claims have been exaggerated. I'm Jewish too. There was a lot of talk about the Jewish community just now, how offended they are, and how Keir is worried about them. Nobody seems to remember that there about 250,000 or 300,000 Jews in this country, and a very large number of them—

Wark: — — [Gabbling intervention. Unintelligible.]

Manson: What I was trying to say is, there is many Jewish communities and they are not all upset about Jeremy being back in the Labour Party. An awful

Dual Power In British Labour:

The Leader vs. The Executive

Labour affairs in Britain have got themselves into a strange and spicy pickle.

As we write, Jeremy Corbyn is a member of the Party but is excluded from membership of the Party in Parliament. Hitherto it has been the case that a Party member elected to Parliament was automatically a member of the Party in Parliament. But now it seems that the Party in Parliament has asserted its independence of the Party in the country. It remains to be seen whether it is now possible for somebody who is not a member of the Party in the country to be a member of the Party in Parliament!

Corbyn is a member of the Party in the country by decision of the National Executive, which has hitherto been regarded as the sovereign authority in the Party as a whole. He is excluded from the Parliamentary Party by the decision of the Party leader, acting freely as Leader, and disregarding the decision of the National Executive.

The Party Leader is widely praised for the action he has taken. The praise has come from outside the Party more than from within it. His enthusiastic supporters see him as acting in an emergency to

save the Party by a strong assertion of authoritative will against the Party. If he breaks the rules in order to save it, that is because it cannot be saved within the rules because it was corrupted by the brief rule of his predecessor Jeremy Corbyn. The Party must be purged of Corbynism and this is something that cannot be done within Party rules.

This has not been said clearly by Sir Keir himself, but it has been said very clearly by his supporters, who have dominated media presentations of the matter.

The case is that Jeremy Corbyn, an Anti-Semite, saturated the Party with Anti-Semitism by means of the very great increase in Party membership which he brought about. The Party institutions are Anti-Semitic and therefore the Party can only be saved by the free and independent action of the Leader against it.

That case depends on Corbyn being an Anti-Semite. If he is an Anti-Semite, then the Party is certainly riddled with Anti-Semitism.

A few months ago, when there was talk of legal action being brought against him by some Jewish institution, there was an immediate response of crowd-funding his

lot of us are very happy that he's back in the Party. And a lot of us would say, like he said, that the allegations were over-exaggerated, partly by the media. So the figure he mentioned: in a book called *Bad News For Labour*—it was discovered that people out there think that 30% of Labour Party members have been investigated. The actual figures are something like 0.3. Can I also say that many of those allegations, according to the EHRC, were not correct—

Wark: — Can I say that, you talk about many Jewish people are behind Jeremy Corbyn. 84% of the British Jewish community believe that there was a specific threat to British Jews, according to the Campaign Against Anti-Semitism's yearly study. That is a substantial amount. You know that the British Board of Jewish Deputies overwhelmingly think that this is a retrograde step. And you don't represent them!

Mansan: About ten or twenty years ago Jews stopped voting Labour, so there's considerable feeling by about 80% of them that do it. Among the Jews who are, secular Jews often don't get invited to these surveys, because they're not registered. All I can tell you is that the Haredi community does not feel like that. Secular Jews do not feel like that.

Wark (excitedly): You cannot lump all secular Jews as if you know homogeneity among them."

Mansan tries to reply, possibly that all Jews are lumped together by Corbyn's opponents.

It is put to her that Corbyn has said that he supports the EHRC recommendations. Is he right to do that? She replies that he is, but that she wishes Keir Starmer would sometimes talk to her part of the Jewish community about training. They have their own training.

She said that the Report said nothing about the scale of Anti-Semitism, but said that there were very unfair practices in the investigation. Nobody was talking about that.

Wark: Let's move on and talk about the future. Do you now think that all supporters of Jeremy Corbyn should throw their weight behind Keir Starmer and bring unity to the Party.

Mansan: I would be very said if the Whip were taken away from Jeremy. I do of course. I'm a Labour Party member and I'm fiercely loyal to the Party, and I would very much like unity. I'm very pleased—

Wark: And are you arrayt [?] to throw your weight behind Keir Starmer.

Mansan: I don't know what [arrayt?] means. I've never thrown my weight behind any Leader... I wasn't happy with his views on soldiers' amnesty. Nobody ever supports a leader completely... Of course I support the Leader of the Labour Party.

Wark: And what happens if Keir Starmer does remove the Whip from Jeremy Corbyn...?

Mansan: I'd be very sad. What I want to talk about is justice. Jeremy is a very good man. He's an anti-racist. The EHRC Report admits that, when he appointed the General Secretary, Jenny Formby, procedure started to get better. Shami Chakrabarti's Report is validated in the Report. I would like the media and yourselves... to look a bit more widely at what's going on, what the Report says, what Jews apart from those who speak up against him think. We are also important."

Louise Ellman, a bitter Jewish opponent of Corbyn, was then interviewed. She is interviewed frequently, and says what she pleases without being interrupted. She was a Labour MP but resigned in protest against Corbyn's leadership. It would have been interesting if it had been put to her to explain how what Jenny Mansan had just said could be reconciled, on the basis of actual Jewish experience in the Labour Party, with what she's been saying—and whether it was the case that the Chakrabarti Report, which had been dismissed on the media as a whitewash, had been vindicated by the EHRC Report. But, of course, nothing like that was done.

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How did all of this come about?

Jeremy Corbyn, a lifelong campaigner against all kinds of racism (including Anti-Semitism), and against Imperialism, was elected leader of the Labour Party after a change of rules had given the decisive influence on choosing the Party leader to the general membership. He was in no way responsible for changing the rules. This was done by the same Parliamentary Party that refused to accept the result of the first election held under the new rules they had introduced.

Corbyn's influence in the Parliamentary Labour Party was so marginal that he would not have got his name on the ballot sheet on the strength of it. It got there only with the help of some mainstream MPs who nominated him almost as a joke. He was a member of the hopeless idealistic fringe. His ideology was the ideology of Left Labour. It was hopeless because it took the traditional rhetoric of the Party in earnest. It was not an ideology appropriate to the governing of a state like Britain.

Leaders of the Party, in governing the state, had never acted in conformity with the Party ideology. But it remained the basic ideology of the basic Party mem-

bership. And so, when it was put to the general membership to elect the leader of the Party, they voted for the candidate who was in earnest about its ideology.

The British state was democratised during the epic phase of the Empire. That state had been built up over the centuries as an Empire which provided cheap food for the home population by exploiting parts of the world which were incapable of resisting it. The formal Empire undermined itself through two wars of destruction on Germany and passed away in the ten years after the second one. But the exploitative relationship with the poorer parts of the world—parts which had been made poor by that relationship—was continued by other means.

Former leaders of Labour, who began as idealistic anti-capitalists and anti-imperialists, came to understand this and adapted to it opportunistically while keeping up the rhetoric of class struggle and anti-Imperialism.

That was not something that Corbyn had a gift for. He belonged to the traditional sentimental left of the Party, which had neither a Communist Party nor a Trotskyist dimension to it, and which also lacked dialectical skills that go with opportunism. And he is the last remnant of that element of British political life.

It was very unlikely that Corbyn would have won the 2019 Election, even if his attempt to wage a coherent campaign had not been sabotaged by his powerful enemies in the Parliamentary Party and in the Labour Party machine. The mass of the working class, which shares his sentiment and his rhetoric has, nevertheless, a kind of unthinking sense of the necessities of the British State and their dependence on it. This was something I discovered in the 1980s when, on behalf of the Northern Ireland Campaign For Labour Representation, I spoke to scores of Labour Party Branches in England and to a number of General Management Committees.

He would probably have lost the Election without being demonised by the realistic and responsible element (i.e. opportunist element) in the Party. But that was no reason for going on strike against him in a way that was destructive of the Party. The Election would probably have been lost just as well by a 'responsible' leader. What was at stake was a 'national' issue, Brexit, and Labour has always been weak and uncertain on national issues.

The demonising of Corbyn as an anti-Semite appears to have been instigated by the Chief Rabbi in the interest of the Jewish State. There are no grounds for complaint in this. Nationalisms prosecute their interests by whatever means they find effective. Israel at that period was becoming explicitly racist in its laws and needed to have attention diverted from the fact.

The Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sachs, stated a number of times that, while it was theoretically possible to criticise the conduct of Israel without being anti-Semitic, it was not possible to do so in practice. That re-definition of Anti-Semitism equated it with Anti-Zionism.

From the 1940s to the 1990s that re-definition would not have been tolerated in British public life in general, or in the Labour Party. Many Jews held prominent positions in the Labour Party and were relentlessly critical of the conduct of the Jewish State. The Chief Rabbi would not have dared to say what he did if Gerald Kaufman was still about.

In those days it was not important to know who was a Jew (or married to a Jew), so that you would be very careful when talking to him to use no careless phrase in common use that might give offence. There is now. The Party Leader has set up an eavesdropping system to get casual comments fed back to him for disciplinary purposes.

It was not widely known that Dame Hodge MP was a Jew, because it didn't seem to matter whether she was or not. People were greatly surprised last year when she asserted herself as a fundamentalist Jewish nationalist. She was known as an ultra-leftist socialist, and heir to a South African diamond fortune. Over the past year she has said repeatedly that the Jews cannot be the only people denied the right of national self-determination. The problem is that they asserted their right of self-determination over a country that had long been occupied by another people. The Zionists put that right into effect by colonisation under the protection of Imperial power. And a further difficulty is that the Jewish State is still extending its territory by colonising areas occupied by Palestinian Arabs. And that is not what is usually meant by the "*right of national self-determination*".

Before the First World War it was held to be Anti-Semitic to say that the Jews were a nation. The approved view was that Judaism was a religion and that its adher-

ents were nationals of the various states over which they were dispersed. After the War began, the Jews in Britain—and particularly in Home Rule Ireland—were regarded as Germans. In 1917 the British Government, in order to turn international Jewish influence against Germany, made an alliance with the element within Jewry which said the Jews were a nation and had national rights in Palestine. It undertook to facilitate the Jewish colonisation of Palestine with a view establishing Palestine as a Jewish state. The word used in the Balfour Declaration was "*homeland*", but Lloyd George and Churchill later explained that the Intention was that Palestine should become a Jewish state as a colony of the Empire. And British influence committed the League of Nations to this project.

The process of Jewish colonisation of Palestine began long before Hitler came to power in Germany.

British Jewry was far from being wholeheartedly supportive of the Balfour Declaration. There was of course a degree of low-level Anti-Semitism in Britain. Influential British opinion at the beginning of the Second World War was that a degree of Anti-Semitism was generated as a matter of course whenever the Jewish population rose above a certain percentage of the host population, and that care should be taken after the War that the Jewish presence in European countries should be kept below that percentage.

A Jewish population was not entirely assimilable because it had a sense of separate destiny. A Jewish minority is therefore not a minority comparable to others—an immigrant group in the process of being assimilated. It erects barriers within itself to assimilation. But Anti-Semitism in Britain was, and is, negligible.

Five or six years ago Melanie Phillips, a well-known commentator in the British media, was outed on a BBC discussion programme as a Jew by another Jew, Will Self. She replied in a Jewish newspaper that she was a Jew with a prior national allegiance to Israel. This was of no practical relevance because it was inconceivable that it should ever be necessary to choose between Israel and Britain. But, if it became necessary, she would choose Israel.

Such a thing could not be said today in the frenzied hot-house atmosphere generated by the tactic adopted by Corbyn's opponents in the PLP of demonising him as an Anti-Semite.

The London Jewish papers in the

Summer of 2019 came out with the line that, if Corbyn won the election, the Jews should pack up and leave the country. That could only mean that Corbyn was the British Hitler.

It was an utter absurdity. But it was taken up by Corbyn's opponents in the PLP. And that is the poisoned cup they have given themselves to drink, now that Corbyn is a backbencher and a Zionist has become Party Leader. They have to carry through the lie they told to about him when as Party leader he seemed to be beyond their reach.

The problem Corbyn poses for the PLP is not that he is racist in any respect but that he is too consistently anti-racist. He is no more an Anti-Semite than he is an Imperialist. But he is not selective in his anti-racism. And that is what makes him an Anti-Semite in the eyes of Jewish nationalism under the self-definition of Anti-Semitism which it drew up last year.

Jewish nationalism in its colonisation of Palestine has been indisputably racist in its relations with the Palestinian Arab population. If it is considered necessary that Palestine should be made into a Jewish state, then racist action against the native population is no less necessary now than it was in the times of Moses and Joshua. The conviction that Palestine must become a Jewish state is based on a command given by God to Moses—as has often been said without being challenged on RTE radio. Fair enough. But that has nothing to do with the rights of nations, or with the Declarations of general Human Rights under which we supposedly live today. It is the exclusive right of an exclusive nation with a fundamentalist religious conception of the world. And it is not a position that can be asserted openly in the British Labour Party—not yet anyway. So other devices must be brought into play.

Corbyn's crime is that he sees Jewish nationalist racism directed against the Palestinian Arab population as mere racism. When he was Labour leader the Labour Party accepted the self-definition of Anti-Semitism drawn up by the Jewish Board of Deputies, but with the provision that this did not prejudice the Palestinian Arab right of resistance to Jewish oppression. This conditional acceptance of the IHRA definition was declared by its advocate to be tantamount to a rejection of it.

How might Corbyn purge himself of his alleged Anti-Semitism? One way that has been recommended is that he should go on a pilgrimage to Auschwitz, immerse

himself in the experience, and express remorse. The suggestion is that he would then somehow understand that the Jewish nationalist treatment of the Palestinian Arab population is not racist.

Sir Keir Starmer was on Jeremy Corbyn's Front Bench then. He did not then give any hint that he was in sympathy with the campaign against Corbyn. On Corbyn's retirement from the leadership, he presented himself as a Corbynite candidate and got himself elected leader. One of the first things he did as Leader was prevent a legal action against the Party, over its comments about a Panorama programme on Anti-Semitism, from going to Court, where the whole matter could be thrashed out before a jury under Rules of Evidence. The Party's legal advice was that its Defence would probably win. Sir Keir decided to prevent a Court hearing by pleading Guilty and paying out large sums out of Labour Party funds in damages. That was his first step in branding his predecessor as an Anti-Semite. Others steps have followed.

The National Executive is now effectively branded as Anti-Semite for ending Corbyn's suspension from Party membership.

On the day that the National Executive found that there were no legitimate grounds for putting Corbyn out of the Party, Dame Hodge demanded that Sir Keir should refuse him membership of the Parliamentary Party, or else she would leave the Party the next day.

A grossly false accusation of Anti-Semitism should be put on a par with an act of Anti-Semitism. Sir Keir has falsely branded Corbyn as an Anti-Semite. He refused to let the issue be dealt with in Court. He now seems intent on using the Party apparatus to 'move on' without further discussion.

Is there some moral obligation on an honest man to let himself be falsely branded by a Party schemer?

If the cards prove to be tightly stacked against him, it might be that the only recourse for the honest man would be to resign his seat in Parliament and re-fight it, putting it to the electorate to decide whether he is an Anti-Semite.

And with the PLP now asserting its independence from the National Executive, why should it not be a contest between the two of them?

Brendan Clifford

Things You Might Not Know About Jeremy Corbyn

In November 2013 Jeremy Corbyn, a Backbench Labour MP since 1983 was given the Gandhi Foundation International Peace Award.

The Foundation explained that the Award was given –

“in recognition of his consistent efforts over a 30-year Parliamentary career to uphold the Gandhian values of social justice and non-violence. Besides being a popular and hard-working MP he made time to speak and write extensively in support of human rights at home and world-wide. His committed opposition to neo-colonial wars and to nuclear weapons has repeatedly shown the lack of truth in the arguments of those who have opposed him.”

Following Labour's dismal failure in the 2015 General Election, its leader Ed. Miliband resigned the leadership, and under new party rules where non-MPs were allowed vote for the Party leader, there was a huge influx of members into the Party. Corbyn was elected by a huge majority of members to the fury of MPs who arranged a challenge to him two years later. He won that by a bigger margin than two years earlier.

At a ceremony in Geneva on 8th December 2017 *The International Peace Union* awarded Jeremy Corbyn with the Sean MacBride Peace Prize.

The Award is named after the late Sean MacBride (1904-1988) who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1974. As Ireland's Minister of External Affairs, MaBride was instrumental in the Council of Europe's adoption of the European Convention on Human Rights. (Britain's Parliament, by giving British service personnel immunity from prosecution for human rights abuses, has just reneged on the Convention adopted in 1950).

The International Peace Union explained its award –

“Jeremy Corbyn is awarded the Sean MacBride Peace Award for his sustained and powerful political work for disarmament and peace. As an active member of the Stop the War Campaign in the UK he has worked for peace and alternatives to war. As a member of parliament in the UK he has for 34 years continually undertaken that work for justice, peace and disarmament inside and outside Parliament. He has ceaselessly stood by his principles ..”

Has any other British Parliamentarian been given such honours?

Donal Kennedy

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War commemorations must not be abandoned

SIR - As Ireland approaches the centenary commemorations of the deaths of Terence McSwiney, Tomás McCurtain and Kevin Barry next month, who died during Ireland's War of Independence, revisionist historians and some political commentators continue to depict Ireland's freedom fighters as cold-blooded murderers and our War of Independence as a sordid sectarian conflict.

Calls for the government to abandon commemorations appear to be an act of atone-ment and State apology to opponents of Irish independence for our audacity in commemorating our political and cultural independence and our revolutionary heroes of 1916 and War of Independence.

It is unlikely that Patrick Pearse and James Connolly would have taken up arms if Britain had recognised the democratic wishes of the Irish people and implemented Home Rule, a wish that was overwhelmingly expressed in every election since 1870. It is also unlikely that Kevin Barry would have taken up arms if Britain had acknowl-edged the democratic mandate that was given in the 1918 general election, a mandate that conferred the authority on the First Dáil to give legitimate expression to the will of the people.

It is risible for opponents of the War for Independence to suggest that the govern-ment should not commemorate the centenary of the execution of Kevin Barry, the death on hunger strike of Terence McSwiney and the murder of Tomás McCurtain, who were soldiers of the Irish Republican Army, recognised by Dáil Éireann as its legitimate army.

The British government, by rejecting the democratic method of declaring the national will, led to a recognition that the bullet be more effective than the ballot. The right to resist foreign occupation does not necessarily stem from the ballot box.

There is a long established and internationally-recognised right of people to resist foreign occupation as expressed in United Nations Resolutions 3070 and 3103 which acknowledge the status of combatants struggling against colonial domination and the rights of people to self determination.

Tom Cooper, *Irish National Congress*,
 Aras an Phiarsaigh, Pearse Street, Dublin 2.
Southern Star 31.10.2020

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Money And Trust

In recent issues of the Irish Political Review there have been some very interesting articles in money theory. However, it seems to me that the notifications to customers by the Irish banks October 2020 indicate a significant shift in what is actually happening with money. The banks have said they will be charging negative interest for holding money for large clients. This means that these customers will have to pay the bank to hold their money.

At the same time, there has been a shift in the Irish banks' attitude towards mortgage borrowers; mortgage borrowers whose payments are in arrears due to covid-19 lay-offs have been sympathetically treated in marked distinction to the way they were treated after the 2008 collapse.

Now the penny has dropped (to coin a phrase) for the banks. They don't really want their money back — what would they do with it? — they want to leave the money out there and keep charging interest and fees on it. And so the banks are happy — well, they never admit they're happy — to arrange an arrears scheme where the mortgage loan term is extended and, in the meantime, the customer continues to pay the interest. So the bankers' salaries and other costs get paid. And the banks continue to own the house or the buildings which are, under the mortgage agreement, the property of the lender until the capital is repaid. So everybody is happy and there is no warfare in courts. In the longer term, lawyers may be unhappy with this and may seek to upset the apple-cart.

This is all happening because many wealthy people have accumulated too much money. In August 2020, Jeff Bezos of Amazon in a wild fit of euphoria announced that he had made \$13,500,000 the day before. In one day. Because of Covid-19 driving people onto computerised systems! Jeff Bezos did not have the money at home or even in his office. No, it was a figure in a computer in a bank or, more likely, many banks in offshore islands where he did not have to pay taxes on it. And so it accumulates, and the poor get poorer.

When I reluctantly attended University College Cork, to please my mother, one of the best lecturers was Professor John Busted, Dean of the Faculty of Commerce for thirty years, before which he had been Editor of 'The Statist' magazine. He was an economist without equal in my present option, although at the time I thought little due to my inexperience. John Busted had been a member of the Banking Commission, which reported in 1938. The members of the Commission were all heavyweights. They really knew their stuff, as I found out later when, one by one, I bought the two volumes of their Report second-hand. The two volumes give a try comprehensive overview of the Irish economy and of Banking. Well worth reading. One of my volumes was signed Alfred O'Rahilly and the other is from the library and signed by Joseph Brennan, Chairman of the Commission. Each of them I picked up for very little and I bought them only for my interest in Professor Busted.

Professor Busted, at the first lecture took out of his pocket a red Ten Shilling Note and he asked us, "What is this?" "Ten Shillings", said someone. "What exactly is Ten Shillings?", he asked. No one answered. He said, "This is a piece of paper; just a piece of paper, with a message printed on it saying 'I promise to pay the bearer on demand ten shillings' and a printed signature, L.K. O'Brien, Cashier, Bank of England." Then he stated, "that of course is a lie because one day in London I took an Irish £1 note into the Bank of England and asked them for twenty shillings and they refused and told me this is an Irish £1 note and so we will give you nineteen shillings and sixpence sterling for it. We are entitled to the other six pence as commission." And so Professor Busted did not receive his £1 sterling for his Irish pound.

But he pointed out that everybody trusted these pieces of paper and people will work from one end of the week to the other for these pieces of paper, because the pieces of paper can be exchanged for food, for clothes and for rent. All based on trust in pieces of paper. This is money used as a medium of exchange.

Things get more serious when a store of value is needed. Money represents purchasing power and, when a person has a surplus of money after purchasing everything they need, what do they do with the surplus? They have to keep it safe and that is not easy. Smaller savers use banks to mind their money. Larger savers call themselves investors and

they buy productive land, or oil wells, or shopping malls, or office blocks, or stock market shares, or . . . , but there comes a limit when everything valuable has been bought. What next?

There is now so much purchasing power (i.e. money) sloshing around in the market places, but under the control of a small number of wealthy people, that, when any secure-looking home appears, the money is poured into it. This is why the Irish Government is able to issue Bonds with a negative interest rate. And this is a very good time for the Irish Government to take the money and build much-needed infrastructure, such as harbours, roads, bridges, and housing. There will be no necessity or question about paying the money back. The investors do not want it back. They just want to know it is safe.

The purchasing power (i.e., money) has been taken by the wealthy investors, who are few, from the vast majority of the people of the world who are poor or relatively poor and now there is a truly great opportunity for enlightened government to redistribute the purchasing power (i.e. money) to those who need it for housing, schools, more nourishing food farms, and better infrastructure. This is what states like China are doing. Hopefully Ireland will learn to do the same.

It is just commonsense, not economics.

Michael Stack 14.11.2020 ©

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I doubt if Damien ever worked in a slaughter-house or a Meat Factory! I know! He is reportedly the United Kingdom's richest living artist, with his wealth estimated at £215 million in the 2010 Sunday Times Rich List.

The United States of America Bureau of Labor Statistics describe work in Slaughter-Houses as "the most dangerous jobs in America".

Worker Safety has not always been a priority in the Meat Packing industry—yes, it has improved immensely in recent decades—to a great extent because lack of safety regulations for the proprietors can be an extremely expensive cost.

For the employer, line speeds are the big target: the faster the line goes, the more efficient the operation. Workers themselves, especially Boners, are encouraged by financial incentives to speed. Speed, and consequently the risk with knives and other cutting devices, increases as workers become more fatigued, hence the risk to accidents, etc.

It is tough work and it's essentially

dehumanising work. The writer was a meat packer for several years in a meat works in Munster.

You have five sections: Kill Floor; Boning; Packing; Despatch; and Freezer Rooms.

The Boners are the aristocracy of the industry, it's a skilled task and pays big money, they're on contract. They often move from plant to plant. Speed is of the essence in the Boning Hall. Boners work in teams and, in the nature of things, it is a race between the teams when you're on piece work.

Irish Boners are highly regarded and work in France and Germany. All on contract.

In this writer's opinion some very strange tax arrangements seemed to function with the Boner's Payment cheque: Payee's name not included; pubs changing cheques.

Killing Floor is the most dangerous area: long before the Covid-19, the accident rate, etc. was substantial. The floor was accident prone because of live Animals and the danger to life and limb of the men.

The only foreign labour in the writer's plant was the individual or individuals

covering Halal slaughter. Halal meat is reared—and slaughtered—differently from conventional meat. Like kosher food, Halal food is guided by religious criteria that govern everything from how the animals destined to be eaten are fed and raised, to how they are slaughtered and prepared for consumption. These workers were treated on the same level as rest of staff.

Employment Policy: Always employ less labour than required.

Autumn/Winter was the busy time following the summer grazing.

There was little or no Health & Safety Inspection. The exception was the intense inspection of the meat during EU intervention orders. Intervention meat supply was vital for the companies: sometimes a make or break situation. The same applied for orders by major retail chains ensuring quality beef. After that there was little inspection.

By the way I can assure readers a major recession is on the way! Why? Over the last few months SPAM (the cheap meat product) have been advertising heavily on CNN tv and other US channels.

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"It is very concerning that IMI is an organisation that trains senior managers and directors and helps to create the corporate culture in this country, and at a time when we should be focusing on matters of economic equality and a better post-pandemic Ireland, it is unacceptable for an organisation like the IMI to ruthlessly oppose their staff having access to collective bargaining."

UCC bought the management training company in 2016 in a deal that required the college to borrow €18m.

IMMIGRATION

Despite all the blather about Altruism, Egalitarianism, inclusiveness, etc. Dublin's policy on Migration is simply one of creating the cheapest labour pool possible.

Freedom of movement and residence for persons in the EU is the cornerstone of Union citizenship, established by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992. The Treaty came into effect in the Republic in 2006.

In April 2019, there were 622,700 non-Irish nationals resident in Ireland accounting for 12.7% of the total population. There's an old adage "Lies, damned lies, and statistics", that should be extended to "Lies, damned lies, statistics and Leprechaun statistics".

AN unforeseen consequence of closed rural pubs is that there are no toilets available for travelling staycationers. Farmers with road-fronted land in west Kerry are having to move their animals due to toilet paper, tissues and excrement from passing tourists jumping the gates to go to the toilet. (Irish Independent, 11.8.2020)

WORK PERMITS

The number of work permits issued to companies for workers from outside the European Economic Area hit 1,772 in April, 2020, the highest since online records began.

All workers from outside the EEA require an employment permit to work in Ireland unless they have an exemption.

The Department for Business Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI) issues permits to applicants who have received a job offer from a company based in Ireland, with a

minimum salary threshold of €32,000 for a critical skills employment permit and of around €30,000 for general employment permits.

The minimum wage is €20,482.80 which the majority of non-EU workers are getting in the Meat industry.

The most permits issued last month [April, 2020] were to Amazon Data Services Ireland with 59, followed by Rosderra Irish Meats and Google. Since the start of the year, the most permits were issued to Dawn Meats with 160, followed by Google Ireland and Rosderra. (Sunday Independent-17.5.2020)

GOLDEN PASSPORTS

"The European Commission has launched procedures against Cyprus and Malta over their "golden passport" programmes which allow wealthy people to acquire EU citizenship in exchange for an investment. The EU's executive said the lucrative schemes are in violation of EU law and undermine the "essence of EU citizenship" (The Echo, Cork, 21.10.2020).

Is Europe blind to Ireland and the "Passports for sales" scandals in the 1980s and 90s? Or could it be that

Cyprus and Malta are a softer touch?

OFFALY ABATTOIR

A proposed €40m beef plant expansion in Offaly is now in doubt, leading to claims that the Government is facilitating a "golden circle" of meat processors.

The expansion of a small abattoir near Banagher received planning approval last week from Offaly County Council. The plant would have the capacity to slaughter up to 140 under-30-month cattle per day exclusively for Asian markets.

However, one of the key backers of the project, former Minister for Agriculture Barry Cowen, said it is now under threat because of the Government's decision not to give the Chinese investor behind the project access to the State's immigrant investor programme.

Successful applicants are granted permission to reside in Ireland for a fixed period; the residency rights also apply to their families.

Mr Cowen also claimed that the Government's rationale for rejecting the investor's application was that it's not Government policy to pursue the development of additional plants.

GOLDEN CIRCLE

IFA president Tim Cullinan called on the Government to clarify its position:

"The golden circle that the sector had become has to be challenged. We badly need new entrants in the sector to shake things up. We see cattle being processed in Northern Ireland at far higher prices than here, and higher prices being paid for finished stock in marts. It is clear that we need more competition."

The dominance of the three main meat processors ABP, Kepak and Dawn Meats over UK and Irish beef processing was further extended last week, with Dawn taking full control of Dunbia. (Irish Independent, 4.8.2020)

Ireland's livestock sector plays a key role in the national economy, with over 100,000 farms involved in cattle production. From a supply base of approximately 1 million beef suckler cows and 1.3 million dairy cows, the industry produces over 550,000 tonnes of beef annually, of which almost 90% is exported.

Total beef production in Ireland stands at approximately 520,000 tonnes, with around 470,000 tonnes destined for export. Ireland's beef is reared on a grass-fed diet, with a 1.1 million beef suckler cow herd kept on just under 80,000 farms.

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"Work as punishment implies a curious equation. Punishment is society's response to a criminal act, and the sentence of 'hard labour' was deemed the most severe punishment, short of death, that society could administer. Using this reasoning the vast multitudes of everyday workers all over the earth who were engaged in hard labour all the days of their lives might have asked what crime they had committed" (Reg Theriault, *How To Tell When You're Tired*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 1995)

A MEAT PACKER REMEMBERS!

In 2012, Damien Hirst, the British artist, held an Exhibition in the Tate Modern in London. You walked, quite literally, through the middle of a cow which had been sliced in half and placed in two formaldehyde-filled tanks, its innards visible through the glass. You gazed at flies feeding on the severed head of another cow, then dying on an insect-o-cutor (an electric fly killer).

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LABOUR

Comment

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“THE number of people willing to move here to work is not going to hit levels seen during the last boom and will not keep wages down,

economists at the Central Bank are forecasting.”

(Irish Independent, 30.7.2019)

More Thoughts on Covid-19!

Neo-liberalism stood for an economics built upon the idea of deregulation of labour and capital markets, privatisation of public utilities and globalisation—all aimed at promoting the uninhibited flow of goods, services, money and people across national borders. Migration flows were a necessary part of this. Not least because they provided a ready means of over-supplying the labour force, thereby containing wages and maintaining a more compliant workforce.

LABOUR FORCE

Brendan Halligan (General Secretary of the Labour Party) worried that Ireland would become a labour pool for the Continent, speaking at a Workers' Union of Ireland meeting on proposed EEC entry in Dun Laoghaire on 15th January 1972. (*Organising History, A Centenary of SIPTU, 1909-2009*, Francis Devine-Gill & Macmillan 2009)

How wrong could you be?

Who would have guessed that one of the most vibrant sectors of the Irish economy, the multi-million meat industry would be composed of 70% foreign labour? Worse. That out of 16,000 employees, barely a third are Trade Union members in a country that at one stage boasted of one of the highest membership levels of trade union membership in Europe.

A 2009 study reports a decline in Trade Union members from 1994 to 2006 and in particular from 2001 to 2006, which shows that changes in the com-

position of observed worker and job characteristics could only explain a very small part of this decline. (Walsh, Frank; Strobl, Eric. Recent trends in trade union membership in Ireland. *Economic & Social Review*, Vol. 40, no. 1, Spring, 2009, pp. 117)

Union density stood at 45.8% in 1994 but by 2003 this rate had fallen to less than 38%, and continued to decline to under 28% in 2014, the new study finds. At the beginning of the recession in 2007 the figure was 32%.

The recession prompted a recovery in Union membership and by 2010 membership was at 33%, the study shows. This appears to have been a temporary change. Since 2011, membership has fallen from

33% to less than 28% in 2014.

Walsh finds that in the private sector, density declined at a steady pace from 27.1% to 16.6% between 2004 and 2014. Conversely, the share of public sector workers rose from 40% to 55% of all union members between 2004 and 2014.

UCC

A good example of the difficulties the Trade Union movement faces today was highlighted by Labour TD Jed Nash in relation to Union Recognition.

The country's leading management training body, which is wholly owned by UCC, is refusing to engage with a Trade Union that represents the majority of its staff.

A number of staff were made redundant as a result of the restructuring and those who remained approached Siptu with a view to getting representation for collective bargaining.

The Union then approached the Workplace Relations Commission to resolve the issue but the IMI refused initially to attend at the Commission.

Last week, the IMI changed its position and has now agreed to attend at the Workplace Relations Commission.

Jed Nash:

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