

IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

January 2020

Vol.35, No.1 ISSN 0790-7672

and *Northern Star* incorporating *Workers' Weekly* Vol.34 No.1 ISSN 954-5891

The Northern Election

Carson's seat in North Belfast has fallen to Sinn Fein!!

But Carson's policy for the Six Counties fell a long time ago: ninety-nine years ago.

Edward Carson opposed the dressing-up of the Six Counties into a distinct political body within the British state in which the Catholic third of the population would be governed by the Protestant two-thirds.

It used to be said, as a debating-point in anti-Partition propaganda, that no Six County MP had voted for Partition. That saying has fallen out of use. We have influenced things to that extent at least.

There was no vote for Partition. Westminster, heavily indebted to America in 1920, did not want to have it said that it introduced Partition. So what it did was introduce Home Rule in two parts, and left 'the Irish' to sort it out for themselves. It set up two Irish democracies instead of one. And, if democracy is a good thing, then the more the better!

What no Six County MP could be said to have voted for was not a Partition Bill but a Home Rule Bill setting up Irish Home Rule in two parts. Carson spoke against that Bill, explaining why a Six County Parliament and Government would be a bad thing. But Westminster, with its landslide War Coalition majority, carried on regardless; and the Six County Unionists were given to understand that, if they did not operate the Northern Ireland system under the Bill, they would come under Dublin rule.

Carson resigned the Ulster Unionist leadership. His place was taken by James Craig, who was a Junior Minister in Whitehall in 1920—and was the last 'Ulster' MP to hold Office in the Government of the State.

continued on page 2

Pat Cox And His Achievements!

If there is a poster boy for the EU in Ireland it is Pat Cox. If there is an Irish Mr. Europe it is him. There was a typical laudatory profile of him in the *Sunday Business Post* on 24th November last year by Daniel Murray, reminding us of his achievements in Ireland and Europe. Murray reports:

“Cox has never been slow to give his pro-European views substantial airtime, but when I ask him whether further integration and moving towards a federalist model is inevitable, he is more cautious. ‘I think, after all these decades, we have to move beyond the binary idea of a federal Europe or no Europe’, he says. ‘We are living in a state of negotiated, treaty-based, permanent in-betweenness. We are not a federation, nor are we merely just a loose intergovernmental connection’...”

This is not a very satisfactory answer for a man who can claim to have shaped the current situation in the EU more than most. Another summary of what he says is that, in effect, the EU is in a bit of a mess.

continued on page 12

December 2019 Brexit Summary

Britain Decides

With Boris Johnson's comprehensive victory in the UK General Election the main political milestone on the road to Brexit has been reached. That the exit will pass the point of no return on January 31st is now a formality.

If Britain's liberal elite had accepted the democratically expressed will of the

majority following the Referendum in June 2016, as some of its number advised, the divisions and eventual paralysis of the last forty months would have been avoided. As it is, the politicians, lawyers, lawyer-politicians, economists, commentator-campaigners, journalist-campaigners, editor-campaigners, high-up civil servants, and academics that populate that elite

have exhibited contempt for democratic politics at a historic moment in British and European history when *demos* power has moved up a gear. It is fitting that the Remain side has been routed.

This UK Election has been a seismic event—in Northern Ireland almost as much as in Britain—it will be mulled over, written about and cited for many years to come, internationally as well as in these islands. This summary will briefly touch on the Election campaign and the significance of the results in the context of the

continued on page 13

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
The Northern Election. Editorial	1
Pat Cox And His Achievements. Jack Lane	1
Britain Decides. Dave Alvey (December Brexit Summary)	1
Readers' Letters: Corbyn. Donal Kennedy	3
LEST WE FORGET (4). Extracts from <i>Irish Bulletin</i> . This issue lists British Acts Of Aggression, 3rd - 10th January 1920 (ed. Jack Lane)	4
The O'Connor Column (Sweeney astray: social democracy and historical fictions; Poland's ghoulish horror show)	9
Two Irish Media Commentaries. Dave Alvey	14
Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy ((Clair Wills And The Story She Tells, Part 15)	16
English Democracy. Editorial	18
Northern Ireland & The UK Election. David Morrison	19
Looking Back! Wilson John Haire	21
A Fairytale Moment On The Late Late. Dave Alvey	21
The Philadelphia Exercise. Paul Hyde	23
Photographs, Photostats And Typescripts. Tim O'Sullivan	26
An Imagined Nation. Brendan Clifford (A Meeting At Skibbereen, Part 2)	28
Biteback: Ryan Commission Embarrassing Statistical Error Unpublished Letter to 'Irish Times', <i>Niall Meehan</i>	30
'Ulysses' Cartoon. Submitted by Niall Cusack	32
Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Climate Change And The Environment; Chambers Of Commerce)	33
Poems. Wilson John Haire (Politics Of The Bathtub!; Love On A Bed Of Nails)	35

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

Recruiting: Let The Wastrels Go!

James Connolly

(back page)

Carson, in retirement, was persuaded to remain silent in the face of the inevitable, and even to give a muffled squeak of approval to it on one occasion.

The incident is entirely excluded from Carson biographies, friendly or hostile, and from histories of Northern Ireland. But it is all there in the newspaper reports of his election campaign in December 1918 and in the Hansard report a year later.

The two peoples in the Six Counties were at war with each other (as part of the Anglo-Irish War) when they were constituted into a little local 'democracy' and required to operate a little Home Rule system of government, which could never be anything but the policing of one community by the other. And the Westminster political parties, which did this deed, then virtuously withdrew from the Six County region of the state, and the Ulster Unionist fragment of the Unionist Party was left to fester in isolation for half-a-century, until the Nationalist minority was provoked into making war of the State.

None of this was due to Carson. And the Ulsterish Unionist who lost North Belfast to John Finucane of Sinn Fein is not a Carsonite.

The significant development within the meaningless Six County participation in the British state election is that the SDLP has given up its 'constitutionalist' posturing by facilitating the victory of the party of the men of violence in North Belfast.

Seamus Mallon was shocked when Tony Blair remarked to him that the difficult thing about the SDLP was that it didn't have an Army. The message has finally sunk in. In the profoundly unconstitutional structure called 'Northern Ireland' there is no virtue in mere constitutionalism, and there is no vice in abstentionism.

Northern Ireland MPs at Westminster are spectators, except on the very rare occasions of hung Parliaments. The SDLP held the balance of power forty years ago. Gerry Fitt maintained the Labour Party in Office. But then he brought it down

because it ended the under-representation of Northern Ireland at Westminster, and opened the way for Thatcher.

More recently, the DUP maintained the Tories in Office but did not understand that it was an extraneous element, just as much as the SDLP had been, because it was outside the party-system, which is what English democracy is all about. It refused a Brexit deal with May that was better for it than any other it was likely to get; after May fell it threw away its bargaining power by putting Johnson at the mercy of an obstructive Commons majority, and suffered in the consequent Election.

The British news says there is now a Nationalist majority in Northern Ireland—as if it mattered how the marginalised political life in Northern Ireland was represented on the Westminster back-benches—or that most of the Northern majority prefers to stay at home.

From a rational Northern Ireland viewpoint, Westminster is a waste of time. And BBC news about Northern Ireland is *Fake News* as a matter of course.

When Britain introduced party-political broadcasts on the BBC about sixty years ago, the Prime Minister of the old Stormont system thought they should not be broadcast on BBC, Northern Ireland as none of the parties making the broadcasts contested the elections there. He was over-ruled by Whitehall. He was told that the BBC was a state institution over which he had no authority, and that the broadcasts would go ahead just as if the Labour, Tory and Liberal Parties were fielding candidates in the Six Counties.

*

The *Radio Ulster* voice of the BBC these days is Stephen Nolan. He conducts long phone-in programmes every day. He also conducts phone-in programmes on 'mainland' BBC at other times of the day, raking in the money.

One would have expected him to notice that something essential to Britain is missing from Northern Ireland—its political parties. He could not fail to notice it. But no hint of it ever issues from his lips—even when he is harassing politicians from the viewpoint of British normality.

The Good Friday Agreement, which enabled the War to be ended, is a very strange political arrangement. The BBC does not emphasise the strangeness which

makes it effective, and often seems to forget it.

A threatened Nurses' Strike was in the news just before the election. Its demand was parity with Britain. The DUP, when in Office, had reduced it below parity on the grounds that the cost of living was lower than on the mainland. Nolan tried to implicate Sinn Fein in that decision in an interview with Conor Murphy. Murphy explained that it was entirely a DUP decision. But, said Nolan, it must also have been a Government decision. So Murphy tried to explain, between Nolan's interruptions, that the Departments were autonomous within their Budgets, while Nolan was determined that the awfulness of this 'Government' decision should not be allowed stand.

Under the GFA arrangements there is no Government. The ministries are autonomous Departments of State. The system is that after Elections the Parties choose which Departments to take, with the Party with the most votes having the first choice, etc. The Departments do not then cohere into a Government conducted by a Cabinet but are conducted autonomously by the parties. Each Department is given a Budget, but the Minister is entitled to spend it as desired.

The nearest thing to a Government is the requirement that there should be a First Minister, but not a Prime Minister, chosen by agreement (which is to say that it goes to the largest party in Stormont); and also a Second Minister, the Deputy First Minister, on a par with the First.

Legislation by the Assembly is subject to a "Petition of Concern" by either of the officially recognised national communities.

There have been no Ministers since early January 2017 because Sinn Fein will not agree to the appointment of Arlene Foster as First Minister unless she agrees that there should be an Irish Language Act, which was previously agreed but not implemented.

The Alliance Party, which affects to be neither Orange nor Green, made substantial gains in the British Election, but that is irrelevant to the GFA.

In Six County affairs Orange and Green are the substance of things. That was always the case. The GFA only formalised it and devised a system for it. The Alliance deplores it but could only end it

Corbyn

The *Sunday Times* "Mainland" Edition (April 7) led with the Banner Headlines - "*Labour's hate files expose Corbyn's anti-Semite army.*"

That paper once "exposed" a former Labour Leader, Michael Foot, as a Soviet agent, and was, quite rightly penalised by a British Court for its lying libel. Now that Foot is around no more, the paper's stablemate, *The Times*, and its columnist, Ben Macintyre, had the brass nerve to regurgitate the same poisonous garbage. *The Times* also peddles the fiction that Frank Foley of MI6, a valued collaborator with the Nazis in Berlin in early 1933, put his life at risk when he had the safest billet in that city up to September 1939 (the British Embassy) to rescue Jews from his friends' clutches.

Love 'em or hate 'em whoever becomes leader of the Labour Party is considered fair game for the peddlers of hate in Britain's Right-Wing Press.

The last leader of the Party was accused of being anti-British, because HIS father, Ralph Milliband, was a Marxist. A Marxist who had served Britain faithfully in her Navy, during the Second World War. Both Ralph's sons became Ministers in a Labour Government, and like their parents, made no secret of the fact that they were, and continue to be, Jewish.

Margaret Hodge MP, is reported to have said that Jeremy Corbyn has not had a new idea in the thirty-five years she has known him. As she appears to be one of those leading the charge of anti-Semitism against their common party, it seems odd that she has taken so long for her to detect anti-Semitism in him.

I've met Corbyn a couple of times, once at the funeral former leader of Haringey Council. George Meehan from Donegal, a long-serving, diligent and conscientious and non-grandstanding public representative, and once in an Irish pub. Corbyn championed the righting of wrongs done to, for instance, to the Birmingham Six, and the ending of the causes of wars in Ireland and other victims of Imperial policies.

In 2016 I attended the 80th Anniversary of "The Battle of Cable Street" where residents, Irish and Jewish and others, stopped Mosley's Blackshirts (favourites of *The Daily Mail*) from rampaging through the area). Jeremy Corbyn was there. Hardly evidence of anti-Semitism. Incidentally, we had near neighbours and friends, an old Jewish couple, then in the Labour Party, who always celebrated St Patrick's Day, having met at a dance organised on that festival by the Communist Party in the East End in the 1930s.

Donal Kennedy

Editorial Note: We remember the British, now 'Oh so politically-correct', media offering then Labour Leader Ed Milliband a bacon sandwich to eat in front of the TV cameras, to test how Jewish he was!

by overwhelming it with 'Others' in a Six County election. But, if it did that, the Others would then have to decide whether they were Orange or Green.

It is not possible in modern times not to

be part of a state. Northern Ireland, is not, never was, and never could be a state. And there are only two states available for it to be part of. The relationship between those two states is in the process of undergoing a great change.

Corrections to *Irish Political Review*, December 2019:

Page 2, Col. 2, Line 3: DUP should read SDLP.

Page 2, Col. 3, Line 5" reference should be to national 'territory'

(Continuing our series on the events of 1919 with the help of the daily newspaper of the First Dail, the *Irish Bulletin*.)

LEST WE FORGET (13)

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE ACTS OF AGGRESSION COMMITTED IN IRELAND BY THE MILITARY AND POLICE OF THE USURPING ENGLISH GOVERNMENT AS REPORTED IN THE DAILY PRESS FOR THE WEEK ENDING JANUARY 3rd, 1920.

S u m m a r y.

Date:- Dec.	29th	30th	31st	Jan.1st	2nd	3rd	Total.
Raids:-	1	25	2	-	1	5	34.
Arrests:-	3	5	2	-	3	-	13.
Sentences:-	-	-	1	6	1	1	9.
Proclamations & Suppressions	-	-	-	-	1	4	5.
Armed Assaults:-	1	-	-	1	1	-	3.
Courtmartials:-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1.
Murder	1	-	-	-	-	-	1.
Daily Total:-	7	30	5	7	6	10	66.

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

MONDAY, DECEMBER 29th, 1919.

Raids:-

Armed police raided the residence of Mr. P. J. Berrills of Dundalk, Co. Louth with the object of re-arresting him. Mr. Berrills who was not at home was recently sentenced to 12 months imprisonment with hard labour for having in his possession seditious documents. He has been twice released from prison owing to serious illness arising from ill-treatment there.

Arrests:-

Three unknown men were suddenly surrounded while passing through one of the gates of the Phoenix Park, Dublin and were arrested and taken to the Bridewell police barracks. No charge was preferred against them.

Courtmartials:-

Mr. C. O'Mahony, Ahiohill, Co. Cork, was at Cork City courtmartialled on a charge of having in his possession a copy of the official organ of the Irish Volunteers.

Armed Assault:-

M u r d e r - In the early hours of the morning of Sunday, December 28th, Lawrence Kennedy, while walking to his home along the public thoroughfare through the Phoenix Par was set upon by four soldiers and a Lieutenant. Before he realised that he was being challenged he was shot. After lying fatally wounded upon the public road for half an hour he was finally dispatched by shots fired into his prostrate body by one of the military in whose custody he was.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30th, 1919.

Raids:-

Armed police in large numbers carried out many raids on private houses at Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford. In all some twenty-five houses were forcibly entered and searched.

Arrests:-

At the Phoenix Park, Dublin, three men and two women were surrounded by fully armed troops and carried off in

an armoured car to a military court of inquisition.

Murder:-

At an Inquest held at King George V's Hospital, Dublin into the cause of the death of Lawrence Kennedy, four soldiers concerned in the murder were examined. Their evidence showed that they got nervous at the supposed sounds of firing, that they made a sortie from the Viceregal Grounds on to the public road which is almost half a mile distant from the Viceregal Lodge; that they challenged the first civilian they saw; that he was deaf, and being unable to answer a challenge he did not hear he was promptly shot; that while on the ground he did not seem to be dead so the corporal in charge of the party fired another shot into him "to finish him off"; that almost half an hour after when a relief party of twenty men came to the scene Kennedy, who was lying face downward on the grass still showed signs of life and the leader of the relief party fired into his head at point blank range. The Jury in their verdict declared "Lawrence Kennedy was killed on his way home by a military patrol and we consider that the military acted in a most heartless manner".

Militarism:-

"The Irish Times", chief organ of English propaganda in Ireland, commenting on this date on the murder of Lawrence Kennedy, says: - "It is clear that Lawrence Kennedy was shot by the military patrol. . . . Kennedy was almost certainly innocent of any design on anybody's life or property". The London "Daily Express" of this date commenting upon the same occurrence says: - "The whole business suggests an amateur soldiering and a lax discipline which we should not expect at the Viceregal Lodge. It has been lamentable in its effects". The London "Daily News" says:-

"The men (i.e. the soldiers) were frightened and not responsible for their actions. . . . It is the only defence

to the charges of brutality confirmed in disgusting detail by their own accounts.”

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31st, 1919.

Raids:-

Armed police raided the premises of Mr. Tim Cronin, Kenmore, Co. Kerry, for copies of the “Watchword of Labour”. Military engineers raided the offices of the Dublin Corporation and placed barbed wire outside the windows of the Town Clerk’s Office.

Arrests:-

Mr. Tim Cronin, Newsagent, Kenmore, Co. Kerry, was arrested and taken to the barracks by a force of armed police for having in his possession copies of “The Watchword of Labour”. Mr. John Wesley Burns mentioned below was arrested.

Sentence:-

Mr. John Wesley Burns, pharmaceutical chemist, 21 Kings Inn Street, Dublin, was sent to prison for one month by Mr. Lupton, English-paid police magistrate, for taking part in a demonstration by chemists’ assistants who are on Strike, against the attitude of their employers. Mr. Burns when asked to pay a fine of 40/- said – “I will not pay any fine or give any undertaking, I will do what I have been doing – calling attention to the wrong conditions under which we have been working”.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1st, 1920.

Sentences:-

Mr. John O’Reilly, 89 Chord Road, Drogheda, was sentenced by courtmartial, held on December 20th, to two months’ imprisonment for having ammunition in his possession. Patrick Molloy, Murragh, Rahan, was sentenced by district courtmartial held in Dublin on December 19th to four months’ imprisonment for having in his possession ammunition and a seditious document. Messrs. Owen Jackson, Ed Horgan, Peter Young and Wm. Barry were returned for trial at Cork, on a charge of obtaining possession of a rook rifle. They will be kept in prison until next March when the assizes at which they are to be tried will be held.

Armed Assaults:-

Armed police barricaded with ropes the public highway at Ballyconnell, Co. Cavan. All traffic was stopped and searched and passers-by questioned.

Ill-treatment of Prisoners:-

No letter has been received from Alderman Kelly, Member of the Irish Parliament for St. Stephen’s Green Division, Dublin, since he was deported and imprisoned, without trial, in Wormwood Scrubbs. A Christmas parcel sent by his sister was not delivered – neither was it returned. His relatives have been informed that no visit can be permitted for three months.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 2nd, 1920.

Armed police raided the Hotel at Birr, King’s County.

Arrests:-

John Riordan and Denis Herlihy were arrested at Millstreet, Co. Cork on a charge of unlawful assembly. Mr. J. Twohy of Sligo was arrested at Birr, King’s Co.,

and brought to Mountjoy Prison, Dublin. No charge has been preferred against him.

Sentences:-

Mr. Felix Connolly of Fincoil, (Fourcuil?, JL), Co. Cork, was sentenced by courtmartial held at Cork on Dec. 20th, 1919, to six months imprisonment with hard labour, for having in his possession two copies of the official organ of the Irish Volunteers.

Proclamations and Suppressions:-

At Youghal, Co. Cork, a proclamation was posted prohibiting all New Years Eve Celebrations. Extra police were drafted into the town to enforce the proclamation.

Militarism:-

The London “Evening Standard” declares that the 1st Battalion of the Coldstream Guards are to be sent from London to Dublin, to be followed speedily by other battalions of guards. Private Heaps was, at Castlebar, Co. Mayo, shot dead by Private Harpington, a Sentry. Harpington in his evidence at the Coroner’s enquiry stated that he believed when firing at Heaps that he (Heaps) was a civilian.

Armed Assault:-

At Blarney, Co. Cork, two policemen named Donoghoe and Moore, were, by English appointed Magistrates, unanimously convicted of assaulting a bar-keeper who refused to give them drink under the influence of which they already were. They were fined 20/- each. NOTE:- It will be remembered that on April 8th, 1919, four young men were courtmartialled on a charge of assaulting two constables by trying their hands and disarming them. Twenty reliable witnesses proved that none of the four men were near the scene of the occurrence when the tying was done. Yet these were sentenced to 3 years penal servitude and one to twelve months hard labour. Further, on December 13th, 1919, the following sentences were passed upon five young men who were charged with assaulting and disarming two constables:- One was sentenced to 3 years penal servitude, and the other four to terms of imprisonment with hard labour ranging from 11 months to 9 months.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3rd, 1920.

Raids:-

The offices of the New Ireland Assurance Society, 56 Lr. O’Connell Street, Dublin, were raided by a large armed force of military and police. Offices, documents, drawers and files were ransacked by Detectives and Police.

NOTE:- This Assurance Society was formed to develop Irish Insurance upon an Irish basis. The members of the Directorate of this Society have, since its formation, been the objects of deportation, arrest and savage sentences for political “offences”. The residence of Mr. B. O’Connor, Building Contractor, 1 Brendan Road, Donnybrook, Dublin, was raided by military and police. All apartments, out offices, garden, etc. were thoroughly examined. Seizures were made of election literature and canvassing books. Mr. O’Connor is one of the Sinn Fein

Candidates for the forthcoming Municipal Elections. Police raided Liberty Hall, the headquarters of the Irish Transport Workers' Union, and seized all copies of the current issue of "The Watchword of Labour". On the arrival at Cork of the American Steamer, "Lake Gretna", a force of police went aboard and seized all the ship's arms, consisting of 6 pistols belonging to the officers. Police searched the house of Mr. Thomas Butler, Turtulla, Thurles. Mr. Butler, who was not in at the time, was recently released in ill-health from Mountjoy Gaol.

Suppressions:-

The offices of Dail Eireann (Irish Republican Government) at 76 Harcourt Street, were entered by a Police Inspector accompanied by Constables, and the Caretaker was informed that the Police had been directed by the "competent military authority" to insist upon the closing of the premises. A Police Inspector accompanied by Constables entered the Sinn Fein Headquarters and informed the Caretaker's wife that the competent military authority had directed the police to insist upon the closing of the premises. The caretaker's wife who lives on the premises with her husband and three young children informed the Inspector that she had no other place for her family. The Inspector also called

at the office of the Sinn Fein Bank and read the closing notice to the Manager. The Sinn Fein Bank is a properly registered Company, carrying on business with the other Banks in the City, and has no power to close except by direction of the Share-holders. The Bank is directed on co-operative lines by a limited Company, with the object of developing Irish Industries, and has no connection with the political organisation known as Sinn Fein. Police have served a closing notice on the Young Republican Club of Sligo. The members had previously been ordered to remove a signboard with the inscription "I.R. 1916".

Sentences:-

Owen Hand, Shop Assistant, Kilcorney, Belturbet, was sentenced at Cavan to two months' imprisonment on a charge of having seditious documents in his possession.

Militarism:-

The Housing Committee of the Dublin Corporation, of which Ald. T. Kelly, M.P., now imprisoned without trial in Wormwood Scrubbs, is Chairman, applied for his attendance at an important meeting of the Committee, to sanction the building of 650 New Houses. The Chief Secretary intimated to the Lord Mayor that Alderman Kelly would not be permitted to attend this meeting.

The following are the Acts of Aggression committed In Ireland by the Military and Police of the Usurping English Government as reported in the Daily Press, for week ending JANUARY 10th, 1920

S u m m a r y.

Date:	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	Total.
Raids:-	25	4	155	3	52	31	270.
Arrests:-	-	-	6	6	1	1	14.
Sentences:-	-	2	1	4	-	-	7.
Deportations:-	-	-	4	-	-	-	4.
Armed Assaults:-	2	1	-	-	-	-	3.
<u>Daily Total:-</u>	27	7	166	13	53	32	298.

The sentences passed for political offences during the above six days totalled 2 years and 9 months.

MONDAY, JANUARY 5th, 1920.

Raids:-

Police, in Dublin City, entered some twenty-five Newsagents shops and confiscated part of the stock.

Armed Assaults:-

English troops in Phoenix Park, Dublin, seeing a regimental cook proceeding to his barracks at Island Bridge, mistook him for a civilian and fired upon him. The firing aroused the troops stationed in the Park and its neighbourhood and promiscuous firing continued for over an hour. An armoured car carrying searchlights patrolled the Park roads until dawn. At Maryborough, Queen's county, armed police attacked a motor-drivers Strike picket, who, in connection with the Strike against the Motor Permits Order, had held up a motor cycle. Several of the picket were injured, one so severely that he was detained in hospital. After the attack large bodies of armed police and troops in full

war-equipment, accompanied by armoured car, patrolled the streets of the town.

Militarism:-

The Rt. Hon. G. F. Masterman, ex-member of British Cabinet, in the course of an article in the London Daily News, writes:- "It is not conceivable that the present government of Ireland by the Sword can be permanent – if for no better reason because English taxpayers will not be willing to pay for it indefinitely". The same writer commenting upon the prevailing unrest in Ireland says it "is possible only as an answer to the tyranny which has evoked it".

TUESDAY, JANUARY 6th, 1920.

Raids:-

Several Motor Garages in Cork City were raided by police.

Sentences:-

Patrick Daly of Charleville Parade, Tullamore, King's Co., and Malachy Lynam of Chapel Street, Tullamore, were sentenced by District Courtmartial, held in Dublin, on 22nd December, 1919, each to six months hard labour on a charge of possessing a revolver without a permit from the English military.

Armed Assault:-

Dr. Keane, Medical Officer of Ennistymon, Co. Clare, was shot by police while proceeding in his motor car to visit a patient.

Militarism:-

Mr. George Bernard Shaw, commenting on the attempted assassination of Lord French, in an article in the "Irish Statesman" says: - "When such incidents used to occur in Russia. . . . the English papers notably the "Times" used simply to ask Tsardom what it expected if it suppressed every popular liberty".

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7th, 1920.

Raids:-

Large bodies of fully armed military and police raided upwards of a hundred houses in Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork, and the neighbouring districts. At Inchigeela in the same County, some fifty private houses were similarly raided. Armed police raided the Forrester's Hall, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, and searched it. Military and police raided, at one o'clock in the morning, four private houses at Dundalk, Co. Louth. The Licensed premises of Mr. Peter Kelly, at Ashtown Co. Dublin, was raided by Military and police.

Arrests:-

Messrs. Garland, Clair, Flood and Kenny, four members of the Irish Automobile Drivers and Mechanics Union were arrested at Dundalk, Co. Louth, on a charge of unlawful assembly. The Union to which these men belong is on Strike against the Motor Permits Order, by which Chauffeurs may not drive a motor car without a permit from the English Military. The four men were subsequently put on trial when it was proved that they had been arrested on a false charge. They were released. Mr. Bartle. Kelly, of Ashtown, Co. Dublin, was arrested on an unknown charge. Mr. James J. Hoey of Bray, Co. Wicklow, a Sinn Fein Candidate in the forthcoming Municipal Elections, was arrested on his way to business on a charge which has not been disclosed.

Sentence:-

Mr. Cornelius O'Mahoney, of Ahiohill, Co. Cork, was sentenced by Courtmartial held at Cork, on December 24th, to six months' imprisonment for having in his possession a copy of the official organ of the Irish Volunteers.

Deportations:-

Four men whose names have not been published were deported to England, on the Mail Boat which left Kingstown on the night of January 6th.

Treatment of Prisoners:-

The forty political prisoners in Cork Jail have gone on hunger strike as a protest against their treatment in that prison.

In the first letter which Ald. T. Kelly, M.P., has been permitted to send out from Wormwood Scrubbs since his deportation, without trial, on December 12th, he states that he received a letter, posted on December 23rd, on January 1st., that he was not allowed to read letters from his relatives, the Governor of the prison reading but parts of such letters to him. No food that was sent to the prison for him had been given to him.

Militarism:-

The Manchester Guardian special correspondent in Dublin writes:- "There are almost as many soldiers to be seen any night in Dublin as in a British base like Calais at the height of the war".

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8th, 1920.

Raids:-

Military and police raided the Headquarters of the National Government of Ireland, 76 Harcourt Street, Dublin. The staff was ejected and military engineers proceeded to board up all doors and windows. The damage done in the process amounted to a large sum. Similar operations were carried out at 6 Harcourt Street, the Headquarters of Sinn Fein organisation. These latter premises are the property of the Sinn Fein Bank, a properly registered Limited Company. The offices of the Bank were also boarded up. Such closing of a Bank is illegal, even under English law. For the second time within a week the Dublin Offices of the New Ireland Assurance Company were raided by military and police. Recent events make it clear that these raids are the result of a definite policy of Industrial suppression. On Friday, January 2nd, this Assurance Company's premises were raided by large bodies of troops and police. On Monday, January 5th, Mr. J. Hoey, Superintendent of the Company, was arrested at Bray and deported without trial. Warrants are known to have been recently issued for other prominent officials of the Company who have consequently to remain in hiding. During the year 1919 several of the Directors of the Company have been arrested and sentenced on trumped up political charges, or deported without trial while agents of the Company all over Ireland have been arrested and imprisoned for various form of "sedition". The explanation of this unrelenting effort to break what is purely a business venture is found in the fact that the New Ireland Assurance Company has succeeded since its establishment in taking over business which in the ordinary course would have fallen to English firms in Ireland. It is known that Agents of these firms have used their influence with the English Government officials in Ireland to secure the suppression of this Irish rival.

Arrests-

At Midleton, Co. Cork, five young men named Maurice Horgan, John Aherne, Joseph Aherne, C. White, and Michael Hallinan, were arrested at their work on a charge of being concerned with a raid on Carrigtwohill Police Barracks. They were subsequently proved to have had nothing to do with it and having been held in custody for some time were released. At Kilmurray, Co.

Cork, Mr. F. Begley was arrested by soldiers and police and taken under escort to Cork on an unknown charge.

Sentences:-

At Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, Messrs. Thos. Cuddihy, Patrick Drew and Harry Burke, were each sentenced to two months' imprisonment for unlawful assembly. Mr. John Foley, for unlawful assembly at the same place and occasion, was sentenced to three months with hard labour. The police evidence was that they came upon a group of twenty young men whom they dispersed. When the men had gone an empty tin was found on the ground. The evidence produced laughter in the court.

Armed Assault:-

Dr. Keane of Ennistymon, Co. Clare, who was shot by police at Ballyvaughan in that County stated in an interview that the police did not challenge him before they fired; that they kept up a rapid fire upon his car for over twenty minutes, during which time the Chauffeur and himself lay on the floor of the car for cover; that the police knew the motor car in which he was driving was a doctor's car; that when they had broken his arm they expressed no regret and tried to force him in his collapsed condition to attend one of their own men who was much less severely hurt. The police poured their fusillade into Dr. Keane's car from behind a wall.

Treatment of Prisoners:-

Mr. John Wesley Burns previously mentioned in these lists went on hunger-strike last Sunday as a protest against his treatment. He has been removed to the prison hospital in a dangerous condition.

Militarism:-

Captain Wedgewood Benn, English Member of Parliament who recently visited Ireland, writes to the Edinburgh "Evening News":- "The fact is Castle Government in Ireland is infamous. Men are spirited away without cause or trial, children arrested for selling flags or whistling derisively at the police; fairs or markets on which the whole agricultural population depend for their livelihood are stupidly suppressed without cause. This fatuous reign of ineffective coercion brings in its inevitable train crime and outrage and the criminals appear to be about the only persons who escape Mr. MacPherson's clutches". "The whole world is staring at our Prussian experiment of Dublin Castle, and wondering how much longer it will be before we practice what we preach about small nations" Manchester Guardian.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9th, 1920.

Raids:-

Armed police raided the private houses of over fifty farmers at Togher, Co. Galway. In not one of the houses thus forcibly entered was anything incriminating found. At Baltinglass, Co. Wicklow, armed military and police raided the two local Motor Garages and dismantled all the motor cars found there.

Arrests:-

Armed detectives accosted Mr. P. J. Ward, Member of the Irish Parliament for South Donegal, at the Great Northern Terminus, Derry, as he was about to enter the

train. Having taken him into custody they searched his pockets and subsequently released him without any explanation.

Deportations:-

It is learned that Mr. J. J. Hoey, Superintendent of the New Ireland Assurance Society has been deported to Wormwood Scrubbs Prison, England, without any trial. Mr. Hoey has not been informed of the charge upon which he was arrested. He and Mr. Bartle. Kelly were among the four men whose deportation is mentioned under January 7th of this list.

Treatment of Prisoners:-

In Cork Jail the prisoners who are on hunger strike as a protest against their treatment are rapidly failing in health. Three of the prisoners have been removed to hospital. Two of those removed to hospital are Peter Young a boy not yet sixteen years of age, and Ed. Horgan aged seventeen, both of whom have been imprisoned for several months without having been convicted of any offence.

Militarism:-

The London Daily Herald's special Correspondent in Ireland writing on January 8th said in a comment upon the dismissal of the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary: "There is no room in the Castle (Dublin Castle) to-day for men who would not be wholeheartedly in accord with any policy of violence which the Punjab Party is contemplating".

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10th, 1920.

Raids:-

At Tuam, Co. Galway, and in the neighbouring districts, armed police raided upwards of a score of houses. Armed police raided the residence at Lower Road, Cork, of Mr. T. Dinan, district Manager of the New Ireland Assurances Society. Every room was searched but nothing incriminating was found. In Shandon district of Cork City, armed police raided five houses. The residence of Mr. Peter Kenny, Irish teacher was raided at Lissinagroagh, Co. Leitrim. The residence at Cork of Mr. L. Ivers, was raided and searched by armed police. Armed police raided three garages in Dublin City and dismantled all the motor cars found on the premises.

Arrest:-

At Belturbet, Co. Cavan, Mr. Hugh McMahon of Barrack Hill, was arrested and brought under armed guard to Belfast prison. No charge was made against him.

Militarism:-

"How can we talk of self-determination for small nations when we think of the scandal and tragedy of Military oppression in Ireland". - Sir John Simon, Ex-Member of the English Cabinet, speaking at Manchester on January 9th. The Daily Mail commenting upon the dismissal of the Inspector General, R.I.C. says:- "Under the new command there is a possibility that the R.I.C. which is at present a semi-military force will be supplemented by drafts of regular troops, throughout the entire country, the whole force being under military control".

The O'Connor Column

Sweeney Astray: Social Democracy And Historical Fictions

Europe, Paul Sweeney — formerly of Sinn Féin the Workers' Party and then the Labour Party, and a long time SIPTU and later ICTU economist—sought to account for the historic achievements of European social democracy, its spectacular recent demise and the challenges to it from “conservatism” and latterly right-wing populism (*The Collapse of European Social Democracy*, Oct. 2018). In another two-part piece he applied the same social democracy/conservative paradigm he saw in Europe to account for Ireland's historic economic take-off from 1987, its collapse in 2008 and subsequent revival (*Ireland's route from boom to bubble to bust*, and *Ireland's recovery: from bust to buoyancy*, ‘Social Europe’, Oct. 2019). It doesn't work.

Sweeney presents post-war Europe as shaped by the political dichotomy of “social democracy” vs. “conservatism”, with the former the driving force: “*Social Democracy (SD) has been the most powerful political force in Europe since the Second World War. It turned the nation state into the welfare state. Its politics built the welfare state and healthcare systems in West European countries. Along with conservatism it was one of the twin pillars of European democracy.*”

Is this really credible? If by “social democracy (SD)” and “conservatism” he means general tendencies, he has a workable hypothesis, but if—as seems to be the case—he means by them the actual social democratic/labour and Christian/conservative parties, then he certainly has not. The force that propelled post-war European development was socialised capitalism as a workable alternative to Soviet-style planned economies, and essential to hold the Soviet—i.e. the internal communist—“threat” at bay. Social forces applied general pressure on the capitalist recovery of a post-war Europe under American capitalist hegemony on the principle of “*après nous la deluge*”—accommodate us or you get Bolshevism. During the halcyon days of the “*Keynesian consensus*” (1945-78), the major leftist pressure in two of Europe's largest states—France and Italy—were not social democratic at all, but Communist Parties, which, predictably, evaporated

when the Soviet Union itself disappeared in 1991. But even aside from the pressure of the Soviet threat—which the framers of the Marshall Plan very specifically identified as what needed countering—“social democracy” was very far from being “*the most powerful political force in Europe*”, turning its “*nation states into welfare states*”. It was Christian Democrats (Sweeney's “conservatives”), sometimes acting with Social Democrats, who largely built the welfare states and collective bargaining systems of the post-war Social Europe, notably in France, Italy and Germany.

The term “conservatism” is only marginally useful. Christian Democrats were not “conservatives” in the anti-social sense implied by Sweeney, as they largely created the new “*social market economies*”—the essence of the “Social Europe” idea—on the basis of principles of “*Christian solidarity*”, specifically as the viable alternative to the wreckage of actual European conservatism, which had disgraced itself through collusion with fascism. This politically functional philosophy was built by integrating Catholic community and social values with capitalist industrial modernisation, producing welfare states and social partnership. This social capitalism was initially opposed by many social democrats as a mere thinly veiled capitalist “restoration”, but it subsequently became, and remains, the programme of modern “social democracy”, as indeed it does of the “conservative” Christian Democrats. Hence the current stalemate, as all they seem to differ on is points of style and emphasis.

Europe's social democratic parties, in evolving towards Christian democratic “social capitalism”, buckled when after the Soviet collapse a deregulated capitalism became the global mode, weakening the European welfare/collective bargaining systems. Social democratic parties—in Britain, Germany and elsewhere—were as involved in this dismantling every bit as much as they had once been involved in their construction. As Sweeney—who essentially accepts this, despite his illusions about the historic role of “social democracy”—puts it,

“The SD leadership was heavily influenced by the dominant ideas of the milieu in which it operated ... All politicians including SDs bowed to the concept of democratic delegation whereby sovereign governments hand power over vital parts of the economy to unelected technocrats in institutions like the ECB and the EU Commission with its Fiscal Compact”.

He pleads for a social democratic revival based on a return “*to its roots around the strong state over the market*”. This would “*oversee trade, regulate financial flows and overall finance, protect the vulnerable*” and “*harness the power of the state for all citizens to address the excesses of the market*”, also ensuring “*world class public services*” and “*individual liberty*”. But surely there are few mainstream centrist parties in Europe that do not stand for some version of all of that. On the one that has decided to take it further towards what Sweeney proposes—Corbyn's Labour Party—he remains conspicuously silent. ‘Social Europe’, which I believe is closely allied to mainstream European social democracy, has been no friend of Corbynism.

But it is in applying his social democratic/conservative paradigm to Ireland that the weakness of Sweeney's thesis really exposes itself.

He describes the “*remarkable ascent from a poor EU country to one of the richest, with employment and living standards for workers doubling in just two decades*” that occurred in Ireland from 1987. All was well with the new growth paradigm “*based on sound economic policies*” until 1997 when it began to swerve off-course by adapting to “*procyclical neoliberalism*”. Despite this error, he concedes that “*the Irish crash was not on the main-street economy but in finance, banking, construction and property*”. This is very true, and is a point continually made during the actual crisis by this journal, against the then dominant catastrophist “Left” narrative peddled by the *Irish Times* and others.

Sweeney argues, correctly, that the Irish economic take-off was only marginally due to low Corporation Tax or EU transfers—though both “*helped*”—with many other

policy factors more important. The “*biggest factor boosting Ireland’s economy to exceptionally high growth and employment was its immediate, open access to the 500 million consumers and millions of firms in the EU’s single market after 1992*”, well exploited by a “*positive attitude to globalisation and a highly interventionist state promotion agency, IDA Ireland*”.

The basis for the take off was laid first by “*curbing the rampant inflation of the late 1970s and 80s*” and then adopting a range of extraordinarily innovative growth strategies. This occurred at least partly through Social Partnership, which mobilised all kinds of productive factors, far-sighted “*investment in education, political stability, good regulation, good services such as banking and insurance, and favourable taxes*”. These “*helped to create a virtuous circle, which generated the key Tiger phase of economic progress.*”

But who did all this? The “*social democrats*”? He doesn’t tell us. His only actual reference to political forces is a denunciation of “*Fianna Fáil (FF), a traditional conservative governing party*”, which, in alliance with “*a small neoliberal outrider, the Progressive Democrats (PDs)*”, inaugurated the deplorable “*neoliberal third phase in 1997*”, which led to the crash. On the other hand, the saintly “*outgoing ‘rainbow’ coalition, ... dominated by the other main conservative party, Fine Gael*” had been “*constrained by its social-democratic partners, Labour and Democratic Left ... Had the prudent economic policies of the first two Tiger phases, 1987-2000, been sustained over the third phase by the government elected in 1997, Ireland probably would have had a soft landing amid the global financial crisis.*”

This parable will not do. We can leave aside this month the account of the post-1997 period. What about the actual growth period, which Sweeney fairly accurately describes in terms of its achievements? He ascribes this to a welfare-state expanding, mixed economy model, “*sound economic policies*” and astute policies exploiting the globalist opportunities of mobile capital and the single market (“*after 1992*”) through a “*positive attitude to globalisation and a highly interventionist state promotion agency*”.

This is all true. But where did it come from? Even his “1992” is a sleight of hand. The fact is that each one of those policies was introduced in a spectacular series of initiatives by the Haughey Government in just a few months in 1987 and stubbornly pursued over the following five years.

Every aspect of the subsequent “*Celtic Tiger*”, down to the details of EU funding programmes, the IDA strategy, the IFSC gamble, the education breakthroughs, the globalisation of companies such as Kerry, the urban regeneration schemes, the attraction of Intel and others, the new industrial relations, equality and social policies—each and every one was inaugurated by that Government, and specifically by Haughey, often having to cajole and browbeat reluctant Ministers. Fianna Fail under Haughey was maybe a very European Christian/Social democratic party after all?

Reluctant ministers were not Haughey’s only problem. Chief among his opponents were Sweeney’s self-describing “*social democrats*”. Labour had adopted a view since the early 1980s that economic policy didn’t really matter. What mattered was ridding Ireland of the “*cancer*” of Haughey and Fianna Fáil (thus Labour Leader Dick Spring in the Dáil in 1990, almost identically parroting Cluskey’s similar comments of a decade previously). When the first Partnership Agreement was facing ratification by ICTU member Unions in late 1987, Spring, Barry Desmond and other Labour leaders and TDs joined in the Fine Gael/PD chorus urging them to reject it, which they very nearly did. (The *Irish Times* commented that it was probably saved “*by a few thousand ITGWU votes*”). Bill Attley, a leading Union figure, was howled down at the 1987 Labour Party Conference for his “*betrayal*” in entering a Social Partnership with the Haughey Government. When the Agreement came up for review in January 1990, Labour and the Workers’ Party (then hurriedly transitioning to its post-Soviet “DL” guise) again urged Trade Unionists to vote down “*this so-called programme for national recovery*”. It was a pathetic display. Needless to say, the obvious success of the Partnership system led these self-declared social democrats to rapidly change their tune by 1991.

It might be added that Sweeney’s “*post-1992*” bit is presumably meant to nudge the reader’s conception of the Irish revival towards the period when his social democrats secured a rather minor role in government. In fact the key moment of the Irish recovery had already occurred in 1987, not only in the multiple policy decisions of Haughey’s Government that year referred to already, but also in consciously deciding to pre-empt the Single Market by fast-tracking capital liberalisation and moving the IDA from its focus on indigenous manufacture specifically

to target high-value FDI sectors, luring these to Ireland precisely as a “*forward base*” from which to exploit the coming Single Market (a future Column will trace this in detail). But nowhere in Sweeney’s account is this referred to or Haughey even mentioned.

It should be said that the first Partnership Agreement of 1987-90, the *Programme for National Recovery* (PNR), was followed by a further one, the *Programme for Economic and Social Progress* (PESP) 1991-94. The latter fine-tuned the PNR and added a comprehensive programme of welfare-state building. But it was framed as a ten-year project, with subordinate agreements to be concluded each third year under it. The template for the entire 1990s decade was thus set in that final Haughey agreement, with subsequent Governments simply tweaking, bending or distorting the model.

Sweeney’s Haughey-denial and Partnership-denial is not unique. Irish commentators are unable to write Irish history from the 1970s, as they suffer from what we might call a “*Clementis’s hat*” syndrome in relation to Haughey. Milan Kundera’s famous story—the only one this writer ever learned anything of any use from—concerned the airbrushing of a purged Czech Communist leader, Clementis, from a photograph, in which his hat survived in the picture, as he had given it to his colleague – and later purger, Clement Gottwald, to protect him from the wintery cold. The cynical Czech writer powerfully employed this image to illustrate the essential lie at the heart of much of post-war Eastern Europe’s communist history-spinning.

Applying this to the Irish case, we can represent the powerful economic transformation inaugurated by Haughey as his hat, a stubborn fact that won’t go away from the historic picture from which he himself has been comprehensively airbrushed, or purged, by ideologists like Sweeney. This airbrushing had already started in the 1990s, when a volume by leading economists on the transformation, edited by Frank Barry, could describe the many radical policy changes made without once mentioning Haughey and only briefly and obtusely mentioning Social Partnership. Sweeney’s own books on public enterprise and privatisation similarly make no reference (other than a very few pejorative ones) to Haughey at all.

But Haughey in fact had even been central to this pet topic of Sweeney’s. He halted the privatising zeal of other Ministers and top civil servants in 1988,

greatly expanded the venture capital and subsidiary enterprises of the State Companies, and established several new ones, notably Coillte, FÁS and Teagasc. Coillte drove a substantial revival of Irish forestry and timber processing. In 1990 Haughey concluded a far-reaching “deal” with the Unions—essentially through his ally, SIPTU’s John Carroll—which took privatisation off the agenda for a decade and committed to the very expansion of State industries which Sweeney lauds in his books without referring to any role of Haughey in it. The slippery road to the privatisations of the post-1997 period only began with some decisions made by the Bruton-led “Rainbow Coalition” of 1994-97.

Sweeney’s Haughey-denialism leads him to resort to that hairy old chestnut of ascribing everything good that happened in the economic take-off to the brilliance of a single, small State agency, the IDA. The absurdity of this would be laughable were it not such a widespread fallacy among the Gottwald milliners, who dominate history-writing in new Establishment publications such as the *Dublin Review of Books*. Throughout the 1980s the Chief Executive of the IDA was Pádraic White, who was a central figure in Haughey’s small radical planning group that in 1982 produced *The Way Forward*, the template for the recovery he implemented with ruthless determination from 1987, in alliance with the major social interests in Social Partnership (and against the relentless opposition of Sweeney’s “social democrats”).

White again played a central role in the planning circle at the heart of the 1987 Government which Pádraig — hUiginn orchestrated from the Department of the Taoiseach in close liaison with Haughey. This group drove all policy making, initiating the many radical departures of the period in close association with the business and Union leaders forming the inner leadership of Social partnership, the Central Review Committee, a grouping relentlessly vilified in the Dáil by de Rossa, Spring and Quinn.

To make any sense of what happened in Ireland from the 1970s onwards needs an end to Haughey-denialism, and to the laughable reduction of him to what a friend of this Column called “*the pantomime villain of modern Ireland*”. Clementis must be restored to his hat!

This will also require an abandoning of the simplistic fable of “social democrats” driving progress and mean “conservatives” holding it up. That is a narrative worthy of a nursery fairytale. Party con-

flict in 1970s Ireland can be seen as one between rival forms of social democracy: Fianna Fáil which advocated a corporatist state-business-labour base to drive policy; Fine Gael with its “liberal crusade” but near Thatcherite economic policy orthodoxy; and Labour with its welfare statism but profound hostility to corporatism. The outstanding social democrat was in fact Haughey, who combined a dynamic growth strategy through globalised capitalism with a mixed economy and expansion of an enabling welfare state that diverged from Labour’s British ‘dependency’ model. In this he found reliable allies among the most dynamic sections of the industrial class and the nationalist section of the Trade Unions.

Poland’s ghoulish horror show

The Column recently had cause to visit Poland. It is a country the Column knows better than most Irish people would, and on which it looks with favour, though often with a tinge of despair at the antics of its ruling elites.

The recent visit took the Column to Gdansk, known for centuries as Danzig. Its historic core, though smashed to smithereens at the end of the war, was carefully rebuilt in the communist era, with much of its beautiful renaissance and Prussian architecture restored. There is nevertheless an eerie feeling walking about this town, which is unsurprising given how the population that inhabits its physical buildings today has little or no connection at all with the population that actually built them over centuries, lived in them until 1945 and disappeared in the great ethnic re-ordering that followed. This is a history told locally only through rather far-fetched euphemisms.

It was with some trepidation therefore that the Column betook itself to the big and flashy “*Second World War Museum*”, which, with massive EU “remembrance” funding, had been opened in 2008 with much fanfare on the eve of the 70th anniversary of the 1939 war. Given the revived anti-Russia Cold War and the virulent posturing of East European states in the EU in relation to it, the Column was expecting some tall tales and mythologising, but was not quite prepared for the ghoulish horror show which confronted it.

The exhibitions at the museum are very stylishly “created” with state-of-the-art interactive and virtual technologies. You could even, rather ludicrously, put on a Virtual Reality mask to ‘experience’ the middle of a battle, with much noise, and im-

ages of things exploding and other people dying (the experience doesn’t extend to being actually shot through the leg or having your stomach ripped open by shrapnel). It is computer-game consumer violence. But throughout the exhibition there was only one real theme: that the totalitarian Nazi and Soviet dictatorships jointly conspired to engineer the conflagration. They allied in 1939 in the “*Hitler-Stalin Pact*”, specifically to destroy Poland and impose their “totalitarian” “terror dictatorships” on the continent.

The exhibition deals little with the actual military events of the war, focusing largely instead on brutalities and crimes of extermination. The Column was surprised to see the exhibition at least acknowledge the ghastly fate of millions of Soviet soldiers taken prisoner by the Germans in 1941-42. But the emphasis, approved by the prominent EU stamp of approval on the museum, is Poland’s critical role as the victim of the joint “totalitarian” aggressors. A recent side exhibition was titled “*Poland: the First to Fight*”.

When you enter the exhibition you are immediately hustled into a smallish but high-ceilinged room where you stand in a group of about thirty before a massive screen—about 15m long and 6m high. This has a short two-minute no-commentary film running on a loop, composed of iconic war clips. But the ones repeated are, firstly, in massive close-up, that of a British Army bulldozer shoving distorted human corpses into a mass grave at Belsen at the end of the war and, secondly, the exhumation of Polish officers shot by the NKVD at Khatyn, with close-ups of their shattered skulls and scattered personal effects. Emerging shell-shocked from this ghoulish introduction, the visitor then wanders down alley after alley of movie, poster, memorabilia and photographic displays, mostly of atrocities of one kind or the other. Film of *Einsatzgruppen* killing Jews in Russia are shown on screens alongside stark film of Soviet NKVD personnel executing “class enemies” through shots to the head. The message is it was all the same. The key event instigating the war is presented as the Soviet-German Non-Aggression pact of August 1939, from which everything else flowed. To enter the room on the first years of the war, the visitor must walk through a narrow hallway, at least 5m high, with giant Nazi flags on one side and Soviet ones on the other, from floor to ceiling.

The exhibition makes no mention of the German-Polish alliance of the 1930s, which was part of the wider British support for the re-armament of Germany and its

anti-Soviet expansion policy. No mention either of the sudden change in Polish policy in 1939 to rejecting a compromise over the small German city of Danzig, or of the “British guarantee” to Poland to come to its aid if Poland were attacked by Germany (never fulfilled): a fake ‘guarantee’ that prompted Poland to abandon compromise on Danzig in the first place. The Spanish civil war is presented not as a fascist putsch against a Republic, whose defence the Soviet Union assisted, but as a trial run between the competing “dictators”. No mention of Poland’s fulsome support for Franco or of Soviet attempts to achieve a joint strategy with Poland and the West—which the latter rejected—to ring-fence and contain Hitler’s Germany. No mention either that it was the USSR which saved far more Jews from the Nazis than anyone else—moving 2m of them eastwards just ahead of Hitler’s invading forces in 1941-42.

And no mention either of just what Poland was at the time. It is implied that it was some kind of peaceable liberal-democratic haven, facing the terrible dictators. But up to 1939 it was a military dictatorship, engaged in talks with Germany on a joint aggression against Soviet Russia, with its own aim of a “re-capture” of wide areas of Ukraine. It was also a deeply anti-Semitic regime, driving out its Jews. Indeed the Polish foreign minister told Hitler privately in 1938 that if he succeeded in “*solving the Jewish question*” in Germany by forced emigration, Poland would erect a statue in Warsaw in his honour and follow suit.

This topic of Polish historic duplicity is one to which the Column will return.

Pat Cox

continued

Being in a “*permanent in-between-ness*” is hardly a sustainable position. It’s a bit like being in Limbo—and even that did not last, despite lasting for a long time. The inhabitants had to move on some years ago, in 1992, to be exact. (By the way, I wonder where they were all relocated to?)

How did the EU get to this position? What direction should it go from its ‘*in-between-ness*’? He surely does not see this as a satisfactory long-term situation? But Pat is too coy to deal with any such issues in any definite way. He takes the typically Irish, Panglossian view that whatever ‘*Europe*’ does is OK. He will thrive in it no matter what – that is one

certain permanency.

Murray goes on to remind us that: -

“In Europe, Cox was elected leader of the liberal/centrist grouping of parties, becoming the first Irish person to do so. In 2002, he succeeded Nicole Fontaine as president of the European Parliament, and upon assuming office, set out three goals for his presidency. He pledged to facilitate the enlargement of the EU, to raise the public profile of the parliament, and to reform the controversial system of excessive MEP expenses. He succeeded in the first two.”

Some feedback from Cox on how all of his goals have worked out would have been useful but none were forthcoming. The most ambitious enlargement project that he was very much a special part of was *the Ukraine* – but it is not mentioned. Pat is not one to hide his light under a bushel and the silence is therefore hardly an indication of success. And for a very obvious reason – the EU’s approach, in which he was a leading light, incited a civil war in that area. So silence is golden.

His achievement—euphemistically described as ‘*to raise the public profile of the parliament*’—was quite specifically aimed at reducing the authority of the central EU institution, the heart of the EU project, *the Commission*. That was achieved with spectacular success.

The European Parliament is a unique Parliament in being responsible to nobody but itself.

And ‘*its public profile*’ has continued to rise to the extent that the Commission is now beholden to its whims. But a weakening of the Commission is a weakening of the EU project and as politics, like nature, abhors a vacuum, that leads inevitably to an increase in the power of the Member States, i.e., the inter-Governmental ruling arrangement that the project is becoming.

But this in-between situation cannot be permanent as Cox seems to assure us. Political imperatives and demands will ensure that. And the inter-Governmental agenda-setting will more and more become the norm. It will be the central focus for dealing with the demands of setting the future direction of the association. And, the more of an inter-Governmental arrangement it becomes, the more unlike any kind of European Union in any real sense it will be: despite all the fanfare to the contrary.

There is no point in crying over spilt

milk but it is as well not to engage in euphemisms and the very pointed silences à la Pat Cox about how this has come about and its consequences. And Pat deserves full credit for his achievements in that regard.

A POST BREXIT VISION

Diplomats must have a way with words as sometimes they must try to convince us that black is white. A former German ambassador to Ireland, Eckhard Lübke, had an opinion piece in the Irish Times “*How to make Europe stronger post-Brexit. Deeper integration and shared sovereignty are needed to meet future challenges*” (5/12/2019).

He made some valid points:

“Brexit is a misnomer. It should be labelled Engxit for England’s exit from the European Union. Engxit will confirm many English people never warmed to their membership of what they regard as a “continental” club... Thus, if Brexit happens, English nationalism will have won the day. Yet Brexit will also represent a triumph of European unity in the face of such nationalism and of solidarity with an Irish neighbour. Converting this triumph into lasting success will be the key post-Brexit challenge.”

He then outlines the integrative measures—with regard to the Euro, budgets etc.—that should be taken by the EU to face various developments in the world and these will be done because “*If united Europe did not exist, we would have to create it to seize the opportunities and contain the risks inherent in these developments.*”

This is a curious way to ensure the success of such a unique and difficult task as uniting 27 countries, which include some of the oldest and most prominent states of the world. In itself, it is no more than wishful thinking that such a thing should happen. Europe as such is a ‘*geographical expression*’ as was once said of Italy, with plans to be otherwise. A currency and proper budgeting are necessary but not in themselves a guarantee that Europe will be integrated.

Pat Cox is right in describing it as being in “*an in-between*” state at the moment. The EU has maintained a united front on Brexit despite every British effort to cause divisions. That was admirable but it was Macron who achieved that when he faced down Orban, in particular, when there was a threat to break ranks at a Council meeting last

year (See the Guardian report “*Macron puts the boot in after May's Brexit breakfast blunder*”, 20.9.2018). On the other hand, Merkel showed all the signs of being willing to break ranks over Brexit: and if Macron had not been President of France that was very likely to have happened. Merkel lives in a Churchillian time warp. Macron as a French President knows that “*Albion perfide*” is a reality and recognises it when he sees it.

Macron, as President of France has plans for Europe. For example, he has stopped further enlargement and sees NATO as brain-dead and is making others wake up to this. The only response from the others so far has been to utter equally brain-dead mantras. He has plans for Europe but Europe has no plans for him only misguided reactions.

The point is that it is individual member states and their interactions that are more and more determining the nature of the EU. Any other view treats the EU and Europe as abstractions. This is what Eckhard Lübke does – Europe is simply ‘*created*.’ His grasp of reality is shown by his conclusion. After all his plans for creating an integrated EU are successful, his vision encompasses a grand climax! “*There is a demanding agenda beyond Brexit. To borrow a phrase from a cunning Brexiteer: it is high time we, the EU 27, get it done. Only then will the triumph be a lasting one and a British re-entry a promising prospect*”.

So all the efforts to make EU work properly is make it a place fit for Britain to be part of! The purpose of the EU is to facilitate a State that wants nothing to do with it! It’s probably nice to live in a cloud cuckoo land of abstractions which is where the EU would be if it had notions like this diplomat for its future.

Jack Lane

Look Up the

Athol Books

archive on the Internet

www.atholbooks.org

Britain Decides

continued

obstructionist tactics of the Remainers. Its other topics will be: Blaming Corbyn, Two Irish Commentators, and the Causes of Brexit.

THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The incoherence manifested by the Remain-supporting parties at Westminster became amplified during the 6-week campaign. Tactically their best bet was to minimise division between the parties and agree voting arrangements constituency by constituency so that the Remain vote did not end up being split. Early in the campaign efforts to establish a central website that could advise people about the best tactical voting options failed. Then hopes were expressed that voters would work out their own options without central co-ordination. But these were dashed as it became clear that many Remainers had swallowed the anti-Corbyn propaganda; a statement by the Chief Rabbi about Labour under Corbyn being anti-semitic became a major talking point.

A sensible answer to the anti-semitic smear being used against Corbyn came from a very unlikely source in the middle of the campaign. John Taylor, now Lord Kilclooney, of the Official Unionist Party tweeted:

“I am no supporter of Jeremy Corbyn but I wonder are some being dishonest in their allegations of anti-Semitism! He is opposed to Israeli policy against Palestinians, as are many Jews in Israel, but being anti Israel is not anti Jewish!” (@KilclooneyJohn 5 December)

In making that statement Taylor overthrew the natural reflexes of a lifetime in order to best serve a community (the Ulster unionists) that had been left in the lurch by Johnson. Mainstream Remainers, by comparison, seemed incapable of viewing their interests with detachment; they allowed their anti-Corbyn feelings get in the way of their anti-Brexit feelings. That the Conservatives gained 47 seats with just a 1.2 per cent increase in their share of the vote underlines how poorly tactical voting worked on the Remain side, notwithstanding the effect of the *first past the post* system.

Johnson faced a firestorm of media hostility throughout the campaign which did him no harm at all. The key Tory strategy was to fight the election on Brexit and

target Labour-held Leave-voting seats in the Midlands and North of England. In the event this worked better than expected, in that safe Labour seats in Wales also fell to the Tories, indicating that the force behind Brexit was more than English nationalism. Realistically, an Election called in the middle of Winter as a result of Parliament’s refusal to facilitate the passage of the latest Withdrawal Bill after months of Brexit deadlock could not have been other than a Brexit Election.

WHAT THE RESULTS SHOW

The results show that the Tory strategy of targeting traditional Labour constituencies with Leave majorities paid off: 24 safe Labour seats fell to the Conservatives, all of which saw double-digit swings from Labour to the Tories. The Conservative majorities in three of these constituencies are now greater than 20 percentage points: Dudley North (31.3 per cent), Bassetlaw (27.6 per cent) and Great Grimsby (22.2 per cent).

Another clear message from the British electorate was the deep unpopularity of Tory and Labour rebels who had sought to thwart Brexit. Dominic Grieve, frequently referred to very respectfully during Brexit debates as the ‘*Right Honourable Member for Beaconsfield*’, enjoyed a high profile and was considered the legal brains behind many Remainer Amendments.

Grieve is a pillar of the Establishment— President of the Franco-British Society, a former member of the London Diocesan Synod of the Church of England, and awarded the Legion d’Honneur by the French Government in 2016. He is also a Senior Council barrister and a former Conservative Attorney General. Given his obvious abilities and achievements, together with his high profile in the Brexit debates, and given the favourable coverage given to him by the liberal media, he might have been expected to retain his seat as an Independent. But Beaconsfield was not impressed with its Right Honourable Member. In the Election Grieve lost to a new Conservative candidate, Joy Morissey, described in the *Irish Times* as “*an American immigrant and former actor who starred in a low-budget comedy described by a UK tabloid as a ‘bonk fest’, a mix between American Pie and a Carry On film*”. Confronted about her past, Morissey laughed it off. She received 32,477 votes as against 15,765 for Grieve.

The two other rebel MPs who lost the Tory Whip in September and stood as Independents, former Minister David

Gaulke and Anne Milton, also failed to hold their seats. Former Labour MPs, Chuka Umunna, Luciana Berger, and Angela Smith, and former Tory MPs Sarah Wollaston, Sam Gyimah, Philip Lee and Antoinette Sandbach, all of whom stood for the Lib Dems, all failed to get elected. What these defeated candidates had in common was strong support from the pro-Remain, liberal media. It seems that, in this instance, being supported by the Guardian/ObsERVER/London Times/Independent/Financial Times was the kiss of death. The British electorate clearly saw the above mentioned former MPs—and indirectly the anti-Brexit media—as responsible for paralyzing the political system in attempting to thwart the expressed will of the people.

Writing days before the Election, *Financial Times* Editorial Director Robert Shrimmsley urged voters to support the above mentioned group of what he termed ‘moderate’ MPs whom he saw as defying a move to the extremes of Right and Left in British politics. He also concluded:

“The lesson of this wretched election is clear. Under this voting system, moderates need to stop dreaming of creating a British En Marche and join the major parties and fight to reclaim them. If mainstream politics is to prevail again, centrists will have to become entryists” (FT, 9 December).

That just about sums up the present disconnect between the liberal media and the electorate in Britain.

BLAMING CORBYN

Following the Election the anti-Corbyn faction in Labour has become aggressive in blaming Corbyn for the party’s disastrous showing. To anyone who has followed what has gone on at Westminster over Brexit that will be recognised as nonsense.

The tactic of aligning Labour to all intents and purposes as a Remain party was forced on Corbyn by Keir Starmer, Hilary Benn, Yvette Cooper, Emily Thornberry and, not least, by the 40,000-strong Momentum movement that happens to be the Labour Leader’s power base. Identifying the party with Remain meant betraying the millions of traditional Labour voters who supported Brexit, thereby creating the electoral weak point that Johnson and his advisors exploited. If any of the pro-Remain Labour MPs, from Starmer downwards, had a shred of integrity they would own up to their role in gift-wrapping a large swathe of the blue collar vote for the Tories.

Labour had two tactical factors working against it in the Election: the need to shift the focus away from Brexit in what was always going to be a Brexit Election; and its identification with Remain. Corbyn made a credible effort to present his party as representative of both sides of the Brexit divide but the damage had been done before the campaign started. He made the best of the hand he was given and, when the public rating of the final Leaders’ debate on TV came out as 52 per cent for Johnson, 48 per cent for Corbyn, that fairly reflected his performance throughout the campaign. While media attention focussed on the anti-semitic slur I suspect that most Labour voters recognised it for the contrived ploy that it was.

In retrospect, regarding Brexit, both factions of the British Labour Party can be faulted for not being more proactive from an earlier time in getting the May Deal passed by the Commons. Such a position was a logical development from the party’s Manifesto commitment in 2017, accepting the Referendum result. When the needlessly-drawn out talks between Corbyn and May eventually occurred, her Government was already starting to

disintegrate. Had the May Deal passed into Law, the Brexit division would have lost its place at the top of the political agenda. In a subsequent Election campaign Labour could have hammered home the advantage of being free from the shackles of the EU’s State Aid rule, alongside the other elements of the recent Manifesto. Having said all that, it must also be acknowledged that Brexit presented unprecedented challenges that any party or political system would have found difficult.

It looks as if Corbyn will be standing down as Leader in the relatively near future. While the air waves will fill up with the usual self-serving denunciations and caricatures of what he represented, he deserves to be remembered as the first socialist to have broken through the defences surrounding neo-liberalism. Following the 2008 Great Recession, the model of a mixed economy governed by a democratic political system needs to be restored. Corbyn’s Leadership of the British Labour Party symbolised the beginning of movement in that direction, for socialists in Britain and across the world. What he started will be followed by others.

Dave Alvey

Two Irish Media Commentaries

For the most part Irish media coverage of the UK Election has echoed the liberal consensus in Britain, being marked by superficial, gossipy accounts of Boris Johnson’s alleged character flaws. But the once influential pro-British contingent in the Irish media has its own reasons for opposing Brexit: the now definitely-happening exit has wrecked its long-term project of tearing up Irish history and replacing it with a contrived closeness to Britain. History, one suspects, will be unkind to the would-be destroyers of a true historical perspective.

From the glut of commentary I will mention articles by Fintan O’Toole and Stephen Collins, both of the *Irish Times*. On 7th December, the Saturday before the Election, O’Toole delivered a hatchet job on Corbyn. All there is to be said about that is that it was inconsistent with everything O’Toole had written as a crusader against Brexit over the previous three years. In the decisive battle of the war, if the Election

campaign can be called that, opposition to Brexit depended on maximising the vote of parties other than the Conservative Party. At exactly the wrong moment from an anti-Brexit perspective, O’Toole decides to make Johnson’s case for him. Am I missing something?

In addition to showing himself to be an unreliable campaigner, O’Toole got Corbyn and the central issue in the campaign completely wrong. As a letter writer pointed out:

“O’Toole rebukes Corbyn’s ambiguity on Brexit as an electoral liability. But Corbyn’s priority is ending austerity and transforming British society regardless of whether the UK opts for Remain or a soft Brexit. Labour is losing support in heavily Leave constituencies because most of the Labour leadership—unlike Corbyn—are fervent Remainers. If they lose those seats it will be because they’ve been insufficiently ambiguous about Brexit” (Patrick Farrelly, IT Letters, 10 December)

Unlike Fintan O'Toole Stephen Collins identifies as a conservative. He has in the past defended the neo-Redmondite strand in Irish conservatism. The following extract is not from a commentary on the UK Election but does refer to British politics. I am quoting it to show how little Collins understands the British view of the EU.

“Nigel Farage was a marginal figure who caused occasional embarrassment to the Conservative Party until David Cameron decided to trump him by holding the referendum on continued EU membership.

That released the Little Englander genie out of the bottle. The result has been political havoc for our nearest neighbour, deep divisions in society and economic consequences that will be felt by the British people for decades to come.”

It is inaccurate to ascribe Brexit to a misstep by David Cameron, as though society is controlled by the capricious decisions of elite politicians. Cameron promised to hold the Referendum because his party was under pressure following UKIP's victory in the European Elections of 2014. If the Brexit result was a freak accident, support for it would have ebbed away in 2017 and 2018 as the divisions in both main British parties led the country into a quagmire. But support did not decline to any noticeable degree; Brexit is driven by a force in British society that is anything but fickle.

Membership of the EU has always been deeply unpopular with a large section of the English electorate. A vox pop shown on RTE news recently gave a good flavour of opinion on the ground in the North of England. An old duffer speaking with a strong accent said that vast sums of money had been paid by UK taxpayers to Europe over the years for the privilege of having EU law imposed on them. Could he be said to be misinformed? Perhaps, in the sense that EU law is determined by a set of processes that can be described as democratic. But his view reflects an accurate understanding of Britain's historical culture and its incompatibility with EU membership. Collins and many Irish commentators don't understand how different from independent Ireland England is.

British dislike of the EU increased in relatively recent years as a result of two events. One was the unification of Germany, which made that country the most

powerful State in the EU. The other was the creation of the Single Currency. On top of the existing British antipathy to Europe, these events made Brexit inevitable. If by some miracle Brexit was to be cancelled in line with the wishes of Stephen Collins and the rest of the neo-Redmondites, the result would be calamitous for the EU, the Euro and Ireland.

THE CAUSES OF BREXIT

Following on from the point that Brexit was inevitable, an interesting article published last Summer in the *Financial Times* sheds light. Entitled, “*Goodbye Brussels: what I learnt in eight years covering the EU*”, the article is a reflective piece by the outgoing FT bureau chief in Brussels, Alex Barker. Describing the 2011 Summit at which the Fiscal Treaty was finalised he wrote:

“The British prime minister [Cameron] had arrived at the summit thinking he had leverage. The euro area was in deep trouble. The UK was peripheral to the crisis, but Angela Merkel needed Cameron's support for a treaty change that would tighten fiscal rules for all members of the single currency — a dose of discipline to assuage German voter concerns over a series of costly financial bailouts, and to reassure volatile financial markets.

The Conservative party's Eurosceptic wing expected Britain to win something in return. Cameron bid high, insisting he would go along with the treaty only if he won concessions to preserve UK control over how the City of London was regulated. He failed spectacularly. Old hands in Brussels recall it as a supreme example of botched summit diplomacy — and that room has seen some breathtaking howlers.”

...
“Some leaders saw it as a ransom demand, seeking national gain from the eurozone's woes — and all to reduce the burden of regulation on London's financial services firms, a sector that many saw as helping to cause the global financial crisis in the first place. “David, we are not paying you to save the euro”, thundered Sarkozy”.

“Cameron later said he had ‘exercised my veto’ on treaty change, but he never actually used those words in the room. The rest of the EU agreed to do a side deal without him, breaking with the convention that the European Council moved as one. It was a real political rupture.

Cameron badly misread Merkel and the strength of Germany's fixation on treaty change. The German chancellor and Sarkozy elbowed him aside over a

fiscal treaty that, in hindsight, was mainly symbolic. In practice, it neither saved the euro (that would take much bigger summit decisions and central bank action), nor curbed member states' public spending.

But the aftermath reinforced the sense of the UK and EU being on divergent paths. Cameron's defeat in Brussels was greeted by cheers at home. Rather than suffer, his approval rating rose among British voters. Boris Johnson, then mayor of London, said the prime minister had ‘played a blinder’, while the Daily Mail said ‘defiant Cameron’ had stood up to ‘Euro bullies’...” (FT, August 29 2019).

Worth noting from the above is that the driving force behind Cameron's actions was a combination of Tory Euroscepticism and British public opinion. Later in the article Barker describes a row in 2014 over the nomination of Jean Claude Juncker as Commission President. Before the June Summit of the European Council in that year, Cameron invited the Council President, Herman Van Rompuy, to Downing Street to express British opposition to the appointment of Juncker. The meeting lasted little more than half an hour and did not go well. Barker concludes:

“As he escorted Van Rompuy down the No 10 stairs, Cameron lashed out at the Germans. Asked whether he felt duped or abandoned, one person privy to the invective said: ‘It was more explicit than that’...”

There is heaps more that could be quoted from Barker's article that underlines the increasingly obvious split between the UK and the European Union; I trust I have quoted enough for readers to get the point.

Before finishing I will repeat a point I have made before. The competence shown by Government Ministers and officials throughout the long Brexit saga provides a marked contrast to the ravings of our Anglophile media. Fine Gael, a party that is deserving of criticism in many areas, has placed Ireland in a strong position as the post-Brexit future beckons. With regard to Brexit the party has shown itself worthy of the tradition founded by Eamon de Valera.

Dave Alvey

“In England we have ... almost no great writers about Society—its historical and monumental aspects, its rich and authoritative consciousness, its shifting values. In this aspect alone the almost unique importance of Sir Osbert Sitwell cannot be over-rated: he anatomises not a single life but an age.”

Elizabeth Bowen, ‘Tatler’.

“... ”

Among the blue flowers of the flax a linnet sang out ‘Lundy’

at the implication of that bleach –

green. ‘It was merely a figure of speech’.

‘Call it what you like.

‘The grey skies of an Irish Republic

are as nothing compared to this blue dome’.

He tailed all over the flax-dam

to return with a charm of goldfinches

who assailed me with their ‘Not an inch’

and their ‘No’, and yet again, ‘No’.

As they asperged me with kerosene

I recognised the voice of Sir Edward Carson;

‘Bid me strike a match and blow’.

**‘Louis’ by Paul Muldoon, *Meeting the British*,
Faber & Faber, London, 1987.**

Clair Wills and the Story She Tells

Part 15

As I already wrote, Wills started her academic career with a book on the poetry of Paul Muldoon and it was while I was reading her essay in *The Chosen Ground, Essays on the Contemporary Poetry of Northern Ireland*, (Edited by Neil Corcoran, Seren Books, Mid Glamorgan, 1992) called *The Lie of the Land; Language, Imperialism and Trade in Paul Muldoon’s ‘Meeting the British’* that I came across his poem ‘Louis’ with that striking last line. And who can forget that whole imbroglio where I already quoted that last refrain of W.B. Yeats:

”We the great gazebo built,
They convicted us of guilt;
Bid me strike a match and blow”.

This was Yeats’s famous and furious roar of rage in his poem *‘In Memory of Eva Gore-Booth and Con Markievicz’* at the latter’s conversion to the nationalist cause. The poem was quoted in a much abridged form in *‘The Irish Times’* during the furore over the sale of Lissadell House and it was only through the intervention of the *‘Irish Political Review’* with the Cork journalist Mary Leland, picking up

on our research, that the full version was produced. (I find it striking that Leland also wrote a book titled *‘The Lie of the Land: Journeys through Literary Cork’*, published by UCC in 1999 following the title of Wills in her earlier work!)

Going back to the book in question, Wills *‘Lovers and Strangers’*, I finished my previous article with the intention of looking at work conditions of the new immigrants in post-War England, especially the Irish. And there is no doubt that Wills did a huge amount of research which informed her conclusions and that is where I will pick up now. According to her, the major employers were *“McAlpine, Wimpey and Costain”*. She then looks at a huge construction by them, writing:

”The Isle of Grain on the Kent estuary was a huge project, including a power station and oil refinery, which employed nearly 5,000 men at any one time from 1950 until 1962”.

She states: *“The way the Isle of Grain was getting run, it was worse than the Yukon”*. And this was because, even with the larger civil engineering projects, they *“operated with an informal economy of bribes and kickbacks”*.

“Many of the larger, unionized contractors sold off parts of the job to smaller businesses, subcontractors or ‘subbies’ who then had to cut corners to make the work pay.”

The Murphy brothers were from Kerry and they liked employing men from their own area.

“John Murphy (the green vans) and Joe Murphy (the grey ones), Lowery, Coleman, R.S. Kennedy—these small and medium-sized contractors thrived during the 1950s and early 1960s, in part because of a lack of regulation in the building industry. Gangers in charge of teams of ten to twelve men made their money by agreeing a price for a job, calculated on a number of hours’ labour, and an amount of equipment. If they could get the job done quicker (reduce the number of paid hours) and skimp on materials, that was money in the pocket.

This meant driving the men hard, sacking any who were unable to keep up the pace, and often refusing to provide cover in wet weather, wellington boots, or even sufficient timber to create safe working conditions. Richard Power found himself working in leaking wellingtons because the subcontractor had sold off the supply he had been given for the men.”

“One man interviewed by Charles Parker argued that even simple digging jobs—like digging trenches to lay cables and pipes— became hazardous under these conditions: Men are dying in trenches— you might be down 12 maybe 13 feet, no timber there and anything can happen, I often saw a crack maybe four feet back. You say to the ganger man is there any timber here he’ll just laugh at you. If you don’t put your jack to it you’re not wanted. There’s twenty maybe thirty contractors who won’t buy timber, looking for big profits.”

Wills is right to show us the ugly reality of Irish companies exploiting Irish workers and she avows:

”The brutal terms on which men were required to work for many (though not all) contractors, and the physical toll which it took on them, created a permanent need for ‘raw men’ coming across from Ireland, who could not refuse the work. ‘Man lands here he might only have a pound, he might have nothing ... he has no option, if he doesn’t get down in that trench he has no food, he has no digs, he’s lost’.”

My problem is the violence, almost recreational—that the Irish became famed for, as Wills amply testifies to—but how could working often twelve hours a day *“in brutal conditions”* allow anyone, no matter how tough, the extra physical endurance to fight, as it appears, to let off steam? D—nall Mac Amhlaigh’s memoir

of labouring in the 1950s is punctuated with stories of pitched, 'tribal' battles. He spent much of 1952 living in a camp at Stratford in the Vale, while working on the airfield at Brize Norton. He wrote:

"Fights started out of nothing. As I went to sleep tonight, the silence was broken with shouting and screaming, dreadful cursing and the noise of heavy blows. It was the Connemara men and the people from Dublin. They've been fighting this many a day... Later, laying rails in a railway tunnel near Northampton, fights started easily from an unguarded word or look, either in the pubs after work or on site. A small amount of spilt tea ended with two men 'lamming away at each other in anger and hate; and what matter but there was so little reason for the whole thing."

Certainly, Wills seems to assert the old adage about the enmity between the country men/the 'culchies' and those from Dublin. This rings true, as it seems to continue today in the media with 'culchies' scorned for their accent and choice of clothes. Put a cap on a Kerryman—no matter how successful—and he is seen as a walking national joke!

"In a series of interviews conducted in the early 1960s by Charles Parker, a producer at BBC Pebble Mill in Birmingham, Irish labourers were disarmingly open about the violence which lay just beneath the surface of Irish emigrant life. Tony Crumlin, who had left Dublin aged fourteen to work on construction sites and who described himself as 'a delinquent' in his youth, acknowledged his own prejudice against the English and the Culchies... 'Dublin people think they are superior,' they wear Teddy boy suits, and at the slightest provocation 'there would be a row'. He recalled his digs in Manchester in the mid-1950s;... a smell of dampness. Three beds in the one room, 10 by 8. A little box to put your clothes in, and your suitcase you kept locked at all times. The men were only allowed in the house to sleep, and to eat their evening meal:

A dozen blokes round the table. At least twice a week there was a row, a punch-up in the dinner room... They were like condemned to take the lower things that were dished out in life..."

But surely Tony Crumlin spoke for the few — not the many. Some time later he says that he came back to Dublin "where he found he could not settle.... 'I left Dublin for the second time to drink. I was drinking every night of the week. Friday night I wouldn't even bother to go home, I'd be stinking... going straight to the pub — out from Saturday to Monday night."

But he still managed to do a week's worth of back-breaking work!!

Were the Irish fighting to drown their sorrows and loneliness? Did the pub become the only place where they could meet as other labourers suggested?

Wills notes that "*to their English neighbours, the Irish habit of fighting looked like a racial characteristic, rather than one that was caused by circumstance*". Then she goes on to muse that maybe the Irish violence was "rooted in something deeper, even more existential". Perhaps Sartre's influence can be detected here, not in the Irish men but in the bias of the writer? Richard Power thought the violence of the Irish was caused by "the absence of any checks by family and community ... the problem for the Irish labourer was that he was 'without household, without authority, without having to answer to their family, to the state, to anyone at all'."

Another labourer told the filmmaker Philip Donnellan, "*We're dependent on nobody. We have to fight to exist.*" Beside this extract in Wills's book, I have pencilled in my own question—*how true is this picture?* Wills too seems to be having second thoughts for she alights on this problem and then makes an incredible admission.

"The often brutalising conditions in which the men worked... was something that was rarely mentioned in contemporary accounts of Irish violence. In fact, although several of Charles Parker's interviewees attempted to explain the effect of daily rough treatment on the worksites, their comments were **not included** in the film he made with Philip Donnellan about the day-to-day life of Irish labourers in 1965."

Wills calls it as it is. She states:

"It amounted to a form of censorship. (All underlinings and blockings are by me —JH) So this 1965 documentary/film 'The Irishmen' was seriously flawed in its methodology. Its portrayal of the fighting Irish had an intent to show us in the most unflattering light, helping this stereotype to be embedded in the host nation. But we were not helped by our own writers, who by now had to know what their English audience wanted. The playwright Tom Murphy wrote a play 'A Whistle in the Dark' "about a group of Irish brothers who believe they have to fight to exist". It was staged in London in 1961, the reviewers found it hard to distinguish the playwright from his material:

"The only thing that separates his characters from a bunch of wild gorillas is their ability to speak with an Irish accent." Kenneth Tynan warned that:

'Thomas Murphy is the kind of playwright one would hate to meet in a dark

theatre.' Like Brendan Behan, indeed perhaps because of Behan, he was regarded as an 'anthropoidal' ape man, as one reviewer put it, a savage thrilling the London theatre."

I looked up the footnotes and found this comment to belong to Michael Billington, a critic from whom I would expect nothing better! He was recently much praised in the *Daily Telegraph*—enough said.

Brendan Behan was a prodigious drinker and as Wills writes:

"favoured an old-style version of Irish troublemaking—though he was only in his early thirties himself. His public profile—unshakeable after he appeared drunk and swearing in a live television interview with Malcolm Muggeridge in 1956, to publicise his play 'The Quare Fellow'—was a caricature of the drinking, fighting Irishman."

Wills amusingly adds that MI5 were watching Behan—

"because of his IRA and communist activities. A Report dated 11th June 1956 concludes that: 'as an individual he is too unstable and too drunken to be particularly dangerous'."

They obviously learnt nothing as Guy Burgess, Kim Philby *et al* were embedding themselves in the security services and they could drink Behan under the table and were troublemakers of proven rank. The English were as bad as any troublemaking Irishman—but the *gaze* of the host nation made the latter fit a perfect trope for English susceptibilities.

As Wills concludes her chapter on 'Drinkers', she accepts the odds that were stacked against the Irish labouring emigrants:

"They were exploited and they knew it... They worked long hours in poor conditions, and the worst off lived in lodging houses that were little better than slums. The pub became their refuge. Several contractors who had made money and invested it in lodging houses and pubs were notorious for paying the men in their own pubs on a Friday night—so that almost before they had got their pay they gave it back to their employers in the price of drink. The men were restless and unsettled, but it was not so much freedom as the lack of it that was the cause of all the drinking and fighting."

P.S.

This is the time of the year that there is a round-up of 'Books of the Year' in all the newspapers. In 'The Irish Times' of 30th November 2019, they had "twenty-five leading Irish writers and critics pick

their favourite new fiction and non-fiction titles of 2019". Simple enough, one would think, but alas Roy Foster didn't seem to get the memo, as his most important book was Barry McCrea's—

"dazzling 'Languages of the Night: Minor Languages and the Literary Imagination in Twentieth-Century Ireland and Europe' which I came to three years late: a linguistic and critical tour-de-force, rereading Joyce, Pasolini, O'Riordáin and Proust and decisively changing the way we read modernist literature and literary history."

One of my colleagues in the 'Irish Political Review' in last month's issue (December), Brendan Clifford wrote an

article 'The Subjective Side of History' (listed to be ongoing) and he'd give Barry McCrea a run for his money regarding modernist literature.

But another of Foster's reads is Margaret Kelleher's 'The Maamtrasna Murders: Language, Life and Death in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', described as "a powerful reconstruction of language shift and legal process in Victorian Ireland which is also a complex meditation on historical violence, injustice and cultural incomprehension—echoing forward to reflections of this episode in the work of James Joyce".

Julianne Herlihy ©

English Democracy

Although there was no Irish participation in the electoral contest to decide which Party should govern the British state, part of Ireland will continue to be governed under the winner, regardless of how the subordinate Six County arrangements fare. Some comment is therefore required.

The outstanding feature of the election campaign was the free and liberal use of the word "lie" by media commentators when interviewing politicians. The head of Channel 4 gave instructions at the outset that politicians were to be called out as "liars" at every opportunity. The BBC followed suit. The result was bizarre. A politician who undertook to do something was called out as a liar if it proved impossible to do it. In meaningful language the condition of possibility is always understood, as it is understood that exaggeration is the well-established mode of political rhetoric.

The notion that party-politics was debasing democracy was much in the news at one point, and there was talk of freeing democracy from partisan distortions. But partisanship is of the essence of democracy of the Anglo-American kind, which now dominates most of the world and which insists that it is the only authentic kind. The normality of democracy was restored by the clear party victory in the Election.

There was for a period a Parliamentary majority hostile to the Government. It sought to perpetuate itself by preventing an election from being called, and by taking to itself the power of legislation by back-bench consensus. But there was enough party-spirit within that consensus to rebel against it and call an election which

restored Parliament to the position of being an instrument of Government.

There was gross religious intervention in the election campaign by the Jewish Chief Rabbi and the head of the Church Department of the State, the Archbishop of Canterbury. They branded the leader of the Labour Party an anti-Semite. The cry was taken up by media commentators, and by influential leaders of the party, including its Deputy Leader, Tom Watson, and by Sir Keir Starmer with some reservations. But Watson found it prudent to retire from party-politics when his part in stirring up of wild claims about paedophilia in very high places broke in the news.

Sir Keir's view was that anti-Semitism is a serious problem in the party. This came as a shock to many people with long experience in the Party (both Jews and gentiles) who had never come across a trace of it.

Shortly before the Election (*Newsnight* Dec.6), there was a very interesting interview with Barry Gardner on the subject of anti-Semitism. He was pressed to explain why the Party had not acted promptly against slogans that were shouted at a public demonstration. He said he had gone to the police about them. They replied that they had investigated complaints about these, but found no laws had been broken. The slogans complained about were anti-Zionist. They were not anti-Semitic. The Labour Party too had made that distinction in the past, but now it had "moved on", Gardiner said.

That obviously is the nub of the matter.

No evidence of anti-Semitism in the Labour Party has come to light. There have been no prosecutions. The expression of anti-Semitism is against the law, and we have been told loudly with regard to other matters that breaches of the law should be referred to the police and not dealt with internally within private organisations.

And yet people have been expelled from the Labour Party, or suspended from it, as being anti-Semites, without the issue being referred to the police. The outstanding case is that of Chris Williamson.

Remember the Maria Cahill affair? She is now a journalist on the rabidly anti-Republican *Sunday Independent*, but she was once a 'dissident' Republican—a very extreme Republican who opposed the Adams/McGuinness leadership on the issue of the Good Friday Agreement. She alleged sexual harassment against a member or members of Sinn Féin. The accusation was dealt with by an internal disciplinary process. That process was then condemned as a Kangaroo Court and Sinn Féin was accused of usurping the judicial authority of the State by failing to refer the matter to the police.

Well, sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. And the Labour Party has dealt with *allegations* of anti-Semitism by an extreme form of the Kangaroo Court method.

There is an active lobby which asserts that anti-Semitism in the Labour Party under Corbyn's leadership is so extreme that it would have been advisable for all Jews to leave the state if he had become Prime Minister. And the effective demand of that lobby is that an allegation of anti-Semitism should be taken as proof of it and should be followed by immediate expulsion.

None of these allegations have been passed on to the police to be dealt with under the law. We can guess the reason why—the law does not treat anti-Zionism as anti-Semitism.

Chris Williamson's anti-Semitism seems to have consisted of an opinion that the Party leadership was grossly exaggerating the presence of anti-Semitism in the Party membership. We would judge that to have been an opinion soundly based on fact.

During the couple of weeks since the Election anti-Semitism has gone out of the news. The campaign of allegations has served its purposes.

We doubt that it had any effect on the outcome of the Election. Its clearly

discernible purposes were to distract attention from the racial policy of the Jewish State, and to blacken Corbyn's character in certain regions of the Labour Party in the interest of the Blairite old guard. Its effect on the country was probably to generate a degree of anti-Semitism where none existed before.

It was said by members of the leadership that the Party had become “*institutionally anti-Semitic*”—a thing that nobody had noticed before. When Corbyn agreed to stand down it was magically purified.

The root source of it all was the hubris of the Blairite leadership in giving the Party membership the power of electing the Leader. When the membership was rendered mindless by Blair's charismatic influence—a very English phenomenon into which we have no insight—that was a safe thing to do. But, with that *Fuhrer* influence gone, it became problematic. The business of the membership is to maintain ideals, while the business of the Leader is to govern a finance-capitalist state with an extensive influential network inherited from the Empire, in which those ideals could be put into effect only to an infinitesimal degree.

The rhetoric of idealism, which is necessary to the party-structure of British democracy, is not implementable as British State policy. The ideals of democracy are moonshine to a very considerable extent. Practical democracy is elitist. Being Prime Minister would have been an excruciatingly painful experience for Corbyn.

When the Chief Rabbi denounced him as another Hitler, Miriam Margoles, a Jewish actor, told the Rabbi he was entirely wrong in characterising Corbyn as an anti-Semite, while at the same time advising Corbyn to stand down from the Party leadership.

On the Brexit issue, the Parliamentary Party, led by Keir Starmer, took a stand, not against the membership on this issue, but against the core working class base of the Party, and lost it. The working class stood by its Referendum vote and therefore voted Tory. English nationalism runs deep.

The other thing to remember from the Election campaign is the disgusting depths to which party-political democracy (the only functional kind) can sink. Its characterisation of Corbyn as a would-be Hitler must not be forgotten.

Northern Ireland and the UK Election, 12th December 2019

% vote shares and seats in 2019 compared with 2017

	2017 %vote	2017 seats	2019 %vote	2019 seats	Change %vote	
DUP	36.0	10	30.6	8	-5.4	-2
UUP	10.3	0	11.7	0	+1.4	0
Tot	46.3	10	42.3	8	-4.0	-2
SF	29.4	7	22.8	7	-6.6	0
SDLP	11.7	0	14.9	2	+3.2	+2
Tot	41.1	7	37.7	9	-3.4	0
APNI	7.9	0	16.8	1	+8.9	+1

The main features of the election were:

A fall in both the DUP and Sinn Fein votes across Northern Ireland compared with the 2017 UK election, 5.4% overall in the case of the DUP and 6.6% in the case of Sinn Fein. Why? Probably because of discontent amongst voters that the institutions of government haven't been restored when there are serious local problems to be dealt with, particularly in the health service.

A substantial rise in the SDLP vote from 11.7% to 14.9% overall and a spectacular rise in Foyle mostly at the expense of Sinn Fein.

The Alliance Party also did very well, more than doubling their overall vote from 7.9% to 16.8%.

4 of the 18 seats changed hands:

North Belfast where the sitting MP, Nigel Dodds, the DUP leader at Westminster, was beaten by John Finucane of Sinn Fein. He is the son of Pat Finucane, who was murdered in 1989 at his family home by loyalist paramilitaries, and is currently Lord Mayor of Belfast. His victory was made very likely because the SDLP did not put up a candidate and Dodds' majority in 2017 (2,081) was only a little larger than the SDLP vote in 2017 (2,058). On the day, John Finucane won well with a majority of almost 2,000.

South Belfast where Claire Hanna had a very good result for the SDLP, winning back the seat that the SDLP lost in 2017. She benefited from the absence of Sinn Fein and Green candidates this time. But in 2017 they got around 9,400 votes,

whereas she increased the SDLP vote from 11,303 then to 27,079 this time, which was 57.2% of the total vote. The sitting DUP MP, Emma Little-Pengelly, came second with a mere 24.7% of the total vote.

Foyle where the leader of the SDLP, Colum Eastwood, had a spectacular result, regaining the seat the SDLP lost to Sinn Fein in 2017. Then, Elisha McCallion beat the former leader of the SDLP Mark Durkan by 167 votes. However, faced with Colum Eastwood this time, she lost nearly half her vote, which declined from 18,256 to 9,771, whereas Colum Eastwood raised the SDLP vote from 18,807 to 26,881 (57.0% of the total vote) giving him a majority of 17,110. The votes she lost seem to have transferred directly to him. What could have caused that? Sinn Fein's abstentionism?

North Down where Stephen Farry won the seat for the Alliance Party, replacing Sylvia Hermon who retired. She was originally elected as a UUP MP, but she left the UUP in 2010 when it went into an alliance with the Conservative Party and from then on sat as an independent Unionist. On her retirement, it was expected that the DUP would easily take the seat since Alex Easton of the DUP ran her a close second in 2017. However, that was not to be: most of Sylvia Hermon's vote transferred to the Alliance Party, whose vote went up spectacularly from 3,639 to 18,358. Even so, Easton would likely have won if the UUP hadn't put up a candidate this time and taken nearly 5,000 votes which would have seen him over the line.

David Morrison

References
see page 20, col. 1

British Labour Woes

After the General Election which has been so disastrous for the Labour Party the inevitable appraisal of the reasons for that disaster began to emerge. Unfortunately, those appraisals have concentrated on things like the role of an aggressively hostile media, the lies from the Conservative Party, the unpopularity of Jeremy Corbyn among the electorate, etc.

The one reason for the defeat that all appear to studiously avoid is the role played by the systematic destruction of the policy which it had advocated in the 2017 General Election and which had proved successful at that time. That policy was clear and precise and it was based on a respect for the result of the 2016 referendum. But it was a policy that from early on some powerful right-wing elements in the Parliamentary Party and the left-dominated constituency party conspired to destroy in the full knowledge that it would be impossible to formulate an alternative policy on Brexit that possessed the same clarity or claim any real adherence to a democratic mandate.

Surprisingly, among the earliest voices advocating the abandonment of the sensible and clear 2017 Labour policy came from John McDonnell, the man considered to be Jeremy Corbyn's trusted ally. This was in November 2018. At that time John McDonnell was reported as saying that "Labour would 'inevitably' back a second referendum if the party was unable to force a general election" (see: "*Labour Will Inevitably Back a Second Referendum, Says McDonnell*", The Guardian, 28 November 2018). This was effectively a statement that the party would not support any Brexit plan that did not come from its own efforts when in government. But, when Teresa May's difficulties in getting her Brexit deal through parliament led to her

offering to consult the Labour Party in the hope of gaining their support for her Brexit bill, the Party decided to participate. Yet, despite May's compromises on things like workers' rights being advanced in those consultations, the Labour Party decided to oppose her Bill and it was this decision that led to its final defeat in March 2019.

This pushed the party back to the position of only supporting a Brexit of its own making—something that was reliant on winning a General Election. But, while this had a certain logic to it, the absence of a continuing definite commitment to the 2016 result continued to compromise its standing among the Leave-voting constituencies

It was also a position that the hard-Remainers inside the party refused to respect and the impetus for an arbitrary commitment to a second referendum (in alliance with other parties and independent of a General Election) continued to mount inside the party. The extent of the pressure in this direction was evident by May 2019 in the lead-in to the elections to the European Parliament.

In an attempt to shore up the existing party policy in advance of those elections the Labour Party's National Executive Committee was reported to have—

“agreed yesterday that its manifesto for the European Parliament elections will reflect existing Labour Party on Brexit, without a stronger commitment to a second referendum. A party spokesperson said, ‘The NEC agreed the manifesto which will be fully in line with Labour’s existing policy; to support Labour’s alternative plan, and if we can’t get the necessary changes to the government’s deal, or a general election, to back the option of a public vote.’ This comes despite strong pressure from Labour pro-Europeans, particularly Deputy Leader Tom Watson, for the party to offer a stronger commitment for any Brexit deal to be put to a referendum” (See: Open Europe, 1 May 2019).

While these meanderings on policy were the direct result of the need to accommodate an increasingly avaricious and assertive ‘second referendum’ and ‘remain’ lobby, the effect was to make the Party's policy more complicated and incomprehensible by moving further away from the clarity of the 2017 policy of simply “*respecting the result of the referendum*”.

Then, later in May 2019, another close ally of Corbyn, Diane Abbott, added to the confusion when she was reported as saying that “*Labour is now committed to*

offering the public a referendum on any Brexit deal” (See: The Independent, 28 May 2019).

Feeding off the growing confusion this was followed in June 2019 when Tom Watson gave a speech in which he said that the party should adopt a policy committing itself to a second referendum. (See: *D. Telegraph*, 17 June 2019)

Then, in September 2019, in advance of the Labour Party Annual Conference, Tom Watson went on record to state that the result of the 2016 referendum was no longer valid and advocated a second referendum (see: *Daily Mail*, 11 September 2019). If anything could be better designed to damage the prospects of the Party in the ‘leave’ constituencies, it could only have been something like the LibDem's policy of arbitrarily abandoning Brexit without a referendum. Whether Watson was aware of this or not is difficult to know but he resigned as an MP and from the office of Deputy Leader before the results of his contribution became manifest.

The denial of the legitimacy of the 2016 referendum was now complete and this led to even more myopic ideas on how the party should proceed. By now the Party's commitment to a second referendum was a given. All that was left was to argue over how the party should campaign in such a referendum. The only thing that the second referendum-advocates and the Remainers had in common was a determination to pursue a policy that was contemptuous of the sensibilities of those Labour-supporting ‘leave’ voters on which so many of the Labour seats in Parliament relied. This is where the left-influenced CLP came into its own, with Momentum activists eagerly pushing for the party to opt for a policy of ‘remain’ in any referendum. The Party, which relied upon a Parliamentary presence of Members from Leave constituencies, was to become the party that actively campaigned for ‘remain’. Such was the logical end product of left-wing strategy.

“A leading leftwing activist, Michael Chessum, who has coordinated local party efforts to push a pro-Remain motion through conference, told the Observer that patience among delegates was running out as the leadership appeared intent on defying ordinary members and imposing central control... ‘We have a party that wants Remain, voters overwhelmingly wanting clarity, MPs that want Remain and a front bench that wants Remain—and yet a ludicrous insistence that the party machine might not back them’...” (Observer, 21 September 2019)

The disingenuous nature of this state-

References

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017_United_Kingdom_general_election_in_Northern_Ireland
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019_United_Kingdom_general_election_in_Northern_Ireland
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belfast_North_\(UK_Parliament_constituency\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belfast_North_(UK_Parliament_constituency))
and equivalent for other seats

ment by a Momentum activist is breathtaking. The “*voters overwhelmingly wanting clarity*” were for the most part those in the leave-voting constituencies which so many of the Labour MPs represented. The reference to the party machine was just plain mischievous as the policy being advanced by Michael Chessum, was one he knew was opposed by Corbyn. As things turned out, Corbyn’s position was saved by the Trade Unions and, despite the pressure being exerted by a combination of the right and the left of the party, not only to have a second referendum in its election policy but to compel it to campaign for ‘remain’ in that referendum, was defeated by Corbyn who managed to have his idea of the party remaining neutral in the referendum endorsed. (See: BBC News, 23 September 2019).

Corbyn, forced to navigate an impossible political landscape by the combination of the Second Referendum advocates and the ‘remainers’ in the party, was now in the position where, in order to minimise the damage that their position would inflict on the party’s chances of being elected, he was left only with the option of advocating a policy that the party remain neutral in any second referendum. However, this was not a policy that was respected by the ‘referendum’ and ‘remain’ lobbies. Corbyn’s position was a difficult balancing act and was reduced to ridicule when leading members of the PLP and those inside his own Shadow Cabinet began to challenge it. Very soon we saw the likes of Keith Starmer publicly defying Corbyn’s position in statements that he would campaign for ‘remain’ in any forthcoming referendum.

This, combined with the contemptuous dismissal of the vitally significant ‘leave’-voting Labour constituencies, by the left activists and the right-wing Members of Parliament, in the end proved too much for the long-standing Labour voters in what used to be the party’s heartlands.

The foregoing won’t be admitted in any of the “official” appraisals inside the Party. The emphasis will be on the need for unity across the Brexit divide. Arguments about the need to bring the party back together will be the order of the day, and that need will ensure that any honest account of how the Party got itself into the position it had when entering the election will be avoided.

However, the sight of Corbyn and McDonnell, donning their hair-shirts and kneeling on hot cinders is not indicative of anything healthy in the party. Seeking redemption in this manner might be ok

on a personal level, but a political party that seeks redemption from the electorate needs to have individuals from all sides of the debacle being equally contrite. In that context, the behaviour of Corbyn and McDonnell has only facilitated the likes of Keith Starmer and others in their determination to direct responsibility away from themselves (and it is significant that there has been no absence of finger-pointing from that direction). If this is the way that the party is dealing with the disaster, it does not bode well for the prospects of the Labour Party being fit for government anytime soon.

The most meaningful analysis of the reasons for the electoral disaster was provided in a posting on the Facebook Page of the *Labour Heartlands* group on 15th December. This was as follows:

“Why did Labour's share of all votes fall from 40% in 2017 to 32% in 2019?

General election turnout was the same (68%), Labour had the same leader and

the media were just as hostile. Principles and policies were similar in every way - apart from on the key issue of leaving the EU. In 2017 the manifesto said "Labour accepts the referendum result" but in 2019 said "Labour will give the people the final say on Brexit."

Keir Starmer, Labour's shadow secretary of state for exiting the EU, visited Wirral West Labour's campaign office the other week. Jo Bird tried to express her experience of persuading on the doorstep and phone—the hardest policy to defend was a final say/second referendum.

People wanted their democratic votes to be honoured. His response was smooth and I wanted to believe him. But he was adamant on a second referendum policy.

But clearly the case did not convince millions of leave (and previously Labour) voters in England and Wales.

This evidence shows changing Labour's policy away from respecting the referendum result was a terrible error of judgement, at best.”

Eamon Dyas

Looking Back!

It’s an absurd situation being friends with Unionists and even B’Specials who are part of a conspiracy that clamps down on your Catholic community to deny it human and civil rights. But this is Northern Ireland. In the rural area they are at times attacking your home, poisoning the well water.

At work in the city you make friends with what you feel are decent types. They may be teenage B’Specials but you can end up going to cinemas with a few of them after work or meeting up in dances at the weekend.

You live in two worlds, rural and urban and the two worlds must never meet.

Much in the way the mixed family you come from cannot have two full sides of the family meet. One side has a record of IRA activity from the 1920s and the other, your cousins, are in the RUC, the B’Specials and the British Army. You meet cousins at funerals and they will come to your funerals. It’s all amiable when you visit their homes, even when you spy a .303 rifle in the corner or a .45 revolver sticking out of a hung-up overcoat. Those are the weapons you wish you had against your enemies in the countryside.

The difference lies in the fact that both rural and city members of the oppressing Unionist policing can voice their political opinions quite openly while you remain mute on your rural oppression and mute

while part of your father’s family glory in Unionism and discuss who in the family signed the 1912 Ulster’s Solemn league and Covenant against the Third Home Rule Bill. Your mother remains mute and so do your sisters while your father, captivated by the discussion, forgets your existence and declares for it.

It’s a sort of helplessness. It all stops suddenly and they’re looking at your muteness. They themselves, you notice, are helpless. It’s their turn to be mute. It takes a bit of time to warm things up again. It’s downcast eyes and a bit of guilt on both sides.

Then the reason you are here is remembered —the corpse in the parlour, your uncle in the open coffin. You notice the Orange regalia next to the lid of the coffin and it’s a shock — he was an Orangeman. He was also a kind man that always visited with presents or dished out 2 pence to you and your sisters when children back in the 1930s. A sister will exclaim for days afterwards:

"Uncle Willie gave me 2d!"

Helpless Ulster, each locked into their own nationality with one the overdog.

Maybe you left for London to get away from all of that and returned in the 1950s with a wife and two young children to avoid conscription. Private accommodation is bleak. You look up a friend you knew from early teenage days when you were both in the The Young Workers’ League and then the CPNI. He’s still lives at home. His step-mother is a leading Unionist and

part of a collective of powerful Unionist women who control the Co-Op movement in Belfast. His father is a civil servant at Stormont, a former professional soldier in the British Army. He is Protestant and votes Irish Labour on the sly but appears Unionist at work. Three different political opinions in one small family.

In a general discussion you bring up the lack of proper accommodation in Belfast and the difficulty in getting public housing. The stepmother has a plan: A fellow Unionist she knows very well, runs a post office, not too far away. He is standing in a marginal Unionist/Nationalist area as a Unionist MP and needs Catholic votes. Her suggestion is that you go to his post office, explain that you are a Catholic, with a young family and could he help get you public housing. He is already, as a Unionist councillor, giving out flats and houses to Catholics. In return they will vote Unionist to repay him. He defeats the Nationalist candidate and is elected Unionist MP for the area.

But you couldn't vote Unionist to get public housing. You can't even pretend you'll vote Unionist. It's principle. The cynics say: *'It's principle but how many principles do you have in the bank?'*

The family you visit again—Unionist, Communist and Irish labour—think you are mad to keep your wife and two young children living in one room. Time to get back to London and out of this situation.

Keeping tabs on the new Unionist MP: a few years go by and there is another election. He is voted out. He expects that but, being an MP has pushed him further up the Unionist hierarchy ladder. There was a certain honesty when Catholics voted Unionist in exchange for public housing. They had assured the would-be MP that they would vote Unionist. The stepmother had said I was to assure him that he had my vote in exchange for public housing. She was bright, she had beauty, she was an early feminist, she was Unionist and she knew of the Catholic plight but her idea was for them to work the system. She was also an avid believer in the Co-Op movement and she was running it. It had the biggest single dairy in Northern Ireland and was the biggest distributor of coal throughout NI (when coal was used in domestic fireplaces)

The Co-Op movement she was running started in a single shop in the Protestant Shankill Road in 1888. By 1932 it was a large four-storey building in York Street in central Belfast. It was decidedly up-market but welcomed all. It was Belfast's Harrods. It sold everything on its four floors. The

shop assistants were apprentice-trained. Dividends were as high as half-a-crown in the pound at one point. It had a Tea Room where a quartet played in the afternoon. This was during WW2. My mother and her sister would drag me along to there. They were Tea Room people. Sometimes it was the Tea Rooms of Bell's of Anne Street. The Co-Op one was the finest. one. Both women smoked openly in the street outside as a mark of rebellion when they could have smoked in the Tea Room. Most likely, even as Catholics, they would have taken to the Unionist stepmother as yet another woman who wanted to make her own way in life.

As a 12 year old I was sent there to shop, getting the bus from Carryduff and then a tram in the city. My father was earning well in the aircraft factory. I can still remember my family's Co-Op number.

This Co-Op building also had the Orpheus Ballroom which I went to as a teenager. I remember it as a magnificent dance place. The only problem was that the girls seemed to be mostly shorthand-typists. It was best not to tell them you were a shipyard worker, or, if they suspected you were a shipyard worker, to tell them you worked in the drawing office as an

apprentice draughtsman. But usually your calloused hands gave the game away as you held their dainty hands in a dance. Maybe you might just might do until they found someone with soft hands?

On the 10th of May, 1972. PIRA bombed it. I happened to be on a visit to Belfast so I went along to look at the result. Most of it was a small mountain of debris with steel girders sticking out of it. I couldn't believe what I was looking at. Internal fires in the rubble were still burning and giving off smoke. The RUC and British Army were everywhere, as if they could reverse the situation. They were even having to chase away looters who were climbing into rubble to see what they could find.

I met up with my friend. He was on his way to visit his father. He wouldn't invite me along as he felt his stepmother wouldn't like it. I could only say: *"Tell her I'm, sorry too"*. And I was.

An attempt was made to rebuild this Co-Op building in 1977. PIRA finished off the attempt with three massive bombs. I had finished caring now. Anyway, It could never be the same building.. Things generally would never be the same again.

Wilson John Haire.
26.11.2019

A Fairytale Moment on the Late Late

The expression of an expletive by singer/song writer Shane McGowan in defence of the lyrics of his world famous song, *Fairytale of New York*, marked the highpoint of a Late Late Show before Christmas (13 December). The Show was a celebration of his career. As he and others performed some of his best songs and as various figures from the music world told anecdotes about him, a picture emerged of a talented if truculent song writer from the Irish community in London who had absorbed the Irish musical tradition in a circuitous way.

When the *Fairytale* came up for discussion, singer Lisa O'Neill was asked whether some words in the song should be changed. She said they shouldn't, that the song was finished and shouldn't now be tampered with. It was then put to McGowan that the word, *'faggot'*, could give offence to members of the gay community, to which he replied in a London drawl: *"Fuck that!"*

It was a telling moment. Sometimes intellectual argument is beside the point. In their own way McGowan and O'Neill were saying: you can have songs of quality,

or you can have political correctness; you can't have both. If creativity is to bear fruit creative people need to be able to upend the conventions.

McGowan's story, as told in a BBC documentary made some years ago, is interesting. Returning from London shortly after Shane's birth the family spent six years in his mother's home place in South Tipperary. That was obviously a formative time for McGowan; photographs show a small bright-eyed boy surrounded by older country people in poor clothing holding various musical instruments. In the documentary his father explains that back in England they got on well with English neighbours but found the culture oppressively alien. Like many Irish they fell back on their own community and traditional music became for them an obsession. Shane's mother was a talented singer in the Delia Murphy tradition.

The musical culture of the London Irish came up on the Show when long time singer Sean O'Shea recounted how he discovered that in London the community had added their own dimension to the music. That quirky London addition to the

Irish tradition is what defines McGowan's music. It is present in the *Fairy tale* but for me the song that epitomises it is *A Pair of Brown Eyes*. Its chorus is arresting and at the same time familiar but it could never have been written by a composer in any of the forms of the Irish tradition.

Lisa O'Neill is also interesting. A great mystery of the contemporary music scene is how such an obviously talented artist is not better known. Thankfully her talent is beginning to get recognition. She is especially good with songs that carry an

element of humour—it suits her puckish demeanour—but she is good across the range of song types.

There was a time when artistic expression in Ireland was curtailed by religious orthodoxy. These days trendy types in the radio stations—our modern gate-keepers and self-appointed arbiters of taste—are the ones doing the censorship. Long may the inarticulate, un-political defiance of people like McGowan and O'Neill protect us from conformity!

Dave Alvey

The Philadelphia Exercise

Professor Christopher Andrew is a renowned authority on the world of Intelligence and was official historian for MI5. He is yet another Casement expert and has made his contribution in favour of authenticity of the Black Diaries. However, his contribution does not withstand scrutiny. In an essay *Casement and British Intelligence* published in *Roger Casement in Irish and World History* (Daly ed. RIA 2005) he writes:

“One of the reports from Findlay ... included the statement that Casement and Christensen had ‘unnatural relations’ ...they began when he was a seaman aged only fifteen or sixteen and Casement was British consul in Brazil. According to Christensen, Casement followed him into a lavatory in a Montevideo hotel where they had sex. Christensen jumped ship and began an affair with Casement lasting for about a month.”

This appears to attribute to Findlay comments allegedly made to him by Christensen in 1914. However, Findlay did not make any such report concerning alleged events in Montevideo. The Montevideo story appeared in June 1916 after an interview with Christensen in Philadelphia was conducted on 23rd May 1916. The interviewer was Chief Inspector Ward of Scotland Yard CID (see appendix) who stated in his long report that he had travelled from London to Philadelphia on instruction of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

This visit is first mentioned by Inglis in his 1973 study (page 352, 1974 paperback edition) where he states that “Christensen wrote to the Foreign Office from the United States suggesting they might like to have his testimony against the traitor.” However, this is false; Christensen did not write to the FO and Inglis gives no source.

The visit is also mentioned by Ó

Síocháin in his 2008 study, where his end-note reads “Acting Consul, Philadelphia to Nicolson, 10 May, 1916.” (Endnote 16, Chapter 18). This also is false; the Acting Consul in Philadelphia, Mr. Ford, did not write to the FO. Ó Síocháin, however, cites his source as PRO FO 95/776. There is no communication of that date from Philadelphia to Nicolson in the TNA file. There is a telegram from Consul General Bayley in NY of that date which informs Nicolson that the Acting Consul in Philadelphia has contacted him regarding Christensen. It is not clear if that contact between Ford and Bayley was in writing or by telephone.

After the interview with Christensen, a typed document of 13 numbered pages was prepared in Scotland Yard. (PRO DPP 1/46). This consists of a report (pages 1 to 7) dated 5th June 1916 followed by 6 pages (8 to 13) purporting to be a statement dated 23rd May by Christensen in the Philadelphia office of the Acting British Consul. The summary report, ostensibly by Chief Inspector Ward, does not bear Ward's signature. Therefore, his authorship is uncertain. The six pages numbered 8 to 13 bear the heading *Philadelphia* and the date *23rd May*.

This account is purportedly in Christensen's first person voice but it too is unsigned. Both documents were typed on the same police typewriter in Scotland Yard at the same time. Therefore, the alleged first person typed statement is not an original account by Christensen, but is the work of Inspector Ward and/or his colleagues. It is a police version of a narrative allegedly originating from Christensen some two weeks earlier. There is nothing to guarantee its authenticity, nothing to demonstrate that the typed words in the alleged statement were ever spoken or written by Christensen. But

there is strong evidence to demonstrate that the statement attributed to Christensen is entirely invented, that it is an example of manufactured evidence. Ward describes the meeting as an interrogation which implies questions and answers, but the alleged Christensen statement does not take the form of an interrogation; there are no questions and no answers. The entire document is hopelessly beset by errors and contradictions which expose this Philadelphia exercise to be as inept and false as the Findlay memo.

The timing cited in the police report and alleged statement, does not bear scrutiny. The Montevideo event reported by Professor Andrew allegedly occurred “about 10 or 11 years ago”, which would be in either 1905 or 1906. Casement was unemployed throughout 1905 and most of 1906 and was not in South America. He arrived in Brazil in mid-October, 1906 to begin work as consul in Santos. It is not credible that he immediately absented himself and spent a month in Montevideo, some 1,200 miles away, nor is there any evidence that he did so.

A second error of timing appears on page two of the statement attributed to Christensen. “In November 1914, by arrangement with him, he having obtained an American passport from a Mr. Landz... we sailed for Norway on the S.S. Oscar II.” The ship carrying Casement to Norway departed New York on 15th October, 1914. In November 1914, both Casement and Christensen were in Berlin. Casement carried the passport of a Mr. James Landy; the Christensen who travelled with Casement to Norway on that same ship certainly knew the date when he boarded the vessel and also knew the correct spelling of Casement's alias. But the Christensen represented in the police statement did not know.

The spelling of several words further betrays the falsity of this endeavour. The names Bayley, Findlay, Devoy, Meyer, Nordenflycht, Landy and Christiania are all wrongly spelled in both Ward's report and in the alleged Statement. Christensen knew Findlay and Devoy personally and knew the correct spelling of their names. He equally well knew the correct spelling of Christiania, the capital city of his own country. But, since the pages were typed in Scotland Yard on 5th June, Christensen was not present to make corrections; more precisely, Christensen never saw these pages far less signed them.

There is no mention of sex in the police

typescript although the innuendo was attractive enough for Professor Andrew to state as a fact that Christensen *had confirmed* the alleged relationship was sexual. This is a clear echo of Findlay's reports in 1914 and 1915 and indeed this 'Philadelphia exercise' was intended to recover something of Findlay's false memo which planted the seeds of scandal.

Both report and alleged Statement claim that Casement was in Montevideo to visit the German Minister, Baron Ferdinand von Nordenflycht (1850-1931). The source given is the alleged statement attributed to Christensen. Indeed, that statement opens with the Montevideo story. Casement did know the German diplomat but not in 1905 or 1906; they met only in August 1909 in the diplomatic community of Petropolis north of Rio de Janeiro and Casement became a frequent visitor to the Nordenflycht home. Roger Sawyer verifies the meeting in 1909: "A friendship which began at this period was with the German consul-general, Baron von Nordenflycht" (Casement, *The Flawed Hero* p75. Routledge 1984).

However, if, as alleged, Casement travelled to Montevideo to visit von Nordenflycht in late 1906 or 1907, he travelled 1,200 miles from Rio in the wrong direction to visit a person who was not there and whom he did not know. This is because in 1906 and 1907 von Nordenflycht was working in New Orleans and did not arrive in Brazil until 1908 when he became Consul-General. The Foreign Office of the Federal German Republic confirms that he was posted to Montevideo only in May 1911 by which time Casement had left Rio de Janeiro (March 1910), never to return. It follows that either Christensen was lying or Inspector Ward was lying but not both. In either case the Montevideo story is false.

The language and the grammatical structures used in the alleged and unsigned statement are those of an Englishman and not those of Christensen, a non-native speaker of US English with limited schooling. We are invited to believe that Christensen himself spoke Ward's stilted formal English. There are no traces of Christensen's US English in the text which is not a verbatim version of anything written or spoken by him. The text is the police version of an entirely imaginary first-person account attributed to Christensen, many elements of which derive directly from Findlay's invented memo of October, 1914 and his subsequent botched attempts to corroborate.

Therefore the 23rd May date of the alleged statement is false since it was typed in London at the same time as the summary report dated 5th June. There are no original handwritten notes made by Ward in Philadelphia with the typescript; Ward relied on a remarkable memory. The spelling errors listed above are common to both report and the alleged statement. Although Christensen allegedly refused to disclose his address in Philadelphia, somehow the Acting Consul managed to arrange the meeting at short notice. Most noticeably, there is in Ward's report no description of Christensen's appearance, although brief descriptions of others are given. Also of note is that Ward, a senior policeman, states that Christensen and Landz (Casement) sailed "from Norway" about "November 1914", and further that he has verified the identity of the real Landz as a Real Estate agent in Nassau Street, NY. On a later page of his report he contradicts the false and imprecise November date of departure from NY and cites the correct date—1915. One further minor detail confirms that the first person statement allegedly by Christensen was not copy-typed by the police from any original written by Christensen; the archaic spelling "shews" (for shows) is used in both the report and the alleged Statement.

The police papers submitted to the DPP also claim that, when leaving Montevideo, Casement gifted cash and jewels worth some \$900 to Christensen. This alleged extraordinary generosity is unexplained and when scrutinised its absurdity is revealed. There is no evidence anywhere that Casement possessed jewelry during his life nor any evidence that he ever gifted jewelry to anyone. MI5's investigation of his London bank account does not reveal the purchase of jewelry. Moreover, Casement had been unemployed for over 18 months before his posting to Santos in late 1906, therefore without income. \$900 in 1906-7 is equivalent to some £21,500 today and amounted to almost one third of his annual consular salary. Though generous, Casement was never a wealthy man but the gift claim asks us to believe that he gave away a large part of his salary *before* he had received it and that he brought from England to Santos a cache of jewelry which he then brought with him to Montevideo only to give away. Such absurdity indicates that the police lost control of the story they were inventing.

The alleged Statement is not signed – Christensen never saw the Statement in Philadelphia because the Statement

did not exist on 23rd May. Therefore the Montevideo story which opens the alleged Statement rests entirely on the word of Ward if he was the sole author. That the Montevideo story is in prime position at the very start of the alleged Statement indicates the importance given to it by the police. It is allegedly the first thing related by Christensen. And yet the words and sentences in the Statement, allegedly spoken by Christensen in first person, are obviously not his; nor can they be considered a paraphrase reconstructed some two weeks later because there is no original version by Christensen. There is no evidence that Christensen related the Montevideo story in any form. There is incontrovertible evidence that the story was typed in Scotland Yard by the police. But, since it is not signed by Ward, we cannot be certain that he is the author of this first person narrative *attributed* to a named third person.

The errors in the police papers are common to both report and alleged Statement. Here are some of them:

1. Christensen wrongly aged 36.
2. Departure date given wrongly as "about November 1914".
3. departure date given wrongly as October 15, 1915,
4. Departure from NY wrongly given as sailing from Norway.
5. Von Nordenflycht spelled wrongly.
6. Bayley spelled wrongly twice.
7. Landy spelled wrongly as Landz throughout.
8. Devoy spelled wrongly as De Voy throughout.
9. Christiania spelled wrongly as Christiana throughout.
10. Findlay spelled wrongly as Finlay and Findley throughout.
11. Wrong address given for Landz.
12. Meyer spelled wrongly as Myers.
13. Brogan spelled wrongly as Brogden.
14. \$300 cited in report but cited as \$200 in alleged Statement.

It is well-nigh impossible to understand how a senior police officer with 29 years experience, who had distinguished himself in detective work, *did not notice* so many errors in a few pages, especially when decent literacy skills were a basic requirement in police service. The presence of so many errors suggests that the narrative was prepared by several officers rather than by one officer.

The following anomalies remain unexplained: two addresses are given for 'Landz' in NY and even when Ward claims to have verified this detail, he still uses

the wrong spelling although the correct spelling of Casement's alias was known in 1914; it is also unclear why Ward did not identify himself to Christensen at the interview as he attests; Christensen refused his address so it is unclear how he was contacted by the Acting Consul at short notice for the interview on 23rd May.

By 5th June, Ward and his CID colleagues had completed the report and alleged statement and top copies were "handed to" Sir Charles Mathews, Director of Public Prosecutions. On 28th June a retyped copy of the report and alleged Statement was sent from the CID to MI5, where it was read on 30th June by Frank Hall, who commented as follows (KV 2-9-3): "...in view of Ward's opinion & the old Findlay incident I doubt if he is ... [illegible] ... His statement, if true, confirms our knowledge of the connection between the German-Irish- ... [illegible]". Thus Hall attested that the Statement contained little or nothing that was not already known to MI5. It is exceedingly strange that Hall made no comment on the scandalous Montevideo story which, all things being equal, ought to have been news to him. This lack of comment requires explanation especially in view of Hall's already recorded interest in such scandal about Casement. It cannot be excluded that on 30th June 1916 the Montevideo story was not news to Hall.

Ten or eleven years before May 1916 would cover 1905 to 1906. In that period Casement was present in South America less than three months having arrived at Santos from the UK in mid October of 1906. There is no evidence of a visit to Montevideo in 1906. TNA files FO 368/9/116 contain his frequent reports to the FO during the latter period of 1906 from Santos and these show that he was busy with normal consular duties concerning import-export, shipping and transport, coffee markets etc.

There is no evidence of a visit to Montevideo in the period January to end of June 1907 when Casement left Santos and returned to the UK. There is evidence of a two-week visit to Buenos Aires in March 1907 which he duly accounted for to the FO. Therefore there is no evidence whatsoever that Casement spent a month in Montevideo in either 1905, 1906 or 1907.

When these facts are added to the fact that Casement did not know von Nordenflycht in those years and to the fact that the German diplomat was located in the USA in those years, it becomes evident

that the Montevideo story is a fabrication. It remains to determine who fabricated the story.

The prime suspect for the invention of the Montevideo story must be the Metropolitan Police because it is in their official papers that the story is reported. A potential secondary suspect is Christensen because the story is attributed to him in those police papers. While it is clear that the police had both opportunity and motive to invent the story, it is less clear that Christensen had both opportunity and motive. This is because there is no external verification for what happened or was said at the consulate in Philadelphia. There is only the police account, unsigned by Inspector Ward and compromised by multiple errors of spelling, dates and facts. If it is allowed that Christensen had opportunity, then it follows that a credible motive must be proposed. The present writer is unable to propose a credible motive which explains why Christensen might relate a self-incriminating and false story of a scandalous nature to three strangers (Consul Ford, Inspector Ward, PS. Brewer).

The attribution to Christensen is made by the prime suspect, the Metropolitan Police, and the attribution cannot be verified externally. Therefore, Christensen would be a secondary suspect only by virtue of the prime suspect's attribution which rests entirely on the word of the prime suspect.

It is now necessary to distinguish between the falsity of the Montevideo story itself and the falsity of the attribution. It is clear that the attribution is effected by means of a lengthy first person narrative purportedly spoken by Christensen but prepared by the police and completed some twelve days after the interview in Philadelphia. Analysis of that narrative demonstrates that the sentences were not spoken by Christensen but were created in London, probably but not certainly by Inspector Ward. The error made by the police was to use first person rather than third person; quite simply the author/s lacked the literary skills to create a convincing first person narrative in the voice of another person. If Ward was the author, he knew very well that the sentences in his narrative were not genuine first person sentences spoken by Christensen. Since those sentences are invented, it follows that they are falsely attributed with the result that there is *no evidence* that Christensen said anything about Montevideo.

Since both the story and the attribution in the police papers are false, it follows that there are no grounds for considering

Christensen to be a secondary suspect for the invention of the Montevideo story. The Metropolitan Police is the prime and only suspect.

One commentator on this episode has claimed that Christensen refused to sign the alleged Statement. This is false. Christensen was not asked to sign any Statement because no Statement was presented to him at the interview and the report does not record any such presentation and refusal. The alleged Statement was typed in Scotland Yard and was never seen by Christensen in Philadelphia. It is, therefore, not a Statement and is evidentially worthless.

In order to locate the origin of the Montevideo story, the following must be considered. There is an unsigned and undated document in Casement's handwriting in NLI among the Dr. Charles Curry Papers (Ms. 17,023). This consists of two pages, the second containing only a few lines. Here is the complete text:

"When I first met Sir Roger Casement I am sure he never thought he would ever again meet the Norwegian sailor he had helped, as he has surely helped many others who were in similar trouble.

I had run away from my ship at a South American port, as many sailors do and after wandering around for a bit I got so hungry and tired that I did not know where to turn.

I could not go to the Norwegian Consul for I was a deserter and liable as such to punishment and I had no claim on any other Consulate.

But I wanted to get to work again and so I thought I would try the British Consulate, where there are always many sailors engaged and wanted. I had no discharge papers from my last ship and so they would not take me."

From the narrative tone and verbal economy this appears to be the start of a projected press article to be published under Christensen's name as his own account of events and Casement probably intended it to include details of the Findlay episode. There is, however, no evidence that it was ever completed or published and the pages, along with other papers, were entrusted to Dr. Charles Curry in Germany until they were deposited in NLI.

Since the proposed article remained unfinished in Germany, it remained unknown to British Intelligence. Nonetheless, two essential aspects in those pages appeared in Ward's report of June 1916: Christensen jumping ship in a South American port city and then meeting Casement. There is only one explanation of how these aspects re-appeared in the false Montevideo story. Christensen himself answered Ward's

question about how and when he had first encountered Casement. This would be a very reasonable opening question in such an interview and it is unthinkable that Ward did not ask it. And Christensen's ingenuous response corresponded to the basic content of the incomplete article. Thus in 1916 the police and then MI5 learned that Christensen had met Casement long before the already known meeting on Broadway in 1914. And from this hitherto unknown information the Montevideo story was fabricated. The police report omitted the original reference to the British Consulate.

The un-named port could be Santos or Rio de Janeiro or Pará. Casement was in Santos from October 1906 to June 1907. He was in Pará March 1908 to November 1908 and in Rio from March 1909 to March 1910. All were busy ports. If the ten year period is correct, the encounter took place in Santos sometime between mid October 1906 and the end of June 1907. From the text of the incomplete article, it can be understood that Casement helped Christensen in some practical way. As a consul Casement often helped people in difficulty and, since his three postings in Brazil were in busy port cities, those in difficulty were frequently sailors. His correspondence from Santos complains of having to deal with sailors: "...an impossible task as the men get drunk and come ashore and desert in shoals and the place is a pandemonium" (Letter to Mary Hutton, 24 October, 1906, NLI Ms. 8612).

Christensen later recalled the earlier meeting because, though he was not a British subject, Casement, a stranger, had helped him. And exactly because "he has surely helped many others who were in similar trouble", Casement had forgotten the encounter after so many years. Therefore the 1914 meeting in NY would be a coincidence for Christensen but not for Casement.

As an example of manufactured evidence, the Montevideo story did not strictly require the link to von Nordenflycht. The FO knew that the German diplomat had been based in Montevideo and that Casement was a friend from 1909 onwards. Ward (or his CID colleagues) took a risk in choosing Montevideo only because Nordenflycht had been posted there in the years just before the war.

Professor Andrew knows better than ordinary mortals that the *raison d'être* of secret services is secrecy and deception. It is unthinkable that he, an expert on Intelligence, genuinely believes in the veracity of the alleged Statement which

is unsigned and without probative value. Perhaps he felt that pretending to believe it was a risk worth taking. After all, *audacter calumniare, semper aliquid haerat*. We must therefore thank him for revealing it and, by so doing, unwittingly exposing police duplicity in yet one more example of manufactured evidence.

The Philadelphia exercise, although hopelessly incompetent and bungled, is nevertheless yet another clear example that both police and Intelligence services were prepared to *manufacture evidence* in their frenzied determination to destroy Casement *before* the trial. However, the deeper significance of this manufactured evidence emerges only if we ask why the police fabricated the evidence when they allegedly held the diaries which made such elaborate fabrication utterly unnecessary. From this it follows that the need to fabricate reveals itself as evidence of the falsity of the diaries.

APPENDIX

Alfred Ward was a highly-regarded detective, having solved several high profile crimes and reaching the rank of Chief Detective Inspector. He joined the police at age 21 on 27th December 1887 (Warrant number 73106), and served for 29 years until he was killed in a Zeppelin raid on 25th September 1916.

Ward travelled from Liverpool with P.S. Brewer on the S.S. Cameronia of the Anchor-Cunard Line, arriving in NY on 22nd May. His passenger ID was 610144120113. It is an indication of the priority given to the prosecution of Casement that two police officers were sent on a dangerous two-week round trip across the Atlantic in wartime without even the certainty of meeting Christensen. That the S.S. Cameronia was sunk by a U-boat in April 1917 is evidence of the danger. In the event, Ward returned from Philadelphia with little of use to the DPP and most of it already known to MI5.

Paul Hyde

Photographs, Photostats and Typescripts

In his piece *Casement and Photographic Evidence* (*Irish Political Review*, 2019 Dec, p.15) Jack Lane related how "I went to the trouble of revisiting the Casement Trial and rediscovered that photographs were a key part of the Prosecution Exhibits, put forward as evidence. That can only highlight the point that Hyde makes."

He went on to comment with regard to the bound diary volumes: "But, mysteriously, the CID made no photographs of them." Further he said: "There is only one rational explanation for the complete absence of CID photographs of the bound diary volumes allegedly held in police custody!"

A key point he was making was that there was no photograph taken by the RIC in County Kerry of the bound volumes, as there were no bound volumes to be seen there after Casement had landed.

Nobody today would challenge this, no matter how they would conceive of the authenticity question.

Banna strand

F.E. Smith, prosecuting counsel at Casement's trial, did say in his 1926 book *Famous Trials of History* that the "diary" came ashore with Casement at Banna Strand in April 1916. However, Sir Basil Thomson, head of Special Branch, Metro-

politan Police, also, in contrast to Smith's claim, related how he was the diary-finder and that the discovery was made among Casement's effects in London. To back up his claim, he wrote up a number of accounts of the finding in various publications and in books he wrote down the years, all mutually contradictory.

Happily, the glaring inconsistency of two rival discovery locations has been resolved for the best part of a century. This is thanks to the simple device of the most dubious location having been forgotten about and ignored. So, you will find no approving reference to the County Kerry discovery in any pro-authenticity writer since the onset of the 1930s.

There were no photographs of the diary or diaries made about the vicinity of Banna Strand because none were found there and nobody today claims otherwise. So this absence of photographs has absolutely nothing to do with the point Hyde has attempted to make that the bound volumes did not exist about the time of Casement's arrest and before his execution.

Jack Lane has innocently accorded too much significance to the written claims of Lord Birkenhead/F.E. Smith made very many years ago. Established Casement Diaries Dogma, it is advisable to under-

stand, never remains permanently fixed. Old material can disappear without trace from the established canon often just as the new bubbles to the surface.

CONFRONTED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

Lane claimed in his piece regarding the Diary volumes: “*But, mysteriously, the CID made no photographs of them. Instead the Metropolitan Police went to the trouble of creating lengthy typescripts – which we are told are copied extracts from the unseen diaries.*”

Can this be true?

We have archival evidence to the contrary. In correspondence between the Home Office and the Foreign Office and The British Embassy in Washington there are references to photographs of diary pages. Note: “*two photos of specimen pages of the Diary ... They will help him to convince anyone to whom he may show the copies that the diary is not a fake or forgery.*” – (Earnley Blackwell, legal adviser to Home Office to Montgomery in Foreign Office, 25 July 1916, Foreign Office Archives, TNA FO 395/43)

According to a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement*, of 18th April 1936 from Shane Leslie, who had been on the staff of the Washington Embassy at the relevant time, “*Photographs (of pages of the Diary) were sent to the late Ambassador, Sir Cecil Spring Rice, in Washington, and he, in duty bound, showed them to American journalists.*”

A secret telegram to the British naval attaché in Washington, Captain Guy Gaunt, of 29th June 1916 went: “*Photographic facsimile & transcript of Casement’s diary of which you have, no doubt, already heard is being sent to America by today’s mail. Person receiving it will communicate with you when it arrives.*” (Foreign Office Archive - TNA FO 395/43)

According to the first biography of Casement in English:

“...The story was most skillfully put into circulation that Casement had for years led a life of gross perverted immorality, and that Scotland Yard had in its possession a diary in his own handwriting, which consisted of a detailed account of indecent experiences in London and Paris and Putumayo. It seemed incredible that anyone but a lunatic could have kept such a diary. But those who expressed doubts were at once confronted with photographs of which many copies must apparently have been made...” (*The Life and Death of Roger Casement*, (1930), pp 17, Denis Gwynn).

It is worth bearing in mind that this was written only fifteen years after the events in question, when there were still plenty of individuals about who could relate credibly what they had witnessed or what others of their acquaintance had witnessed.

A biography by Geoffrey Parmiter, six years later also referred to the showing of photos. So also did the investigative study *The Forged Casement Diaries* by Dr. W.J. Maloney (1936).

A further point: if, as Lane suggests, there were no photographs made by the CID and displayed, then why was this curious fact not reported and remarked upon way back in the relevant historical era?

COMMON SENSE

The Department of Naval Intelligence, from its perspective, sought to undermine the campaign to have the death sentence commuted. As well, it aimed to discredit Casement as a traitor who went over to the side of the Germans. Along with that it sought to bolster British war fighting morale and also to discredit Irish revolutionary nationalism.

If the surreptitious strategy to discredit Casement were definitively exposed as a deceit, there would have been catastrophic consequences from the viewpoint of the British Imperial interest. The drive for clemency would have become a clamour. The prestige of Casement would again soar, in Britain and worse still in America. For Britain had a long-term aim of involving America directly in the war.

To base an allegation of an obscene diary upon typed transcripts without the backup of corresponding handwritten pages would have been to flirt with potential disaster. Captain Reginald Hall was daring but he was not reckless. He could not have risked carrying out a bluff which could so easily have been called.

All that was necessary was for a canny individual to intuit what was afoot. They might select a few typescript paragraphs at random and demand to see, within a matter of an hour, corresponding photostat copies of handwritten pages. If the pages failed to materialize, the whole game would have come unstuck. With the technology of that era a photostat, which corresponds to a modern photocopy, took a mere four minutes to produce.

The use of typescripts without corresponding handwritten text would not have been a practical approach. The risk of being found out was too great. Such a gamble was too great to be justified. So, we can reason, as we are contemplating the conduct of first-rate professionals, it could not have happened.

WERE PHOTOGRAPHS OF TYPESCRIPTS?

In Paul Hyde’s *Anatomy of a Lie*, Chapter 7 *Invisible evidence* (p.113), it is claimed the photographs sent to US Ambassador Page were photographs of typescript pages of the 1911 diary. I do

not wish to repeat what I have already said in relation to this matter in earlier contributions to this discussion.

However, I wish to add that the state-of-the-art technology of the Great War period in relation to the reproduction of typed text involved the photostat machine. This produced a black and white copy in about four minutes which approximated in quality to a modern photocopy. Handwritten documents could also be reproduced using this technology. Reproductions of very high definition would still need to be done using close-up photography. Yet, high-definition reproductions would only conceivably be required of unique handwritten personal documents, artistic works or some highly complex technical drawings. There was no technical sense in making photographs of typescripts during this era as suggested in the book in relation to the case of the US Ambassador.

The production of photographs involved taking the pictures, extracting the film, developing and drying the negatives, all of which will take at very least half an hour. The prints have to be made using a device known as an enlarger and the employment of trays of chemicals. They then have to be dried which will take a number of hours. All of this has to be done in a specialised photo-laboratory known as a darkroom. Such a time-consuming and costly procedure would not be justified to reproduce a number of typed pages when a so much more convenient procedure was to hand.

I hope this serves to clarify matters.

Tim O’Sullivan

Due to pressure of space,

Part Two of

**The so-called
‘Treaty’ and the
so-called ‘Civil War**

has been held over to the

February issue,

as has the INDEX for the

Irish Political Review

for 2019

An Imagined Nation

A West Cork History Festival was organised by a local millionaire three years ago. Its opening session was launched by Professor Roy Foster of Oxford University. Professor Foster told the audience that the millionaire founder of the Festival, Simon Kingston, was a very important person in the world of academia, particularly the academic world of Oxford and Cambridge.

In his Address Professor Foster made reference to Charles Haughey as “*an ex-Provo gun-runner*”. The Festival was attended by some members of the Aubane History Society in North Cork. One of them, in the brief discussion period following Professor Foster’s Address, took issue with his characterisation of Haughey, pointing out that he had been subjected to trial on the charge of illegal importation of guns and had been found Not Guilty.

At the end of that opening session Mr. Kingston suggested to the Aubane members that they were out of place at the Festival and should think about leaving it. They took the hint and left the Festival to mull over a kind of history in which facts were an unwelcome intrusion. Their account of the opening session was published in this journal in August 2017. Its accuracy has not been disputed by Mr. Kingston, Professor Foster, or anybody else.

Haughey was a senior Government Minister in 1970 when, without warning, he was dismissed from the Government by the Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, and Lynch launched a prosecution against him for illegal importation of arms. Haughey was subjected to trial and found Not Guilty. The Fianna Fail Government, supported by the Fine Gael Opposition and by the Labour Party, dismissed the jury verdict as perverse. It was suggested that a nationalist jury, flying in the face of the evidence, had declared him Not Guilty precisely because he was guilty.

It later came to light that there was a disproportionately high number of Protestants on the jury, indicating that, if there was an attempt at jury-rigging it was on the other side.

The official Court Transcript of the

proceedings of the Trial went ‘missing’. Angela Clifford reassembled the aspects of the Trial that were in the public domain by collating the newspaper reports of it. It appeared from this that no other verdict could possibly have been brought, in the light of the evidence submitted, than *Not Guilty*. The academic world beholden to the Government took no heed. Professor Foster did nothing unusual when he ignored the Court verdict. All that was unusual was the dismissing of historical facts at a History Festival.

But Oxford now seems to have decided that at least this incident in recent Irish history must be put on a factual basis, and the service rendered by Angela Clifford to authenticity in history is acknowledged in a recent Oxford University Press publication, *A Treatise On Northern Ireland* by Prof. Brendan O’Leary, Volume 2.

It is ideologically awkward for Professor Foster that criticism of his treatment of history which he is unable to ignore comes from the wrong side—not from stick-in-the-mud Anti-Partitionist Catholic nationalists, but from two-nationists on the North, who also pioneered rational consideration of Church/State issues in the Republic half a century ago.

He is overloaded with official approval by the regime that was set in motion by the failed prosecution of Haughey, and that became dominant ideologically despite its failure at law. He supplied it with the general historical obfuscation it required and it has rewarded him. But, in totalitarian spirit, he is irritated by an obscure group that dares to publish coherent, fact-based criticism of him. He cannot bask in his glory and take no heed of those “*sixpenny papers that none of us ever see*”—as Redmond did with the small-circulation Republican publications of 1914.

He is irritated, but what can he do without making things worse? He invents facts. He told a public meeting in Dublin, at which nobody from Aubane was present, that Aubane had described

his wife as “*a Castle Catholic*”. That made Aubane a source of Catholic and nationalist bigotry for that particular audience. When later asked by Aubane for a source for that accusation, he did not reply.

In one of his books there is a purely fictitious account of what was supposedly said by Jack Lane and myself at a Conference on Hubert Butler held at Kilkenny. He was not present at that session of the Conference. I had agreed to take part in it only because I was assured that there would be a record of the proceedings. Following the publication of Foster’s comprehensively false account of what I said, I wrote to the organisers asking to see the record of the Conference. The reply was that no record of it had been kept. Foster’s account of it was therefore based on maliciously ignorant gossip. (I give him the credit of assuming he did not invent it himself.)

Following that experience I decided to keep well away from any possibility of coming into contact with further Anglo-Irish chicanery. And I was also stimulated to find out more about Hubert Butler, towards whom I had felt vaguely sympathetic. I found that his driving force was anti-Catholic bigotry, and that his writings on the Balkans and Germany should not be taken on trust.

Foster himself was an established English historian before he turned to Irish history. He would never have been a major English historian but he was established as a niche historian with a biography of Lord Randolph Churchill, published by Oxford University Press in 1981, and re-issued as a paperback a couple of years later.

Lord Randolph was an interesting failure with a ruling class background, who darted about in various directions within the loose party politics of the 1880s, when politics in Ireland were still part of British politics. Foster, with his Anglo-Irish world-view, was at ease in that region. There was no ‘revisionism’ in his approach to it, no debunking of the narrative of Destiny into a fairy-tale. And I do not recall any mention of Sir Charles Dilke’s boast in *Greater Britain* that the Anglo-Saxons were *the greatest extirpating race known to history*.

(Dilke, a very eminent Liberal contemporary of Tory Democrat Churchill, wrote a convincing account of the

world as being composed of “*dear*” peoples and “*cheap*” peoples, in which the former did what it pleased with the latter. *Greater Britain* is out of print, but its ideas are not out of date. It remains an accurate description of the world as it is beneath the humbug.)

Lord Randolph is remembered for his notion of “*Tory Democracy*”, his slogan *Ulster Will Fight, And Ulster Will Be Right!*, but most of all because he was the father of his son, Sir Winston—“*the greatest teller of fairy-tales in the 20th century*”, to quote the notorious answer given in a radio quiz programme broadcast from Belfast during the 2nd World War. (And Sir Winston would not have denied it. He said frankly that Britain could do just as it pleased in the War because the victor would write the history of it, and he set about making up the story that would be told about it, even as the Russians were doing the fighting that defeated Nazi Germany and the Americans were doing the fighting that withheld Western Europe from the Russians who had broken the German military power.

Sir Winston’s *History* is a skilfully woven combination of Von Rankean objectivity and a fairy story. If it is read with attention to detail, and with memory that is not carried away by rhetoric, it says that Britain made a complete mess of its victory in the 1914 War, and that the 1939 War was an unnecessary war brought about by its own policy from 1919 to 1939, not a war that was forced on it by circumstances beyond its control. At the same time it told to the great mass of British readers, who were in need of a fairy tale, the story that they wanted to hear.

But this is off the point. The myths of English history are sacred to Foster, the Anglo-Irish being more English than the English. In the Anglo-sphere he is a believer. He was an orthodox English historian when he was called upon to produce a ‘revisionist’ history of Ireland for the Government. And he had no practice at revision properly so-called, not having questioned the sacred beliefs of English history, and not having Irish history in his make-up as he had English.

What could nationalist Ireland be to Anglo-Ireland except the consequence of a colony that unaccountably missed its destiny—a colony gone wrong? But the story could not be written overtly in those terms.

There is an English historian of England’s lost colonies: Toby Barnard. When writing on the lost colonies in Ireland, Barnard does not purport to be writing as an Irish historian, and therefore he does not need to resort to ideological contortions. But Foster had to write as if he was an Irish historian, rather than England’s “*cleverest Irish historian*” (Robert Kee’s description).

It has been suggested that Kee was not actually praising Foster for being clever but was using the word in the sense of ‘Smart Alec’, and was saying that he had been too clever by half with his complete negation of the Irish attempt at historical political existence. It would have been prudent to leave some scrap to them as authentic. Depriving them of everything could provoke them into asserting themselves forcefully as being something. It would be more advisable for Britain to allow them to have been something, and ‘help’ them to shape that something, than to rubbish them entirely and possibly stimulate them to become something against British disapproval.

But I have not seen the source of the Kee quotation, that appears as a blurb on Foster’s *The Irish Story*. All I know of Kee is that he was a television journalist who made some programmes on the ‘Troubles’ in the 1970s and made books of them. I glanced at one of these books. It told me that Sinn Fein had won the 1918 Election on a minority vote, and that a large percentage of the votes it got were gained by fraud in the form of mass personation. I looked up the record and found it was true that it did not get an overall majority of the votes cast. But the reason was that in a quarter of the Constituencies there was no voting because nobody stood against Sinn Fein. And, with regard to “*personation*”, if it was possible on a large scale, that could only mean that the Constituency organisation of the Home Rule Party had collapsed and had no effective presence at the polling booths.

The whole thing was a red herring and I assume that Kee knew it.

I don’t think I ever read a book on Irish history until I was in my thirties. My schooling, such as it was, ended as I entered my teens. What I knew about Ireland was what everybody knew through just growing up in Slieve Luacra in the 1940s and 1950s. In Belfast around 1970 I looked for books to explain the strange structure of Northern Ireland to me. I

couldn’t find any. So I read the papers, which were conveniently available in the Shankill Road, the Newspaper Library and the Linenhall Library. And what I found out from the papers did not tally with the books that began to appear from the Universities.

I had read much about German, French and Russian history. And I had read about the “*Stalin School of Falsification*”. I could see that there was streamlining, and the knocking off of awkward edges in the official Soviet account of the Soviet Revolution, the *Short Course In The History Of The CPSU (B)*, but it did not purport to be a dispassionate account of the past, and neither did it contradict the actual course of events leading to the present, in which it was a programmatic policy document.

But, with regard to Northern Ireland, the academic histories half a century after its establishment comprehensively misrepresented both how it had come about and what it was.

It was a Whitehall imposition on the Six Counties in which a majority had insisted that it would not be made part of either an Irish Home Rule Government or an Irish state. The Ulster Unionist demand was to be excluded from the Home Rule Bill and be governed as a regular part of the British state system. The Unionist leader explained at length why it would be a bad thing to set up a local system, unique in the UK, in which a Protestant majority would be required to govern a large Catholic minority. And the Nationalist community did not ask for a local Protestant Government to be set up between itself and Westminster, cutting it off from the Government of the state. But that was what Westminster decided to do. The Six Counties were made into a disenfranchised enclave outside the democracy of the state. It could only work as the governing (in the sense of policing) of the Catholic community by the Protestant community. And that led to the War.

But that is not the story one gets in the academic histories.

And when war did break out the Dublin Government was somehow persuaded that the cause of it was the way history was taught in the Southern schools and colleges, rather than the undemocratic, sectarian, Six County system within the British state. And the Government set in motion a movement of denigration of its own history, under the delusion that this would bring about

peace in the North and Irish unity.

The chief work of denigration was Foster's *Modern Ireland*. Professor David Fitzpatrick, an Australian with a family grudge against Nationalist Ireland, who was given a post of administrative authority (which Foster never had), set in motion the writing a false narrative of Irish history, in place of Foster's disparagement of narrative. But Fitzpatrick's positively false narrative was a step too far, and his chief agent, Peter Hart, seems to have fallen into disrepute, after being hailed in the first instance as a Liberator by the History Department of Cork University.

Edmund Burke remarked somewhere; I think in the *Regicide Peace* (the closest thing to "*political science*" ever produced) that there are states, or nations, which cannot bear the weight of their own history. He called them "*truckling states*" as far as I remember. And he said their destiny was to be woven into the destiny of others.

It never occurred to me, as an unreconstructed product of life in Slieve Luachra, that the Irish fell into that category. But, if Cork University in the hands of Dermot Keogh is taken to be representative of the nation, it can hardly be denied that they do. And the West Cork History Festival is conducted on the assumption that they have done.

A West Cork History Festival might have been expected to be a celebration of the work of the *Bantry Band*, and especially of the writings of the historian A.M. Sullivan and the poet T.D. Sullivan. Mr. Kingston's Festival, however, made no mention of either of the Sullivans or of the Bantry Band. His West Cork seems to be a parallel country situated in the same territory—a country of holiday homes in which the busy and successful and wealthy citizens of another world found rest and relaxation amid a simple peasantry. It was Tir na nOg, and the Lake Isle of Innisfree combined and transplanted and commercialised. It was apparently seen as a site on which West Briticising Fianna Fail could establish a counter-offensive against the de-Britishising effects of Brexit.

The word "*palimpsest*" was hijacked by academics and social scientists some time ago as a useful figure of speech which enabled politically awkward conclusions to be evaded. A new figure of speech was enough to make a reputation.

· Biteback · Biteback · Biteback · Biteback · Biteback · Biteback · Biteback · Biteback

Unpublished Letter to *Irish Times* (27 November 2019)

Ryan Commission 'embarrassing' statistical error

More than one statistical problem affects the 2009 Commission to Investigate Child Abuse (CICA): report (Simon Carswell, 'Ryan report not 'undermined' by error', 27th November). **I alerted CICA last year [2018] to its four-fold inflation of numbers of children in industrial schools, that resulted in Monday's 'embarrassing' correction.**

The report says nothing about abuse in Smyly's orphanages or in any other Protestant ethos institution, that CICA should have investigated. That may be because, as far as I am aware, few (if any) Smyly's victims spoke to CICA. Such victims thought, following the dominant societal and media narrative, the Commission a "Catholic thing" or "for Catholics".

My evidence is anecdotal. Why don't we know for sure? As I pointed out on the report's tenth anniversary last May, CICA reported testimony from 1,500 former residents but not how many from each institution. Institutional case studies were decided upon on the basis of testimony from over 20 former residents of an institution. However accurate and harrowing individual testimonies, this self-selection methodology distorted the overall picture.

Within a state-licensed sectarian system of welfare provision, one side of the sectarian fence was not investigated. As a consequence, confirmed persistent abuse in Smyly's institutions did not feature in media reports. It is not a topic of political conversation or within Protestant church communities. In this way, fate has smiled on Smyly's, if not on Artane, Goldenbridge and Letterfrack.

The problem is not confined to CICA. Those permitted to tell the Commission their story were required first to have been resident in an institution named on the Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB) schedule.

Unlike with CICA, Protestant ethos abuse victims spoke to the RIRB. But the RIRB, in turn, refuses also to provide an institutional breakdown for the 15,581 people it compensated. In addition the RIRB refuses to state how much compensation, per institution, was paid to victims.

As a result, we don't know how much Smyly's abuse cost the taxpayer. Furthermore, unlike Roman Catholic Religious Orders, the Church of Ireland ethos Smyly's institution did not contribute to the state's controversial abuse compensation fund. That Roman Catholic money funds Caranua that helps abuse victims, some from Smyly's.

CICA and the RIRB gave me unsatisfactory excuses for refusal to publish missing information. The relevant minister could and should order its production. If reluctant, the Taoiseach or, failing him, the Dáil should instruct that it be produced.

Niall Meehan

The word was originally used to describe a piece of writing on a page in which a previous piece of writing had been erased, but later was more generally used to describe a painting on a canvas in which an earlier painting had been painted over, but with which it had not merged, and from it could be excavated by chipping away the top layer of paint. West Cork might be described as a palimpsest of three or four layers. But the word can only be applied very loosely to a functional society because the successive layers do not remain separate from each other but fuse into the culture of the present moment.

In 1795 John Foster, the 'Patriotic'

Speaker of the Irish Parliament, was of the opinion that "*the mass of the papists feel themselves unconcerned in the question*". The question referred to was what to do about the Papists. Foster thought that, though they were the bulk of the population, they had no public sense of themselves. As far as politics was concerned, it was as if they did not exist. The thing to do was to let them be in their apathy, and suppress the mischief-makers who pretended to be acting on their behalf.

I don't know what West Cork was then, but whatever it was it ceased to be it with the 'Famine', and the emergence of the Bantry Band, when it became coherently national.

With the national development, the Sullivans set themselves against Fenianism as the general mode of development. They established a Constitutional alternative to it within the British system, while at the same time preserving in memorable verse the Fenian spirit of rejection of the Constitution as Imperialist and repressive.

As between Constitutionalism and Fenianism there is not 'right' and 'wrong'. It all depends on circumstances. The Sullivans did not think that in the circumstances of the 1850s much progress could be made in the form of military conspiracy, but neither did they assert that the end, national independence, could be achieved with it.

They gave priority to social and political reform by use of the means provided by the Imperial system but, when the Fenians made an attempt by other means, they celebrated it in verse. "*God Save Ireland*" was a celebration within the Constitutional movement of what the English called "*murder*".

The relationship of the Bantry Band with Britain was equivocal—but so was its relationship with the Fenians.

The Sullivans were land reformers. If the landlord gentry could be reformed out of existence, leaving behind them a society of 'peasant' owners of property, then that was the thing to do. But the Fenians saw land reform both as a distraction from military organisation, and, if successful, as the removal of a grievance which generated national feeling. And the best-known of the Fenians, Charles Kickham, did not relish the prospect of a peasant society without gentry. He wanted the landlords to behave better and thought they could be brought to do so. This is clear from his novel, *Knocknagow*, which (unlike *Ulysses*) was both famous and widely read for many generations, until it was junked (along with Canon Sheehan's Fenianist *Graves At Kilmorna*) in the re-indoctrination ordered by Jack Lynch's Fianna Fail, after Lynch's nerve broke on the North in the early 1970s.

(The Fenian suspicion of land reform was shared by the ultra-Constitutionalist Redmondite Home Rulers in their response to William O'Brien's 1903 *Land Act*.)

The Bantry Band became Parnellite for a season, without being creatures of Parnell.

In 1910 West Cork took part in the general Co. Cork repudiation of Redmondism as a Catholic Ascendancy aberration within the Home Rule movement. (Cork University, which might now be defined as an anti-Aubane institution, seems to be intent on writing that All-For-Ireland phase of development out of the historical record.)

In 1914 Redmond destroyed the Home Rule movement by putting it at the disposal of the British Empire for its wars of destruction on Germany and Turkey. Constitutionalism became the entry-point to a slaughter-house. The moment for Fenianism arrived.

The circumstances under which tens of thousands were sent off to the trenches and the shores of Gallipoli made it possible for an Irish Army to be raised openly, drilled, and prepared to make war on the warmongers.

A disciplined Irish Army took the field for the first time in two centuries and a quarter. It was defeated in a week-long battle. When defeated it surrendered formally in the old-fashioned way—but was not accorded prisoner-of-war status in the old-fashioned way. Britain was discarding old-fashioned way of war and was pioneering total, or totalitarian, war—in which unconditional surrender was the only thing.

The impact of an Irish Army marching into the centre of the second city of the Empire in broad daylight and taking it over was shocking. It was the thing that could not happen. And things could never be the same again because it did happen.

When the long-delayed Election eventually came along in 1918, the Irish voted as they had never voted before. They voted for an independence party to stay at home from London and govern Ireland. And the core of that party was the "*conciliationist*" movement which had dissented from Redmondism in 1910. The Redmondites did not even field candidates in the Constituencies they had lost in 1910.

The Sinn Fein MPs constituted themselves into a national Parliament in Dublin. That Parliament declared independence and set up a Government. The handful of Redmondites did not attend the national Parliament but went to Westminster. Westminster at first took no official notice of the fact that it had lost the Election in Ireland by a

landslide. It tried to continue governing Ireland, trusting that the Irish would 'come to their senses', meaning the sense of their own incompetence—referred to by Foster. When the Irish showed signs of coming to a very different sense of things, Westminster declared that the Irish Parliament and Government were illegal and set about abolishing them.

(The great slogan of the Great War was "*the self-determination of nations*". The British Prime Minister did not explain until 1921 that, in the case of the British Empire, self-determination was conditional on the agreement of the Imperial Power and had unconditional application only with regard to peoples in the Empires destroyed by the British Empire.

The attempt of the British Government to continue governing Ireland as if nothing had changed proved a vain endeavour as Local Government election results confirmed the General Election result. The democratic Local Government Councils transferred allegiance from Dublin Castle to Dail Government. All this led to war, but war of a different kind from that of 1916.

In 1916 an Irish Army had appeared in battle-dress to assert national independence, under circumstances in which electorally-based government had been suspended by Britain. In 1919 there was an elected Irish Government, but a Government without an Army drawn up in battle-formation for Britain to defeat. It was a merely Constitutional Government—a Government resting on mere Constitutional right.

If the will of the populace, expressed electorally, was the source of Right, then the Irish Government was based on Right. And, if a well-established national body-politic had no right to establish independent government without the consent of an Imperial Power that had conquered it and held it by force, then the British slogan that had raised scores of thousands of Irish recruits for the wars on Germany and Turkey was a piece of nonsense for fooling the simple-minded.

Sir Charles Townshend has made fun of those Irish of 1919 who thought that, in basing a Government on Rights proclaimed by the Imperial Power for the purpose of waging world war, they were basing it on a real foundation. If they did not understand that, in the real world as shaped by Britain, Right is an expression of Might, then they were fools who could not be trusted with the conduct of a State.

But what is Might in this connection? Is it only the offensive power of a regular Army?

MacSwiney saw a capacity for endurance as a form of power. If the Irish, having decided to form their own state, endured in support of it, despite the punishment which the English felt free—under the international circumstances of the time—to inflict, then they would win. And that is really how it was.

Imagination is of the greatest importance in these things. Not imagination in the trivial sense of *Imagined Nations* introduced into English propaganda a generation ago and copied in Irish academia by Professor Comerford's *Imagined Ireland*, but in the sense of what a people can see itself doing.

England overawed Irish imagination for a couple of centuries by the sheer vigour, military and political, of its Protestant Imperialism, with regard to both this world and the next. It disabled them in this world but failed with regard to the next. And, whether that next world exists in a mundane sense or not, it is an ineradicable factor in the life of this world. The cosmic vision of Calvin, Cranmer and Knox was not to the Irish taste. Not many of them took to it, even when it was a way—and the only way—of getting a political foothold in this world. And, because they were incorrigible, their continuing existence had to be taken notice of, and they had to be allowed certain secular powers in this world on their own terms. But until 1916 they could not, in the mass, see themselves as governing themselves in their own state. Independence was only a dream. Small groups of bolder spirits flirted with it conspiratorially before gravitating towards the British-centred Constitutional movement.

It was only when that Constitutional movement, at the peak of its power, plunged the people into a war that was not their war, that an Irish Army capable of fighting a war in Ireland against the Imperial Government, and conducting it in open battle, that independence became imaginable.

When it was voted for in 1918, and the Home Rule movement withered, it became the *status quo* in the state of mind of the populace. It became what was predestined—not by some prophet seeing visions but by the common understanding of the people who had voted for it. And that shift in common understanding made

the old world—the world of a few years back—incomprehensible.

The academic notion of the Imagined Nation is trivial. At best it is pedantic.

The nation had long been a passive subject, in one sense of the word “*subject*”. In 1916-18 it became an active subject in another sense of the word “*subject*”, and became incapable of imagining itself back into subordination under pressure of a combination of condescending flattery and harassment by the Imperial Power.

The task England set itself in nationalist Ireland in 1919 was unachievable. The 1918 Election had a profound effect on the electorate, even if the Mother of Parliaments took no heed of it.

It was, of course, a very unusual Election. The electors did not choose between parties wanting to govern a state. What was at issue was whether a state should be established. Sinn Fein was mandated to establish a state. The Home Rule Party wrote off a great swathe of the country to Sinn Fein and, where it did stand, did not campaign clearly in support of continuing British sovereignty.

It then rejected the overwhelming mandate of the electorate for the formation of an Irish state by boycotting the Dail and taking its handful of MPs back to Westminster. Then, in the 1921 Election, it did not field any candidates against Sinn Fein on a programme of disestablishing the state which had been set up—even though it still did not recognise Irish sovereignty.

In 1921-2 England conceded something in the nature of an Irish state to a Sinn Fein group organised by Collins, doing so in a way that was designed to break up the Sinn Fein Party. It did not make a Treaty with the Dail Government. It never recognised the Dail in any shape or form. It made a deal with Collins, who acted independently of the Dail Government and against its instructions.

In setting up what is called the *Treaty Government*, Collins acted on behalf of a fictitious body called the ‘Parliament of Southern Ireland’, which had reality only in British law. The matter was then put to the Dail,

which had the choice of accepting it or being brushed away by a British reconquest. It bowed to that ultimatum by a majority of 64 to 57.

This, in Dail terms, was a vote to dismantle the Government it had formed in 1919. In the British view the Republican Dail was a bit of pretentious Irish nonsense, and that was also how Collins treated it. He had clearly decided to take affairs into his own hands as a purposeful man of action, handle them in the light of what he considered realities, and pay no heed to Dail Constitutional formalities.

B

ut things fell apart in his hands. The ‘realities’ on which his *realpolitik* was based proved to be brittle. And the Constitutional formalities of the Dail system did not prove to be mere illusions.

These are serious matters in Skibbereen, where I found myself, by some kind of mistake as I saw it, addressing a meeting last August, held in rivalry with the Kingston Festival.

Collins is the man there. But so is Tom Barry. And yet Collins and Barry were antagonists in the ‘Civil War’, launched by Collins in July 1922.

Brendan Clifford

To be Continued



Email weekend@theguardian.com or comment at theguardian.com by Monday noon for inclusion; see <http://gu.com/letters-terms>. To submit to A Letter to, email family@theguardian.com

The Guardian Weekend | 23 November 2019 3

Cowboys reading *Ulysses*?
(We are indebted to Niall Cusack for sending us this cartoon.)

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

Climate Change and the Environment

London Council has introduced a charge for polluting cars entering into a new Ultra-low Emission Zone (ULEZ). The charge is £12.50 for diesel cars over four years old and for petrol cars over thirteen years old. This charge is in addition to the existing Congestion Charge of £11.50 between 07:00 and 18:00, Monday to Friday. And so we have an additional layer of bureaucracy. The ULEZ scheme does not stack up because it is inconsistent with the Department of the Environment Test (DoE) already paid for by the car owner and which, among other things, tests each car for emissions. It must also be asked, what is so special about the ULEZ area—other than that the London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, suffers from asthma—that is not also special about the rest of the country?

Everybody everywhere will suffer from bad emissions and so, rather than being ageist—about the age of cars—should not all cars of whatever age, and including taxis, have to comply with a safe low level of emissions to be enforced through the annual DoE test? Otherwise the new ULEZ charges will look very like just another form of taxation and just another level of bureaucracy.

The really heavy polluters in London are the buses, coaches, big trucks, aeroplanes—and the biggest of all is the Underground. The Underground is the biggest user of electricity and electricity is, as presently generated, the dirtiest fuel of all. The accelerating and braking mechanisms on the Underground are unhealthy (and they smell unhealthy), and the fuel is dirty because it is made elsewhere in power stations fuelled by coal or heavy fuel oil or by atomic reaction which, over the lifetime of the power station, is the most dangerous and environmentally unfriendly of all.

The strange thing about the London traffic charges is that my twenty-year-old diesel Landrover, can travel freely around London because it seats twelve, according to its specifications. And any vehicle seating over nine people is treated as a

bus. Does this not prove that the collection of taxes under the guise of a ‘climate change’ charge is somewhat of a fraud, because the buses which are very heavy polluters are treated more favourably than cars? Avoidance of traffic congestion is a legitimate aim but ‘climate change’ is just an excuse for extra taxes which will fall directly on the poor because who can afford to buy new cars?

Governments do not believe in ‘climate change’ seriously; if they did, Government would take practical steps such as prohibiting the building of offices, homes and factories on lower levels of land which, according to climate change activists, will be flooded in the future. No practical steps are taken by Governments. They obviously agree with President Trump that climate change, if any, will not affect us. Not in our time, as President Trump says.

Chambers of Commerce

Historically in Ireland, Chambers of Commerce were established and set up as corporate bodies by groups of merchants with a view to protecting and promoting their commercial interests. The pattern of organisation was similar to Chambers of Commerce in the UK. Reading rooms were provided where members could meet, often on a daily basis, to exchange news and read newspapers and consult trade directories. Shipping news was important and export merchants could arrange with each other to make up cargoes for export. This led to the local Chamber of Commercés providing Carnets and Certificates of Origin for Customs and Excise purposes.

Many of these functions of Chambers of Commerce have disappeared due to changes in technology, and membership of the one customs union in the EU. Many Chambers of Commerce have changed their names by dropping the word “Commerce” from their titles and as such wish to refer to themselves as ‘The Chamber’ in a sort of grandiose way as if mere commerce is a lower class of word describing an activity that is beneath polite society.

It is true that nowadays many of the members are Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), or are registered charities, or are in Public Relations, or are Event Organisers and even Data Assembly companies. (Otherwise known as Data Miners, which is a semi-respectable form of hacking.) Incidentally the data-mining business is very secretive but recently a Court case brought the business into the daylight in Cork city. Momentarily! It was

soon glossed over. A case was brought before the Court by a man who believed he was wrongfully dismissed from his employment. He gave evidence that he was one of several hundred employees in a large office building in the city and that he was expected to read *one thousand emails an hour*.

This is a shocking revelation of what goes on in these new office blocks. If there are, say, two hundred employees at this activity gathering data from emails, that is 200,000 emails every hour, all day, every day. Whose emails are these? How is a company allowed to do this? However, the activities of its members are not questioned by the Chamber. Members may be solicitors, accountants, bankers, property developers, data miners or registered charities and the one common activity amongst them is they are all intent on accumulating money and as much of it as possible.

So the Chamber represents the interests of members by lobbying Government for or against new laws or changes in the law. And ‘Government’ here includes City Councils and County Councils, law enforcement agencies and so on. All grist to the mill. Throughout the year ‘The Chamber’ organises gatherings for members to meet each other and, in theory, to meet important speakers. (The speakers at events are usually cornered and monopolised by insiders on the committee before and after the event.)

The Annual Dinner is the big event of the year – the attendance at the Cork Chamber Annual Dinner is usually over 1,000 members and their guests. As well as members’ guests, the Chamber itself invites over seventy ‘President’s Guests’. This results in the ticket price of the dinner, including wine reception, being over €200 per person. However, as with most other things in life, the ticket price includes VAT for the State of about €25 and so the State gets about €25,000 in tax from the dinner, as well as free dinners for the guests who are mainly Government Ministers, TDs, County and City Councillors, Managers, Defence Forces—Army and Navy—Garda Superintendents and many guests whose value to the ordinary member is doubtful but who are no doubt useful contacts for the President and his/her Committee members.

Everyone must be kept onsite, and in that spirit there are usually two Bishops who pray grace before the dinner. One of the more important guests is, every year, the British Ambassador to Ireland. Currently, Mr. Robin Barnett is Britain’s

envoy. It is strange that there is no Ambassador from any other EU country nor from the EU itself! Were they invited? Or did they refuse?

One of the surprising arrangements at the Annual Dinner is that, although the ordinary members gather beforehand for a glass of wine or two in the Executive Reception Area, there is no attendance there of the 'President's Guests', whose dinners are paid for by the members but instead these free-meal important guests are corralled in the Lord Mayor's Rooms with the Committee and away from the members. Also, at the end of the evening's proceedings, the important guests again vanish almost by magic from the gaze of the plebs, although for a long while afterwards, their black limousines with their drivers are still lined up outside Cork City Hall. Such is life at the top.

Michael Stack ©

POLITICS OF THE BATHTUB

Do we need proof of anything anymore

or is it a playful language now being spoken for to be asked for proof is to be labelled a bore as if the rules of parliament have been broken. US admin, dressed as superman, on a high plays in his bathtub (those waters of the world) with his flotilla, while above his head flies the air-arm of bombers waiting to be hurled. These are the rules: If he wants something to happen it happens. In his bathtub he sees all, moves on and rarely recalls.

Should he decide on war then his tongue fattens to say it in a language so obscure it appals, but it's his bathtub, query him and he make waves. Your downstairs will be flooded with the electrics sparking, the plaster on your ceiling falling, the walls a muddy river water-marking. So don't ever again ask him for proof and insult his calling.

Wilson John Haire
17 June, 2019.

CONNOLLY continued

feasted and toasted the gallant general who on their behalf declared he and they would not serve against the Ulster Orangemen who threaten to disrupt your country [2]; remember all the truculent threats of the officers of the army against the unarmed forces of Home Rule, and contrast it with the abject whine for assistance they have set up in a thousand ways when confronted with a nation of armed men. And remembering all this let the beggars whine—and whine in vain for your aid.

Mr Asquith and all his friends in and out of the Government are now wroth with the London *Times* for publishing the news to which we have given prominence at the beginning of this article. They are in a blue funk lest the truth be known about the awful plight of their beaten and demoralised army. The effort to discredit the story was made all the more ridiculous by the publication on Tuesday morning in the *Times* of the circumstances attending the first printing of the report.

It was there shown that the Censor, Roughrider F.E. Smith, Mad Carson's blatant lieutenant from Birkenhead, had actually begged the *Times* to publish it, and *had even written some of it himself*.

The lesson to be drawn from this incident, and from the statement of Mr Asquith that more severe censorship would be exercised in future is, and mark it well, oh, ye recruits, that the news is too awful to be told.

Would it not be better for all capable of bearing arms to resolve to fight, and if need be to die, for Freedom here at home rather than be slaughtered for the benefit of kings and capitalists abroad?

We echo again the historic words of Fintan Lalor:

Who strikes the first blow for Ireland, who wins a wreath that will be green for ever?

(JAMES CONNOLLY
Irish Worker, Saturday,
5th September, 1914.)

[a] The British suffered a major defeat at the hands of the Boers at Spion Kop, West-South-West of Ladysmith, Uthukela District of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa in January 1900.

[b] British Officers at the Curragh military camp resigned in March, 1914 when ordered to act against the Ulster Volunteers. Faced with a situation tantamount to mutiny, the Asquith government sidestepped the issue.

LOVE ON A BED OF NAILS

Head of this and head of that, keepers of the nation's integrity, fighting that small boy's terrible memories, aka: Jamie Hegarity.

One gives D-Day as his reference, as if that wipes away the sins of man, facing the German Atlantic wall, but less dangerous than the sweet breath of the damned.

Sticking mud that soils a generation? The would-be cleaners the printed press,

their crucifying cross too big for poor Hegarity. Will the gavel of the state thud to make him even less.

Once a light shone into some dark places and minor figures met their doom, now Caligula's power wantonness has a minus zoom.

Those childrens' homes. the warehouses, the staff forklift procurers. We saw into a nation's innards, for a time, now they have turned to ghosts, these child wooers.

Wilson John Haire
20 June, 2019.

CONNOLLY continued

and Maubeuge, then through Le Quesney, where desperate fighting took place southwards continually. Regiments were grievously injured, and the broken army fought its way desperately with many stands, forced backwards, and ever backwards, by the sheer unconquerable mass of numbers of an enemy prepared to throw away three or four men for the life of every British soldier. In scattered units, with the enemy ever on its heels, the fourth division, all that was left of 20,000 fine troops, streamed southwards.

Our losses are very great. I have seen the broken bits of many regiments. Let me repeat that there is no failure in discipline, no panic, no throwing up the sponge. Everyone's temper is sweet, and nerves do not show. A group of men, it may be a dozen or less, or more, arrives under the command of whoever is entitled to command it. The men are battered with marching, and ought to be weak with hunger, for of course, no commissariat could cope with such a case, but they are steady and cheerful, and wherever they arrive make straight for the proper authority, report themselves, and seek news of their regiment. I saw two men give such reports after saluting smartly. 'Very badly cut up, sir,' was the phrase one used of his regiment. The other said: 'Very heavy loss, I'm afraid, sir,' when asked if much was left.

Apparently every division was in action. Some have lost nearly all their officers. The regiments were broke to bits, and good discipline and fine spirit kept the fragments together, though they no longer knew what had become of the other parts with which they had once formed a splendid whole."

In addition to this report there was a short report which I read in *Reynolds' Newspaper* on Sunday, in which a British soldier who took part in the battle of Charleroi is quoted as saying that there were only 20 or 30 survivors left out of 2,000 with whom he set out to take up position in that morning. It is then clear that the real extent of the casualties is being most carefully hidden from the public. That public is bewildered by flaring posters, by the exaggerated description of every trifling skirmish in which it can be claimed that the British gained an advantage, and by the almost ceaseless repetition of tales about the losses of the Germans—a matter of which the British are completely ignorant. A victorious army occupying in their advance the ground formerly occupied by the beaten enemy can certainly arrive at a rough estimate of the enemy's losses by counting the dead and wounded they have left behind, but a retreating beaten army

knows little of the losses of those before whom they are flying, and any statements to the contrary are merely attempts to cover their own discomfiture.

I am not writing this because I glory in the tales of the British dead. Those poor rank and files were, and are, no enemies of mine, of my class, nor of my nation. But as far as they are items of the forces with which the Enemy keeps this country in subjection, and in so far as the success of that Enemy is, as I believe it is, a menace to the peaceful progress of the forces of democracy in Europe, the enthronement of Czarism as the dominant force on the Continent, and the perpetuation of the degradation of Ireland, to that degree and for that reason I rejoice with all my heart at British reverses, and acclaim German victories as the victories of the most enlightened nation in Europe—the nation whose democracy is most feared by the cunning capitalist rulers of the world.

For another reason I wish to give prominence to the real state of affairs at the front. I wish that no man shall be seduced to go to that front in ignorance. Let the truth be known! Let those who wish to sacrifice themselves for England—for The Enemy—know the extent of their sacrifice and risks, and then if they go let them know that their country disowns them.

But let them go—let the dupes go—Ireland is well rid of them. There will be more room for the good men who remain behind.

I have just come across the limit—the finest specimen of the tactics of the Enemy yet to hand. It is in the form of an advertisement for recruits, and lest it be forgotten in the future I propose to enshrine it for immortality in the pages of the *Irish Worker*. We print it "free gratis and for nothing," as the saying goes—for the fun of the thing:-

NOTICE. FOR KING AND COUNTRY.

Men are immediately required for the two new battalions of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers (i.e., the 6th and 7th Service battalions), for 3 years or the war. Old Soldiers, Special Reservists, and untrained men of every class are wanted. The true defence of Ireland at the present moment is undoubtedly the defence of the frontiers of France, where we are in touch with our common enemy. Do not waste time. As soon as you have read this apply to the nearest Recruiting Office, or the Head Recruiting Office, Brunswick Street, Dublin.

GOD SAVE IRELAND and GOD SAVE THE KING.

G. DOWNING,
Lieut.-Col., commanding
7th Service Battalion,
Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

Is not that the limit for pure unadulterated hypocrisy? The cry of 'God Save Ireland' owes its immortality to the fact that it first came defiantly and spontaneously from the lips of the Manchester Martyrs, condemned to death for the crime of loving Ireland and daring to serve her. In the name of the king these three men were hanged for daring to work for Irish Nationality, and as the cry broke forth from their lips it reached its way to and lodged ineradicably upon the hearts of every true Irish man and woman. And now in its extremity the power that hanged them, the power that would as readily hang the apostles of a true Irish Nationality to-day, that power blasphemously couples the holy prayer of our martyrs with the official formula it signed at the bottom of their sentence of death.

Oh, have we not heard *ad nauseam* about the noble British ruling class, their haughty nobility, their dignity in the face of danger, their unbending courage in the front of adversity, their stoical heroism, etc., etc.? Have we not heard all those things until we almost believed in them, and almost despised our own class in consequence? But the above advertisement gives the true index to the character of our rulers; couple it with the frantic letters in the *Irish Times* from landowners and "officers and gentlemen" appealing to you to stand up for the Empire and you have a true picture of the nature of the creatures who for so long have ruled and robbed us.

There you see our rulers mad with fright, panic-stricken at their losses and keenly alive to the possible failure of their conspiracy against the life and civilisation of a peaceful people, turning to the Ireland that they hate and exult in browbeating, and changing their sneers into prayers, their open venom into fawning flattery, their threats against the unity of our country into more dreadful, because more loathsome invocations to God on its behalf.

The snivelling, hypocritical, dastardly bullies! Remember how those 'officers and gentlemen' who now beg for help threatened mutiny at the Curragh against your National freedom; remember how they

continued on page 34



LABOUR

Comment

ISSN 0790-1712

VOLUME 38 No. 1

CORK

ISSN 0790-1712

James Connolly

Recruiting – Let the Wastrels Go!

(Warning: Some readers of the New Labour and New Left may be shocked at the sheer bluntness and reality of war and imperialism as described by a founder member of the Labour Party in Ireland)

At the present moment every nerve is being strained in Ireland to obtain recruits for the British Army. Employers are bringing all sorts of pressure to bear upon their workpeople, so-called charitable associations are ferreting out particulars of every family in the tenement houses visited by their agents and setting recruiting agents like sleuth hounds on the track of every young unemployed man. The Home Rule Press lends its aid by giving startling prominence to every anti-German lie that the fiendishly unscrupulous Press of England can invent, and a thousand diabolical agencies are at work to coax, coerce, or seduce Irishmen to fight the battles of the Empire.

All this is good, I say that deliberately and, as the lawyers would say, with malice aforethought. It is good, because in the first place it reveals as nothing else could the stricken condition of the enemy.

For reasons of clearness and to avoid too undue repetition of the words "British", "English", or "British Empire", I propose hereafter to refer to the Government of this country and of England simply as "The Enemy". It will simplify matters in more ways than one.

These frantic endeavours to secure recruits are then a sufficient indication that The Enemy is in a bad way. He is smashed up by land, and is now endeavouring to

retrieve his lost reputation by columns of flamboyant description of a petty victory on sea. The weaker he becomes the stronger becomes every revolutionary force at home, as conversely the stronger he becomes the more defiant and unyielding he will be to every influence for good in Ireland.

That he is smashed up by land is apparent to everyone who cares to study the reports. True, the Press tells us continually of the 'fine position' of the allies, of the 'brilliant stand' of the British troops, of the 'strategic movement to a new base', and so on, writing always in such a manner as would make the ordinary reader believe that the allied troops were carrying all before them.

But the 'fine position' is always about 20 or 30 miles behind the last 'fine position', the 'brilliant stand' is invariably a preliminary to what the historian will describe as a headlong retreat although the Press reporter describes it simply as a 'withdrawal', and the 'strategic movement

to a new base' is by all the signs of warfare a panic-stricken rout of a beaten force.

Read this from the Special Correspondent of the London *Times*:-

"Further to the right along the Sambre, and in the angle of the Sambre and the Meuse, the French, after days of long and gallant fighting, broke : Namur fell, and General Joffre was forced to order a retreat along the whole line. The Germans, fulfilling one of the best of all precepts in war, never gave the retreating army one single moment's rest. The pursuit was immediate, relentless, unrelenting. Aeroplanes, Zeppelins, armoured motors, and cavalry were loosed like an arrow from the bow, and served at once to harass the retiring columns, and to keep the German Staff fully informed of the movements of the allied forces."

The reader will remember that when the British retreated broken and baffled from Spion Kop, the Boer general with mistaken humanity refused to fire upon the retreating army as he declared it would be unscriptural to do so. [a] This humanity lost the Boers the war. It is conceivable that The Enemy believed that he would find the Germans equally ready to allow the British a monopoly of ruthless severity in the field of battle. If so the movement narrated in the concluding sentence of the above extract will show how ruthlessly he was undecieved. The result, as well as the completeness of the defeat of the British is told in the following quotation from the same article. Perhaps in the mess of war reports you have missed the significance of this report. If so study it now, and realise the plight of The Enemy:-

"The British force fell back through Bavai on a front, between Valenciennes

Irish Political Review is published by the IPR Group: write to—

1 Sutton Villas, Lower Dargle Road
Bray, Co. Wicklow or

33 Athol Street, Belfast BT12 4GX or

2 Newington Green Mansions, London N16 9BT

or *Labour Comment*, TEL: 021-4676029

P. Maloney, 26 Church Avenue, Roman
Street, Cork City

Subscription by Post:

12 issues: Euro-zone & World Surface: €40;
Sterling-zone: £25

Electronic Subscription:

€ 15 / £12 for 12 issues
(or € 1.30 / £1.10 per issue)

You can also order from:

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

continued on page 33