

IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

November 2021

Vol.36, No.11 ISSN 0790-7672

and *Northern Star* incorporating *Workers' Weekly* Vol.35 No.11 ISSN 954-5891

The Political Arena:

1. *Con-Celebrating Partition?*
2. *Iran.*
3. *Polly Toynbeeism in Afghanistan.*
4. *What is the EU?*

The centenary celebration of Partition and/or Northern Ireland was commemorated/celebrated at Armagh Cathedral, the Ecclesiastical centre of both Anglican and Roman Ireland, presided over by the African Head of the Methodist Church in Ireland. Methodism, an offshoot of Anglicanism in the Puritan direction, is a free-standing, Congregational kind of religion. To the best of our knowledge it is not the state-Church anywhere, and therefore the event possibly symbolised the transition of Ireland, both Protestant and Catholic, to a post-religion era in which words written in stone three thousand years ago have passed through the rabbit-hole and acquired the magical property of meaning whatever, in the experience of the moment, you wish them to mean. We now have Wonderland Christianity.

On the secular side the celebration was rather lopsided.

The Queen agreed to be there. It was her business to be there. Being there is what she is paid for. Her existence is pedigreed and the thing was set up by her grandfather, or somebody thereabouts.

The President, however, said he would not go there because the celebration was an exercise in political spin, and the thing itself was nothing to celebrate. So he stayed home and went to the funeral of Manus O'Riordan instead.

It so happened that the Queen was only there in spirit. Of all the days of her life, that was the one day in which her body let her down and made her skip a duty of State. It told her she needed a walking-stick and should therefore make an urgent visit to hospital.

The Royal watchers of the British media had not been forewarned. They were taken by surprise and had not prepared the public for the disappointment of not seeing the Queen at Armagh. But, for days after the Armagh event, with the Queen back immediately at her duties, they worked manfully at making the case that it really had been necessary for her to go to hospital on just that particular day.

continued on page 2

Budget 2022 –

Not the Paradigm Shift That's Needed

Budget 2022 fits the pattern of an annual event staged by passive political parties that still hanker for liberal orthodoxy, except that the hankering gets weaker and more indefensible every year. That Sinn Fein currently holds a ten-point lead in opinion polls is one of many indicators that change is needed. Irish society needs to undergo a paradigm shift, a move away from liberalism towards some form of post-Crash, post-neo-liberal social democracy. Viewed against that scenario, this Budget falls short.

The political presentation of Budget 2022 ticks a lot of familiar boxes: well leaked in advance, expectations carefully managed, no surprises, something for everyone, a few sticking plaster solutions and, most of all, no banana skins. The craft of public relations is to the fore, although behind the spin there are some positives.

continued on page 5

Ireland leads the charge against Poland

The *Irish Times* boldly declared editorially that there is “*A battle Brussels must win*” against Poland and encouraged Commission President Von der Leyen “*to use all means to force it to reverse course*” (20.10). This is the oft-repeated mantra by the paper and many others.

But, towards the end of the battlecry, it says—

“Ultimately this is a battle that the commission must press on with and win, though some in Brussels worry its legal case on the primacy of EU law may not be as watertight as it suggests. And the dispute could get messier.”

The “*some in Brussels*” are not alone. Some member states, led by Merkel, are not

at all so *gung ho* about the issue. Why?

Because Poland has a solid legal case. Treaty law does not apply to everything. If it did, there would be no argument—and no need for national judiciaries. Where to draw the line is the issue: and all the ranting and raving will not clarify that. The EU is such at present that it cannot be done. As a report in the same paper said:

continued on page 7

CONTENTS

	Page
The Political Arena. Editorial (Con-Celebrating Partition?; Iran; Polly Toynbeeism In Afghanistan; What Is The EU?)	1
Budget 2022: Not The Paradigm Shift That's Needed. Dave Alvey	1
Ireland Leads The Charge Against Poland. Jack Lane	1
Readers' Letters: China: Some Falsification! Eamon Dyas	3
Methane: Climate Change Misinformation. Fergus O Rahallaigh	3
Remembering Manus O'Riordan. Two Memorable Gatherings— The Wake And The Funeral. Dave Alvey; Jack Lane; Donal Kennedy	8
Joe Keenan. Reminiscences Invited	9
Es Ahora. London Review Of Books Julianne Herlihy	10
What Is Socialism? John Martin	12
A Diet Of Weasel Words. Jack Lane <i>A Lesson For Micheal Martin And Fianna Fail</i>	14
Centenary Commemoration Of The Dripsey Ambush Address by Gabriel Doherty	15
Roger Casement: Two Caveats. Paul R. Hyde	17
Casement In Turkey. Pat Walsh	18
In Defence Of Dorothy Macardle. Biographical Sketch, Part 6 Dave Alvey	18
A Voice From The Grave: Peter Hart. <i>By Way Of Jeffrey Dudgeon</i> Brendan Clifford	23
An Outsider's Book Review. Wilson John Haire reviews Diarmaid Ferriter's <i>Irish Civil War</i>	26
Political Economy: Public Financial Deficits; Public Finance & Housing	28
Biteback: Disrespecting The President! Donal Kennedy. James Carty's <i>Histories.</i> Unpublished Letters to 'Irish Times' by Donal Kennedy	29
Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (The Budget 2021; <i>Slaintecare</i> ; COP 26)	30

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

Roddy Connolly

Organised Labour! This month's Trade Union News

(back page)

The Prime Minister, who is officially *the Crown in Parliament*, stood in for the Queen.

There was no need whatever for anybody to stand in for the President. The setting up of Northern Ireland certainly was not welcomed by the Dail in 1921. It was regarded as a profoundly anti-Irish act.

But, if somebody was to stand in for the President—and somebody did—surely it should have been the Taoiseach. But it was not the Taoiseach.

Why did he not go? It would have been the culminating action of his systematic demolition of the historical foundations of his Party. And he does not usually shun whatever limelight is available to him.

Was it that he felt, without Eoghan Harris clearing the way for him with mass propaganda, that he has become vulnerable; and judged that a visit to Armagh would provoke the remnant of the fast-fading historic party into action?

And it was not even the Tanaiste who went. It was only the third in command

who went. That could have been interpreted as an insult, if there had been any real enthusiasm for the occasion.

*

Northern Ireland was set up in 1921 by the most powerful and active democracy in the world, the British State, to be an undemocratic enclave in the British state, whose Parliamentary franchise had been democratised three years earlier.

By means of the setting up of Northern Ireland, the electorate in the Six Counties—while remaining within the British state—was excluded from the process of electing a party to govern the state.

Ever since the end of the First World War, three parties had sought an electoral mandate to govern the British state: Tory Labour and Liberal.

All three withdrew from the Six Counties when it was made into Northern Ireland. Fanciful theories of democracy may regard that as a very slight thing, but it is what the actual democracy of the British state consists of. And, on the basis of it,

the party system of the state, searching for votes, exerts a far-reaching influence on public opinion.

Public opinion in the British state is not formed independently of the parties by individuals reflecting on the world and then registered in elections: it is to a considerable extent shaped by the continuous activity of the parties. Electors in the Six Counties were excluded from that process by the formation of Northern Ireland.

The Government that did it had a reason for doing it, of course. It was part of a manoeuvre to break up the Sinn Fein movement of the time. But, it might be said, whatever the reason was, it was still an act of gross political responsibility. And it was scandalous that it should have been done by a democratically-elected British Government.

But, it might be said in response, the party-political system of democracy has irresponsibility built into it.

After all, Iran made a deal with what calls itself the *Free World*, under which it undertook to limit its nuclear development, and allow outside inspection at its nuclear facilities, in return for the Free World lifting the economic sanctions by which it was attempting to break the Iranian State and disrupt national society in Iran.

But then the United States had an election. A new President appeared. He revoked the deal, re-applied the sanctions, and dared the rest of the Free World to dispute the issue with him. It toed his line, knowing that it could only be 'Free' if it was in tune with the United States, and that the United States was the President of the moment.

Another election was held. A new President came in. He had condemned the action of the old President, and was expected to re-install the Agreement with Iran.

Iran had survived the calling-off of the deal, and the re-imposition of the sanctions—which of course had also restored its freedom of action in nuclear matters. And, learning from experience, it did not rush into the arms of the new President. It said that, in order to restore the Agreement, it must be guaranteed that it would not be revoked capriciously by another turn of events in American politics. But it was explained to it that no such guarantee could be given, because the United States was a democracy and was therefore incapable of giving any reliable guarantees.

We assume that the Iranian authorities were well aware of this feature of party-political democracy in the freest country in the world.

*

Twenty years ago the Republican Government in the USA and the Labour Government in Britain invaded Afghanistan, occupied it, and set up a new Government in it.

They did it so that they could catch the Saudi Arabian, Osama bin Laden, who, they said, organised the driving of a couple of aeroplanes into the Twin Towers and was hiding there. They had demanded that the Taliban Government, led by Mullah Omar, should hand him over. Mullah Omar asked for some evidence in support of the extradition demand. He was told not to be impudent, and the Taliban regime (which the USA had fuelled a few years earlier) was held to be a rogue state and was marked down for destruction.

At the time we summed up the invasion from the British side as "*Polly Toynbee's War*". She was very articulate in support of it as a feminist crusader.

The invasion was a great success. What else could it have been when tribesmen were assaulted by two states armed with nuclear weapons and every other known kind of military device?

Ten years later Osama was discovered in Pakistan. An American raiding party went in and filmed itself killing him—instead of capturing him—to Hilary Clinton's delight.

Two more years went by. Uncounted billions went into the creation of little Californian oases around Afghanistan, and the formation of a powerfully-armed Army to protect them. But it became evident that Freedom only existed in close conjunction with pieces of American military power.

The country remained with the Taliban and it exerted continuous pressure on the American enclaves. The British presence became token, and the Labour Party tried to forget that this was its War.

President Obama saw that the thing had become futile. Trump negotiated an American withdrawal with the Taliban. Biden put Trump's agreement into effect. It was expected that the State structures established by the US in Afghanistan would fight on for their existence—as the Communist State structure had done after the Russian withdrawal, when the Taliban (or Mujahideen) were being encouraged and supported by the US to bring it down.

But the US/Afghan State simply melted away. Afghanistan's President fled out of the country (with a big chunk of the Treasury) as the Taliban walked into Kabul. The only resistance to the Taliban was offered by surviving remnants of Osama's Al Qaeda. It remains to be seen whether the US will re-

continued on page 4

China: Some Falsification!

One of the main components of media propaganda is the reporting of events with a false context. That false context can be set either by a blatant lie or simply not providing the actual context. Not providing the actual context is a more subtle means of delivering the lie without being held responsible for it, and it is the favourite technique of the liberal media, eager to preserve its reputation for objectivity.

As the anti-Chinese agenda of the US is cranked up some of the media outlets of the UK have been slow in adjusting to the requirements of the country's ultimate masters.

We see this in the reporting of the incidents around Taiwan over the past month. The BBC reported a story of Chinese jets in Taiwan air space on 6 September last. In the midst of that particular report there was a critical context-setting piece of information, which had the effect of neutralising its propaganda impact. It pointed out that the Taiwanese Government was measuring air intrusions on the basis of a definition of its air space that had no standing in international law when it revealed that:

"An air defence identification zone is an area outside of a country's territory and national airspace but where foreign aircraft are still identified, monitored, and controlled in the interest of national security.

It is self-declared and technically remains international airspace" (see <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-58459128>).

Eamon Dyas

Methane: Climate Change Misinformation

The most pleasant animal on earth, the poor cow, is being blamed for ruining the world

This is part of a new wheeze—which is to move the Climate Change agenda at the Glasgow Environmental Conference away from CO2 emissions. This is a ruse organised by the US in cahoots with the EU and the UK. With the environmentalists in tow (for their own reasons), the trio is attempting to move away from CO2 because of the difficulties which restriction of CO2 emissions pose for a lot of countries (including big countries with lots of big, heavy industry), and onto a headliner (methane) that mostly hits farming and food, especially pastoral farming. Here is Rod Oram, a New Zealand commentator, on the methane ruse and implications from a Kiwi perspective:

"Until this year, most of the climate debate revolved around carbon dioxide, given vast long-lived emissions from fossil fuel use. While methane is a far more potent greenhouse gas than CO2, its short life in the atmosphere made it seem a less pressing problem.

But the escalating climate crisis, and the failure of countries to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions, is now intensifying the focus on methane..." (See: <https://www.newsroom.co.nz/the-harsh-climate-truth-on-methane>).

Here are some further random links on the methane ruse—

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/20092021/global-methane-pledge-glasgow-cop-26/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/sep/30/cutting-methane-should-be-a-key-cop26-aim-research-suggests>

<https://www.systemiq.earth/etc-pathway/>

The methane ruse is a political smoke and mirrors diversion aimed by big fossil fuel producers and users to get the publicity focus onto a new baddie and away from smog and oil. While methane is an issue, this move is a ruse and intended as such, and utterly cynical in its design by the US, the UK and the EU.

Fergus O Rahallaigh

vert to inciting fundamentalist Islam against the 'moderate' Islam which got the better of the most powerful country on earth.

The critical thing about it all is the failure of *Polly Toynbeeism*. For twenty years the greatest military power in the world, with its NATO allies, and supported by the most seductive propaganda power in the world, attempted to engender Californian feminism in Afghanistan. The basic belief of the exercise is that, from the beginning of recorded history, women have been oppressed by men, and have been yearning to be free of men. This is now a basic belief of liberal democracy, which is close to becoming an obligatory universal belief.

But the experience of the 20-year effort in Afghanistan stands in gross contradiction with it.

A problem with this belief is that it is entirely unstable. A process of change is inherent in it, and it is continuously on the lookout for ways to change. Liberal democracy is not now what it was twenty years ago. Restoration of the conditions of twenty years ago, for which it destroyed States, would be experienced as intolerable oppression.

*

This matter has arisen in the conflict between the West European states which dominate the EU and the East European states which joined the EU at the end of the Cold War—particularly with Poland and Hungary.

The Hungarian Prime Minister was challenged in a long interview broadcast on *Al Jazeera*—the kind of interview one never sees on EU media—with the accusation that Hungary was breaking EU law. He went into the matter of law and showed that everything done by Hungary was well within its competence under the EU system.

But the EU said it was in breach of EU values?

His reply was that Hungary was in agreement with EU values as they were when it joined. It agreed with the founding values of the EU. But a group of EU states was moving away from the founding values, and were attempting to present these changed values as law.

And there is no doubt about it.

The trick of altering the founding values of the EU without political agreement and presenting the altered values as law is done by the European Court of Justice.

The ECJ wants to act as if it was of a kind with the Supreme Court of the USA. But that is not what it was set up to be. The EU is not a Federal State. It is an alliance of nation-states.

The United States established what it is by means of all-out Civil War. A President with the ambition of forging the alliance of the Colonies into a Continental super-state with unlimited authority waged war against colonies which wanted to secede from the Union and become independent states. He won the war and therefore the law found that the USA was an unbreakable Union.

But, in order to workable, the Union had to allow very extensive rights to its component states, with a Supreme Court to arbitrate in matters of general concern to the Federation as a State, and therefore to say what was law. Interpretation of law is law-making.

When some issue is in contention and is put to law, a decision will be made one way or the other by the appointed arbiter. Which way it is made will depend on the arbiter, rather than on an inexorable process of deduction. Either pleading can be upheld. The pleading which is upheld becomes the law, and this is presented as always having been the law. (And that is the principle behind Papal Infallibility in another sphere. If things are to hold together, there must be a Court of final decision.)

All of that is done openly in the United States. And appointments to the Court are openly political, with the President being free to threaten a Court which is out of tune with Government policy by enlarging it, putting his Judges on it.

The EU is not a Federal State. It is not a State at all. It has no politically authorised system of law, except trade law. It added a Parliament to its institutions, to make itself look more like a State.

A Parliament on the British model has two functions: to appoint an Executive and to make laws.

The European Parliament is neither a Legislature nor the base of an Executive.

Insofar as the EU has a democratic foundation, it is that its Council consists of the leaders of elected national Governments.

But the Parliament, though it is not elected to appoint an EU Government or to make laws for the EU, has been trying to make itself into a Legislature by roundabout means.

It adopts resolutions which the ECJ, in a mood of judicial activism, takes as encouragement to assert its authority over the national States on matters that have nothing to do with trade. That is certainly not what it was set up to do.

Things began to go badly wrong when a failed German politician, with no experience in the rough and tumble of the real

political world, was appointed President of the Commission. Ireland had an able and experienced Commissioner, Phil Hogan. The President of the Commission found that he had attended a golf dinner arranged by Parliamentary golfers which may have been in breach of Irish Covid guidelines, but was certainly not in breach of Irish law, or of any law to which he was subject as an EU functionary, and asked for his resignation.

She had no power to sack him, but the Irish Government did not stand by him, and he resigned. The Irish Government then had the right to appoint another Commissioner. But the President of the Commission stepped in and demanded that the Irish Government should give her two nominations from which she would choose one, and specifying that one of those nominated must be a woman. This was an innovation, with no basis in EU law or practice.

The message was well understood: unless you were a woman it would be pointless to be nominated. And there were no female quality Ministerial candidates to hand.

The Irish Government complied with this breach of precedent, in pursuit of political correctness, with the result that its replacement Commissioner is viewed as a second-ranker.

And the Irish Government has actively taken the part of the Commission President in her attempt to force what she considers to be EU 'law' on Poland and Hungary.

In all of this Ireland is behaving like a failed state, making amends for a disgraced past by being ultra-good in the hope of getting a pat on the head.

The leaders of the EU are, of course, heads of failed states: Germany, France, Italy, Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg. They are all post-1945 re-creations with pasts which they find it difficult to account for in terms of their present ideology.

They were re-founded after 1945 by politicians who had experienced the chaos of Europe under British domination and manipulation from the First World War through the chaos of the inter-War period and into the Second World War. They had held themselves slightly apart from the course of events, while being immersed in it. They knew what had happened and where responsibilities lay, and they were not guilt-ridden by the past.

But they were followed by a generation with *kindergarten* understandings of the world. The Europe made by De Gaulle, Adenauer, and De Gasperi has been taken over by that Toy-town generation of politicians for which the past is prohibited territory—except when it comes to demonising

Russia—and for whom the *abolition of hate from the world*, announced by President von der Leyen, is a realistic objective.

The EU was held to the values of its founders, more or less, while the Cold War lasted. But then, after 1991, encouraged by Britain, it embarked on random expansion into former Soviet territory, and supported the transformation of NATO from a defensive military alliance against the defensive military alliance of the other side (the *Warsaw Pact*) into a force of world conquest which would operate wherever it found the opportunity, with the first object being the disintegration of Russia.

But now it is locking itself into conflict with its two major recruits from the former Soviet system, Poland and Hungary. And the interesting thing is that those two states seem to be entirely free of guilt feelings about the past as a result of their 45 years being worked upon by the Soviet system, which overthrew Fascism by winning the World War.

Facts seem to exert an influence, even if not recorded in academic history or spun as propaganda. And the facts are that the Nazi system was broken only by Soviet power, (liberal democracy failed to prevent Fascism and could generate no effective power to overthrow it); and, insofar as Jews were saved in large numbers from the Nazi extermination process, it was Communist power that saved them.

Emerging from under the wings of the Power that destroyed the Nazi system and saved the Jews, what have Hungary and Poland to feel guilty about? Their minds are free in a way that the minds of failed and re-imposed liberal democracies of western Europe are not.

They may detest Russia because of those 45 years, but they are different because of them.

And Poland feels free to stamp on Jewish-nationalist attempts to implicate it in the Nazi extermination process, and reclaim properties which were lost by Jews in Poland three regimes ago, while properties lost by Palestinians to the present Jewish-nationalist regime in Palestine are made sacrosanct.

A fragment of real Europe still survives.

PS: On the issue of national judicial systems, their separation from the national political life of the state, and their subordination to the European Court of Justice: Irish judges are political appointees, and Germany bound itself into a fixed and unalterable Constitutional system in order to save itself from relapse, and can accord no supremacy to the ECJ. But the EU knows better to question that. In the European Union some are more equal than others! ■

Budget 2022 – continued

Big ticket issues like Brexit, the pandemic and the corporate tax rate are being competently managed, while measures aimed at tackling the chronic problems—like those in housing, health, childcare and climate change—in the absence of coordinated political statecraft, lack credibility. Otherwise, the Government is claiming credit for economic outcomes that are either the result of political actions from decades ago or of a set of favourable circumstances at the present time.

In this article the Budget is reviewed under the following headings: Lucky Breaks for the Irish Economy; Instances of Competence; Small Increments and Sticking Plaster Solutions; and Housing and Health.

LUCKY BREAKS FOR THE IRISH ECONOMY

Since the late nineties the Irish economy has benefited from large flows of foreign direct investment that have created and sustained an export-orientated multi-national sector that is often called the *traded sector*. Such is the productivity of that sector that it enabled the Irish economy to grow even during the lockdowns of the past eighteen months. Certainly, accounting practices aimed at tax avoidance exaggerate this growth but there has been nothing illusory about the flows of income tax and corporate tax streaming into the public finances during the pandemic.

In addition to the advantage of being a base for foreign direct investment, in recent years Ireland has gained from the clampdown on tax havens. Large multinationals, reportedly, have shifted profits from locations now considered dodgy, like the Cayman Islands, to low corporate tax countries like Ireland. The result has been unexpected windfalls in corporate tax receipts to the Irish exchequer, over a number of years. The difference between revenue and public expenditure for this year was expected to be €20 billion; it will actually come in at €13 billion: a very significant reduction in the size of the deficit. A sizeable chunk of that €7 billion reduction has come from unexpectedly buoyant flows of corporate tax from the traded sector.

But the most important stroke of good fortune for the Irish economy has been the recently brokered OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) tax agreement which has set the interna-

tional minimum Corporation Tax rate at 15 per cent. For at least ten years Irish economic analysts have been expecting an international agreement that would outlaw Ireland's 12.5 per cent rate of corporate tax and impose a minimum rate of 20-25 per cent. In the event, not only has the increase been kept to 15 per cent, but for firms with annual revenues below €750 million, the 12.5 per cent rate will continue to apply. The agreement also means that the Irish rate can no longer be undercut by other Governments.

It is difficult to estimate what factors influenced the OECD decision—the deal still needs to be ratified by the US Congress—but it may be that Minister Pascal Donohue and his officials deserve credit for the manner in which they defended Ireland's position regarding foreign investment.

INSTANCES OF COMPETENCE

The previous Government made a reasonable fist of defending Irish interests during the Brexit negotiations and the present Government acted competently in applying the *Employer Wage Subsidy Scheme* (EWSS) and the *Pandemic Unemployment Payment* (PUP) as methods of minimising the economic damage arising from the lockdowns; its determination to avoid a cliff edge withdrawal of these schemes also makes sense.

Another area that post-Crash Governments might be expected to competently manage is the public finances. The lesson in the aftermath of the Crash was that when, the balance between monies raised in taxation and public spending becomes disordered, the lion's share of deprivation falls on those with low incomes. It makes sense to keep control of the public accounts in accordance with Keynesian principles.

During the pandemic, concerns were frequently raised about the sustainability of the large-scale borrowing being conducted by the Government, especially since we continue to carry the debt burden left by the Crash. On this subject the Autumn Quarterly Report of the *Economic and Social Research Institute* (ESRI) contains an interesting commentary. It states:

“In assessing whether Ireland is a high debt country we use an alternative measure of fiscal sustainability—the ratio of gross government debt to taxation revenues. This we believe is a much better indicator of the capability of an economy to meet its debt requirements in terms of its total revenue take. While not totally immune to multinational related distur-

tions, taxation receipts are less susceptible to the issues which have afflicted GDP estimates". (p. 60)

Having selected a more reliable indicator for assessing the debt position and having compared it both with previous years back to 2011 and with other EU countries, the Report authors state:

"By the end of 2022 Irish debt levels are set to be very much in the middle of the 17 countries reported, with the Irish ratio just above the average rate. This reflects the underlying strength of the Irish economy as it has performed much better than other countries throughout the COVID-19 crisis. The Irish economy, alone amongst European countries, experienced a positive growth rate in 2020 for example". (p. 64)

Furthermore, Irish public debt continues to be competently managed by the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) in cooperation with the Department of Finance. As I referenced in an article on Budget 2021 in the November 2020 issue of *Irish Political Review*, quoting John Fitzgerald, debt interest payments from the Irish State were estimated to be approximately € .3 billion less in 2021 than in 2020 as a result of the near zero interest rates set by the European Central Bank (ECB). As Irish bank deposits rose during the lockdowns, the Irish banks deposited their surplus funds with the ECB. The ECB then purchased Irish Government Bonds, so the increase to Ireland's foreign indebtedness during the pandemic was minimal.

SMALL INCREMENTS AND STICKING PLASTER SOLUTIONS

In Budget 2022, additional spending amounts to €4.3 billion while the tax reduction total is € .5 billion. Taking one Department, Education, it can be seen that the additional spending will have the effect of returning the figures to something like what they would have been if the Crash had not happened. Minister Norma Foley has increased the expenditure of the Education Department by 5 per cent. Areas benefitting are the DEIS (Delivery of Equality of Opportunity in Schools) schools, special needs education, the primary schools which get a reduction of 1 in the pupil teacher ratio, and Voluntary Secondary Schools in the Free Education scheme which get extra funding. In addition, the €200 fee that entrants to Further Education have had to pay since the Crash, is now abolished.

Stand-out measures in Budget 2022 were: the increase in the tax band for the standard rate of tax by €1,500, together with increased tax credits that most workers

will get; assistance to childcare providers; a 30 cent increase in the National Minimum Wage (an extra €624 per annum for full time workers); a final extension of the lower rate of VAT to tourist outlets; increases in welfare payments, including the fuel allowance scheme; a new 3 per cent tax on the ownership of land zoned for development; and tax relief for employees working from home.

An interesting Twitter exchange in October 2019 between Dublin City University (DCU) academic Eoin O'Malley and one of Pascal Donohue's senior advisors, Ed Brophy, sheds light on the mindset of those who plan Budgets. O'Malley tweeted that the Irish system responds well to what are perceived to be acute crises but can only produce sticking plaster solutions to long-term chronic problems. In reply Brophy questioned whether this acute-versus-chronic problem was unique to the Irish political system, the implication being that all the Western democracies face chronic problems, including in housing, and none have demonstrated the capacity for long-term planning that such problems require.

This liberal mindset can be seen at work in many of this year's measures; they are not designed to make serious inroads into chronic problems, just to have minor effects that look good. Thus, the income tax changes will do little for people with high mortgages or high rents. The aid to childcare providers, at best, will freeze the very high fees that parents face. The extra €5 for those already in receipt of the fuel allowance will do nothing for the large swathe of people ineligible for it, especially in rural areas, who need to use a petrol/diesel car and heat their houses using fuels subject to the annually increasing carbon tax.

Likewise, now that property prices have exceeded the prices of the Celtic Tiger era, applying the Zoned Land Tax is shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted, and it won't be introduced for a further two years. The relief for employees working at home has been estimated to be worth about €60, barely worth the effort of documenting monies spent on heating, electricity and broadband.

The measures contained in Budget 2022 can make a difference for some individuals, depending on their circumstances, but for most people they will have minimal effect. Ultimately however, this Fianna Fail/Fine Gael/Green Party Government's record will be judged by what it delivers in the areas of housing and health.

HOUSING AND HEALTH

Housing measures announced in the Budget include an undertaking to provide 11,820 new social homes next year, new accommodation to the value of €18 million for the Traveller community, and the addition of 14,800 tenancies to the existing total of 82,000 tenancies in which tenants are heavily subsidised by the State in paying rent to private landlords.

Most of the Budget's housing provisions come under *Housing for All*, the Government's new strategy launched on September 2nd. In itself that strategy document represents a tacit admission regarding the failure of the bulk of the housing schemes introduced by Government over the previous ten years. The document contains some measures that are very welcome, like the promises that, for each year to 2030, 2,000 *cost rental* homes (homes in which the rent is determined by the cost of building and maintaining the property over 30 years, estimated to be substantially cheaper than market rent), and an average of 9,500 new build social houses will be provided, and a recognition that an overall average total of 33,000 homes per year needs to be added to the housing stock over the same period. Slowly and painfully the Irish political system has moved towards a recognition that market-based solutions are never going to work in housing.

However, misgivings must be registered about *Housing for All*. The first is that there is currently a labour shortage in the construction industry. The present Government is committed to building replacement houses for those affected by the mica and pyrite scandals; an extensive nationwide retro-fitting programme under the climate change heading; and the completion of ambitious infrastructural works under the *National Development Plan*—in addition to the massive scale of *Housing for All*. Where is the skilled labour to come from? In the aftermath of the Crash, when many construction workers were emigrating to Canada and Australia, it was a commonplace of commentary that an apprenticeship policy needed to be implemented so that a supply of trained workers would be available when the industry revived; as the recovery gathered pace that didn't happen to anything like the required level.

In July of this year the Construction Industry Federation (CIF), as represented by Damian Duff of Seamus Duff & Sons, issued a statement critical of the apprenticeship system and bemoaning shortages of painters, bricklayers, plasterers and tilers. That statement raises a question as to why the CIF failed to meaningfully

cooperate with the relevant State body, SOLAS, over the previous ten years. At the end of the day, apprenticeship entails a partnership between SOLAS and the industry; in the event of a system failure some responsibility must rest with the industry.

Another weakness in *Housing for All* is that the shared equity scheme is being retained and augmented. At the core of the housing crisis is exorbitant rents and house prices. As has been documented in the UK, shared equity schemes, which involve ownership being shared between the occupant and the Local Authority, fuel house price inflation. In short, like all the previous housing reforms, the present strategy has the flaw, in some of its measures, of giving property developers what they want, and most of what they want involves higher prices and higher rents.

The health section of Budget 2022 entails a number of measures: raising the age at which children get free GP care to include those aged 6 and 7; lowering the monthly Drug Payment Scheme amount to €100 (it was €114); spending €250 million on efforts to reduce hospital waiting lists; providing free contraception to women aged 17-25; disbursing €30 million for patients needing high-tech drugs; and expanding dental access for medical card holders.

As in housing, most of these measures are very welcome. However, in at least one instance the proposal amounts to little more than spin. As Sinn Féin Health spokesperson David Cullinane pointed out on RTE Radio's *This Week* (10 October), large numbers of dentists are leaving the medical card scheme. Annual public spending on dental treatment has declined from €60 million to €40 million. The scheme is effectively collapsing, with the result that lower numbers are getting treatment: leading to higher public and personal costs in the future.

Health spending needs to be seen in the context of the *Slaintecare Implementation Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2023*, the relevant Government policy statement produced earlier this year. One problem with that document is that it was overseen and presented by Executive Director Laura Magahey who subsequently resigned, along with the Chair of the Slaintecare Advisory Board, Dr Tom Keane, on the grounds that the Government has not taken Slaintecare seriously.

Responding to the resignations, Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly shifted responsibility for Slaintecare to Health Department Secretary General Robert Watt and the Chief Executive Officer of the Health Service Executive, Paul Reid, the two most

powerful executives in the health service. So, a reform that was originally proposed by an All-Party Dail Committee four years ago, has been moved out of the structure it was given last year and left in the charge of two bureaucrats.

Given that major health reform would be difficult to deliver even if it arose in the normal way — from an electoral commitment promised by a political party and executed with the full backing of a Taoiseach, relevant Ministers and a plethora of clearly focussed administrative committees — the chances of its success under a pair of administrators from different parts of the health service, with uncertain political backing, must be limited. The reason, of course, behind the lukewarm political support is that private sector interests, in the form of the private hospitals, the health insurance companies and the Irish Medical Organisation (IMO), have strong connections with Fine Gael (and perhaps Fianna Fáil also), and these private sector bodies stand to lose out from a National Health Service-type reform of the Irish system.

It makes sense that elements desiring radical reform of the health system should continue to lobby for progress with Slaintecare, but nobody should expect that a reform not owned by those in power will get very far. A successful implementation of Slaintecare, it seems fair to say, will require sustained public pressure, ideally from the Trade Unions, and most probably a change of Government.

Dave Alvey

Ireland leads the charge against Poland

continued

“The real trouble is over a more specific point. It’s about where the boundary between domestic and EU law lies, and which authority gets to decide on this. Diplomats and EU officials concede this is a grey area, and one on which there have been differing points of view. “Where is the limit, who defines the limit, and so on, this is a subject that fills entire libraries”, a harried senior diplomat put it this week” (ibid. 21.10).

But not to worry, Micheál Martin has clearly studied this and resolved the matter with a series of specious phrases. He accused the Poles “of going too far”, of “crossing a line”, and of giving “a slap in the face” to the EU, etc.

Indeed he seems to want to lead the charge against Poland:

“Ireland has long been in a camp of liberal-leaning member states with misgivings on democratic backsliding within the EU, but has not previously taken the lead in expressing its concerns. The comments (Martin’s, JL) were in contrast to like-minded countries like the Netherlands and Luxembourg, who sounded a more cautious note and stressed the need for dialogue, to avoid a conflict that could further feed Mr. Morawiecki’s political base in Poland while stoking division within the EU. Mr. Martin set out Ireland’s position as the 27 leaders debated the issue. The discussion was held without notes being taken to avoid deepening a row that has pitted Poland and its ally Hungary, against many of the EU’s older member states. In the background, the European Commission is preparing options to respond, including a new tool with the potential to ultimately cut off Poland’s access to EU funds if deployed.” (ibid.22/10)

The question arises: what outside body can accuse a Government, elected by majority vote and subject to re-election, of “democratic backsliding”? In a democracy, if a Government exhibits dictatorial tendencies, the remedy is in popular hands. What is the need for intervention from institutions, acting beyond their competence; or from spectators from other countries?

Despite these considerations, no doubt Mr. Martin will support “the new tool” of economic blackmail and throw caution to the wind for the consequences.

Not for brave Micheál the sense and caution of Luxembourg’s Prime Minister, Xavier Bettel, who said it would be —

“a shame if people only gave in when there is money involved. Europe is also values and rules... if it all works only with money, then I think we also have a moral problem...”.

That is the essence of the issue. Is the Europe of the EU to be maintained by blackmail, bluster and threats against a Member State that considers itself as European as any other, and clearly wants to remain in the EU? A country that also considers itself, quite rightly, to have saved Europe’s very existence at Vienna in 1683.

And the whole *contretemps* is over a totally invalid legal interpretation!

Martin is by contrast to Bettel reckless and demented.

The moral question is: are we to have a Europe that is a liberal totalitarian entity or a Europe of variety in all spheres of life? Martin and the Government have chosen the former. They will rue the day.

Jack Lane

Remembering *Manus O’Riordan*

Two Memorable Gatherings – the Wake and the Funeral

Something of what Manus represented, privately as well as publicly, was to be seen in the wake and funeral that his family organised for him. Both events had large attendances, made up of people from diverse backgrounds who would not normally socialise together. Such were the numbers at both gatherings that it was impossible to chat with everyone, but the buzz of conviviality at both sent out its own message.

Of course, there was sadness as well as companionship, and adding to the sadness of Manus’s sudden passing was the memory of two other wakes that had taken place in the O’Riordan house, those for Michael, his father, and Annette, his late wife, both well known to many in the room.

The attendance included people who had known Manus through all manner of activities. A big contingent were friends from the *Goilin Club* where he built a reputation as a singer. When I mentioned *The Wife of the Bold Tenant Farmer*, a song that Manus wrote about and recorded for the Club, Des Geraghty told me it was one of Manus’s first recordings, a song that had strong family associations for him. [See *Church & State* magazine, No. 117, Summer 2014, where Manus wrote about the song, Ed.]

Notices added to the *rip.ie* website contained many for Manus from the world of traditional music and entertainment like Christy Moore, Andy Irvine and the host of the popular music radio show, John Creedon.

Many in attendance knew Manus through the Transport Union (now SIPTU) where he worked over a long career. There were also friends from Bohemians Football Club, from the Friends of the International Brigades in Ireland (FIBI) and the International Brigades Memorial Trust (IBMT), and from politics. Former Labour Leader Joan Burton was there with her husband, Pat Carroll, as was Micheal MacDonncha of Sinn Fein, as was a large contingent from the Democratic Socialist Party, the party he helped found with Jim Kemmy in 1982 which merged into Labour in 1990. Other

political associates present, of course, were those of us who were his fellow contributors to the *Irish Political Review*. Other friends of Manus in attendance were Alice Lawless, Frank McGabhann and Deaglan De Breadun and a friend from the Goilin Club, retired Assistant Secretary at the Department of the Taoiseach, Wally Kirwan.

In recent years Manus was very active in the organisations associated with the International Brigades. That his commitment in that instance stemmed from the participation of his father in the Spanish Civil War was very clear, but only marginally less important were friendships he made through that involvement. In a remarkable article published in the September 2021 edition of *Irish Political Review* he paid tribute to Eddie O’Neill, the Tyrone Republican who founded FIBI in 2013. Drawing from Ruan O’Donnell’s multi-volume study, *“Special Category – The IRA in English Prisons”*, he recounted the inspirational story of O’Neill’s 14-year prison experience. One point made in the article was an acknowledgement of the *“close comradeship and friendship [that] was formed over the succeeding eight years, notwithstanding differing political backgrounds”*, between Manus and Eddie.

Another friend he made through the International Brigades network, of course, was his partner, Nancy Wallach, who travelled from New York for the funeral. At the wake Nancy told a group of us of adventures she had with Manus on the New York Subway arising from his dislike of using taxis. His position was that, having represented transport workers for most of his life, he would always opt for public transport, no matter the inconvenience, no matter the location. Manus would have enjoyed the story—a sharp Dublin wit was one of his strong traits.

By any standard, the procession from the O’Riordan house to the Glasnevin chapel was an impressive affair. Headed by a piper, it had hundreds of followers and a forest of colourful Trade Union banners and flags that tested the knowledge of some. The flags were of Palestine, Catalonia, the Basque country,

and Cuba, as well as Tricolours and the Starry Plough. Among the marchers I noticed many old friends—Tony Byrne, Sean Barrett and his partner Niamh, Simon O’Donnell, Noel Redican, Helen Lahert, Jimmy O’Leary—in addition to present members of the *Irish Political Review Group*—Malachi Lawless, Tony Monks, and Philip O’Connor.

Given the contribution that Manus made to the achievement of Social Partnership, a point endorsed by Peter Cassels on *rip.ie*, it is fortunate that solid research on that topic is being continued by Philip O’Connor. A book on the topic by Philip is reported to be close to final production and Manus reportedly provided many interviews for it. Just before he died, Manus expressed satisfaction with that work, having read a completed draft.

As at the wake, the distinguishing aspect of the procession was the number of people from widely different political backgrounds who joined it. Well known figures I recognised were former Labour Leader Ruari Quinn; Roger Cole, Chair of the Peace and Neutrality Alliance and the Roger Casement Summer School; Chris Hudson, now a Unitarian Minister in Belfast; and Mick O’Reilly the long-time official of the British based ATGWU.

Mick, who is the father of Sinn Fein TD and Shadow Spokeswoman Louise O’Reilly, made an interesting comment about Manus. Hearing that he was a member of a group called the *Ernest Bevin Society* in London many years ago, he and a group of colleagues asked Jack Jones, then Secretary of the T&G union in Britain, for his view on Bevin. The reply from Jones, who incidentally was also a friend of Manus’s, and whom he stoutly defended when Jones was slandered in the British press, was that *“Bevin never had a left-wing thought in his life”*. It was a friendly and decent gesture on Mick’s part to attend the funeral and his presence underlined how Manus kept on good terms with all strands of Trade Union opinion. He can rest assured that an explanation of Bevin’s contribution to the socialist advance achieved in Britain by the post-war Labour Government, with which he is free to disagree, will be offered in *Irish Political Review* in due course.

Due to the continuing restrictions, a relatively small number of mourners attended the service in the crematorium chapel. As President Higgins arrived, the crowd broke into spontaneous applause. Among the throng that remained outside I met up with Niall Meehan, Anne Speed and John Meehan. John told me how Manus had

attended the funeral of Rayner Lysaght, a leading figure in Irish Trotskyism with whom he had maintained a friendly rivalry over many years.

As we waited for the service to conclude, I spoke with Sinn Fein Leader Mary Lou McDonald, who told me that Manus's son Luke worked for the Sinn Fein organisation. Other dignitaries and Office holders present included former President of SIPTU Jack O'Connor, current Minister for Finance Pascal Donohue, Francis Devine of the Irish Labour History Society, Sinn Fein Councillor Larry O'Toole, former Trade Unionist and Official Republican, Fergus Whelan, Eugene McCartan, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland, and Sinn Fein TDs, Louise O'Reilly and Sean Crowe.

After the service, before the President headed for the exit, he nodded — although I don't believe he knows me — when I said to him that only Manus could have united such a cross section of the Irish Left!

There was plenty more socialising at the sit-down meal and many people remained chatting long after the meal had finished. Manus's family — especially Jess, Neil and Luke — can draw succour from the knowledge that he received a fitting send-off that will be long remembered.

Dave Alvey

Remembering . . .

Manus was the Ireland Secretary of the *International Brigade Memorial Trust* and had formerly worked as Head of Research for Ireland's biggest Trade Union SITPU successor to the ITGWU founded by James Connolly and James Larkin. He was the son of Michael O'Riordan, who had as a teenager fought and was wounded with the International Brigade (Connolly Column) in Spain, who founded and was General Secretary of the Irish Communist Party. Father and son were committed Internationalists and their fidelity to Ireland was not compromised by their wider vision.

I only met Manus once, in 2016 on the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street in London, where working class Irish fought shoulder-to-shoulder with their Jewish neighbours and English workers to prevent Mosley's Blackshirted Fascists from barging their way through the neighbourhood. The Metropolitan Police was deployed to help the Fascists and the most wealthy Jews, more comfortably

Jack Lane remembers —

Manus's approach to political issues was well illustrated at the launch by Desmond Fennell of one of his own books, *The Revision Of European History* (2002). After Fennell's introductory launch remarks, Manus asked why Fennell had dedicated his book to a British spy, Professor T. Desmond Williams. Manus further explained that, in view of this, he saw no real need to read the book any further.

Fennell was shell shocked. I got the feeling that he thought that, even if the accusation was true, this was neither the time nor the place to say so — it was like farting in church! But Manus persisted and proved his case.

As with a variety of other issues over the years, if something needed to be said Manus said it, oblivious to the status or prestige of the person or institutions involved.

There must be a large file of his unpublished letters to the *Irish Times* over the years, correcting the pompously self-styled 'paper of record'. Come to think of it, that self-congratulatory phrase seems to have declined in use recently and that may be in no small measure due to Manus's efforts

housed were not much in evidence to help their poorer brethren. (Like the Bourgeoisie of all creeds and nations). The East End Irish were paying off a debt.

Years earlier, when striking Irish dockers were in want, their Jewish neighbours, themselves near paupers, fed the Irish children.

I tell this story because Jeremy Corbyn was at the rally — and was praised by Manus O'Riordan, as was 101 year old Max Levitas, the Dublin-born Communist Jew and East End legend who had taken part in the 1936 Cable Street Battle and many more. Max was one of three brothers born in Dublin and transferred to London, all of them prominent Communists. As children in Dublin, with their playmate Chaim Herzog (later President of Israel), they nearly burnt down the Rathmines Synagogue, when Herzog's father was Chief Rabbi in Ireland. Known as the Sinn Fein Rabbi, he was a firm friend of Eamon de Valera and kept a safe house for him when the Brits were on his tail

I didn't see Keir Starmer at the commemoration. Nor Tony Blair nor Peter Mandelson.

Anyhow Manus O'Riordan had an encyclopedic knowledge of 20th century Irish History and he wrote well-informed, rationally-argued commentary and was generous and fair to those whose opinions he disagreed with. His pieces in the *Irish Political Review* were always superb. Many of his excellent letters, taking issue with favourites of *The Irish Times* were spiked by that paper, which is conducted

under the secretive guidance of an oath-bound Trust, set up by the late and crooked fixer for Harold Wilson.

As it happens, historic photographs from the last 150 years have been 'colourised', and one taken in 1934 showed Fine Gael stalwarts in Dublin's Mansion House giving the "Roman", or Fascist / Nazi, salute. A man in the formal suit wore a mayoral chain: He was Alfie Byrne, and he stood to the left of Fine Gael President General Eoin O'Duffy in his paramilitary uniform. Manus circulated this and it was declared that, peeping over his shoulder, was Fine Gael's Vice-President, W.T. Cosgrave. I contacted Manus, suggesting that, without seeing the black and white original, I would not accept that the gent in a dress suit was W.T. Cosgrave, as claimed.

Manus produced a black and white print from the same occasion and proved his point.

Manus was an educator to the last.

Ar Dheis De go raibh a Anam Dilis.

Donal Kennedy
Fianna Fail

Joe Keenan

**The death has occurred of
Joe Keenan,
a strong socialist from his youth.
Readers are invited to
submit recollections and
appreciations to the December
*Irish Political Review***

London Review of Books

In the above named magazine, Vol. 42, No. 4, 20th February 2020, there is a review of 'Collected Stories' by Elizabeth Bowen (Everyman, 2019, USA), by Tessa Hadley under the rather quirky title, 'Hats one Dreamed about'. Hadley is Cambridge-educated and came to writing comparatively late in life. She is Head of Literature and Creative Writing in Bath Spa University. Her novels focus on family relationships and her literary heroes are Jane Austen, Henry James, Elizabeth Bowen and others of that type. Hadley is the author of seven highly acclaimed novels and three short story collections.

Her review of Bowen's short stories is fair but rather stolid. She opens her piece with reminiscing about the first time she came across Elizabeth Bowen in the Library when, at the age of "12 or thirteen", she promoted herself to the adult section and took books to read about which she knew nothing, including Elizabeth Bowen, Compton Mackenzie and Hugh Walpole. She stuck with Bowen but realised that, when she had finished reading:

"I hardly knew what had happened in them. Her prose was sophisticated, her references depended on all kinds of knowledge I didn't have: this writing was not addressed to me, but over my head. Who were these people and what did they want, what did it all mean, why did they dress for dinner? What was it about Ireland anyway? And yet I loved this writing: it excited me and made its mark on me... No doubt I was drawn to the posh pastness of her contemporary world... I loved the furniture in Bowen... and the "crisp white skirts and transparent blouses clotted with white flowers" ... on the first page of 'The Last September'. (Needless to say, this was nothing like my life.)"

"So Bowen was one of my writers, at the beginning of my adult education. And then I forgot her for a while, she wasn't in Leavis's *Great Tradition*, and wasn't on the Eng. Lit. curriculum in my university in the mid-1970s (she died, though I wasn't aware of it, in 1973, aged 74). No one mentioned her name."

But—

"the literary world was on the brink, in fact, of its great feminist reappraisal of 20th century women writers – and Virago – but I was slow to notice... I began rereading Bowen in my thirties, when my reading horizons had widened in every direction and I was trying and failing to write myself. Now I've never not got something of hers open on my desk."

"Everyman recently reissued Bowen's short stories in one of its gorgeous hard-

back volumes: it's the same collection that was published by Cape in 1980 and then by Penguin and Vintage, except with a new, enthusiastic introduction by John Banville and a useful short bibliography. Bowen is one of those rare writers who is equally good at novels and short stories... In her style and way of seeing, she's a short writer: less rather than more".

But that is more certainly no how Bowen saw her writing, as Hadley reveals lower down the same page. "Into the novel", Bowen writes—

"goes such taste as I have for rational behaviour and social portraiture. The short story, as I see it to be, allows for what is crazy about humanity: obstinacies, inordinate heroisms, "immortal longings"."

Tessa Hadley makes the point that that latter phrase is put in quotation marks by Bowen herself. And the former makes the point that:

"The overreach of the imagination and the containment of a strong intelligence are inseparable. And no doubt those polarities derive in part from her class and her history: the dryness and smartness from an upper-class style, the excess from a long tradition of Irish Protestant gothic, as well as from her own experience."

Hadley then tries to narrate the whole history behind the Bowens and their "Protestant Ascendancy roots in a big plain rectangular 18th century house in County Cork, on land that was granted to Bowen ancestors in the Cromwellian settlement". But, as we Irish know, those terms "granted" and "settlement"—with all their savage barbarisms, massacres and total war—could never sanitise what happened, even if others now see fit to write otherwise. One only has to read General Macready, the commander of British troops in Ireland during the War of Independence—who wanted all-out "Cromwellian severity" in a sweeping draconian military response to crush the IRA—but even he had to acknowledge "that such

an approach was not politically feasible" with the world's eye on English activities.

It is always interesting to see how other critics respond to Bowen's "family history", the book, 'Bowen's Court'. Hadley uncritically comments:

"She tells her ancestor's story with finely judged generosity and criticism."

In last month's magazine, the October *Irish Political Review*, regarding John Banville's toadyism on this very issue, I cited the great Hermione Lee's analysis to show the very opposite to what Banville wrote. Such Bowen-esque attempts to re-write history were always going to draw down the wrath of those, like Lee, and the American biographer Vera Kreilkamp, who wrote in 1998 that *Bowen's Court*—written between 1939 and 1941—was nothing more nor less than "an act of piety".

I would also contend, like others, that—as it was written as the Second World War was coming out of its phoney phase, as the British couldn't prosecute it on their own, and were now winning the USA over to its side—this book gave Elizabeth Bowen perfect cover for her espionage activities in Ireland. 'Seven Winters' written at the same time gave her a Dublin background and thus, when interviewed in 'The Bell', she could state to the obvious amazement of the 'Bellman' (Larry Morrow) that she was always aware of "being an Irish writer".

But such were the new positions being taken by very odd people. The *Irish Times* Editor, R.M. Smyllie, confessed in the pages of 'The Bell' that:

"when the British left Ireland in '22 ... The bottom fell out of the world in which 'The Irish Times' previously had existed. Quite frankly, we had been the organ of the British Government ... We had now to write for a totally different public" (Underlining – JH).

But to give Smyllie his due, in that very clever statement, he never acknowledged what "organ" the paper was now writing for!

In Victoria Glendinning's biography of Elizabeth Bowen (1977), there is a very funny description of the writer, on coming back from London to Dublin, and opening her copy of 'The Irish Times' to find an article written 'as Gaelge', much to her fury. Surely some things were sacrosanct!

But she quickly learnt that, in war, this was not going to be the case at all and—like the paper—she herself cottoned on to the new 'war' dispensation, and took to it like a duck to water—especially when lots of travel and payment were in the mix.

Tessa Hadley synopsisises Bowen's life, which again suggests that her readers need such history. Reviewers in magazines like this would surely expect their highbrow readers to be familiar with their authors: so it does show that Bowen is still that name that needs to be explained.

And, when one turns to the Roy Fosters of this world, as does poor Hadley, alarm bells should well and truly be ringing. The thing that Roy explains is of course her "*activities*" in Eire. So this is how Tessa Hadley tells the tale:

"...when she went to Ireland she sent confidential reports on morale to the British Ministry of Information, though Roy Foster says she was 'warmly defending neutrality' in them, 'as an Irishwoman'. Foster has persuasively made the case for Bowen's thoroughgoing Irishness 'as long as I can remember', she wrote, 'I've been intensely conscious of being Irish.' Her work, Foster says, is always shot through with the characteristics of the Irish literary tradition: its sensuous language, baroque humour... uncanny ability to recreate childhood, and a sense of place experienced with a paranormal intensity."

I suppose Foster can still pass in England for the kind of critic that the State finds handy when it needs such obfuscations. In a former issue of the *Irish Political Review*, the whole essay on '*Neutrality*' was dealt with and, far from Bowen's '*warmly Irish-woman persona*' of Foster's delusions, it was firmly argued that Bowen gave England the information it needed to make their war-time decisions.

The fuzzy warmth of Foster's analysis didn't come into it and—if it had—Bowen would not be the successful spy and asset that she most definitely was to England's advantage.

Hadley continues to summarise her favourite Bowen short stories but she is all over the place. She even ignores Bowen's own strictures about how short story writing should be done, though having already quoted from it.

Instead of going to Roy Foster, Hadley should have consulted a very slight booklet '*Elizabeth Bowen's Irish Stories*' with an introduction by Victoria Glendinning, (Poolbeg Press, 1978, Dublin). Yet first we must go to another biographer—the great Hermione Lee, whose biography of 'Elizabeth Bowen' was first published in 1981 (Vintage, London), and whose next work on her was '*Elizabeth Bowen: An Estimation* (Vision, London, 1981).

In her introduction Lee states:

"I have written a critical study of Elizabeth Bowen because there is a great deal to be said about her work, and because she has been *peculiarly neglected*.... Yet the span

and quantity of her work is considerable: between 1923 and 1968 she wrote ten novels, almost eighty short stories, a history of her family, several non-fiction works and a great deal of literary journalism, from which two collections were made... Elizabeth Bowen is an exceptional English novelist because she fuses two traditions—that of Anglo-Irish literature and history, and that of European modernism indebted to Flaubert and to James" (All Italics – JH).

"Her scrutiny of pre-war, wartime and post-war England and Ireland places her firmly in the tradition of Jane Austin, George Eliot, Henry James, and E.M. Foster. But she also deserves recognition as a modern writer for her analysis of dislocation, unease, and betrayal. Her part in the modernist paradox—the application of elaborately formal methods to chaotic, inexpressible experience—is the precise charting of loss."

And then we go back to Glendinning's booklet of Bowen's Irish short stories and find that there were only nine of them—and that even surprises Glendinning—but what a land it would give to John Banville and Tessa Hadley! Glendinning, at home with her subject, makes the point that "*home*" for Bowen "*was always Bowen's Court in County Cork until it was sold, when she was over fifty*". Glendinning goes on to ruminate that Bowen's husband was an Englishman, that she had spent a lot of time in England—so therefore it was no surprise that she worked for the British Ministry of Information during the war.

"She identified fiercely with England's struggle and was a great admirer of Churchill."

And Glendinning notes that Bowen was very definite about *not* using the paranormal in her novels saying "*it was unethical*". But her short stories were of a different nature. This is of course the opposite of what Roy Foster says, and Hadley in future would want to be wary of using just such an undependable source.

Glendinning also notes that Sean O'Faolain, in his book '*The Short Story*' (1948)—

"took 'Her Table Spread' as an example to analyse: he had worthwhile things to say about its compression and cohesion – 'a lovely example', he says, of the merging of situation and construction." (Frank O'Connor in *his* book on the short story '*The Lonely Voice*', 1963 does not discuss Bowen at all: an interesting omission.)" (Italics – VG)

Tessa Hadley finishes her review with an upbeat tone—despite accepting that Bowen in her final years seemed "*old-fashioned, her stylishness belonging to another era, her perceptions no longer quite mapping onto cotemporary experience*". Elsewhere, Hadley does accept that Bowen—

"plays up and down the range of the middle-classes and into the gentry: nobody is impossibly lofty or titled (unless the title is Italian), though sometimes when she strays down the social hierarchy – into the new housing estates, say – there are strong whiffs of condescension."

"But now, fifty years after her death, when the 1960s are past history too, we can do justice to her achievement: it can seem as fresh to us, or fresher, than writing that was in its moment more fashionably avant-garde. I think – but then I'm prejudiced – that she's as good as anyone: better than Woolf, who's enshrined at the heart of the canon."

That is an incredibly foolish call to make, but then Hadley is no Woolf scholar, as can be gleaned from those writers that she uses to make sense of Elizabeth Bowen.

It is the great scholar Dame Hermione Lee, biographer of Bowen, and author of the award-winning '*Virginia Woolf*' (1996), *Philip Roth*, 1982, *Willa Cather*, 1989, and *Edith Wharton*, 2007. In 2013 the playwright Tom Stoppard asked her to write his biography. It was published in 2020. In between, there are a lot of other writers that she has written about, while all the time working in academia. She is a former President of Wolfson College, Oxford, and a former *Goldsmiths Professor of English Literature* in the University of Oxford and professorial fellow of New College. She is a Fellow of the British Academy and of the Royal Society of Literature.

Yet this is what she had to write when her biography of Elizabeth Bowen was re-released in 1999.

"In 1981 it was hard for me to find a publisher, or an audience, for a book on her work... I began and ended my book by claiming that she deserved a higher estimation, a bigger and different reputation: that she had been undervalued and mis-read..."

But, reading Tessa Hadley's review, one can see why Lee's appeal never took off—it is the continual *mis-reading* of Bowen that is the issue and the intrusion of people like Roy Foster, whose literary and political naivety—to put it nicely—leads others to a collapse of ability in reading Bowen, the novelist, and the spy.

Negationist history has a lot to answer for (a phrase I borrow from the Casement historian Paul R. Hyde), and it really is time now to clear the ground so that we can begin the essential exercise of renewed effort towards reclaiming that which is ours to reclaim.

Julianne Herlihy. ©

What Is Socialism?

If socialism is defined by how its political representatives act, then its elements can be described quite clearly.

In the Irish context socialists tend to distrust the State. All actions by the State are suspect. The State must be called to account with the presumption of guilt. State initiatives, such as NAMA, are automatically deemed to be suspect: either corrupt (“*the developers bank*”) or incompetent (“*will lose billions*”).

The State’s past record is a nightmare from which we are recovering. Socialists vie with each other for superlatives (e.g. “*Gulag*”) to describe the horrors of the past.

But on the other hand, they tend to oppose cuts in public expenditure. They resist any attempt at privatisation of the services provided by the “*corrupt*” State.

However, they rarely advocate nationalisation or workers’ control.

Socialists tend to oppose monopolies and support free market competition.

Irish socialists tend to oppose property taxes. They favour increased expenditure on social housing but also favour affordable housing, which is in effect subsidised private home ownership.

Present day Socialists tend to extend the principle of equality beyond the economic and the political. This principle has been used to establish ‘rights’ for a whole array of groups such as feminists, Gays and ethnic minorities.

These positions of present-day socialists are relatively recent. While some of the above are not incompatible with an older version of socialism, others are antagonistic to it, while still others have nothing to do with socialism in the traditional sense.

Up until about thirty years ago, socialism meant the social ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange. Disagreements within the broad socialist movement related to how and when this could be achieved. Other struggles, such as women’s liberation and gay rights, were subordinate to the objective of social ownership. They certainly were not considered a substitute for this main objective.

Social ownership was desirable because private ownership was considered the means by which the working class was

exploited.

If social ownership has been abandoned, it would be useful to know why. Is it necessary for it to be abandoned and, if so, what elements of socialism can be salvaged?

For much of the twentieth century, socialism was considered to be the wave of the future. Its proponents claimed that it was not only a fairer system but also a more efficient way of organising society’s resources. Indeed, Marx argued that Capitalism acted as a “*fetter*” on productive resources. The attraction of Marxism was not just that it was a moral denunciation of capitalism but purported to be a scientific analysis of the laws of motion of the capitalist system.

Marx rather convincingly suggested that the capitalist system contained within it the seeds of its own destruction. Its most significant characteristic was that it socialised production. In previous modes of production, a large proportion of production was consumed directly by those who produced it or, if that was not the case, the producers knew who the ultimate consumers would be (e.g. his landlord, other members of his family or community). But Capitalism was “*social*” in the sense that the vast bulk of production was produced for society. The individual worker had no idea or particular interest in who would be the final consumer. He was part of a vast socio-economic mechanism that provided for the economic needs of the society and whose scope extended way beyond national boundaries.

The system was revolutionary in its effect. It uprooted and destroyed other forms of production. It could do this because the socialisation of production had enabled a massive increase in productive resources, which was accentuated by the application of scientific methods. Marx thought that Capitalism developed in the Netherlands before other countries because socialisation of production was forced on the Dutch by the challenges imposed by their natural environment.

Marx believed that any attempt to reverse the process was utopian. Instead, the beast must be controlled. The problem was that, even though production was “*social*” or oriented to society, the “*society*” had no control over that production. Ownership and therefore control was in private hands. Another way of putting it is that capitalism was “*indirectly social*”. Social needs were

provided for as an indirect consequence of the drive for surplus value or profits.

What could be more logical than social needs being provided for directly by society? But how could this be done?

The means by which this would be achieved was by the State. The State would represent society’s interest. Communists believed that their party, with its understanding of scientific socialism, was best placed to act in the social interest by taking control of the State. Other strands of socialism believed the State should be representative of the society.

So where did it all go wrong? In many ways it didn’t! Practically all the developments that Marx identified in the nineteenth century have been accentuated in the twenty-first. In particular, an increasing proportion of life has been “*socialised*”.

A feature of many of the services offered on the Internet are that many are free at the point of use. This doesn’t make them socialist, but neither are they capitalist in the traditional sense.

Social media has enabled the sharing of personal data which can be easily manipulated. Never before has the question of social ownership and control been more pertinent.

The problem has always been: how can social ownership and control be made effective?

It was thought, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, that the State was incapable of providing for the complex demands of a consumer society. But recent developments in capitalism make that point moot.

The technical capacity to store vast amounts of information has enabled corporations to anticipate demand before the consumer is even aware of what his needs are. Indeed, it could be said the corporations determine what those needs are. Thirty years ago, except perhaps in France, it never occurred to anyone that telephone communication could be visual or that any individual could access a bewildering number of services through a centralised database, or that people could be constantly connected to such information through a hand-held device. No one demanded these facilities, but once experienced, it is almost inconceivable that life could continue without them.

The idea that companies compete with each other to satisfy the arbitrary and pre-existing demands of consumers is an illusion. In the new economy production and consumption is centrally planned.

In France the impetus for such develop-

ments was the State (Minitel). In the US it was large corporations (or small companies that had unlimited access to capital at the development stage). The common factor in each case was a willingness to forego profits. US companies such as Amazon were prepared to lose billions for many years.

Indeed, it could be said that one of the reasons inflation has not been prevalent in recent years in the world economy, despite an expansionary monetary policy, is that a large proportion of funds have been sunk into creating the architecture for a new economy. There hasn't been a consumer boom.

The question arises: *why was the French attempt overtaken by the Americans?*

The answer is that the Americans had deeper pockets and had a global reach. The French system was really only for the French. But, apart from that, the approaches were similar. The Americans had to abandon all hope of obtaining a short-term economic return. The stock market could cope with that by giving investors capital gains, rather than cash dividends.

The capital gains only occurred because of the weight of money invested in the companies. To a rational investor, schooled in the old economy, such investments looked like gigantic Ponzi schemes. And indeed, many of them were, but enough of them had substance to justify the massive outlay.

The relative success of the Americans compared to the French illustrates a problem. In order to be successful the operation had to extend beyond national boundaries. This applies to all industries.

Marx, of course, was aware of the internationalisation of capital but the implications were not really explored. The State is the means by which capital can be controlled. But the State is organised along national lines. How can the State control international capital? The answer is it, on its own, can't.

Multinationals decide where in the world they want to organise production. States compete with each other to attract such companies. If a multinational leaves, there is not a lot the State can do.

A few years ago a subsidiary of a multinational closed down in Ireland. A left-wing TD called for the company to be nationalised. But, of course, such a proposal was impractical. The subsidiary most likely sold its products to other companies in the group. It was not a stand-alone company but merely a component in an integrated system of international production.

The obvious solution is some form of

cooperation between States. But that is easier said than done.

In the meantime, it is very understandable that the Republic of Ireland should attempt to attract multinationals. The negative publicity about Ireland is as a result of the country being so successful.

Recent moves by the OECD on tax harmonisation will have the effect of benefiting the larger countries, since tax will be based on where the product is consumed rather than where it is produced. It is easy to be virtuous when it coincides with one's self-interest!

While the global reach of multi-nationals has made social control—never mind social ownership—impossible without international political cooperation, there are vast swaths of the economy in which social ownership/control does make sense.

The obvious area is the financial sector. What benefits to society has free market competition had in the banking sector?

A strong case could be made for the opposite: competition, particularly from foreign banks, precipitated the financial crisis.

The solution to the crisis was to nationalise the banks: a longstanding socialist policy. And yet, now that the crisis has been surmounted, there is no serious resistance (socialist or otherwise) to their privatisation. There is no socialist vision for how the economy might run.

Similar arguments can be made for social ownership of the insurance and pensions sector.

In general, operations relating to infrastructure should be under social ownership or control.

What about the building sector? It is widely believed that this sector has not served the social interest. It is not necessary to nationalise every small firm in this sector, but there is a case for the State controlling what traditional socialists called the "*commanding heights*".

Many of the large building companies are in effect employment agencies subcontracting work as the need arises. Why can't the State deploy such resources to achieve desirable social objectives?

If socialism is to advance politically, it must have an overarching vision of how society should be organised. In the absence of such a vision, it will lapse into incoherence and be a prey to special interest groups.

John Martin

The 'Civil War'

book review continued from page 26

I wonder how many have heard of Knocknagoshel? Well, most have heard of Ballyseedy but aren't aware of what led to the Ballyseedy incident. The IRA, (anti-Treatyites) planted a mine, at Knocknagoshel, and with false information drew in the National Army to the that spot. It exploded, killing five government soldiers and mutilating another. Retaliation saw nine IRA roped to a mine at Ballyseedy. Eight were blown to pieces with one, Stephen Fuller, being blown into a tree. He was two feet away from the mine and it cut through the three ropes tying up his body, also blowing off his clothes. On escaping, it was Free State supporters who treated and hid him for a week. Despite escaping such a fate, he was on the run until March 1924, still wanted by the Free State Government.

He applied for a wound-pension (according to the book) under the 1932 *Army Pensions Act* and was granted £150 a year. He later served as a Fianna Fail TD from 1937 to 1943 and lived to the age of 84, despite health problems and domestic problems involving the death of one of his wives from tuberculosis. (He had remarried.) At the age of 80, in 1980, he appeared in a rare TV interview, with the historian Robert Kee's Irish history series.

There was to be no end of retaliation back in 1922. Ballyseedy didn't seem to be enough. The National Army set up two more deliberate killings involving mines—four IRA prisoners were blown to pieces at Countess Bridge, on the following day, near Killarney, and on the 12th of March, five more at Cahirciveen.

Some added titbits:

Among this conflict was what was called the Neutral IRA, mentioned by the author, not much is known about them.

At one time there were 13,000 IRA interned, plus 500 Cuman na mBan.

Churchill, colonial secretary, at time of the signing of the Treaty in Downing Street, made the usual disparaging comments about Ireland: He warned that the focus had to remain on constitution and empire because:

"If you come down from that height and fight in the swamps of Lough Erne you will be overwhelmed".

In 1914, speaking on the Ulster crisis he warned about:

To page 22

A Diet Of Weasel Words

The dogs in the street seem to be aware that Fianna Fail has lost its way as a Party.

There is a dire need for that most clichéd of political terms — leadership. But it is not coming from Micheál Martin and all know that it never will.

Members must feel a bit like those described by Browning in the *'The Lost Leader'* — though the leader is not yet gone in this case:

"Life's night begins:
let him never come back to us!
There would be doubt,
hesitation and pain,
Forced praise on our part
— the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again!"

So what to do? If you lose your way one good idea is to remind yourself where you came from and where you were planning to go in the first place. As it happens there could not be a better moment to do so. Commemorations of the so called 'Treaty' are flavour of the month. And Fianna Fáil in essence began on the 8th of December 1921 when de Valera issued a statement saying:

"TO THE IRISH PEOPLE.

A Chairde Gaedheal,

You have seen in the public Press the text of the proposed Treaty with Great Britain.

The terms of this Agreement are in violent conflict with the wishes of the majority of this Nation as expressed freely in successive elections during the past three years.

I feel it my duty to inform you immediately that I cannot recommend the acceptance of this Treaty either to Dáil Éireann or to the country. In this attitude I am supported by the Ministers for Home Affairs and Defence.

Éamon de Valera"

Fianna Fáil stood by that for decades and became the most successful Irish party of all time coping with every challenge at home and abroad on that solid basis. It stood for that position or it was nothing. Every leader up to Martin did so.

Among the many commemorations about this so called 'Treaty', one was held at UCC on 1st-2nd October, which Martin addressed. It was a perfect opportunity for him to set the record straight about the origins and *raison d'être* of his party but of course he did not.

Being a master of weasel words, *mantras* and innuendo, his talk was a connoisseur's collection. This was no surprise. Martin gave a clear view of his position some years ago in a book on the

'Treaty', a book that is now acclaimed, and on the basis of which he is credited with being a historian. It was called *'Freedom To Choose'*. However, if there had been freedom to choose, then de Valera and his colleagues who objected to the Agreement were wrong and reckless. And Fianna Fáil should never have come into existence.

Martin explained in his introduction to this book on the 'Treaty' that he did not consult de Valera's papers to write it. This is like writing Hamlet without the Prince. A new method of history writing, perhaps it's a development in the revisionist school.

At the UCC Conference I submitted a question by reminding him of this book:

"Micheál Martin's book on this period called 'Freedom to Choose' is a misnomer as that is exactly what was not allowed by the Articles of Agreement. The attempts to choose any other way by De Valera and Collins in 1922 was denied under its terms and the British insisted on war to make the point leading to what is called the civil war. Is this not the basic fact of the situation regarding the Articles of Agreement?"

The question was not answered of course: and when the basic issue is avoided all that follows can only be obfuscation and questions going a begging. Here are a few gems from the Taiseach:

"The Civil War was not inevitable, Mr. Martin suggested, and "the sheer number of times that stopped the drift to conflict was remarkable". (Irish Times, 2.10.21).

If not inevitable why then did the Treaty War happen? Martin did not explain. Could it not be the obvious fact that Britain insisted on the *Articles of Agreement* being implemented to the letter, despite the joint efforts of de Valera's and Collins to ameliorate them and to avoid further conflict by an agreed *Pact* as late as 20th May 1922?

There was no *freedom to choose* any other interpretation, and, if there had been, there would have been no 'civil war.' No book could have a more misleading title.

"There is simply no doubt that the Treaty debates and its aftermath saw rampant misogyny in the service of belittling and marginalising the voices of women", Mr. Martin added."(ibid.)

That is certainly something that did not apply to the supporters of de Valera, as he was notably and ably supported by all the women TDs and their Republican activist sisters outside the Dáil. The misogynists nicknamed them "*The women's and Childers Party*". It was scurrilous not to make

this very clear about his own Party, but Martin has to play to the Politically Correct gallery in his trade-mark weasley way.

"Mr. Martin said the failure to expand the franchise in the June 1922 general election to include all women was a "shameful episode that set women back many decades"(ibid).

And who insisted that there not be universal franchise in that Constitution? Mr. Churchill did so because he claimed that it was "Bolshevism" to have such a policy and the Free Staters had it removed. But the revisionist gallery called to Martin and Britain disappears again from any responsibility. One could go on and on.

Life's night has indeed begun for Fianna Fáil under Martin. To finish with Browning:

"Songs may inspire us,—but not from
his lyre;
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts
his quiescence"

Jack Lane

PS

The *Evening Echo* on 7th October, reported on the UCC Conference and its organiser, John Borgonovo, claiming that:

"A particular highlight, according to Dr. Borgonovo, was an address by a certain former UCC history student. "Micheál Martin was fantastic. He made a superb contribution with his remarks. He did his MA here and wrote a good book on City Council politics in this period. His knowledge of this period is really extensive"."

Martin's contribution had nothing to do with the historical narrative. He was following the current line to gloss over the events and issues that were the topics of the Conference and make them as meaningless as possible. That is the order of the day in official Ireland for these commemorations. It is natural for politicians to do what they have to do and debase the historical narrative (and anything else if necessary) to serve their current political purposes. Not a pretty sight but at least it has a valid purpose in that sphere of life.

But while it is one thing for a politician to follow his/her political imperative, and use and abuse history as they see fit, it quite another for any self respecting historian to follow suit, not only to condone it but to describe it as "*fantastic*". It is nauseating to behold Dr. Borgonovo do so in such a flattering and ingratiating way. It is a further debasement of Martin's original debasement and I do not know of a word that does that situation justice.

As for being a "former UCC history student" he is indeed but not the only one from the stable that also produced Eoghan Harris under the tutelage of John A Murphy and if Dr Borgonovo considers that a badge of honour I assume that he will help produce similar foals from that stable. ■

Centenary Commemoration of the Dripsey Ambush

REVEREND FATHERS, COUNTY MAYOR, FAMILY MEMBERS OF THE VOLUNTEER SOLDIERS OF THE DRIPSEY AMBUSH, MEMBERS OF THE DRIPSEY AMBUSH MEMORIAL COMMITTEE, ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

To have received the invitation to address this, the centenary commemoration of the Dripsey ambush, is one of the great honours of my life. So great is the honour, indeed, that I have to confess that I hesitated, at least momentarily, before accepting, primarily because I am conscious of how significant an event it was in the history of this locality, of the rebel county of Cork, and of Ireland as a whole.

I was not sure when I received the invitation, and am perhaps still a little uncertain, as to whether any words of mine can ever really be adequate to pay proper tribute to those who went out to fight for Irish freedom in late January 1921, and most especially to the memory of those who never returned home. But as one of the themes of my Address is the vital role that a sense of duty and service played in those momentous times, I think it behoves us all to do what we can to keep alive the memory of those heroes – and that term is certainly warranted – and so I responded with both a glad heart, and a somewhat racing pulse!

Before I begin in earnest, let me extend this point very briefly and pay tribute to those involved in the *Memorial Committee*, some of whom I have previously had the pleasure of knowing, and some of whom I have encountered more recently. I sincerely believe that both they, and their predecessors going all the way back to the 1920s, are exemplars of the same spirit of service that motivated those whose names are listed on the memorial – albeit, of course, that service has been rendered in a different way.

As someone who has had the immense good fortune to be paid to teach and research history in University College Cork, I am simultaneously in your debt and stand in awe of the voluntary, silent, worthy work that you have done and continue to do, year in, year out, in keeping alive an awareness

of these times past. And so, a personal words of thanks from me to you.

And thus to my own views. What I will not be doing to any great extent is to recount the sequence of events that took place a century ago, mainly because I do not need to – anyone who wishes to obtain this information is strongly advised to purchase either the centenary commemorative booklet, which has an excellent summary, or the longer, detailed account authored by Mary O'Mahony, herself a graduate of the School of History in UCC, and a good friend of mine. Or both!

What I will instead do is to focus on the meaning, and significance of what happened. Not to chronicle the events as it were, but to assess and interpret their importance, as best I can.

In this vein the thing that must be emphasised, first, foremost and repeatedly, was that the Dripsey Ambush was planned as an act of war, to be carried out by the volunteer citizen soldiers of the Irish Republican Army against the professional soldiers of the British Army garrison in Ireland. Everything that led up to the staging of the ambush, everything that occurred on the day itself, and all that flowed from it, must be considered with that plain, unvarnished truth in mind.

It is a strange, decidedly uncomfortable reflection on how the history of that period has been conveyed in certain quarters in Ireland over the past hundred years that some might take issue with this description. Indeed a tiny number might even go as far as to echo (I think parrot might be the better verb) the insulting terms used by the London Government of the day to denigrate their republican adversaries. But this was a military engagement, between two belligerent forces, and the evidence for same is provided by none other than the British Army itself.

On the issue of the military standing and capability of the IRA, I quote from a confidential report sent by Lt. General Frederick Shaw, then Commander-in-Chief of British forces in Ireland, to the British Cabinet in March 1920. He stressed that even then:

"the ... Irish Republican Army is organized and commanded in a manner which

would be creditable to highly-trained military experts; its communication and intelligence services are most efficient, and its discipline leaves little to be desired ... It is only want of armament which has prevented [it] ... becoming a most formidable and open enemy."

In short, ten months prior to the events in Dripsey (ten months during which that deficiency of weaponry was only partially rectified) the head of the British garrison in Ireland was informing his political masters in plain language that the IRA was not alone really an army, but a really fine army – and the First Cork Brigade, of which the 6th Battalion was an integral and active element, was demonstrably one of its élite units.

But this is not the decisive evidence that the British, as well as the Irish Volunteers, viewed the events of that day in military terms, for the very charge levied in the court martial against those captured was that they "*did levy war against His Majesty by attacking... a detachment of His Majesty's forces*". I shall return to these sinister proceedings in a second.

Of course, the Volunteers needed no validation from the British side as to their standing, for they derived all they needed in this respect from within their own republican tradition, historic and recent.

- The 1916 Proclamation had drawn attention to the repeated assertion in arms of the Irish people to their right national freedom and sovereignty, and this right was what the Volunteers at Dripsey were asserting.
- The Message to the Free Nations ratified on the opening day of Dáil Éireann on 21 January 1919 recognised an 'existing state of war' between England and Ireland, and this was the war that the Volunteers at Dripsey were waging.
- And the Declaration of Independence endorsed on the same occasion demanded the evacuation of the country by the English garrison, and this was the garrison who the Volunteers at Dripsey were fighting.

So an act of war occurred here, in which soldiers of both nations took part, and as a consequence of which one Irish Volunteer suffered an injury that ultimately proved fatal. But consider what followed!

The captured soldiers were not afforded the honourable prisoner of war treatment to which their status, and deeds, entitled them. Rather they, in the manner of felons, were put on trial for their lives, the charge being that they had waged war. But waging war is what soldiers do, and have done since time immemorial. That is their reason to exist.

The offence committed by the Volunteers in British eyes was, thus, not any violation of the rules of war, but their scrupulous observance. The Volunteers fought a clean fight for the duration of the engagement, yet that was precisely the charge levelled against them. In other words, those who were executed were done to death not for having done anything wrong, but simply for being who they were, soldiers of the Irish republic.

Let the inescapable truth then be stated clearly. There was indeed a crime, a war crime with which the name of Dripsey will forever be associated. It was a war crime perpetrated by the British victors. It occurred not during the heat and fury of a military engagement on a battlefield, but in the considered quiet of a judicial forum held in a secure military barracks. It was the war crime of the trial, conviction and execution of prisoners of war.

It is a point I never cease to make when I take students and visitors to UCC, to the site of the republican plot on campus, final resting place of these and other victims of this inhumane policy. I repeat it here now, during the ceremony to mark the centenary of the Ambush, and I think it should never be forgotten—most especially by the British people.

Let I be accused of glossing over the sequel to those executions, I acknowledge that other deaths followed as a direct consequence of these executions, those of Mary Lindsay and James Clarke. Let us not, for fear of giving unnecessary offence in this the centenary year, be afraid to fail to call the actions of the former in regard of the ambush by their proper name, however unpleasant.

The passing on of information regarding the IRA ambush was a hostile act in a time of war, one that transformed those who so acted from civilians, who were entitled to remain above the conflict and be guarded from it, into spies who could not expect any such protection. I certainly do not deny that Mrs. Lindsay acted according to her political convictions, but such convictions were no defence against the charge properly levelled against her.

It is a matter of record that those on the republican side did everything humanly possible to avoid the desperately sad sequel. The final decision lay in British hands – to respect the customs of war and to spare the all the lives of those in custody, or to ignore them and condemn them all to death. Tragically they chose the latter, lesser path.

Both the Volunteers at Dripsey and Mary Lindsay acted according to the

lights dictated by their conscience, and both paid the ultimate price for so doing. But there, to my mind, the similarity ends. The Volunteers acted as soldiers to free their country, to ensure that the will of the Irish people would be the decisive factor in the future government of Ireland. Mrs. Lindsay acted as a spy, and sought to ensure that Britain continued to rule the country, in defiance of the will of the Irish people. I leave it to those assembled here to silently decide for themselves which was the better path.

But it is the republican Volunteers who are the proper focus of today's commemoration, and it is to them that I return for the remainder of this Address. When we consider their deeds on that day, a bigger question, or several bigger questions, suggest themselves: why did these local men engage in this act of war? Why did they become soldiers of the Irish Republic in the first place? Why were they willing to risk their lives for the cause of that Republic?

Well, there are a number of answers to those questions, but what is for certain is that self-interest played no part in their motives. Consider the prospects facing Irish Volunteers when they mobilised to serve that day. Remember that the British by this stage had most certainly let loose the dogs of war in Ireland, including—

- the deployment of specially-recruited, ill-disciplined paramilitary forces;
- the declaration of martial law and the abandonment of even the pretence of democratic government;
- and the infliction of authorised collective punishments of the civilian population, amongst many other indefensible steps.

The Volunteers at Dripsey knew well that they faced the very real prospect of being killed in action. But they also knew that even if they survived and triumphed in the engagement, they faced the prospect of an indefinite period 'on the run', during the depth of an Irish Winter, constantly moving from safe house to safe house, or even sleeping rough, at all time knowing they could be attacked without warning by Crown forces.

They had to live with the knowledge that were their identities to become known, it would at minimum mean the burning of their family home, and quite possibly the visitation of still fouler deeds upon other family members.

However, if they survived but were vanquished, they knew that—

- the shooting of Volunteers out of hand

under the guise of 'trying to escape' was already an established feature of British operations;

- that there were documented cases of captured prisoners suffering physical ill-treatment in custody that certainly passed well beyond the threshold of torture;
- that at best they faced indefinite detention in insanitary internment camps, in which several prisoners were to perish;
- that the British had already, in the case of Kevin Barry, begun executing prisoner of war.

Yet, knowing all these risks, all these dangers, all these hardships, the Volunteers mustered and they fought. Why? Why did they do these hard, dangerous things, with the prospect of no reward other than the knowledge that they had served the republican cause?

Well, the answer is surely in the question. It was the beguiling nature of that cause, the cause of freedom, the cause of the Republic, that drew so many willing to its flag. This call of service was, to the men and women of that greatest generation, an irresistible one.

Until the Spring of last year, most of us had become accustomed to the wrong-headed idea that service was something rendered by those at the bottom, as it were, of the social pile to those above, and they were dependent upon, and somehow owed something to, their 'betters.'

Well, if ever there was an illustration of the truth of the gospel injunction that the first shall be last and the last first, it has been provided over the intervening months. We have witnessed across all sectors of society, from health workers to those who work in unheralded areas such as shop assistants, that service is needed; that service is virtuous; that service is a noble calling, and that those who perform it are deserving of our sincerest gratitude.

And if this is true of service in general, it is especially true of those who perform service voluntarily, with no thought of pecuniary gain. And above all it is true of those who, as at Dripsey, freely served in the knowledge that death might be result of their willing, giving actions.

Service of the cause of the Republic such as was rendered here was power in its most authentic form—not the illusory, superficial, showy power of Empire, not even the very real and very cruel power deployed by the British to kill republican prisoners of war—an act that merely demonstrated the weakness of the British claim to govern Ireland in the interests of the Irish.

By way of contrast, the embrace of service as witnessed by the action at Lissarda harnessed the motive power of the Irish people to the keen edge provided by the Volunteers, and the effect was devastating and historic. Even the sharpest blade cannot inflict a wound if there is not force behind it. But if there is such a force, as there was in Cork in these tumultuous times, even something as seemingly invulnerable as the British Empire could be dealt a debilitating injury.

The Empire could kill the bodies of prisoners of war. But in so doing it only liberated and strengthened the ideal that inspired them to serve their country in the first place, and drove on their cause to new, unimagined heights.

So, in conclusion, let us recall the names of those Irish heroes who fell in the service of their country, and in so doing let us also recall their comrades in arms, who survived. While we mourn their premature deaths, and are conscious of what more they had to contribute, let us be prouder yet that they served, and in their short lives gave so much:

Captain James Barrett
Volunteer John Lyons
Volunteer Timothy McCarthy
2nd Lieutenant Thomas O'Brien
Volunteer Daniel O'Callaghan
Volunteer Patrick O'Mahony

May God rest them.

issue. Former Attorney General Michael McDowell, now also an Adjunct Professor of Law, has stated his position in his own 'stylish' way. I had already seen some comments by Professor McDowell which seemed to refer to my research.

"That 'research' looks like ludicrous, puerile Qanon fantasy. I don't agree with the conspiracy theorists. The majority of his biographers no longer argue for fabrication. On what planet does the so-called researcher reside. Some of the forgery nuts actually believe the typed diaries precede the manuscript version. Look at Casement's poetry."

This certainly differs from a remark received at the same time from President Higgins, which described my research as "very important scholarship". But it was McDowell's reference to poetry which spurred me to follow his advice and research the most controversial poem, *The Nameless One*, a task which occupied me for four months. Professor McDowell was advised of the resulting article, now published in *Village* (Oct-Nov, 2021), and his response was invited.

After a week of silence it seemed reasonable to conclude that Professor McDowell no longer wished to engage with the issues and, given the outspoken, dismissive, tone of his earlier remarks, it seemed that his reticence could be explained by a change of mind about *The Nameless One*, as happened with Professor McDiarmid. If so, that he chose not to challenge the published analysis and conclusions, indicates a tacit acceptance of the evidence that the poem is a forgery. Professor McDowell is a distinguished barrister and it is unthinkable that he is unaware of what this forgery implies for the alleged authenticity of the diaries. It is axiomatic that a forged document cannot be evidence for the authenticity of other documents. The forged document can reasonably be considered strong evidence against the purported authenticity of other documents by the common-sense principle of *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*.

To conclude; the absence of evidence for authenticity of the diaries made it necessary to forge evidence. It is irrational to believe in authenticity when the *only evidence* is false.

CAVEAT LECTOR

Publication of *Anatomy Of A Lie* in April 2019 provoked complaints from persons named in the book and, after a few months, the book was withdrawn from sale to avoid the risk of costly litigation. In the event, no litigation took place and the book is due to be re-issued.

Roger Casement: Two Caveats

During research into the controversial poem *The Nameless One*, I contacted Professor Lucy McDiarmid in New York. Sometime in the late 1990s she had found in NYPL a ms with the mis-spelled title *The Namless One*; she was the first person to report the existence of this ms. Later she published a photograph of the ms in her book *The Irish Art of Controversy*. On 24th March, 2021, I received an email from her in which she stated: "... I want to be on the record as saying the NYT [NYPL] ms is authentic ...". By early July I had completed research, and I sent a copy of my article, *Naming The Nameless One* to Professor McDiarmid asking for her comments. I received no reply.

In late September I wrote to inform her of forthcoming publication of the article and asked again for her comments. I added the caveat that a no-response could be interpreted as a change of mind. After 15 minutes a reply came and this was followed by a brief exchange of emails which gave me the strong impression that Professor McDiarmid no longer wished to be 'on the record' concerning the alleged authenticity of the ms in NYPL. Since her emails did not refer to the poem or to my article and amounted to a 'no comment', I concluded that she had indeed changed her mind in light of the new evidence in the article. This change of mind spurred me to elaborate further the deeper significance of what I had discovered in respect of the 1957 publication of the poem.

The evidence I presented is of a quality which makes it impossible to construct a

coherent fact-based argument for authenticity of the poem and only those afflicted by severe cognitive dissonance would be tempted. Professor McDiarmid was not tempted. It is self-evident that the hitherto unheard-of poem was composed in 1957 in order to combat the widely publicised book by Alfred Noyes.

The full significance of this forgery is revealed in the following considerations.

A long-standing suspicion of forgery cannot be dispelled by a later act of forgery. It is axiomatic that persons innocent of forgery would not resort to forgery to demonstrate their innocence. Only those aware of a prior forgery would risk a second forgery hoping to cover up the first. In 1957 the following was decided: '*let's tell a lie about him that proves we never told lies about him*'. However, a lie cannot prove another statement true.

This is the reasoning which became clear to Professor McDiarmid when confronted by the irrefutable new evidence set forth in *Naming The Nameless one*. There is nothing dishonorable about changing one's mind when faced with previously unknown evidence. It is an exercise of intelligence, integrity and humility and as such is a credit to Professor McDiarmid and an example to others.

Among those others are a number of Irish academics, mostly historians who, as Professor Ferriter has confirmed, have not carried out primary source research on the vexed matter of the diaries. They have been content to recycle the 'official' version as consolidated dogma. Many of them prefer to keep a safe distance from the diaries, but one academic is not afraid to engage with the

Anatomy of a lie is only the third book to present extensive arguments that the diaries are forged. In 1937 Maloney's *The Forged Casement Diaries* provoked a forged letter—allegedly written by a TCD professor—sent to Maloney's friends 'for private consumption'. The letter insinuated a threat to Casement's status as 'national hero and martyr' by exposing him as 'a pervert'. Again in 1957 the publication of Alfred Noyes' book *The Accusing Ghost* provoked the forgery and publication in the *Sunday Times* of a compromising poem attributed to Casement. Therefore, it would not be surprising if at some time *Anatomy Of A Lie* also provoked a comparable reaction intended to discredit the evidence for forgery.

Among those arguments is that presented in Chapter 4, where it is demonstrated that there is no independent witness evidence testifying to the material existence of the bound diaries in 1916. Only the police typescripts were shown at that time. This argument might now attract hostile attention in the following way. A hitherto unknown document purporting to confirm the showing of the bound diaries to an independent witness might now be 'discovered'. This uncanny 'discovery' would indeed replicate the 1957 'discovery' of a hitherto unknown poem, to coincide with publication of Noyes' book. Such a convenient 'discovery' in the future would merit the greatest suspicion, whatever purported provenance was claimed. Both the timing and the motivation would be sufficient for a conclusion that the document was a forgery. This would hold good for any similar attempt to discredit *Anatomy Of A Lie*.

The events of 1937 and 1957 are explored in *The Bigger Mystery* and *Naming the nameless one* available on www.decoding-casement.com

Both involved forged documents.

Paul R. Hyde
20.10.2021.

Casement In Turkey !

Dr. Turan Cetiner has translated Casement's writings into Turkish for the first time. Considering Casement's many interesting insights into Britain's war on the Ottoman Empire this is a very useful development. Dr. Cetiner has been a keen student of Irish history since his period with the Turkish Embassy in Dublin about a decade ago. He attended many events relating to Ireland's role in the Great War and, with Altay Cengizer, another historian, who was Ambassador at this time, did much to promote Irish/Turkish relations. These go back to Ottoman times when the Sultan sent ships to aid the Irish during the Great Hunger.

Less known are the links between Republican Ireland and Republican Turkey during the early 1920s which formed around the parallel independence struggles.

Dr. Cetiner saw the importance of Casement early on and, throughout his subsequent postings in Ottawa and Ankara, he maintained his interest in Casement and Irish history in general. Now his interest and work has borne fruit with this first translation of Casement into the Turkish language. Below is a rough translation of the blurb:

"Roger Casement's writings are of invaluable interest for Turkish readers. As a colleague of British Foreign Minister Sir Edward Grey and a member of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before the First World War, Casement has seen first-hand what was happening inside the British State.

Secondly, under Edward Grey's tenure, British foreign policy embarked on a major change of direction that had severe consequences for the Ottoman Empire.

Casement, in his *Crime Against Europe* collection, advanced the opinion that British foreign policy was directly responsible for the World War of 1914. He initially defended

Ireland's neutrality in the First World War, having predicted the inevitable direction of the policy of the British Foreign Ministry. But he subsequently supported the War on the side of Germany—which he considered a more progressive force in the world and a victim of the new aggression policy of Britain—and he acted on his views.

Casement pointed out how the Balkan Wars had liquidated the Ottoman lands in Europe and he showed that the Germans had sought to help revive the economy of the Ottoman Empire, creating a hindrance to British Imperialism's designs on the region.

Sir Edward Grey at the Foreign Office shifted his position during this period, and stopped defending International Law, known in those days as the Public Law of Europe. Casement saw that Britain aimed to expand its empire across Arabia and ultimately take Mesopotamia and Palestine into the its Imperial control.

Dr. Cetiner's translation into Turkish of Roger Casement's analysis helps to explain the existential threat faced by the Ottoman Empire in 1914—and thus the subsequent actions of Turkish statesmen in defending the Ottoman State."

Pat Walsh

Biographical Sketch Continued, Part 6
Part 5 appeared in the June issue

In Defence of Dorothy Macardle

Twelve years after she wrote *The Irish Republic*, and four years after the end of the Second World War, Dorothy Macardle produced a work of non-fiction that merits recognition as an important journalistic contribution to the study of European history. Entitled *Children of Europe*, it revealed in detail, from an anti-Fascist perspective, the adverse effects of the War on children in all the countries of Europe, and it showed how Governments, international relief agencies, and members of the general public could target more effectively their willingness to assist the children of the war-ravaged regions.

The book was a contribution to Europe at a time of need from Republican Ireland. Published by Victor Gollancz in London in 1949, and by the Beacon Press in the United States in 1951, it won international acclaim, as is acknowledged by both of Macardle's biographers. The publicity it received in Ireland, including radio interviews with the author over many years, suggests that *Children of Europe* was viewed with pride in Ireland.

What is covered in this article is how Macardle came to research the subject of the

book and the story of how it was written, including a coincidental side story. The main section is a summary of the book's contents using, as much as possible, extracts from the work itself.

Before any of that, it is necessary to understand that all historians of the Second World War need to pick their way through a propaganda minefield. The saying that history is written by the victors is only partially true in the instance of the last War; its history was written by the *Western* victors. Even today, the role played by the Soviet Union in defeating Germany is downplayed. To a large extent the present worldview of Western liberal democracy is underpinned by US and British narratives of the War. The chapter of European history to which Macardle chose to contribute was, and remains, a closely-guarded ideological space.

Two examples of bias in the mainstream US/UK accounts of the Second World War are: a failure to describe the manner in which 1939-45 was a continuation and consequence of 1914-18; and a judgement that the source of German aggression was to be found in the German or Prussian character,

rather than in the ideology of Nazism, a phenomenon that was itself a product of a complex set of national and international circumstances. Macardle is freer of these prejudices than the generality of Western commentators.

The manner in which the Nazi genocide of European Jews has been weaponised by Zionist organisations and their supporters is another example of the way that propaganda has intruded into the narratives of the War. That polemical project has been progressed to the point where criticism of Israel can now be presented as evidence of anti-Semitism—witness the campaign against Jeremy Corbyn in the British Labour Party. On this issue Macardle was an early opponent of Nazi anti-Semitism and, after 1948, an implacable critic of Zionist activities in Palestine, as I reference below. As is the case with many opponents of Fascism, her story—the way she related to the issues of her day—is a living refutation of the idea that anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism are synonymous.

Children of Europe carries the weaknesses as well as the strengths of a comprehensive journalistic investigation; the author's work was dependent on the veracity of the witnesses she interviewed and the reliability of the sources she consulted. At times she echoes the propaganda of the Western Allies—it was, after all, as an Irish Republican tending to a liberal democratic worldview that she opposed Fascism; as she states in the *Foreword*, her book contains no discussion of the situation of children in the Soviet Union, showing that she shared the Western blindspot about the Soviet experience of the War. As a Republican in the Irish tradition, she was also hampered by the failure of the newly independent State to develop an understanding of World War I consistent with its own recent history, in other words, consistent with the writings of Roger Casement.

Yet Macardle's account of the War—her book is not confined to the experiences of children but includes various episodes of the conflict—was written before the lines of ideological division were firmly drawn, and is all the more insightful for that. An incident referred to in Part 2 of this series testifies to how far she was from being a pawn of Western propaganda. In 1948, the year when the Israelis expelled half of the Palestinian Arab population (over 700,000 people), and a year before the publication of her book, she wrote to the American publisher of *The Irish Republic*, Ziff Davis, forbidding that book's publication on the grounds that “the organised

*Irish in America appear to be associating themselves to some extent with this movement” [Zionism] (Leanne Lane biography, p. 175). She was clearly concerned that her book might indirectly assist a movement that was tearing up the rules governing international order. That a second edition of *Children of Europe* was never issued is further evidence, arguably, that it did not fit the prevailing narratives.*

BACKGROUND STORY

As the events of the 1930s unfolded, Macardle's attention shifted from Ireland to Europe which is why, in 1939, she moved to England. Once established in London in accommodation and in potential employment through the submission of scripts to the BBC, she volunteered with a relief agency working with refugees from Germany. Leanne Lane states that she offered the BBC case studies of refugees who had been subjected to anti-Semitism during the inter-War period (p. 199); we are not informed whether the Corporation used these scripts. Before War was declared she enrolled with a group of relief workers planning to travel to Czechoslovakia but, due to a stint in hospital for severe head pain, she was unable to meet that commitment. Her intention, apparently, had been to get to Prague to experience first-hand the atmosphere of a German-occupied country with a view to writing up research she had conducted in London.

That missed opportunity in 1939 indicates when the seeds of *Children of Europe* were sown. Clearly, her plan was to use her talents in the fight against Fascism by writing about what was happening in Europe. While war-time conditions prevented her from travelling to Europe until 1946, the Acknowledgements section of the book lists the many London-based organisations from which she was able to access information including: the Save the Children Fund, the Girl Guides International Service, as well as from the London offices of UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) and UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation). She also received assistance from the London Embassies of the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark and Yugoslavia.

At an early stage during those years she must have decided to make children the focus of her work. Macardle had shown an unsentimental concern for the welfare of children in a series of articles for the *Irish Press* in 1931-32 in which she drew attention to the effects of poverty in Dublin. The series culminated in an expose of the numbers of young offenders

being brought before the Children Court; with Maud Gonne, she objected to the incarceration of high numbers of boys and girls in Industrial Schools (see Part 4 of this series). Frustrated in her desire to improve the lot of children in 1930s Ireland, she worked the subject into her novel, *The Unforeseen*. From that time, a concern for child welfare was an integral part of her feminism. She is, in that regard, comparable to the Norwegian feminist, Mimi Sverdrup Lundén, who also wrote about the plight of children in post-war Europe (Smith, p. 118).

Smith describes Macardle's travels in Europe when the War ended:

“Dorothy, now fifty-seven, travelled throughout Europe to meet with leaders of child welfare organizations in the spring of 1946. She conducted research in France, the Low Countries, Czechoslovakia, and Switzerland. She interviewed government officials in the Health, Education and Social Welfare ministries in these countries, as well as physicians, educators, and child psychologists.” (p. 117)

In Geneva she met International Red Cross officials and staff from the International Union for Child Welfare. Macardle transferred the allegiance she had given to the League of Nations to the UN, and became a strong supporter of UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund), notwithstanding the exclusion from membership of neutral countries like Ireland at that time. She also had consultations in Vienna.

Drawing from a broadcast talk that she gave on *Radio Eireann* (Coincidences, 28 August 1957), Lane refers to the adverse conditions Macardle faced travelling alone in post-war Europe, and especially in Vienna where “possessing no ration card and no permits”, she was refused food in the cafes and a bed in the hotels (p. 203). Luckily, she was recognised in the Austrian office of UNRRA as the author of *The Irish Republic* and granted a press pass.

While travelling on the Continent Macardle sent back regular reports to the Fianna Fail Government on what she was seeing. Speaking in the Dail (19 January 1946) on the allocation of funds for the relief of distress in Europe, Robert Briscoe TD referred to reports from “a lady of great repute who is well known in this country, Miss Dorothy Macardle”, regarding work being done by organisations “which are disposing of the goods provided by the assistance given by this government” (Lane, p. 203).

A SIDE STORY – HERBERT REMMEL

In the very brief section of her biography devoted to *Children of Europe*, Lane refers to a visit which Macardle made in June 1946 to Glenree, County Wicklow, where the old British Army barracks, later a Reformatory, had been refurbished for use as a Red Cross centre for refugees from Europe. It so happens that one such refugee, Herbert Remmel, who was among the first group of 60 German children to stay at Glenree in 1946, later wrote about the three years he spent in Ireland under the foster family programme known as *Operation Shamrock*. Coincidentally, the English translation of his book, *From Cologne to Ballinlough*, was published in 2009 by the *Aubane Historical Society*, a society having associations with this magazine.

It is unclear what role, if any, Macardle played in the organisation of *Operation Shamrock*—it is not mentioned in *Children of Europe*—we know she was sending reports from Europe to the Irish Government in 1946 and that she had high-level connections with the Red Cross in Switzerland at that time, so she may have well have been instrumental in making background arrangements.

What is known for certain is that she visited Glenree a month before Herbert Remmel's arrival and wrote about it in the *Irish Press*. In an article, "*Glenree is Home for War Orphans*", she expresses satisfaction seeing "*institutions erected for enemy purposes transformed to our own use*", even mentioning that, when it became a Reformatory, "*grim stories were told of it in the Glen*". In stating the main point in the article, she conveys concisely an important message of her book:

"Sweden and Switzerland have given boundless hospitality to the young victims of the war, and Ireland, equally thankful for immunity, is eager to do no less. Irish people have imagination and have also sufficient knowledge of war and its miseries to guess what war on a vast scale must mean. We cannot muffle our minds up in a cloak of incredulity or shut out hearts against Europe's needs" (*Irish Press*, 28 June 1946).

Alongside her article a boxed report states that 100 German children would be arriving in the following month, so, in defending the work of the Red Cross at Glenree, she was also protecting the inclusion of German children in *Operation Shamrock*.

Herbert Remmel's memoir complements Macardle's efforts in the 1940s, by demonstrating how valuable charitable initiatives could be in providing relief to children from war-torn Europe. At the beginning of his book, he explains why he wrote it:

"My nearly three years with the Irish were amongst the happiest and most interesting of my childhood. Down the years I have told stories about my Irish experiences to my children, family, and friends, and they started pressurising me to set down my 'Irish biography' in sequence. This I have done without literary pretensions, seeking to retain the child's view of events, and I have added an account of my childhood before my Irish adventure. Now, under pressure from my Irish friends, I have been prevailed upon to allow an English edition of my memoir, to which I have added a few more recollections" (*From Cologne to Ballinlough*, p. 5).

Not only does Remmel's account of his time in Mayo describe positive experiences that German children had in Ireland—he asserts that the absolute majority of the 30 children who returned to Germany with him regretted having to leave Ireland—it undermines the literary myth that rural life in Ireland at that time was one long catalogue of misery. Herbert was happy to re-join his German family in 1949 but was sorry to leave his "*beloved Irish family*", and indeed the community of Ballinlough, some months before his departure had been due.

CHILDREN OF EUROPE — EXTRACTS

Summaries of books are necessarily selective, tending to reflect the bias of the summariser, and to that general rule the following paragraphs are no exception. Fortunately, the book can be read online from the *archive.org* website and copies of the original print editions seem to be available for a price, so sceptical readers can access Macardle's text for themselves.

Author's Foreword

The book, at 349 pages, is a big read, covering dark material in places. The Author's *Foreword*, itself a synopsis, is a good place to start. As the extracts in this section are all from it, I have not added page references. In the later extracts, the page references are from the US edition.

Defending her work, Macardle says the book—

"represents no more than the writer's attempt to collect and relate, like an honest journalist, facts and case histories that may help to illuminate and illustrate the truth", and this is justified "because any contribution to the understanding of these problems may help a little towards their solution, and because the emergency is acute".

From the start the investigation highlights Fascism and its effects.

"Since the children's troubles have their roots in their experiences under Nazi occupation, the story of those experiences form the major part of this book.

The Nazis were logical, and their plan for the conditioning of the young generation in

conquered territories was elaborate and complete. The children of the annexed districts [Austria, Sudetenland, Alsace-Lorraine, Danzig] were to be Germanised; those of France and the Nordic democracies were to be reared as willing employees of the New Order; Greeks and Slavs were to be reduced to the condition of semi-literate labourers, while to Jewish, Gypsy and mentally defective children a process of elimination was to be applied. As a result of this programme the children of the occupied countries underwent not only the common rigours of war, but also countless sorts of pressure and strain" (p. 12).

Macardle considered that the experiences of childhood cannot be considered in isolation. So, "*how their fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters were living and dying must, therefore, be told*" (p. 13). Referring to the psychological damage suffered by children, she says, "*Children are children everywhere; their reactions to bombing and hunger and separation are much the same in Slovakia as in Norway, in Austria and France*" (p. 13). Attending to the psychological needs of such children, she says, is a "*new field, for never has childhood been so assailed and tormented since the beginning of man*". Yet, she adds, researchers delivered some findings that were encouraging, "*it is astonishing to see what a miracle can be worked for a child when the right thing is done in time*".

She estimated that the children in most acute distress at the time when she was writing were those "*in certain German towns*".

"No one who dislikes seeing the iniquities of the fathers visited upon the children can rest satisfied until their grievous situation has been lightened and their outlook for the future rendered less dark".

Notwithstanding her principled advocacy on behalf of German children, already evident in her article on Glenree, she seems to acknowledge in the final paragraph of the *Foreword* a faint possibility that the Nazi is innate in the German. That element of doubt re-appears in the first chapter, when she describes the traditional German family, in which, she says, the mother played a weak role and the father tended to be authoritarian, thus providing fertile ground for the emergence of Nazism (p. 20). Perhaps such stereotyped thinking was understandable in the immediate aftermath of the War, but the passage of time has shown it to be utterly groundless. The paragraph reads:

"Nazis were made in less than one generation by a perverted group of men who used the nature of the children and the weight of tradition and the pressures of their time to shape and harden the nation's youth. If we have to believe that

they did this easily, because the Nazi is innate in the German, we can cherish no hope for Germany and feel little hope of peace for Germany's neighbours; but if it was not done easily—if an unprecedented coincidence of circumstances, exploited with an unparalleled tenacity, cunning and callousness, was necessary to attain that end—then it is reasonable to believe that wise and generous dealing with today's young generation may enable a different Germany to emerge."

NAZISM AND GERMAN YOUTH

In a thought-provoking first chapter, *To Create a Nazi*, Macardle chronicles how the National Socialist leadership captured German youth, mainly through the agency of the *Hitler Youth*. Having adverted to the debatable point that the hardening of young males was aided by the traditions of German family and civic life, her next point goes some way towards acknowledging the legacy of World War I and Versailles.

"Fusing and welding all these discontents [depicting Soviet Russia and the German Jewish population as objects for hate] was the impoverishment which Germany was angrily suffering: a result of defeat, and of subsequent hunger and epidemics, the Reparations and financial collapse. There was humiliation: and no individual nor any group that has not experienced humiliation can know how deep and penetrating and spreading are the evil roots that grow in that poisoned soil" (p. 21).

As the chapter proceeds, the overall picture is added to—how German youth was initially attracted through "*an admixture of what is true and sound and generous*"—participation in the shaping of a resurgent Germany—how their critical faculties were dulled and their herd instincts overdeveloped—how the young "*find life and ethics complex and are glad to have things simplified*" (p.24)—and how ties with family and religion were sundered. She describes the ubiquity of the ideological messaging in the following terms:

"They could not escape, and only a minority wanted to. Not only were the young people subjected to a tremendous, incessant pressure of suggestion, but they lived in a world from which every opposing influence had been shut out. Their school studies and text-books had all been distorted to make them support the Nazi creed; the Press, the radio, books, plays and films all told the same story; no counter-suggestion was allowed to intrude" (p. 28).

An angle that Macardle explores is the maleness of the 'New Germany'. The Hitler Youth offered satisfactions and pathways to power for boys but "*girls had to be persuaded to turn away from all the bright vistas which progressive feminism was opening to women and to accept a wholly*

subservient role" (p. 32). At a young age, girls were enticed into a cult of adoration of the Fuhrer; later they divided into fighters' auxiliaries and *Rassezuechteren*—'race-breeders'. In the elite *Castles of the Order*, carefully-selected high-achieving males in the Hitler Youth, on reaching the age of twenty-five, were given a combination of drastic training and lavish privilege. In these centres "*a brutal contempt for women was cultivated*" (p. 28).

The Toll on Children

Among countless accounts of distress and persecution suffered by children in *Children of Europe*, the most harrowing are in a chapter called, *The Jews*. Macardle writes:

"The number of Jewish children who died as a result of the war and the persecution is believed to be about two million. Many died of starvation and hardship and many were killed in pogroms, but there can be no doubt that more than a million were deliberately put to death by German governmental ordinance" (p. 108).

In the chapter much of the horror of what happened is recounted interspersed with tales of heroism and survival. The Youth *Aliyah* movement is described. Founded in Germany in 1933 by Recha Freier, an orthodox Jew who reportedly became a Zionist in response to experiencing anti-Semitic humiliation, it successfully lobbied the British Government for immigration permits allowing young Jews to enter Palestine.

Macardle describes how hordes of escaped Jewish children made their way by the most circuitous of routes to Palestine where they were integrated into agricultural settlements. "*By the end of September, 1944, about twelve thousand boys and girls had been rescued and settled by the Youth Aliyah*" (p. 114). The chapter concludes: "*The children had no enemies in Palestine then. Arabs came with gifts to them and said: 'May Allah be with you: you are now the children of mankind'.*"

Children suffered hardship and death in all the occupied countries, some worse than others—three million Poles as well as three million Polish Jews died as a result of the War. Apart from violence and terror, the lack of food, both during and after the War, impaired very large sections of the populations of Europe. Later in the book Macardle states:

"It had been estimated that in 1943 about forty million children in the occupied regions of Europe were in a condition of low vitality for want of food. By the end of 1945 the children of some of these countries—Holland, Belgium and Norway, especially, were receiving more nourishment, but to the number of the hungry had to be added,

now, the children of defeated Germany and of the countries which had supported her. In these, scarcity was general, and it was increasing to famine, and the hungry children could not be kept warm. Winter came with bitter menace and misery to peoples short of fuel, blankets and clothing as well as food" (p. 225).

Other scarcities included soap, the lack of which was causing outbreaks of skin disease, and hide for the manufacture of shoes—that large numbers of children attended school without shoes meant that in Winter their ability to learn was severely weakened.

Education

Regarding education, Macardle's understanding of post-war conditions can be seen in the following extracts:

In Czechoslovakia

"Thousands who ought to have been entering the universities had been factory hands since they were fourteen and had forgotten how to study. Children who ought to have been able to enter the secondary schools or higher civic schools were without elementary knowledge of their own country's history and literature. Not only were boys and girls backward in knowledge, but most of them had lost the ability to learn. Distracting emotions, obsessing fears, the tensions and excitements of each day's news, hunger, fatigue, and unremitting anxiety about food—all these and scores of other factors had combined against a peaceful and studious routine. Such conditions spoil the memory and the power to concentrate. Keen and ambitious children, consumed with a fever of eagerness to make up for lost time, would start hungrily to study, but would break down in tears over their inability to take in what they were trying to learn" (p. 62).

In Poland

"Teachers were astonished at the resilience of the children who were well enough to come to school. Although most of them were wretchedly housed and still undernourished and in poor health, they were not spiritless, not cowed. The apathetic despairing children were few. Most of the boys and girls were alert, and responded with wondering delight to the appearance in their lives of any new element of comfort and civilisation—things such as the younger ones had never seen or heard of before; and they were eager to be taught. They would go out in teams among the ruined houses, collect tables and chairs, furnish some empty room and, announcing that they now had a school, demand teachers and books" (p. 82).

In Greece

"Teachers who returned to these districts found eager pupils awaiting them, but found nothing else. They did what they could without schoolrooms, tables, benches or books. In Thrace, for a time, a pencil cost

four eggs, and when one was secured, it was cut in three. The only bits of paper obtainable were the labels from Unrra tins. The teachers, tired and under-nourished, were unable to support themselves by means of their poorly paid profession, and most of them had to do manual work as well as teaching.

Their difficulties were as numerous as they were unpredictable, but the greatest difficulty lay in the minds of the children. The children's hatred of being ignorant and desire for learning were vehement, yet they found it almost impossible to spend hours in school."

'Today's Campaigns'

The book's final chapter having the above title is opened with this sentence:

"Three and a half years after the German capitulation there are more than twenty million children in Europe who are in a declining state of health because, after years of under-nourishment during the war, they still have not enough to eat" (p. 297).

Briefly surveying the state of progress in different European countries, she singles out UNICEF as an organisation worthy of public support, an organisation she describes as making child welfare work a co-operative enterprise of the entire civilised world. UNICEF deserves support, she says, because it is focused on children and expectant and nursing mothers of all races, countries and religions, having both the USSR and the US on its Executive Board; and having need as its sole criterion—two thirds of UNICEF aid to Europe at that time was in the form of powdered milk.

She endorses *children's villages*, an initiative originating in Italy that spread across the Continent, that had developed "without theorising or planning", catering, with a reasonable degree of success, for the needs of homeless, war-affected orphans. Macardle's recounting of the story of the *Kinderdorf Pestalozzi* in the Swiss canton of Apenzel, where emotionally-impaired children from all parts of Europe were given appropriate long-term care, closes the book.

CONCLUSION

Given that *Children of Europe* never came out in a second edition, that even in Ireland it is not well known, and that, even among commentators writing about Macardle, it is invariably referred to briefly and in vague terms, it is tempting to see the book as something of a flop. Actually, it was successful beyond what might have been expected of it. Even before it was published, it was clear from the Acknowledgements that Macardle had the backing of

the international organisations running relief programmes in Europe. Peter Beresford Ellis, writing in 2016, quoted from a review in the *British Spectator* magazine:

"This terrible and magnificent book will undoubtedly remain the standard work on the children of this war" (The Green Book, Bealtaine 2016, p. 78).

It was also favourably reviewed in the *Times Literary Supplement* (Smith, p. 122), and in the US. That the book continues to be cited in research is another testament to its success. A footnote in Nadia Smith's biography refers to a study published as recently as 1998, *DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-1951* by Mark Wyman (Cornell University Press) in which Wyman extensively cites *Children of Europe* in his chapter on displaced children (Smith, p. 122).

Considering that Macardle gave numerous interviews to both the BBC and *Radio Eireann* about the book, it can be safely assumed that it got the exposure it needed. The degree of influence that such a book exerted internationally is impossible to measure, but must have been substantial.

Outside the field of child welfare studies, *Children of Europe* should have a place in the literature of anti-Fascism. An editorial that covers developments in Afghanistan in the September edition of *Irish Political Review* states:

"Fascism has never been a major concern of the USA. Its Capitalism has never been under any danger from Socialism. The methods by which it created itself are not easily distinguishable from the methods usually described as *Fascist*. And it had good reason for not signing the UN Genocide Convention after 1945.

Its concern was Communism—which Britain's ideologically-confused and incompetently-conducted War brought to dominance in half of Europe. Fascism was the means by which Communism had been warded off in the chaotic situation brought about by Britain's First World War. And, after 1945, the USA took up the anti-Communist crusade from Nazism, having no scruples about taking Nazi experts into its service."

Seeing Fascism from that perspective provides great clarity for understanding Macardle's book. Whereas the Great Powers viewed Hitler pragmatically in the context of the survival of capitalism in the time of what they termed the Soviet threat, and later milked their role in Germany's defeat for propagandist purposes, Macardle aligned herself against European Fascism as a matter of principle from its emergence to its collapse.

As is clear from the series of articles attacking the Blueshirts she wrote for the *Irish Press* in October 1933, her stance arose from

the defence of democracy mounted by the anti-Treaty side in the Irish Civil War. Later, alongside de Valera, she was appalled by the weakness of the League of Nations in failing to stand up to Mussolini. Likewise, in the *Address* she gave to Mills College in California and the war-time broadcasts she made for the BBC, her consistent message was how democratic norms and liberties were being annihilated in Italy and Germany. The assumption that the danger posed by Fascist ideology had passed in 1949, is only safe in retrospect. When Macardle was writing it, the argument presented in her book, especially its first chapter, still needed to be made (arguably, that remains the case).

That polemical angle apart, *Children of Europe* still holds up well as a historical study of life in German-occupied countries in the Second World War. For all these reasons and more, after seventy-two years, it still deserves to be known about and read.

Dave Alvey

To be continued

The 'Civil War'

book review continued from page 13

"Getting stalled in the muddy by-ways of Fermanagh and Tyrone."

Sometime later he was to talk of the dreary steeples of Armagh.

This was the man who didn't seem to notice the lice, bedbug-ridden slums of the East end of London, where sometime two families shared one room, with the same conditions reigning in all major British cities, not forgetting the horror of the Gorbals in Glasgow.

The anti-Treaty war was no doubt a massive shock to the Irish physic. Right up to the end of the 1990s, and his death, a life-long friend of mine from the Glen Road, a Republican area in Belfast, was affected by his father being a member of the Treatyite National Army at one time. The jeer, to his regret in later life, was:

"Your khaki didn't take a good dye of green after all."

It made for bad relations with his father which he was unable to heal.

Wilson John Haire.

18.9.21

A Voice From The Grave: Peter Hart

by way of Jeffrey Dudgeon

Jeffrey Dudgeon has been publishing his correspondence. He has been putting it on some Internet site. I understand that that is now considered to be *publishing* as much as if it was issued as a printed book.

I have no direct access to these things but occasionally some of them find their way to me.

Dudgeon's published correspondence includes letters sent to him as well as letters sent by him. It includes a letter sent to him by the late Peter Hart—the student historian who, under instruction from Professor David Fitzpatrick of Trinity, undertook to write a history of the IRA in Cork in the War of Independence in the light of *a priori* knowledge that it was in large part, or in essence, a Catholic sectarian war against Protestants. I seem to recall that Hart was later discredited by Fitzpatrick, who moved on.

Hart wrote a second book, on Michael Collins. It seemed to me to be one of the better books about Collins. He gave a meeting about it in Belfast, which I went to with the intention of saying something in support of it. It appears that I was recognised by the Chair, who decided that I should not be allowed to speak in the discussion. That suited me fine. People with nothing better to do with their lives constructed me into a bogey and I thought I had better things to do than try to dispute the matter with them.

What Hart said to Dudgeon in the sphere of private gossip would be of no concern to me if Dudgeon had not considered it to be so important that it must be published.

Hart is long since dead, therefore I assume he is not responsible for publishing this trivia—though he himself recorded an interview with a man who was dead at the time.

The publisher is responsible for the content of what is published. I understand that there is no Internet publisher who is responsible for what appears on the medium. The publisher is the person who inserts it. Responsibility for the accuracy of the content therefore lies with Dudgeon in this instance.

Here is what he published about me, under Hart's name, dated 29th July 2009:

"I read back to the start of the Irish Political Review in the N.L.I. a while back—much is impressive, much is repetitive, you can see how everyone follows Clifford's lead, and gradually history takes over. He has changed his line on lots of things—one bugbear used to be his defence of David

Irving—he finally, reluctantly dropped that though, without apology.

"Interesting their turn to anti-revisionism has united a lot of rival tendencies—O'Riordan surely used to be an enemy, for examples, and Des Greaves was hated.

"The real asshole is Niall Meehan—Brian Murphy, Clifford, Meda Ryan all have some substance to them. Meehan is the attack dog, who refuses to declare himself a republican, claiming to be a journalist."

I gather from this that they hated Niall Meehan because he maintained a pragmatic, empirical position within the medium of journalism and academia which was otherwise dominated by the ideology of Oxbridge-inspired "*re-writing of Irish history*". He has no connection whatever with me, nor had most of the others mentioned.

As to David Irving: where did I "*defend*" him? I found him to be a historian where otherwise there was only a rehashing of the War Propaganda—the only other historian being Liddel Hart. He insisted on dealing with the War as an empirical historian. He found out about it by investigation, instead of knowing about it in advance, as a right-thinking person should.

He dealt with the treatment of the Jews in the same spirit. If he was a Holocaust Denier, that could only be because the Holocaust was something different from a process of extermination carried out within the order of causation. Perhaps the only right way of dealing with what is called *the Holocaust* is ahistorically, as an event outside of history, caused by an extra-terrestrial force of Evil, located in Eternity and therefore unintelligible on the ground of human affairs. That was certainly the routine way in which it was dealt with before Irving. And that way of dealing with it reduced it to the status of an Article of Faith, a subject for belief or disbelief, but not for historical understanding.

Irving, insofar as I read him on the matter, treated the handling of the Jews by Germany in the hinterland of the invasion of Russia as an event very much within history.

He did not deny, but described, the killing of Jews in large numbers. But he secularised it, while Holocaust is a word with sacred overtones.

I did not follow his trial. I thought he was very foolish to sue for libel in an English Court. He had put himself out of court by de-sacralising the great Icon at the centre of British ideological life after the great blunder of the second war on Germany

which brought Communism into Central Europe and reduced Britain to the status of kept man of the United States. Suing for libel showed a touchingly naïve belief in a fundamentalist British sense of Justice existing beneath all the vicissitudes of war, politics and power. An 18th century Judge had said, in Latin: "*Let Justice be done even though the Heavens fall*". It was the proper thing to say, but I could not find a single instance in which British Justice handed down judgements damaging to Britain.

The operative maxim says something quite different. I forget the precise wording, but the meaning is that *the welfare of the people is the supreme good*. This says that Heaven must be kept in place at all costs, because England is its agent on earth. The English State is the Providential State in the world, and that is the status that gives its people their sense of well-being. Irving affronted it with his strictly empirical history of Churchill's career. And he was given his come-uppance when he put himself at the mercy of the law.

I believe that the Judge delivered a very long summing-up on the way to his verdict, but I never got around to finding it. I'm sure I said at that time that, in the light of what I had read of Irving on the German handling of the Jews in 1941-4, it seemed to me to be a perverse verdict, but not a surprising one.

This is the only view I have ever had of Irving. He stopped writing and I stopped commenting.

Was it worth commenting that the *Irish Political Review* was largely "*repetitive*". It is a periodical publication which follows the twists and turns of a particular situation, so what else could it be?

As to "*history takes over*": it was written from the start within a clearly-established historical view of Northern Ireland and of the Irish Republic.

And, whether or not it is true to say that "*Greaves was hated*", the attitude towards him expressed in the *Irish Political Review* did not change.

But Dudgeon feels that these inane private remarks of a favourite historian need to be published to the world. So there they are.

He also publishes a much longer letter from himself to Hart, in which he says:

"I was a fellow traveller of BICO in their two nations (CEC/CLR) days from 1971 and remain of the view they nearly changed the world.

"They then unexpectedly and quite shockingly turned against most of us in 1987. I follow their trajectory, intervening occasionally when they get too gross.

They are also now the backers of the Roger Casement Foundation in an alliance with the old times and modern anti- or post-revisionists like Angus Mitchell.

“I don’t intend to get involved beyond correcting, expanding and balancing the Wikipedia entries which are top heavy with quotes from Meda Ryan.”

I was very surprised to see Dudgeon presenting himself as having been “*afellow traveller of BICO*”. He never showed any interest in BICO. His only interest in that regard was in “*the Union*”. Because of “*the Union*”, he took some part in the *Campaign for Labour Representation*, without, as far as I could see, having any interest in Labour.

BICO founded the CLR for the purpose of exerting pressure on the Labour Party of the state to organise and contest elections in the Six County region of the state. There were BICO members in the CLR and there were BICO members who were not, and there were members of the CLR who had no time for BICO.

The CLR exerted gradually increasing pressure on the Labour Party over a period of about fifteen years while David Morrison was directing it. In the early 1990s the members of the CLR who resented the presence of BICO formed the Protestants in it who were not members of BICO into another organisation—organised by a Trotskyist Marxist in London, of Ulster Protestant background, who had become a Labour MP—and was on its way to becoming merely Ulster Unionist. This was done, so it was said, to free the issue of Labour Party organisation from the retarding doctrinaire influence of the BICO. The new organisation was called *Democracy Now*. It was donated funds by some millionaires and it put on lavish events at Labour Party Conferences. It disappeared without trace within a few years, having prejudiced and undermined the cause which it pretended to advance. The pressure on the Labour Party was removed. Kate Hoey was rewarded with a Junior Ministry when the Party returned to Office.

Dudgeon was an active supporter of *Democracy Now*. He said a couple of years ago that he had not helped Kate Hoey to organise it. But, when it was being done, he was, at least, eager for it.

The reason *Democracy Now* subverted the cause it pretended to serve was that it was extravagantly Unionist, and it set off all the prejudices of Labour members on the question of Northern Ireland. They had seen, over two generations, nothing but “*foul Ulster Tories*” being sent to Westminster from Northern Ireland, sitting on the backbenches and voting with the Tories,

while those they represented were supplied with the Welfare State, thanks to the British taxpayer and the Labour Party. (Harold Wilson’s notorious “*spongers*” speech in 1974 summed up the attitude.)

The CLR had been steadily eroding the prejudice amongst Labour Party members in Britain who came into contact with it. There were at least as many Catholics as Protestants in the CLR. The Catholics were not ‘Castle Catholics’. And the Protestants were active in the other wing of the Labour movement, the Trade Unions.

At one of the last meetings of the CLR which I attended in Belfast, there was an argument about this aspect of the matter. It was argued that there should be fund-raising for a legal action against the Labour Party to compel it to organise and contest elections in Northern Ireland. I argued that the two parties were the real elements of the sovereign Constitution, that there was no law that could be brought to bear on them in a political matter like this, that Court action would be a waste of time and energy, and that it would be counter-productive with rank-and-file Labour Party members.

I was put in my place sharply by either Derek Peters or Erskine Holmes. I was a ne’er-do-well, without a stake in the country, and so I could not understand these things. They were men of property and so they knew that money talks. (Peters was a former member of the Communist Party, Northern Ireland, and a Hotel owner. Holmes was a property developer, satirised by the People’s Democracy as *Irksome Slums*.)

During the late 1970s and most of the 1980s, I had spoken to many Labour Party Branches and a couple of GMCs in various parts of England, at meetings arranged by David Morrison, about the Labour Party ban on Six County membership. The most difficult thing was to get it understood that the Six County electorate did not reject Labour Party candidates, but that the Labour Party rejected the Six County electorate. Although that was an obvious fact, it was also unbelievable. And, if it was acknowledged to be a fact, there was great reluctance to think about its implications, or about a remedy.

Fixed ideas about Ulster as a mediaeval remnant in which the Pope still did battle with Luther got in the way. Yet some progress was made by the persistent efforts of the CLR over a period of fifteen years. The strong Catholic presence in it had an unsettling effect on the fixed ideas.

That progress was washed away by the first appearance of *Democracy Now!* at a Labour Party Conference. The Party spokesman, Kevin McNamara MP, had always

dismissed the CLR as a Unionist façade. The appearance of *Democracy Now* seemed to prove it.

The CLR gave up the case as hopeless. It appeared at a couple of subsequent Party Conferences only to explain that it had nothing to do with *Democracy Now!*

Democracy Now! then disappeared, its work done.

My opinion from the time that a Northern leadership took over the direction of Provisional Republicanism was that the only functional alternative to the BICO approach was that of the Provos. After the CLR was wrecked, I became a mere commentator, and left it to the wreckers to make good their pretensions.

The Campaign for Equal Citizenship, which was set up, I think, in early 1986, was different in kind from the CLR, though working in parallel with it. It was based on a series of pamphlets I wrote on general British politics, especially the Party system. When I heard on the radio the heads of the *Hillsborough Agreement* in the Fall of 1985, I knew that the Ulster Unionist body as a whole would be shocked and unsettled, and I thought it might be worthwhile to put an argument about general politics into the mix. But *Unionism was Unionism was Unionism*, as Gerry Fitt said. However, an element in the Tory Party took up the argument that, in the British state, exclusion from the party-system is exclusion from democracy. The case was put to the Party leaders and they felt obliged to make some response to it. The Secretary of State published a reply to me in the *Daily Telegraph*, but it satisfied nobody. I gathered that Mrs. Thatcher let it be known that she did not want the argument to be put to her.

I attended a cocktail party in London—the only one I was ever at—and a message was conveyed to me from the Foreign Office that under no circumstances would the Six Counties be included within the British political system.

Some of the Tories who were putting the case were local Councillors. They were career politicians. It was put to them that, if they did not desist, their career prospects would not be good. They had done their best, but now they had to concede. I thought that was fair enough.

But a token concession was made to them: individual party membership was opened to Six County residents.

The CEC [Campaign for Equal Citizenship] organisation was local Protestant middle class of various degrees. They took it that individual Party membership was worthwhile. I thought it should be rejected

almost as an insult. It was a contemptuous dismissal. I would have nothing to do with it and I withdrew. It was suggested that I was acting out of personal vanity and damaging their prospects. I left them to it. Many years later I happened to run into one of them who said they learned from experience that they that they had been fobbed off, and apologised.

Robert McCartney QC was President of the CEC, but during its period of effectiveness it was conducted by David Morrison. McCartney then set up something of his own, paralleling Kate Hoey's effort with Labour. Dudgeon was closely involved with it. I forget the details, if I ever knew them. It issued a denunciation of me, to which I didn't bother to reply.

Intimidation was undoubtedly an influence on these things. For the most part it was very polite and discreet intimidation. A hint that association with Athol St. was not advantageous to them sufficed. I doubt that this would have applied to Dudgeon, who was notorious as a homosexual campaigner, and seemed to be independently wealthy. And it seemed to me that McCartney was shocked back into Unionism by events at the funerals of the Republicans murdered in Gibraltar. There is, however, no doubt that respectable middle class Protestants who began to think about what Northern Ireland was were encouraged to stop thinking about it.

"The CEC/CLR days from 1971": the CLR was not established until after the Sunningdale Agreement was scrapped by the Secretary of State in the Summer of 1974, and the CEC not until a dozen years later. The B&ICO, with which Dudgeon had no connection, decided to let attempts at internal reform of NI run their course before taking issue with the exclusion of NI from the political system of the state. It supported the Agreement up to the point when the SDLP refused to co-operate with the Faulkner Unionists in making the compromise needed to preserve it.

BICO support for the Sunningdale Agreement was not Unionist, nor was the CLR, nor was the CEC.

The CLR did not question the policy of the Labour Party when demanding that it include the Six Counties in its sphere of operations. Labour policy was for *"unity by consent"*. Some members of the CLR, long before Dudgeon became active in wrecking it, thought that the organisation should agitate for a change in Labour's policy, along with agitating for the extension of the Party's activity to NI, and they left when the majority thought it would be absurd to attack Labour policy while

demanding that it should become active in NI. I imagine that others bided their time until Kate Hoey and Democracy Now gave them the opportunity of being both Unionist and Labour together.

Unionism is as Unionism does. The Ulster Unionist Party, under Carson's leadership, opposed the formation of a Six County sub-government which could only be functional as government of the Catholic community by the Protestant community. And Carson explained why it would not be a good thing. What he wanted was a simple exclusion of the Six Counties from the Home Rule Bill. In his 1918 Election campaign he took it that a Six County Partition was a certainty, and he said that, with the mainly agricultural part of Ireland going its own way, the Six Counties could be treated as an integral part of the British economy. It should have unamended British legislation, instead of having to cope with amended legislation for agricultural Ireland.

Nobody in 1918 thought that Partition might take the form of setting up a Six County Government. When that was proposed, in the Bill published in December 1919, Carson spoke against it in the Commons. And, when the Bill was introduced early in 1920, he spoke against it again.

In 1921, with Northern Ireland about to be established, Carson resigned the leadership of the Ulster Unionists but expressed acceptance of the now inevitable establishment of separate government.

I could find nothing about this in the admiring biographies of Carson by British Establishment figures in the 1920s—which were all that were available fifty years ago. I dug it out of the Commons reports and the newspapers, and published it. Nobody was interested, Unionists least of all.

Carson was somehow persuaded to give token support to Northern Ireland, but he could not be persuaded to govern it. And, a few years later, in the House of Lords, he launched a personal assault on his former colleagues who had created Northern Ireland.

Ulster Unionism is the work of James Craig, a Belfast capitalist who was a Junior Minister at Whitehall when Northern Ireland was created. (Carson was Anglo-Irish gentry, of a Liberal background.)

Craig's Unionism was a form of *"connection with Britain"*. Scotland and Wales were not *connected* with Britain, they were just part of it. And, when they were given devolved governments, they did not cease to be part of Britain. The Parties that governed the state continued to contest elections in Scotland and Wales after devolution as they had done before.

The Six Counties were inherently unsuitable for devolved government. They did not ask for devolved government: it was imposed on them. And they were then cut off from the political life of the state. That was what made things intolerable for the large, and growing, Catholic minority.

As the late Peter Hart so acutely observed, the *Irish Political Review* was *"repetitive"*. Not many issues of it could be found in which those facts were not repeated. But Dudgeon somehow failed to notice. How did he manage it? Presumably because he was a sound Unionist, interested only in *"the Union"*, and he saw in the CLR position only a way of being Unionist in the post-August 1969 world.

The BICO position on the Six Counties had the object neither of *"changing the world"*, nor of saving *"the Union"*. Its purpose was to unfreeze the Northern Ireland situation and make political movement possible in it. That was why no Unionist organisation would have anything to do with it. The communal conflict of Protestants and Catholics on the spurious issue of staying in the UK, with its welfare state, or joining the Republic, secured 'the Union'.

The opening up of the possibility of political movement could only endanger the Union. Northern Ireland was not a suitable arena for policy politics. Brookeborough understood that very well. 'Normal' politics was for other situations.

The great fear of the UUP over the decades was that a semblance of policy politics would develop within Unionism and confuse the outcome of elections. Tentative developments in that direction, based on class or personality, had been warded off. The introduction of the politics of the State was as dangerous as those local variants had been. The UUP would have none of it, nor would any of its fragments after the split of 1972.

But there were in Belfast in 1969 some highly educated—over educated, or inappropriately educated for the circumstances—young gentlemen of well-to-do background, who were bewildered by the turn of events, and it seemed that they turned to BICO for salvation. Lord Bew and Professor Patterson might, I suppose, be described as *"fellow travellers"* for a couple of years. (I gather that Lord Bew claims to have been a member of BICO, but he never was. He could never have been. His language was too ponderously academic.)

To page 26, Column 1

An Outsider's Book Review

I have just read *Between Two Hells, The Irish Civil War* by Diarmaid Ferriter (published by Profile Books, London). But, before I comment on it, I want to say that I was born and raised in the enclave of Northern Ireland. I realise more and more now that the South is a foreign country to me and, as the years pass, since the Northern 28-year War, it is even become more so now. I never had an opportunity, since childhood, to get know the history of the Irish Free State/The Republic of Ireland. The elementary rural school I went to in the once hard-line loyalist area of Clontonacally, Carryduff, County Down, didn't teach Irish history, nor Northern Ireland history, nor the history of the enclave. It taught pure English history as if I was living in England, and Scottish literature as if I were living in Scotland.

My mother attended a convent school in Omagh, which taught Irish and French. Her family owned property and controlled the Nationalist, County Tyrone *Ulster Herald* newspaper. My father was a Belfast shipyard worker who played classical music on the violin. He played so well he once got a call to audition for the BBC, and turned it down, saying that musicians only played

for a few years and spent most of their lives waiting to perform. He seemed to aspire to the middle-class with his strict table manners and sartorial dress. He was one of those strange creatures, politically—a communist unionist for reform.

As my mother was pulled more and more into the Protestant heartland, she became more and more mute about her background. The only religious symbol in the house was a very small statue of St Theresa of Lisieux (the Little Flower) and hidden rosary beads. The Little Flower she would put in her pocket if there was a knock at the door.

Radio Athlone would be turned on, very low because of the neighbours, but turned off if it played Irish music. My father said Irish music was too repetitive. He did try a few jigs on the violin but stopped saying it was turning him into a fiddle-player.

My mother would attempt a Hail Mary in Irish sometimes, but would stop because, we as children laughed at the strange sound of the language. She tried to renew the French she had learnt by having us repeat it—but the only word I remember now was the correct pronunciation of vase. Occasionally she might speak of her family background, the politics of it was looking South to Dublin. The Irish tricolour was not green, white and orange but green, white and gold.

Her father wrote a great amount of articles on nationalism for the *Ulster Herald*, as the manager of that paper but she didn't have any of it show us. (I recently researched for his articles, found them, but have still to get them as I will have to pay a monthly fee.)

My father spoke of a relative in the Unionist Government Cabinet whom he knew from boyhood, but only met once in adulthood when he attended the funeral of my father's mother, who had adopted him for a few years.

Mainly it was British culture of a sort for us as a family—the BBC on radio, the cinema, the music hall with its English artists, the *Belfast Telegraph*—but with my mother clinging on to her weekly *Ulster Herald* all her life.

During WW2 it was the chimes of Big Ben coming from radios (the wireless) that was heard in the quiet countryside of Carryduff, coming from the houses as you

passed. Then there were ominous intervals on the radio as the bass tones of first few bars beginning Beethoven's Fifth Symphony was played as Morse code—*V for Victory*. WW2 was to push Ulster Unionism even more into dominance, with the German bombing of Belfast industry.

Thousands were allowed to cross the border from the South to work in the war industries, like the shipyard and the aircraft factory. There were rumours that, among these Southern workers, there were agents working for Germany. How else was Lord Haw Haw (William Joyce) able to be so accurate about what was happening in NI? He even knew that the Portadown town clock was 10 minutes slow.

Then came the mass building of social housing by the Unionist Government post-War, and my father acclaiming that Unionism was reforming. (This was an attempt at social engineering with an equal mix of Catholics and Protestants as tenants.)

My mother might on occasions speak of her family hiding the IRA on-the-runs. No, they weren't on-the-runs. They came to Omagh on a mission for the Republican Publicity Bureau, and they weren't armed. And they weren't being hidden, but entertained. This brought about a couple of Black & Tan raids, described by her as "*brutish apes but they weren't dealing with corner-boys this time when they were dealing with us*". Faced-down, I think they call it now.

My father, his nose stuck in a book, never made any comment. I got the impression from my mother that the War of Independence was largely a middle-class affair. Which brings me to the book and the author Diarmaid Ferriter's comment on page 11:

"There were few references to class issues in the Treaty debate", and the TDs were "broadly representative of the upwardly mobile Catholic middle-class but not of the mass of the people".

I have to declare myself a non-partisan outsider on the question of history in that part of Ireland and I can only think of what should have been. Living in London, I joined the Connolly Association during the 1950s and 60s and parroted quite a lot of their stuff on that organisation's *One Country, One People* mantra, despite knowing better, because of my background. The membership was mainly Southern and Southern-orientated. They either envied or disputed that the North had heavy industry, though it employed a third of the population. To persist in that claim made you an Orangeman.

It was odd listening to the disparaging of the North by some of those who had

Voice From The Grave

continued from page 25

Professor Patterson was not quite the young gentleman. He was Protestant working class by origin and culture, but he flourished in academia and he formed a pair with Lord Bew. And they were the only fellow-travellers BICO ever had, as far as I recall.

Dudgeon I would describe as having been a hanger-on of the fellow-travellers. I believe he was present in the 1970s, along with Professor Patterson, at a discussion between BICO and the Gay Liberation Front about matters of feminism and homosexuality and their ramifications, and that it was the first time he had ever heard such things discussed matter-of-factly. But that did not inhibit him from later describing the B&ICO as a centre of homophobia.

Dudgeon has also published some groundless comment about Angela Clifford that he made in his chattering letter to Peter Hart.

Brendan Clifford

been educated in the best universities in Ireland. Yet that attitude still persists today among the survivors of the Connolly Association.

The book under review doesn't have the intellectual vigour of a Clifford or a Walsh, but maybe that was because it was meant to reach a wider readership. Neither name is mentioned, despite all the hard work they have done in changing the conception of what NI really is. Also, anyone persisting in calling the Northern War *the Troubles* has got to be conforming to a propaganda mode.

Nevertheless, the book is mostly a well-researched collection of dates, and the names of individuals. It reveals the post-struggle, gung-ho life of Ernie O'Malley and Dan Breen who was now taken up with fighting for pension rights. There is page after page of this struggle, naming individuals in dire straits after the guns have been silenced. There is a terrible toll on health, post-traumatic-stress-disorder, tuberculosis, heart problems, and so many other debilitating illnesses got through active service, through sleeping or lying in damp ditches, inadequately dressed and half starved while on active service.

Included is a generous collection of Notes, Bibliography and an Index.

*

But what is a Treaty? I have looked up various descriptions of it and none fit the Irish situation, as it existed back in 1921/1922. What is a Civil War? Again, the Irish situation back then doesn't seem to fit that description. About 200 civilians died during this 'civil war'. Real Civil War could have erupted during John A. Costello's time as Taoiseach from 1948 -1951. His reign saw a lot of sabre-rattling, with rumours of an airborne attack on the North and artillery bombardments on loyalist areas. It wasn't said like that from that Fine Gael Government, but it was attributed to a mysterious captain in the Irish Army, by the loyalist newspapers.

The Unionist Government reaction was to threaten to arm the Protestant population and to seize Donegall by trapping it at its narrowest landmass around Belleek in NI, in order to secure the border. That's my idea of a possible civil war—the entire Protestant population laying siege to the then Catholic minority—with a resultant armed conflict spreading over the border, with hundreds of thousand killed in the end.

There was, no doubt, concern in the South about the plight of the Catholic in the North. It led to the rhetoric of the anti-partition movement, put out by Irish governments,

and sporadic IRA activity. None of this was going to bring results for the Northern Catholic. Any attempt to bring the 1921 Southern conflict North mostly likely would have ended in defeat for the Southern forces. Awaiting them were 30,000 Protestant Paramilitary police, quickly armed and trained by Britain, and divided into A,B and C Specials, as the book says.

A-Specials would be disbanded when the threat was over but would be allowed to keep their arms. C-Specials were liable to be called up in times of danger. B-Specials would be kept as a part-time auxiliary force, also allowed to keep their arms at home.

Some units of the B-Specials would become full-time, especially during the 1956-1962 IRA attack on the North, which came mostly from the South. They would guard oil installations and power stations and could be seen at night with a flock of geese, who were said to have the best ears for suspicious sounds.

This wasn't to say that the Southern fighters of the conflict weren't able to go to war against the North, indeed they, by this time had plenty experience of guerrilla warfare, but they were to face a million people who had nowhere to go and had to fight, and would have done so with biblical wrath.

Protestants outside the police also held numbers of privately-owned firearms: 6,000 gun licences for private protection had been issued to the Protestant population during the 1950s alone. No one was to know how many firearms really did exist.

A strike from the South would never have solved anything for the Catholic minority. The British Army would also have been drawn into the conflict. It was at a time, also, when Ireland was to face the conflict of an army in the field splitting into Treaty and anti-Treaty forces. There was just nothing left for a Northern conflict.

The building up of the oppression of the Northern Catholic, the sheer humiliating life that went on 24/7/365 was to build a local force that knew both the British Army and their allies—the loyalist paramilitary death squads. It was going to have a better result than a Southern intervention, even if they had had the soldiery and the arms.

*

I thought, when reading the book about the vote in Dail Eireann on the Treaty which had 64 TDs for the Treaty and 57 TDs against: that was a majority vote, and not to comply with it was to lead to massive destruction, like the old records during the Four Courts siege. There is one dramatic scene in the book, vividly described, as burning and charred pages of the records were being blown about by the wind into the surrounding streets, and the desperate effort by people

to recover them, for they might yet keep some information.

Then there were the bridges blown up in the rural areas by the anti-Treatyites, that caused a disruption in everyday life when people couldn't get to work or deliver their produce to shops and markets. Post offices were raided and up to £55,000 stolen—a huge sum then—resulting in people not getting their pensions.

The damage, according to the book, amounted to £47 million, £2.7 billion in today's money. Eight hundred personnel of what was called the '*National Army of the Free State*' died, in comparison with the 400 IRA of the anti-Treatyites, and remembering also the 200 civilians killed. That War killed two very notable people—Michael Collins and Erskine Childers. Michael Collins was the brilliant anti-British Intelligence leader who finished off the Cairo Gang of British spies in Ireland. Erskine Childers was the Englishman who sacrificed all for Ireland's freedom.

Without the Treaty conflict, these two greats would have survived, accelerating Ireland's progress into a Republic. Instead, their reputations are mired in dog-like abuse, and Childers has even been called an English spy. Ernest Blythe wouldn't have had his 77.

In most countries, a majority vote of government, in time of peace-making, which was not heeded, would result in the recalcitrant being put down. De Valera, who is a shadowy figure in the book, was not a signatory to the Treaty agreement, though some say he met elements of the British Government. Dev aroused suspicion, and still does, as an important figure in Irish politics who was not in Downing Street on that fateful day of the signatures. Was he waiting to see what why to jump? That has always being the eternal question, that's the suspicion the Treaty War caused. But, in the end, in 1932, after his party won the election, he abolished the British monarchical Oath-of-Allegiance to the British Crown and steered Ireland into neutrality during WW2.

I suppose people need time to develop and I'm sure some of us look back to our more underdeveloped days and wish we could have said then what we are saying today. One interesting fact, mentioned by the author, was the arrest of De Valera and his imprisonment from August 1923 to July 1924. He certainly was still being a survivor, just as after 1916, and was now surviving during this terrible period.

Continued on
page 13, column 3

Public Financial Deficits

For the purposes of defining public debt and the deficits of national governments in the Euro-zone, the EU Commission and the Governments have shunted the details off to Eurostat, the statistical body for the EU. Eurostat has come up with a scheme to determine when a State Debt or deficit is not accountable. That is to say, when public spending goes off balance sheet and so does not count toward the measurement of the state debt/deficit. Welcome to the innovative world of State spending and borrowing!

How to handle public accounting has arisen time and again in Ireland, and I suspect in every country. It was an aspect of the final design of NAMA [National Assets Management Agency]. Here a vehicle was created that was only 49 per cent owned by the State. It was an accounting and financial sleight of hand, but Eurostat signed off on the ruse and since then, the Irish (and I suspect everyone—the Spanish have at times been very adventurous) have engaged in fancy financial structures with Eurostat in cahoots. This ensures that Governments are not trapped by the Treaty provisions relating to public debt and deficits.

The irony is that the stability rules relating to debt/deficits were designed by the Germans, who centuries ago, in the form of the Prussian State, invented the off-balance sheet financing ruse—the *Pfandbriefe*—by underpinning the ‘off-balance sheet’ structure with a State guarantee. If private finance makes money out of this, ‘who cares?’ is the view. It fits the needs of politics—and the pockets of investors.

Charles Haughey as Finance Minister in the late 1960s introduced the division of the budget into two—one for “*current spending*” and one for “*capital investment*”. The latter was supposedly self-regulating and off the national balance sheet. It’s what became the “*Public Capital Programme*” and functioned like the *Pfandbrief* system.

In 1972 George Colley, who replaced Haughey as Finance Minister after the Arms Conspiracy Crisis, famously introduced the first “*deficit budget*”, to be driven by borrowing. Critics at the time—including the much-lauded T.K. Whitaker, who was a hard-line fiscal conservative—claimed that the Capital Budget was a bit of a fic-

tion, as it was soon being used wholesale to finance what were really current spending measures.

The monetarist wing of Irish economic thought (which became the dominant strand in Ireland in the early 1980s and has pretty much remained so) traces Ireland’s 1980s economic catastrophe to these events and the resulting foreign debt crisis.

Although Haughey would cleave to monetary orthodoxy (you had to, to have the ‘confidence’ of the ‘markets’, the IMF and the OECD), he at the same time resurrected the Capital Programme on a big scale.

The 1980s crisis, it turned out, was not really a fiscal or monetary one at its core at all—even though civil servants, T.K. Whitaker *et al*, had convinced Garret Fitzgerald that this was so—but one of industrial structure. All the shoddy industries of the Lemass/Whitaker *laissez-faire* industrialisation collapsed or closed one after the other. In fact they had mostly originally been subsidiaries of British firms, which located in Ireland to profit from the protectionist system. None could, or could be bothered, trying to weather the Free Trade environment of the EEC it emerged.

The answer therefore (in Haughey’s mind) was to build a very different, entirely new but “real” industrial base (nuts and bolts and finance), which is what was done in 1987-93. None of these new industries suffered in the least during the 2008-12 Great Financial Crash.

**Fergus O Rahallaigh
Philip O’Connor**

Public Finance And Housing

Off-balance sheet accounting has come to the fore with the news that Dublin Corporation wishes to continue its leasing deals with private developers, even though this contravenes Government policy. Unfortunately there are no safeguards for the public interest in these schemes, which in effect transfer publicly-owned land into the private sector.

As far as can be gathered, private developers receive this land and build homes on it. Some of these are leased to the Council for 25 years: after that they become fully private property.

The national capitalist, Dermot Desmond,

has pointed out the folly of using such financial devices: he has written to Minister for Housing Darragh O’Brien (Fianna Fail), describing the practice of buying and leasing social housing from developers as “*a criminal waste of money*”, saying that it has “*left housing in Ireland prey to greedy developers and international investors*”, who are “*laughing at us*”. He adds:

“Allowing the private market to dictate the price of social housing is a shocking mis-management of public funds. You might as well hand out blank cheques. It is astounding the government cannot see this, and persists in pursuing what is clearly a deeply flawed national housing model to the detriment of all” .

The *Sunday Business Post* says that Kevin Dillon, Minister O’Brien’s top advisor in the Department of Housing, “*accepted the point that the state was losing out*” in leasing homes for social housing and not owning the homes at the end of leases, but pleads the necessity for *off balance sheet accounting*.

It has always been our contention that public taxation could be greatly reduced by State provision of public services at a reasonable cost. A public service is provided and there is an income stream for the State. This view is borne out by Desmond, who told the Government that, due to present low interest rates, there was an opportunity, “*to make home ownership affordable and to make money for the state*”. He added:

“What I do understand is finance, and what is happening at the moment from an Ireland Inc perspective is insane...”

He is referring to the Housing Department encouraging Councils to lease homes from developers for social housing, rather than buying the units outright. This keeps the units off the State’s balance sheet, and helps Ireland avoid breaching EU financial borrowing rules that limit spending on capital projects like housing.

The *Sunday Business Post* suggests that Ireland will spend nearly €1 billion in rent, paid to developers, on the 2,400 homes due to be leased this year. Such developments are built on land, which will leave public ownership. Once the 25-year lease period is over, the homes and the land will pass into private hands.

Desmond points out:

“These funds are taking on Irish sovereign risk [i.e., low risk], but instead of being paid 0.02 per cent, they are being paid over

5 per cent. Assuming you want to invest at least €5 billion into new or government-led housing initiatives, the policy being followed will cost Ireland and its citizens nearly €250 million per annum,"

This €250 million is being gifted "every single year to the international fund investors".

And all this in a climate of low international interest rates. As Desmond points out, so cheap is borrowing money at present internationally, that the National Treasury Management Agency was being "paid to borrow money". In other words, the rate of interest is below the rate of inflation. The final word has to go to Desmond:

"In this world, the state should be innovative. You have the opportunity to make home ownership affordable and to make money for the state" (see *Sunday Business Post*, 10.10.21).

A Maynooth Social Studies academic has suggested that the National Assets Management Agency should be used to provide the homes that are urgently needed. On 18th October he pointed out in the *Irish Examiner* that NAMA has €1.2bn in funding reserves and 577 hectares of residential development land that could accommodate 80,000 homes. It also owns thousands of apartments, which it is

selling it off to cuckoo fund investors in the private market at inflated prices.

NAMA is a big success story for the Irish State. It was set up in after 2008 crash to take the toxic loans and associated assets off the Irish banks. As Rory Hearne points out, it has paid down all its borrowings and is now a wholly debt-free state-owned agency with €1.2bn in funding reserves and 577 hectares of residential development land that could accommodate 80,000 homes.

NAMA has 1,300 units under construction and almost 7300 units with planning permission—that's more housing than the Land Development Agency is likely to deliver for years. The Government could, if it so wished, direct NAMA to deliver 8,000 affordable homes each year (4,000 affordable purchase and 4,000 affordable cost rental would make a real difference). This would triple the supply of affordable housing

But, instead of providing affordable housing, NAMA is selling new housing it is building at prices at the top of the market. It is selling two and three-bedroom apartments in Dublin for €525,000 as starting prices. It is pushing for maximum prices and thus fuelling rising housing prices.

As Hearne says:

"at the height of a housing crisis, a state agency is leaving homes vacant, and selling them to investor funds to then rent them out at rates already beyond many people".

Two Unpublished Letters To *Irish Times*

Disrespecting The President!

I realise that Michael D Higgins is a Servant of the people.

However, anyone encountering your headlines for the first time might be forgiven inferring that you played the role of Bertie Wooster and Mr Higgins that of a gentleman's gentleman.

Today I read "*Higgins told organisers.....*"

Yesterday I read "*Higgins Blames Politicised Title...*"

Mr Higgins has been raised twice to the Presidency of Ireland in contested elections under a Constitution enacted by its citizens.

That Constitution stipulates that

"There shall be a President of Ireland, hereinafter called the President, who shall take precedence over all other persons in the State and who shall exercise and perform the powers and functions conferred on the President by this Constitution and by law."

As a citizen I am happy to realise that our President is both a Gentleman and a Scholar and was raised to his high office by a discerning electorate.

Donal Kennedy

18.9.21

Would the *Irish Times* refer to the Queen of England as *Windsor*? Ed.

James Carty's *Histories*

For about 40 years school history textbooks by James Carty BA, of the National Library of Ireland were common in the schools.

I understand that he had contributed to *The Irish Bulletin* between 1919 and 1921. He died in 1959 aged, I believe, 59.

While giving accounts of actions in Ireland he also devoted space to the Wild Geese—including those whose graves are by Sulva and Sud El Bar.

He quoted General Liman Von Sanders' tribute to the Irishmen who opposed him at Gallipoli.

Sinn Fein's *United Irishman* in the 1950s wrote about them also, without condemnation. And, in the *Irish Press*, Brendan Behan celebrated the families, the survivors and their families, his Dublin neighbours.

The lie that they were shunned at home and airbrushed out of history has been spread by RTE, the Department of Foreign Affairs, and a President of the Military History Society (in the pages of *The Irish Times*). I have written numerous pieces refuting the lie. Ones sent to *The Irish Times* were spiked.

As it happens, from 1957 to 1959 I was in Rockwell and in the Study, sat next to Denis Carty, son of the historian.

At Mass, 7 mornings a week and at evening devotions, I knelt beside a future Vice President of the Military History Society.

Late in September 1957 with scores of others we swore by the Mass, to serve Ireland faithfully, in the Second Line Reserve of Oglagh na hEireann. The future Vice President of the Military History Society, retired from the Forces as Chief of Staff with the rank of Lieutenant General.

I took the trouble, when I retired fifteen years ago, to visit the British Library and to confirm that my recollection of Carty's *History* was not mistaken.

My father could quote Edmund Burke, Wolfe Tone and many others at length, as well as Virgil, Horace and others. He used quote Von Liman's tribute to the Dublin Fusiliers. Perhaps, without alluding to the lies spread by the "Revisionists" you might quote from James Carty's pieces on the *Wild Geese*, including the Dubs at Gallipoli.

Donal Kennedy

9.10.21

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

The Budget 2021

As Budgets go, it was a good budget in that it created very few ripples. It did not interfere unduly with the *status quo ante*. Taxation is a necessary evil and as Mark Twain said: “two things are inevitable: death and taxes”.

The Government says it acted in a restrained and responsible manner. But, a few weeks before Budget Day, it was announced officially that the Government had “found” 7.2 Billion Euros. They found, when the sums were being added up that there was 7.2 Billion Euro more available to spend that they had thought!

No explanation was given on Budget Day as to what happened to this supposed 7.2 billion euro. And nobody wants an explanation because the Department of Finance is notoriously bad at doing the sums, as everybody knows. So finding or losing a few billion euros here or there is routine news and does not surprise anyone.

There are however some huge omissions. The Defence Forces, the Army and the Navy are falling apart due to lack of funding. The conditions are not good and people are leaving as fast as they are recruited. Adequate funding has been denied for years. If the Defence Forces were properly funded, they would provide a training regime and a reservoir of essential skills which would benefit the whole State. We need large numbers of practical engineers, carpenters, technicians and electricians and managers in our civil society, and if the Army and the Navy were properly funded then they would be of enormous benefit to society.

There is every good reason why the Army and the Navy should be generously funded in a similar scale to the universities. Our senior Army and Navy officers should not have to be sent abroad to West Point in USA and Sandhurst in the UK. This is happening and it is a disgrace for us as a State.

Some of the vast funds being allocated in the Budget every year to, for example, the Health Service Executive (HSE) would

be far better to be allocated to training in our Army and Navy. Then put some Army Commandants in charge of the HSE and we’ll get good results. The whole public service needs to be shaken up and redesigned because what we have now is dysfunctional. It is not working.

A very public example of our dysfunctional public service is the building of a National Children’s Hospital. Such a hospital has been proposed for well over twenty years. It took many years to decide on a site and even now the suitability of the site is being debated. Then it took years for the planners to produce plans and the bitter arguments on the matter of the site went on, so that it is then said the plans had to be revised to take account of the most modern technology. On and on the arguing and infighting goes on.

No one seems to be in charge. Blame is put on greedy consultants who want things done their way. Then, understandably, with the costs of construction rising and with the changes of plans, the building contractors wanted more money. The latest we heard the price is expected to be over two billion euros!

While all this was going on the privately-owned Bon Secours Hospital group built a huge extension to their Cork hospital without any perceptible interruption of services. The building was completed in two years and the Bon Secours Hospital in Cork is now said to be the largest private hospital in Europe. No fuss.

Similarly, the Mater Private Hospital is developing excellent services for its patients.

SLÁINTECARE.

In March 2020, when the lockdown for Covid-19 commenced, a deal was done by the Department of Health and the private hospitals under which the private hospitals made themselves available to meet the expected rush of Covid patients. Apparently, the deal was for three months at 115 million euros per month. Many medical consultants also, almost secretly, signed up for three months. They more or less joined the public service for three months. The Department of Health thought they had achieved Sláintecare by the back door (never waste a good crisis!)

But fortunately the expected avalanche of Covid-sick patients did not materialise. Hospital beds were empty and unused because the “decks had been cleared for action”, which did not happen fortunately. And, at the end of the three months, everything returned to almost normal. Including

the reappearance of patients on trolleys in the public hospitals.

Where had these patients been during the three months? Were they sent home ill? Untreated?

The media were compliant in their silence. The media silence was ensured by means of a constant daily drip of taxpayers' money for Covid advertisements, University advertisements, and County Council advertisements and so on. All the resources of the State were motivated to ensure that the public received only the news decided upon by the State. Censorship was and is massive.

The people were frightened of the pandemic and were even more frightened of the censorship. No one knew what was actually going on but everybody sensed something big was going on behind the scenery. Where is all the money coming from? People asked each other in awe and fear. And indeed that is still an unanswered question. We suspect the money was borrowed and, if it was—how and when can we pay it back?

Sláintecare, a national single health-care system is desirable in the long run but the HSE as presently constituted is not capable of operating Sláintecare. The egotism and greed evident within the HSE has got to appalling proportions. Patients are left on trolleys, waiting for Emergency Department beds, when elsewhere in the system whole wards are vacant. It does not stack up!

Cases like young Adam Terry from Whitechurch, near Cork city, are heart-breaking for normal people but not for stony-hearted politicians and HSE officials. Adam, aged 10, has scoliosis and has been waiting for years for surgery. He is only ten years of age and several times operations for surgery have been cancelled. His parents were given a date and were told, if an emergency case comes in or the hospital does not have the intensive care bed, it will be cancelled. This is a barbaric way to run a hospital service. Who is the manager responsible for this situation? Why does the Minister for Health not deal with the manager responsible? Why does the Taoiseach, Micheál Martin not deal with the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, FF?

COP 26.

Greenpeace has emerged as the biggest influencer at COP 26, the UN *Climate Change Conference* at Glasgow, UK.

It is very hard to stop a good party once it gets going – everybody wants to be at it.

To page 30, Column 2

Roddy continued

his seat after 10 months and emigrated. His exit from the Dail was allegedly facilitated by Dr. John Charles McQuaid, the Archbishop of Dublin.

Roddy, the aide-de-camp to Pádraig Pearse in the GPO, had very turbulent relations with the party and the ITGWU from 1920 to 1943. William O'Brien had done his utmost to ensure employment for Connolly's family but Roddy did not retain his posts for long. In later years he was a vocational teacher with Wicklow VEC.

Brendan Corish and Brendan Halligan convinced Connolly to return to an active role in the party as Chairman from 1971 to 1978. Aged seventy-two, he was elected in a by-election to the Senate from 1975 to 1977.

He steered the party well in the 1970's when the anti-coalitionists made it almost unmanageable. This period was extremely factious and controversial mainly evolving around participation in coalition and Northern Ireland policies. I recall that during the bitter internal debates on coalition in the 1970's Roddy, who rarely invoked the name of his father, was provoked to comment 'After all in 1916 Connolly became a coalitionist when the occasion demanded!' He was a calm and unifying influence within the party during these emotional debates. He died in 1980, aged 79" (*No Workers' Republic, Reflections on Labour and Ireland 1913-1967*, Barry Desmond, p.124-25; *Watchword*, 359pp, 2009).

**REPUBLICAN STRUGGLE
IN IRELAND
by Roddy Connolly
Irish Communist Organisation,
Dublin; Reprint: 1966.**

In 1920, Roddy Connolly was sent to Moscow to affiliate the party to the Communist International and met Lenin and Zinoviev.

In 1965, he was appointed Bridge Correspondent of the *Irish Independent* and travelled to such places as Warsaw, Oslo and Lisbon to report on international competitions.

[We introduce a new monthly feature.
Readers are invited
to send in their Trade Union news]

Organised Labour!

WORKERS must make 40 years of social insurance contributions to get a full State pension in a new plan, the Government will be told.

A draft *Commission on Pensions* report recommends that an "interim" way of calculating the payment should now become the "definitive" method.

It says this should mean 40 years — or 2,040 contributions — are required at State pension age to qualify for a maximum rate pension.

Under current arrangements, people can qualify for a full pension after 10 years. The amount they get is based on average yearly contributions. (*Irish Independent*, 14.9.2021)

PUBLIC servants received an across-the-board increase worth 1% of their salaries or €500 — whichever is greater — under the *Building Momentum* deal from 1st October.

This follows a 1% increase last

October, while increases worth up to 2% are set to be paid next year. A Department of Public Expenditure and Reform spokesperson said TDs will not get the 1% increase as they benefited from pay restoration in July. (*Irish Independent*-2.10.2021)

THE International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) says the government has 'botched' transposition of EU law around working time for migrant workers in fishing industry

The ITF union represents fishing industry workers, and plans to launch a judicial review case against the State in the coming weeks, arguing that Ireland has incorrectly transposed the EU's *Working Time Directive*, which regulates the amount of time workers should work while at sea.

The Union says Ireland's application of an EU directive on working time at sea is deficient. (18.10.2010)

**Does
It
Up**

Stack

From page 30

Particularly if money is being handed out. And it is being handed out. There is no other rational explanation why so many are denying that climate change is a natural phenomenon caused by the sun and is not caused by human activity. There is no scientific evidence to prove otherwise, no matter what 200 scientists say on behalf of the UN.

They are all well bribed — not always in money but in grants for speaking engagements, for "consultancies", and a myriad

of other delicate ways of influencing their opinions. Climate change has always been a feature of our Earth for the 4,500 million or so years of its existence.

If you have any doubt about the size of the bribery business, just look at the fact that — at the height of the 2008 economic crisis in the USA — there were over 4,000 lobbyists in and around the US Capital Building, lobbying Senators and Representatives. The lobbyists were lobbying for the Banking industry. Were these lobbyists handing out lollipops to influence votes?

And it was mentioned recently that in Ireland a manufacturers' association had spent 97 million Euros on lobbying politicians in Dublin. 97,000,000. Where do you think it was spent? Meditate on it.

Michael Stack ©



LABOUR

Comment

ISSN 0790-1712

VOLUME 39 No. 11

CORK

ISSN 0790-1712

“One father is enough to govern one hundred sons, but not a hundred sons one father.”

RODDY CONNOLLY

“THROUGHOUT the 1920’s and the 1930’s events in Russia continued to have a fascination for many Labour and Trade Union activists, not least Roddy Connolly, the only son of James Connolly. He took part in the Rising as a 15-year-old lieutenant with the Irish Citizens’ Army under his father. He was imprisoned for a short period, joined the first Communist Party in Ireland and was editor of the party journal. In 1920, he was sent to Moscow to affiliate the party to the Communist International and met Lenin and Zinoviev.

In 1921, he returned from Moscow. Together with Liam O’Flaherty, Walter Carpenter, George Pollock and Sean McLoughlin, Connolly took over the defunct Socialist Party of Ireland in September, 1921, having expelled the ‘reformers’ O’Brien and O’Shannon. Roddy was determined to set up a Communist Party in Ireland. By November of that year it was so renamed and continued to 1924. He was only 23 years old.

Roddy became President of the first CPI in Ireland and Walter Carpenter was appointed Secretary. O’Brien was unimpressed, having kept the Connolly family in body and soul with resources from Connolly admirers.

Soon afterwards the CPI was accepted as the Irish Section of the Third International of The Comintern. He and Carpenter and their associates denounced the Treaty. In 1922, they occupied the

Rotunda for four days with unemployed workers led by Liam O’Flaherty. They closely associated their small group of some thirty to fifty members with some of the imprisoned Republican leaders in Mountjoy, notably, Peadar O’Donnell.

In 1923, Connolly attended the Third International in Moscow. He decided on a complete change of policy, which was to provide a major rift in this small party. ‘The split’ made its ubiquitous appearance. Connolly urged the Republicans to enter the Dail as a strong opposition, to hold off military operations and to form a new Republican Party. In this he perhaps foreshadowed de Valera.

One suspects that by now he was giving heed to the admonishments of O’Brien, Foran and Johnson. Peadar O’Donnell denounced Connolly and the CPI was divided on the strategy. But this development was overtaken by the return of Larkin to Ireland in April 1923.

Larkin’s standing among the leaders of the Third International was now considerable. In early 1924 the CPI was dissolved by the Comintern. In the summer of 1924 Larkin attended the Comintern Fifth Congress and was promptly elected to its Executive. In 1926 Roddy Connolly joined his fourth political organisation The Workers’ Party of Ireland, which included Charlotte Despard and Maud Gonne MacBride. Their avowed policy was to establish a ‘Workers’ Republic’. However, under pressure from Larkin and Moscow, the WPI was disbanded by mid-1927.

This period was to prove a potent source of confusion, conflict with red baiting by the many shades of the Right in the two decades ahead. Having taken the anti-Treaty side Connolly was associated with Saor Eire in 1931 and the Republican Congress in 1934. Roddy was to join the Labour Party in 1927 while still retaining a close association with the second Communist Party of Ireland between 1933 and the early 1940’s. The Connolly name continued to have a powerful resonance and Roddy was a Labour deputy from 1943-1944 and 1948-1951 for the Louth constituency.

In 1957, Roddy tried to regain his Dail seat in Dublin South-Central following the retirement of James Larkin, Junior. However, he was soundly beaten by Jack Murphy, the first unemployed person to be elected to the Dail. Murphy was the hero of *The Unemployment Protest Committee*. Murphy was soon disillusioned and he went on hunger strike when Fianna Fail abolished the food subsidies. He resigned

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 15