

# IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

June 2022

Vol.37 No.6 ISSN 0790-7672

and *Northern Star* incorporating *Workers' Weekly* Vol.36 No.6 ISSN 954-5891

## Behind a Painted Veil —the EU and the role of reality in politics

There may be such a thing as an identifiable objective reality free of an observer's prejudices, preconceptions or wishes. If such exists in Ukraine, it is not being reported in the mainstream media.

Every event and twist and turn is filtered through the formidable lenses of Ukrainian /NATO sources. Occasionally RTE calls on the Russian Ambassador, but not to interview him, only to harangue and denounce.

The narrative is that Putin invaded Ukraine as part of a deranged plan to restore the Russian Empire, and that the invasion itself has been characterised by brutality and incompetence, whereas the plucky little Ukrainians have outsmarted the Russians at every turn. The nightly news is a litany of Ukrainian victories and counter-offensives, while the reality on the ground is a slow, if relentless and grinding, Russian advance in the South-East.

The narrative does not allow for the eight-year war preceding the invasion, a war waged by Kyiv against what it defines as its own people in Donetsk and Luhansk.

That war has involved conscript and volunteer armies of West Ukrainians and East Ukrainians pitted against each other in a brutal conflict that—even before Putin's operation—had claimed over 16,000 lives, at least a third of them Donbas civilians.

In Putin's move, as this civil war threatened to escalate, a swathe of territory across the south, from Mykolayiv and Kherson in the West to Mariupol and Donetsk in the East, was fought over until secured and occupied. A considerable element of the Russian

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## Clare Daly, Casement and the Pope

The Annual Casement Summer School had a debate on the situation in Ukraine between MEPs Clare Daly and Barry Andrews. It was very timely as the war in Ukraine has an uncanny similarity with the war that Casement described and analysed so well as *'The Crime against Europe'*, his description of WWI. He had come to realise that the War launched by Britain on 4th August 1914 had been long planned in secret and in detail by his Government, and that the object was to maintain the unipolar world as it then was: i.e. a world dominated by the British Empire.

The Empire saw that its destiny and duty was to destroy a potential rival in trade—which also presented a model for an attractive alternative social life—Germany.

To do so was considered a Darwinian necessity, and very conveniently so,

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## Parallel Universes: *The Proxy War against Russia*

The media narrative is that Russia, or to be precise Putin, invaded Ukraine as part of a deranged plan to restore the Russian Empire. The Russian invasion has been characterised by brutality and incompetence, whereas the plucky little Ukrainians have outsmarted the Russians at every turn.

There is no mention of the eight-year

war the Kiev Government waged against the people of Donetsk and Luhansk.

There is no mention of the increasing strident demands of the Kiev Government for NATO membership.

And a discreet veil is drawn over the Kiev Government's official endorsement

of NAZI ideology which is an affront to Russia and to the memory of its 30 million citizens who died in the Great Patriotic War.

The narrative of the West may not be true, but how people perceive reality has an effect on behaviour. Germany—whose economy was dependent on cheap energy from Russia, as well as it providing a lucrative export market, has been forced

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

Landlordism In Towns

James Connolly

(back page)

**Organised Labour:**

New National Agreement; Unions Fail To Save Social Partnership  
(page 31)

and Germany in particular.

The narrative of “*our shared values*” veils the reality of EU-US relations up to just four months ago, which involved severe tensions over transatlantic trade terms, tariffs, food quality, industrial standards, and relations with Iran and China.

Now it is as if these problems never existed! The European media avoids mentioning these matters, sharing in a pretence that they are secondary. In reality, these issues will all now, perforce, be resolved to US advantage.

The ideological subordination of Europe has been thoroughgoing and complete, extending from the government level through to the media and the general populace, as illustrated by Ukraine’s recent Eurovision win and how it has been portrayed.

For a brief period Germany under Merkel, and hence the EU, began taking some tentative steps towards independence. But the prodigal has now returned!

The massive European sacrifice might, of course, be justified if the narrative on which it is based had a firm foundation. But, as the conflict unfolds, cracks are appearing in that narrative’s carefully constructed edifice.

The gains that the Russians and their allies have achieved in the east have not been reversed. There was little evidence in those areas of Zelensky’s vaunted army of 'volunteer civilian soldiers' emerging to fight the “*occupiers*”, and none at all of a substantial opposition emerging in those areas since they were occupied.

Ukraine’s military campaign has been sustained by a massive propaganda effort, and an influx of arms from the West to the tune of a multiple of the combined annual military budgets of West European states.

The EU’s Covid recovery savings bank has been emptied to fund the War.

If there was any doubt before, it is now very clear that Ukraine since 2014 has been ever more a *de facto* NATO member, and that the present conflict is a proxy war between Russia and NATO (which is the USA), with all the appearances of it being a war of choice on the American side.

At no time since his inauguration in January 2021 did Joe Biden take a single step to deflate rising tensions with Russia, not only in Ukraine, or to stop the drift to an increasingly likely war. His interventions before February 2022, and those of his military personnel, were designed to assist a Ukrainian re-capture of lost eastern territories and, since February 2021, to expand the conflict and encourage ever more radical

forces involved was composed of units of the armies of the Donbas Republics, i.e. nominal Ukrainians, fighting West Ukrainian forces that included volunteer battalions with little love of their eastern compatriots. Can there ever be a way back from that?

There is never any mention by RTE, or the sources from which it derives its narrative, of the increasingly strident demands of the Kyiv Government for NATO membership, Western armaments, nor of its rejection of negotiations until all “*Ukrainian territory*”, as defined in 1991—including the Donbas and the Crimea, with its massive naval base at Sevastopol—has been “fully liberated” and the invader ejected.

And a discreet veil is drawn over the Kyiv Government’s endorsement of the Nazi ideology of its most impressive fighting formations, which is an affront to Russia and to the memory of its 30 million citizens who died in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-45.

The narrative of the West on the causes and course of the War may contain truths, but how people perceive reality is what af-

fects behaviour. Germany, whose economic golden era since re-unification in 1991 was based on producing highly-tooled productive manufactures reliant on cheap energy from Russia and exports to China and elsewhere, has been forced—in a tsunami of moral indignation—to abandon its ties with Russia. It also faces the certainty of mounting restraints on its Chinese trade.

It is increasingly apparent that the sacrifice of Germany and the rest of the EU will be even greater than the damage done to the intended target.

More significantly, Germany, and the EU in general, have subordinated themselves to the foreign and military policy of the United States.

Germany and the EU have thrown themselves on the mercy of the US to make good with alternative sources of materials and markets the massive damage which abandoning their economic integration with the East entails. Replacing Eastern imports with significantly more expensive American energy and raw materials will seriously damage the economies of European countries in general,

war aims on the part of Kyiv.

Reeling from the economic and foreign policy consequences of the NATO agenda for the War, the EU's leading officials, Ursula von der Leyen and Josep Borrell, in a frantic bid to keep pace with NATO, have sought to impose an ever more radical war agenda on member states: Nothing short of full restoration of Ukraine's mythical "territorial integrity" (including Sevastopol!) can be accepted, declared von der Leyen. Negotiations for a resolution were pointless and the War must be "*decided on the battlefield*", said Borrell.

The leaders of Germany and France are *personae non gratae* in Kyiv, and indeed throughout the length and breath of the EU's recently enrolled eastern member states.

Boris Johnson, the leader of Brexit Britain, has emerged not only as Zelensky's hero, but as leader of the most radical European position on the War. He is Chairman of a *defence co-operation alliance*, incorporating much of the Eastern EU; "*coordinates*" the arms shipments of all Western states into Ukraine, and has latterly issued 1939-type 'guarantees' to come to the aid of Finland and Sweden, if attacked pending their NATO integration. He is the real King of Europe, and even nearly beat the Ukrainians to first place at the Eurovision!

The EU response to its marginalisation has been pathetic, with Draghi proposing further EU integration by abolishing national vetoes; Scholz wanting to prioritise incorporating the western Balkans in the EU before Ukraine; and, most astonishing of all, Macron—who just two years ago pronounced NATO "*brain dead*" and held that an independent EU security and geopolitical position was essential—canvassing the subsuming the EU into a broader European political union, which would incorporate states such as Ukraine along with, and primarily, Boris's exited Great Britain!

Europe, it seems, must again be led by Britain!

It is a certainty that Britain, which can now rely on the firm support of the Eastern and Nordic EU, will have its way on the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The EU, if it is to survive, needs to disentangle itself from the shrill but brittle moral politics of denunciation and deal with the harsh realities of international power politics.

Only then is there any hope that it can begin consolidating as a coherent political entity. ■

## Ukraine And NATO

Effectively, Ukraine has already been a proxy member of NATO. On 12th June 2020 Ukraine was admitted as an Enhanced Opportunities Partner of NATO. Its armed forces undertook joint exercises with NATO and were trained by NATO. Regarding the acceptance of Ukraine as an Enhanced Opportunities Partner, an established western security consultancy had some ideas about how that relationship could be developed outside of formal membership and there is little doubt that this was the trajectory that Ukraine was being set upon by the US:

"From the US perspective this [Enhanced Opportunities Partnership] was an important development for it rewarded Ukraine for its long standing cooperation in Afghanistan and Kosovo, as well as its strong contributions to the NATO Response Force and NATO exercises.

"While a significant development, full integration requires that the government take a number of important steps, including adopting a new law on the security services as well as new laws on intelligence and state procurements, among other things. This is a time when strong transatlanticists on both sides of the Atlantic need to step up and embrace this development encouraging the Zelinski Administration to take advantage of the new opportunity by demonstrating its further commitment to the West.

"NATO member states for their part must support and encourage these actions. It also gives us an opportunity to think about alternative structures given that NATO accession is not currently possible. Some creative ideas include: The Three Seas Initiative and Bucharest Nine Group could be asked to include Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova; and Poland, the Baltic States, and other close friends of Kyiv could be encouraged to conclude mutual aid pacts with Ukraine similar to Turkey's 2010 partnership agreement with Azerbaijan. Additionally, Washington could extend its bilateral strategic partnership charters with Kyiv and Tbilisi to a multilateral format comparable to the older Baltic and Adriatic Charters." <https://www.bluestarstrategies.com/news/insight-and-analysis/538-ukraine-s-enhanced-nato-relationship>

Ukraine is not important to the US: no more than is the idea of its national sovereignty (look at the US's record in respecting national sovereignty anywhere in the world). What matters to the US is its own geopolitical interests. It is only in that context that Ukraine is important to the US and there can be little doubt that the US has all along been manipulating the situation in a way that serves its interests. The delusional government in Ukraine has played right into the US strategy—a strategy that has on its own admission the economic weakening of Russia. That this also involves the weakening of the European Union is a bonus. It has successfully bullied the EU onto going along with its anti-Russian strategy despite the fact that it will inflict untold damage on the EU's economies and enhance the U.S. economy in the process.

**Eamon Dyas**

## Neutrality!

Justin Kilcullen has vast humanitarian experience working worldwide with Trócaire. I was surprised therefore to read (Letters, April 19th) his negative comments on Irish neutrality and his description of the European Union as "*a haven of peace and democracy*".

Yes, the EU did a lot to promote peace within Europe, and by providing an alternative vision for governance compared with communist-controlled Soviet Union. Since the end of the cold war, however, the EU has largely failed to promote peace within Europe, and especially within the wider world. This is partly due to the reality that several of the EU's most powerful states, especially France, have never fully abandoned their colonial exploitation.

Added to this is the failure of the international community, including the EU, US and Nato, to promote peaceful cooperation with our neighbour Russia within the broader Eurasian sphere. The counterproductive continuing existence of Nato and the reality of Nato expansion has been a major cause of the unjustified Russian war against Ukraine. The EU's role as a peace project has been fatally compromised by the fact that 21 EU member states are also members of Nato.

Irish neutrality, supported by the vast majority of Irish citizens, is something to be proud of because it has enabled us to achieve far more towards international peace and justice than we could ever achieve as an insignificant belligerent state.

The "trials of war" are not confined to the "heart of Europe" and the people of Ireland are correct in wanting to bring peace and justice not only to Europe but especially to our sisters and brothers in Africa and the Middle East.

**Edward Horgan, PANA**

*Irish Times*, 22.4.22

## Sean O’Faolain and Canon Formation

### Part 4.

When Sean O’Faolain took his Fellowship for the Commonwealth Scholarship from no less a personage than the Prince of Wales, later to be King Edward VIII, in St. James’s Palace, London—there was always going to be a *quid pro quo*. Having researched this author thoroughly, I am now of the opinion that Sean became for the British someone of dependable form, a person who would always act in their interests. And this he did: as is signposted both outwardly and obliquely throughout his life. No less a person than Conor Cruise O’Brien, so savagely an anti-Irish nationalist himself—only later to become an Ulster/British one—abhorred anyone who used the sobriquet ‘shoneen’ as this, in his opinion, was anti- “Protestant ... and Catholics who were insufficiently anti-British” (*Passion and Cunning: Essays on Nationalism, Terrorism and Revolution*, Simon and Shuster, New York, 1988)

O’Brien in quoting from *The Irish Mind: Exploring Intellectual Traditions* (Richard Kearney (ed.) Wolfhound Press, Dublin 1985), lashes Kearney for opposing Sean O’Faolain:

“Kearney is far too sophisticated to call Sean O’Faolain a shoneen; he just taxes him with ‘post-colonial servility’ which O’Brien tells us ‘is exactly the same thing’. There is no denying the anger with which O’Brien decries anyone who is up to the same thing and in this he also names two others ‘Seamus Deane and Desmond Fennell’. And indeed while he is at it—O’Brien gives the whole thing the lash he deems it needs.

“The politics, now defined as ‘anti-colonial’, and larded with Third World quotations from the school of Frantz Fanon, is really good old Catholic Irish nationalism, in trendy gear. These cultural nationalists are the latest generation of what used to be called ‘the literary side of the movement’—a term formerly employed—with genial derision, by the military leaders of the movement in question: the IRA. It is all rather a pity. Some of those concerned—Kearney and Seamus Deane in particular—have talents that should not be wasted on this sort of guff ....”

But for the likes of O’Brien, the very name of Seamus Deane drew such fury that I remember him once in *The Observer* reviewing one of the great books of the latter under the title of *The Cult of Blood*. The book was the very scholarly *Celtic Revivals: Essays in Modern Literature*.

Conor Cruise O’Brien was one of Ireland’s greatest censors—and a real brute of a bigot towards the Catholic minority in the North—yet somehow his legacy is not

laced with the vitriol that is aimed towards the very decent Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid.

There is (as an aside) a very important point to be made and that is that some people are now referring to the diplomat appointed from Britain as “Ambassador”, and that what we had in Dublin as an UK Embassy. This is quite inaccurate. We were a *Dominion* and at first the British tried to foist upon us the title of *Governor-General*, until Eamon de Valera put into the position the Irish-speaking and slightly deaf Donal O’Buachalla—a good friend of his—much to the quiet fury of London!

There was some to-ing and fro-ing but ‘High Representative’ was deemed unacceptable, due to its connotations of Monarchy which was deeply repugnant to the Irish Republican Party, Fianna Fáil. So what we got was the title of ‘Representative’, and his official residence was called the ‘British Representative’s Office’: and from 1939-1948 that person was the very able Sir John Maffey, who in 1947 was made Lord Rugby by his Government for his services to Diplomacy, and well earned it was.

It was only in 1948 that the Oireachtas passed the *Republic of Ireland Act* under which Ireland withdrew from the Commonwealth, and the following year the Office was changed to ‘Ambassador’, a post which the British filled in 1949-50 with its first Ambassador to Ireland, Sir Gilbert Laithwaite.

Again in another aside (I will deal with this in a later article), I notice that John

Minahane (in *The Heidegger Review* No. 2. Athol Books) references quite often a book by Paul Delaney called *Sean O’Faolain: Literature, Inheritance and the 1930s* (Irish Academic Press, Dublin, 2014.) The blurb at the back of the cover notifies us that the author is a Lecturer in Irish Writing, in the School of English, at TCD and that his other books include one on Colm Tóibín (2008), and another on William Trevor (2013): the latter co-authored with Michael Parker. (With these publications under his belt, I would be astonished if Delaney hasn’t climbed further up the academic ladder by now—JH.)

And Delaney certainly centralises O’Faolain by explaining that he was—

“promoting a group of Irish writers (O’Connor, Peadar O’Donnell, Sean O’Casey, Liam O’Flaherty and himself, especially) whom he considered representative of a ‘brutal literature of despair’. This attempt at canon-formation proved deeply influential and helped shape the ways in which subsequent generations of readers viewed the cultural history of the Free State... This was only possible through a careful process of selection, as some writers were favoured, others were sidelined and all were interpreted along very specific lines.”

Now to get down to business, how did Sean O’Faolain come to such literary eminence when he couldn’t manage to even get the Professorship of English in his own university in Cork? The bitterness at that rejection ran deep and in a final swipe O’Faolain wrote that losing out to Dan Corkery “was not an irrecoverable loss to me. I had the rare good fortune to go to a real university, to Harvard...” And then he quotes Edmund Burke:

“The road to eminence and power from obscure condition ought not be made too easy, nor a thing too much of course; if rare merit be the rarest of all things it ought to pass through some sort of probation’—and then promptly shook the dust of Dublin from his shoes, lived, worked, died and was buried, in the greatest elegance, as far away as he could conveniently get from the country of his probation.”

But later on revealingly Sean O’Faolain confessed:

“Kingsley Amis’s hero Lucky Jim was lucky to have been rejected from his job. I was lucky to be rejected for mine. It is a novel that I often reread with all the bitter pleasure of dismayed self-recognition.”

But O’Faolain would return again and again to those in UCC who didn’t see his “rare merit” and he flayed out against

Professor Stockley who had shown him such exquisite kindness and hospitality at his home in Tivoli, Cork. This Professor of English who was—

“I now think, an honourable soul without an iota of intellectual persistence who, over the years, possibly from lack of challenge, had ended up as something midway between a sentimentalist of literature and a playboy of a professor”.

And this “playboy”, who was a man of such eminence in Irish life was also a brave man of rare quality. He was once met during the War of Independence with a gun-toting English soldier as he walked up to his house and chided the young man to put his gun away and was immediately shot for his impertinence. But by luck the bullet hit his wallet and so he escaped injury!

By contrast when O’Faolain has something positive to say about those in UCC, it would have to be about *Bertram Windle*, President of Queens College/ University College Cork from 1904-1919, who showed his misogyny and ignorance by stating of the great woman of revolution and politics, Constance Markievicz, that she was a “strumpet” and “whore and murderess”, and it all but killed him to see her elected to the Dáil “by a respectable Christian Catholic Constituency”. But what mattered to O’Faolain was that Stockley “must have driven Windle mad” by his lack of ability at being a professor—the bite of rejection still conditioning all of O’Faolain’s writings.

Where did Sean O’Faolain get the paper for *The Bell*? This is an important question, given the shortages in the middle of World War II. Here is his explanation:

“When I began to edit our monthly periodical ‘The Bell’ some Dublin wag said truly that it was a most distinguished production if for no reason than that it was the only magazine in the world printed on lavatory paper with ink made of soot. It was bum paper. We were lucky to get any from Britain so hardpressed that its own publications soon dwindled every year in number, size and quality.”

I remember reading in some book or another that there were severe strictures governing “paper” for war-time Britain. It was rationed and put under legal protections: so just being able to get paper from this source seems to me to be highly questionable.

Irritatingly, O’Faolain constantly refers to the *British Embassy* when there was no such entity. But he got many favours from the British Representative’s Office, even

something small like “some kind of brush that a portrait painter of my acquaintance needed for his profession”.

O’Faolain also records that ‘Sinn Féin’ means ‘Ourselves Alone’ when, as an Irish speaker, he knew this to be a lie: as it means ‘We ourselves’—the far more inclusive term that the republic wanted. And towards the end of his autobiography, ‘Vive Moi’, which I have extensively used here, he wrote:

“There is no such thing as an independent nation. It took a war to teach me that obvious fact.”

Truly, this kind of *raméis* is appalling: after all, in the most treacherous conditions, we in Ireland emerged from the war, a stronger neutral county, one that was widely admired in the international community; and emulated by others seeking escape from the firm grip of the British Empire: such as India, for example.

But the daughter of O’Faolain, Julia, in an endnote, was having none of this and kept to Sean’s position: having lived her life between Italy, America and Britain.

She gives this information which in these times of ours is quite important. Her father called his magazine ‘*The Bell*’—

“in homage to Herzen, the 19th century Russian exile whose Kolokol (bell) aimed to keep Russian revolutionary thought alive. Sean in internal exile in war-sealed Ireland, hoped to rouse his post-revolutionary readers to think again. To do this, he wrote polemical editorials and published work by people as well known as Elizabeth Bowen, Cecil Day-Lewis, Flann O’Brien and Patrick Kavanagh and as unknown—at the time—as Brendan Behan and the ex-convict who signed his account of prison time with our telephone number. Alas, when Sean, in his eighties, came to write about it all, the memory no longer roused him. The public man had gone private and readers eager to know more about those years must turn to old issues of ‘The Bell’.”

Sean had returned to Ireland from a very comfortable teaching job in Richmond, London and “war-sealed Ireland” (my italics) was where he—like Hubert Butler—rushed back to (avoiding conscription): as their preferred retreat from wartime London. (Differing here from Elizabeth Bowen, to give her credit: the latter was spying here—and thereby going to and fro for her London handlers.)

Julianne Herlihy ©

Next issue:

**The men who funded ‘The Bell’!**

## Clare Daly, Casement and the Pope

because it was also a moral cause of Good versus Evil. Science and morality were then happily fused in the first and greatest propaganda campaign ever waged against another people and their state.

Casement rebelled against this, viewing it as a recipe for the destruction of Western civilisation, and he had the moral and physical courage to oppose it. That is what made him what he was and why he had to be destroyed physically and morally.

But he has been proved right, as Europe is now a has-been Power, a victim of the original Crime of 1914, and no longer the master of its destiny. It is so pathetic that it seems oblivious to the fact that, if there is an escalation to a nuclear war, Europe is the first and certain victim.

The uncanny similarity does not end there. Only dissident socialists opposed WWI, apart from the Vatican under Benedict XV. And both made an appearance at the Casement School in the person of Clare Daly and her acknowledgement in her talk that Pope Francis “had stolen her notes”.

Clare’s views are known through her castigating by the MSM [mainstream media] but the same MSM has deliberately avoided the Pope’s views, as they would have a very subliminal effect worldwide. So what the Pope has said bears repetition.

After describing his efforts so far he spoke “...above all” of his—

“willingness to go to Moscow to meet President Putin. I asked Cardinal Parolin, after twenty days of war, to send a message to Putin to say that I was willing to go to Moscow.” Of course, affirmed the Pope, the Russian President must first offer a window for dates. “We have not yet received an answer, and we are still insisting, even if I fear that Putin cannot and does not want to have this meeting at this time. But how can this brutality not be stopped?... Pope Francis spoke of “an anger facilitated” perhaps, by “NATO’s barking at Russia’s door” that has led the Kremlin to “react badly and unleash the conflict”... “I don’t know how to answer—I’m too far away—the question of whether it is right to supply

the Ukrainians", he reasoned. "The clear thing is that weapons are being tested there. The Russians now know that tanks are of little use and are thinking of other things. This is why wars are waged: to test the weapons we have produced. Few people are fighting this trade, but more should be done..."

"I am not going to Kyiv for now; I feel that I must not go. First I must go to Moscow. First I must meet Putin. But I am also a priest, what can I do? I do what I can. If Putin would only open the door..." The Pope's gaze widened again to speak of the rights of peoples in a world at war, a "third world war" so often evoked and feared. He was not raising an "alarm", he clarified, but offering an "ascertainment of things: Syria, Yemen, Iraq, in Africa one war after another. There are international interests in every bit of it. You cannot think that a free state can make war on another free state. In Ukraine, it seems that it was others who created the conflict. The only thing that is blamed on the Ukrainians is that they reacted in the Donbas..." (*Vatican News*, 3.5.2022).

The treatment of these Papal views is reminiscent of the way Pope Benedict XV was marginalised when John Redmond was leading the country in war: the Papal views had to be suppressed lest they contribute to peace and a negotiated settlement.

Any Pope has to speak in 'diplomatic' terms, but in plain language the Pope is effectively saying that NATO's expansion and its other wars has provoked Russia to retaliate, that the Donbas is the focus of the war, and that there is a danger of a nuclear war.

That is the essence of the issues in Ukraine but to our lobotomised media commentators this supports Russia's case and therefore it can't be true, and it certainly can't be reported!

All wars have unexpected consequences but a meeting of minds between the Pope and a leading Irish socialist is a very welcome one and the Casement School is to be congratulated for facilitating it.

**Jack Lane**

**See page 9 for a further report of the events**

## **Proxy War against Russia**

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to sever its ties with Russia, amidst the tsunami of moral indignation. It appears that the sacrifice for Germany and the rest of the EU will be greater than any damage done to the intended target.

But more significantly Germany—and the EU in general—has subordinated itself to the foreign policy interests of the United States. The ideological subordination has been thoroughgoing, extending from government through to the media and to the general populace—not just in Germany, but across the Continent, as evidenced by Ukraine's recent Eurovision win.

For a brief period Germany under Merkel showed some tentative steps towards independence but now the prodigal has returned!

The sacrifice might be justified if the narrative on which it was based had a firm foundation. But, as the conflict unfolds, cracks are beginning to appear in the carefully-constructed edifice.

The gains that the Russians and their allies have achieved in the east have not been reversed. There is no evidence of substantial internal opposition to areas that Russia and her allies have occupied. Ukraine's military campaign has been sustained by a massive influx of arms from the west, and its political leaders have been willing to do the USA's bidding, notwithstanding the cost in terms of Ukrainian lives.

If there was any doubt before, it is very clear now that Ukraine has been a de facto member of NATO. The conflict in Ukraine is a proxy war between Russia and NATO (ie the USA).

The EU needs to disentangle itself from the shrill and brittle moral denunciations and deal with the harsh realities of international power politics. Only then will it prove itself capable of consolidating itself as a coherent political entity.

## **Memorial to Carbally Ladies' Land League**

This is an appeal for funds to erect a memorial to the Carbally Ladies' Land League in south Co. Waterford. The manifesto and spirit of the Ladies' Land League is best expressed in "Hold the Harvest". This is a poem by one of their founders, Fanny Parnell, which begins:

Now are ye men or are ye kine, ye tillers of the soil?  
Would ye be free or evermore the rich man's cattle toil?  
The shadow on the dial hangs dark that points the fatal hour,  
Now hold your own or branded slaves forever cringe and cower.

The Land League was founded in 1879 during a savage eviction crisis while another major famine loomed. A women's auxiliary movement in the USA raised funds from the refugees of the 1840's and '50s, and saved the lives of the jeopardised population back home.

The women's movement which averted famine was the precursor of the Ladies' Land League formed in 1881 after the leaders and activists of the Men's League were thrown in jail.

Branches of the Ladies' Land League were set up all over the country, until

they too were suppressed in 1882. One of their achievements was the provision of emergency housing for evicted people. In Carbally the elderly Morrissey couple of nearby Ballygarron were housed by the efforts of the local branch.

These campaigns can be understood as the beginnings of independent self-government. In the face of a hostile despotism, local representatives openly organised to implement policies for the improvement of their society.

The objectives of the League survived its suppression, and were achieved in the decades that followed.

The girls of Carbally came from humble backgrounds and, after their extraordinary achievements, went on to live ordinary lives. Many of their descendants still live there, in this beautiful coastal area of south Co. Waterford.

The local League and its individual members are long forgotten almost everywhere throughout the country. But Carbally is uniquely fortunate in having a written account of their own group, along with physical remains of the cabin in which they conducted their proceedings, where

the memorial is to be located.

If you decide to contribute to this memorial you will be participating in a pioneering effort to preserve the memory of these representatives of the otherwise forgotten foot-soldiers of that time, who achieved so much in a brief period of the early 1880s.

And please pass on this appeal to anyone who may be interested in correcting the historical record – and, indeed, to anyone else!

**Pat Muldowney**

Click Memorial to see proposed plaque  
Click Site View 1 to see memorial framing on a surviving wall of their meeting place  
Click Site View 2 for another view

## GoFundMe appeal for LLL memorial in Carbally:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/carbally-ladies-land-league-commemorative-plaque>

## Looking Behind The Headlines! Northern Ireland Assembly Elections

held on 5th May

### Assembly elections

SEATS	2017	2022	Change
SF	27	27	n/c
SDLP	12	8	-4
<b>Total N</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>-4</b>
DUP	28	25	-3
UUP	10	9	-1
TUV	1	1	n/c
Ind U	1	2	+1
<b>Total U</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>-3</b>
All	8	17	+9
Green	2	0	-2
PBP	1	1	n/c
<b>Total Oth</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>+7</b>

% VOTE	2017	2022	Change
SF	27.9	29.0	+1.1
SDLP	12.0	9.1	-2.9
<b>Total N</b>	<b>39.9</b>	<b>38.1</b>	<b>-1.8</b>
DUP	28.1	21.3	-6.8
UUP	12.9	11.2	-1.7
TUV	2.6	7.6	+5.1
Ind U	0.4	1.5	+1.1
<b>Total U</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>-2.4</b>
All	9.1	13.5	+4.5
PBP	1.8	1.1	-0.6
<b>Total Oth</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>+3.9</b>

As predicted by opinion polls, Sinn Fein is now the largest party in the Northern Ireland Assembly, winning 27 seats out of 90 in the elections on 5 May. Sinn Fein increased its share of the first preference vote from 27.9% to 29.0% compared with the 2017 elections and retained all 27 of the seats it won then. It received just over a quarter of a million first preference votes.

By contrast, the SDLP's vote share

fell from 12.0% to 9.1% and it lost 4 out of the 12 seats it won in 2017. Most likely, part of the decline was due to former SDLP voters switching to Sinn Fein to ensure that it was the largest party in the Assembly and therefore eligible to nominate the First Minister.

### UNIONISTS

On the Unionist side, the DUP's vote share fell dramatically from 28.1% to

21.3%. In 2017, it received 225,413 first preferences, a couple of hundred more than Sinn Fein; this time, it got 184,002. It lost 3 of the 28 seats it won in 2017, making it the second largest party in the Assembly behind Sinn Fein. If an Executive is formed at some time in the future, Sinn Fein leader Michelle O'Neill will be First Minister.

The main beneficiary of the DUP's decline was the TUV, which tripled its overall vote share from 2.6% to 7.6%. However, it didn't win any extra seats. It had one seat in the last Assembly, held by its leader Jim Allister in North Antrim. He retained that seat, coming close to getting a quota in first preferences. His candidates in other constituencies, who were much less well known, were not capable of doing that.

The UUP also lost ground, its share of the vote falling from 12.0% to 11.2% but managed to hold on to all but one of the 12 seats it won in 2017.

### ALLIANCE PARTY

The Alliance Party won 16.8% of the vote in the 2019 General Election, so it was expected that it would improve on its performance in the last Assembly election when it got 9.1% of the first preference vote and 8 seats. That came to pass: this time Alliance got 13.5% of the first preference vote (116,681) and with the aid of transfers from a wide spectrum of other parties managed to have 17 candidates elected.

### DESIGNATIONS

The success of Alliance Party has meant that the "Other" bloc in the Assembly has increased substantially from 11 seats to 18 at the expense of the "Nationalist" and "Unionist" blocs.

In 2017, 39 elected members (27 SF and 12 SDLP) designated themselves as "Nationalist" and 40 elected members designated themselves as "Unionist" (28

DUP, 10 UUP and 1 TUV plus Independent Unionist Claire Sugden, elected in the East Londonderry constituency).

This time, the "Nationalist" bloc was reduced to 35 because the SDLP lost 4 seats. The DUP and the UUP also lost 4 seats between them. But Claire Sugden retained her seat and a second Independent Unionist, Alex Easton, was elected in North Down (Easton had been a sitting member,

having been elected for the DUP in 2017). The net loss to the "Unionist" bloc was therefore 3, so in the new Assembly the "Unionist" bloc has 37 seats (25 DUP, 9 UUP, 1 TUV and 2 Independent Unionists).

The "Unionist" bloc therefore remains the largest designation. The Northern Ireland Act 1998, which put the Belfast Agreement into law, provided that "the nominating officer of the largest political

party of the largest political designation shall nominate a member of the Assembly to be the First Minister". If that rule applied today, the DUP would be in a position to nominate the First Minister. At the instigation of the DUP, that rule was changed in the St Andrews Agreement so that the largest party in the Assembly had that role.

David Morrison  
15 May 2022

## Paddy Heaney 1931 - 2022

### A Committed Historian

Revisionism has not gone away, you know. But it is less fashionable now than it was twenty years ago. Big Beasts of revisionism such as Eoghan Harris have been silenced because their fanaticism and lies became a liability to the cause.

One of the rocks into which Harris spectacularly crashed his revisionist car was Offaly historian Paddy Heaney, who passed away on 29th April 2022. This particular car crash was the 2007 RTÉ documentary, "The Killings at Coolacree" concocted by Harris with the assistance of UCD sports historian, Paul Rouse, along with a number of other academics.

Harris had come across a 2005 book called "I met murder on the way", which described the execution by the IRA of two Protestant farmer brothers in Coolacree, near Cadamstown, Co. Offaly in June 1921.

This book was written by the son of an associate and kinsman of the two brothers in response to Paddy Heaney's "At the Foot of Slieve Bloom", a history of that region published in year 2000. Paddy's book included a couple of pages about the Coolacree episode, describing those executed as members of a party of loyalist gunmen who had attacked an IRA roadblock at Coolacree, seriously wounding several people and leading to the arrest of the Cadamstown unit of the IRA.

The gist of Harris's and Rouse's television documentary was that the two brothers were innocent members of an unworldly Quaker-type pacifist religious group who were brutally murdered by the IRA in pursuance of a local sectarian vendetta leading to a land-grab of their farm.

But, when challenged, the case put forward by Harris and his academic allies fell apart. They had suppressed and cen-

sored out the official documentation of the events because the official documentation confirmed Paddy Heaney's honest and objective account.

In fact those executed were militant loyalists who chose to involve themselves in the British terror campaign against the elected Irish Government and its volunteer army. The records showed that they had conducted a successful armed attack; that their execution was not a local affair but was officially ordered by the authorities of the elected government; that this was confirmed by a British military report; and that there was no land grab.

This was a landmark defeat of revisionist propaganda. But without Paddy Heaney's rigorous and meticulous stand, the Harris-Rouse documentary might have succeeded.

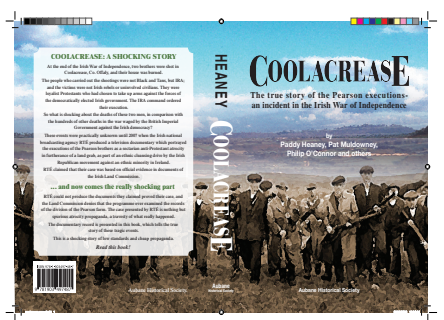
Harris has been silenced. But Rouse and the other academic delinquents have not.

They haven't gone away, you know.

Pat Muldowney

**Coolacree. The True Story of the Pearson Executions in Co. Offaly, an Incident in the War of Independence by Paddy Heaney, Pat Muldowney, Philip O'Connor €30, £25**

athol-st@atholbooks.org



### Propaganda Lies then and now!

The contemptible and hysterical propaganda against all persons, matter and things Russian, and Vladimir Putin in particular, has historical precedents. It worked in the past against other nations and their leaders, and it bears out Abraham Lincoln's observation that you can fool all of the people some of the time.

Vladimir Putin is in good company. Lincoln was a hate-figure for The Times of London, which called him Ape Lincoln. What the thunderer's Irish pip-squeak fellow-traveller called Lincoln I don't know, but in February 1933 it warned against voting for Eamon de Valera, and in March 1933 welcomed Adolf Hitler's accession to power.

I have read of the hatred of Germans deliberately stirred up by the British Government in 1914, which resulted in Germans living in and contributing to Ireland's welfare and culture being branded as her enemy.

The war against Germany had been contemplated since that country's unification in 1871, and its planning was started in 1904 with the Entente Cordiale, and the establishment of the secretive Committee of Imperial Defence by the Conservative Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour. The Liberal Imperialist MP, Herbert Asquith, was a member, but most MPs were kept in the dark about the Committee's existence and busy labours.

In the first paragraph of his War Memoirs, David Lloyd George recalled his surprise as a young MP on it being explained to him by the former Liberal Imperialist Prime Minister, Lord Roseberry, that the Entente Cordiale meant war with Germany. The Liberal Imperialists were anti-Boer, whereas Lloyd George at the time was not a Jingo.

In 1914 Irishmen with courage didn't



back trucks into Germans' dwellings, but took to killing Germans, gulled by the liar John Redmond. Roger Casement described Redmond as a liar, and his word is good enough for me. My Uncle Jack Burke was wounded at Jutland, when a German shell hit the Cruiser HMS Princess Royal. Jack was 6 weeks shy of his 17th Birthday. His brother Ned, who on 26th July 1914, as a member of Fianna Eireann, helped unload rifles from The AsgardTH in Howth, joined the Dublin Fusiliers. He fought for most of the war until the Great German Counter-Offensive in the Spring of 1918. Then, he said, he threw away his rifle and ran away as fast as he could, together with those of his comrades in that sector who could manage it. He was badly gassed and in and out of hospital until his death 45 years later.

I see no reason to accept the anti-Russian narrative and the demonisation of President Putin. It is DeJa-Vu. There are propaganda precedents from both 1914 and 1991—at least, DEJA VU—all over again ...and again ...and ....!

In 1991 the Daughter of a Kuwaiti Ambassador accused the Iraqis of murdering babies in a Kuwait hospital. She was lying through her teeth. So was the American woman Ambassador who had assured Saddam Hussein that the United States had no favourites among quarrelling Arabs. The Americans and their allies had materially assisted Iraq's 8 year war with Iran (1982-90), and the CIA had helped Saddam to power. He had an understandable grievance with Kuwait and an equally understandable belief that the Americans were giving him a green light to seek its resolution as he saw fit

Victoria Nuland, the US Under-Secretary of State, is described as a Diplomat by Wikipedia. She does believe in Teddy Roosevelt's doctrine of speaking quietly and carrying a big stick. She is on record (a tape recording) saying "FUCK THE EU"—and saying whom she favoured for the Presidency of Ukraine before the guy was installed by an illegal and violent putsch.

#### PROPAGANDA

The story of the Russians bombing a Maternity Hospital echoes the lie told about the Iraqis in Kuwait.

Bombing maternity wards would be more in the spirit of the American President and Vice-President and their party's Abortion Crusade, or that of the Irish Teachta Dala who called a colleague a "fucking ejjit" for giving birth to a child.

**Donal Kennedy**

## Food for Thought: this year's Roger Casement Summer School in Dún Laoghaire

### The 2022 Roger Casement Summer School

The wide variety of talks, discussions and events, including a screening of Secrets of Putumayo, threw up many thought-provoking insights about Casement himself and causes with which he identified. The School took place over three days (5-7 May) in the Lexicon Library. The full Programme of events included the launch of Angus Mitchell's new book: *The Casement Memorial Statue*, which has a *Foreword* by Michael D. Higgins, Uachtarán na hÉireann. Mitchell introduced this beautifully illustrated work, underlining how the newly installed statue of Casement has already become a popular landmark and talking point in Dún Laoghaire. His book was published by the local Council, represented at the event by An Cathaoirleach Lettie McCarthy—who gave tribute to the lasting legacy of Casement's humanitarian work. That Casement's message lives on was also confirmed by the presence of the Brazilian Ambassador to Ireland, H.E. Mr. Marcel Biato, who explored the links between Casement and Brazil.

#### UKRAINE DEBATE

The event at the School that attracted media attention was a debate between Clare Daly and Barry Andrews, chaired by Deaglán de Bréadún. The subject was the effects of the Ukraine War on Ireland and the EU. Significantly, it gave a platform to a politician, Daly, who is openly critical of the prevailing narrative. While criticism of Deputy Daly and her fellow MEP, Mick Wallace, may have had the aim of isolating them, the debate showed that, for a cross section of the Irish Left at least, the pair are regarded as courageous defenders of Irish neutrality at a time when it is under sustained attack.

After the event Daly let it be known that an article by Ronan McGreevy in the *Irish Times* (6 May 2022) was not a fair summary of what she had said. The article had the heading, "Clare Daly says Ukrainian politicians made themselves 'puppets of another power'", and can be accessed via Google. She has been in correspondence with the paper, asking for the misrepresentation of her words to be corrected.

However, Senan Malony in the *Irish Independent* did produce a fair report. She commented in a tweet: "Rare enough to see my comments on Ukraine reported accurately".

Faced with an audience unsympathetic to his arguments, Barry Andrews said the Left had "underestimated the threat from Russia and secondly that a false equivalence has been drawn between Russian overreach and the actions of the West". He referred to detailed proposals he has made in a policy paper on Irish neutrality (easily accessed online).

While his position is close to that of the Government and would be seen as a weak-

ening of traditional neutrality, he deserves credit for publishing a thorough statement of his views, a rare enough phenomenon in Establishment politics.

The arguments of the two speakers were also summarised by Senan Molony in an article titled, "We cannot ignore the part played by the EU, and the US in Ukraine war, insists Clare Daly" (*Irish Independent*, 6 May 2022). In the article Daly is quoted stating that those not adhering to the mainstream narrative of goodies and baddies were being either "ignored or demonised" and that the response of the EU and the Irish Government "had pretty much been to escalate the war and to ensure it continues". Molony quoted her citing Pope Francis that "NATO bears responsibility for facilitating Russia's invasion and for fomenting international interests in the same way in Syria, Yemen and so on".

Molony reproduced a statement by Deputy Andrews that "The left in Ireland had never appreciated the threat from Russia". He was also quoted saying that the cyber ransom attack on the Irish health service last year had been mounted by a criminal gang based in St Petersburg known as *White Spider*, an attack that he claimed "had been facilitated by the Russian regime": a bizarre claim! And he did not mention that President Putin assisted in re-establishing the computer facilities on which the Health Service depended, after the Taoiseach appealed to him for help.

Molony also bizarrely claimed that the shooting down of the Malaysian airliner MH-17 had been by "Russians serving with secessionist groups in the Donbass, using a Russian BUK surface to air missile".

While the exchange between Daly and Andrews received media coverage and provided plenty of food for thought, the contributions from the floor were also of a high standard. I hope to provide a summary of that part of the debate, along with an analysis of US Democrat policy on Ukraine for the July *Irish Political Review*.

#### SECRETS FROM PUTUMAYO

*Secrets from Putumayo* is a film from Brazilian director Aurélio Michiles about Casement's work in the upper reaches of the Amazon River in 1910. Released in 2020 and based on Casement's journals, its narrator is the Irish actor, Stephen Rea, and its line of approach that of Angus Mitchell who also speaks to camera at different points in the film. The story it tells is how Casement reported and exposed the exploitation—to the point of extermination—of the native population by a British-registered Peruvian company supplying rubber to the world market.

The only other screening in Ireland of this superb film was at the Galway Film Fleadh in July last year, so its screening as part of the Summer School was a treat. The use of words like *disturbing* and *harrowing* in its marketing may put some people off; I would have no hesitation in recommending it for second level school students from Transition Year upwards, as well as the general public.

During the discussion following Tom Daly's presentation on the efforts of the Ulster GAA to build a modern stadium at Casement Park, Belfast, I raised the question of Casement's legacy for the GAA. I pointed out that *Cuala*, the local GAA club in Dalkey, run an annual programme in which members of their youth section travel to Africa to assist with construction projects, solely because of that club's association with Casement. I asked the speaker would he consider screening *Secrets from Putumayo* at Casement Park when it eventually opens, to which he replied that the Stadium would also fulfil the role of a Heritage Centre. I took that as a Yes.

*Secrets from Putumayo* covers a part of Casement's legacy with which no one can disagree—in a documentary on the subject some years ago a British official, on behalf of his Government, claimed the credit for Casement's work in the region (pity about the execution, then!)—so it is a stroke of good fortune for those of us committed to conserving Casement's legacy that the film was made and will hopefully gain a wide audience.

#### MÁIRE COMERFORD'S MEMOIRS

On the Saturday morning Hilary Dully gave a presentation based on the memoirs of the republican activist and journalist, Máire Comerford, *On Dangerous Ground*, which she had edited. A welcome part of the presentation was three audio recordings of Comerford expounding her views. It was also interesting to learn that Comerford had reported numerous incidents in the War of Independence for the Publicity Department of the Dáil, i.e. the *Irish Bulletin*. During the presentation Dully related how Comerford had been devastated when, in the 1950s, having submitted the manuscript of her memoirs to the publisher, Arlen House, she received a detailed rejection from the company.

It turned out that Arlen House had referred the manuscript to a Professor of History at University College Dublin for review and it was his advice that led to the rejection. The professor in question was none other than *T. Desmond Williams*—a member of MI5 (British intelligence), as several audience members attested.

At a separate festival a week later, the *James Connolly Festival* in the New Theatre behind Connolly Books bookshop, this discussion at the Casement Summer School was cited as evidence of how Irish media and publishing has in the past been subject to manipulation.

(A work by Williams, *The Genesis of National Socialism*, was published by the *Belfast Historical and Educational Society* and edited by Brendan Clifford in 2012. The introduction covers Williams' work for the British Government and much else. It was favourably reviewed in *History Ireland* in its September/October 2015 edition which can be accessed via Google.)

The discussion on Máire Comerford was greatly enhanced by contributions from the well-known Sinn Féin activist who chaired the two Saturday morning sessions, Danny Morrison. Morrison got to know Comerford at the height of the Northern conflict in the seventies and gave the oration at her funeral; from his comments it was obvious he had read the memoir closely.

That he had agreed to chair the Comerford talk at short notice and travelled from the Election Count in the North at an early hour to do so, showed how highly he regarded his friend from an earlier and different phase of the republican struggle. The relationship between the War of Independence and the Long War of recent times is a complex subject requiring separate treatment but Danny Morrison's

commitment to honouring Máire Comerford's memory gives the lie to the thesis that Northern Sinn Féin, since the Good Friday Agreement, engages in purely verbal republicanism and, in a practical sense, is indifferent to issues relating to the national tradition as understood in the South.

Actually, the publication of the Comerford memoir is important for Sinn Féin as a party, as was demonstrated on March 29th when the book was launched at a venue in Sandyford (South Dublin) near to where Comerford lived. The line-up of speakers at that crowded event reflected the different elements of society that have gravitated towards Sinn Féin in recent years. In order of appearance, it comprised: Rita O'Hare (her background is worth looking up on Wikipedia), a representative from Lilliput Press, Tim Pat Coogan, Liz Gillis, Hilary Dully, and Mary Lou MacDonald.

#### THE HUMAN RIGHTS SESSIONS

As in previous Roger Casement Summer Schools, and as befits Casement's legacy, the final sessions on the Saturday afternoon covered human rights. The topics this year were Afghanistan after the US withdrawal by Sayed Anosh and the treatment of refugees in Ireland by Roos Demol. After Anosh's presentation which included a video showing women's groups protesting after the US withdrawal, a question arose which may be relevant for human rights campaigns in many parts of the world.

Mary Lawlor—a UN Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, who has chaired this part of the Summer School in association with Frontline Defenders since its inception in 2017—stated, in response to a question that I asked, that in Afghanistan rights activists should eschew politics which would involve compromises with the Taliban but should stand firm on the basis of the *Declaration of Universal Human Rights*. She argued that playing political games would undermine the case being made by human rights defenders. While much politics, certainly in democratic states (not to speak of the machinations of powerful states in the international sphere), does indeed involve game-playing—political actors generally need to engage in demagoguery to some extent—the role of politics in its Aristotelian meaning—the necessary management of human affairs in the public sphere—should not be lost sight of. Ultimately, such differences of approach will only be resolved by outcomes in the field, but engagement on such issues is, I believe, a necessary part of the contemporary debate on human rights.

'Let's learn from the Ukrainian experience' was the message of Roos Demol's presentation. She argued that people fleeing dangerous countries should be given immediate protection just like the Ukrainians. Referencing the Government's promise to end Direct Provision (DP) by 2024, she set out what she thought should happen immediately.

Those currently in DP should get an immediate right of access to third level education on the same grounds as Irish citizens. Ukrainian migrants from other countries should be afforded the same protection as Ukrainian nationals and should be allowed to complete their studies in Ireland. The ending of DP should give priority to families with children as a matter of urgency because of the extreme unsuitability of DP for children. The treatment of refugees needs an overhaul focussed on the concept of inter-cultural dialogue and awareness of the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder.

One of the final demands proposed by Demol was that the temporary accommodation should not be owned by private companies. "Stop the profiteering from refugees" was how she expressed it. Speaking from the floor, Angus Mitchell opined that the Direct Provision system entailed inhumane treatment comparable to the abuses that Casement had railed against in his various campaigns. The Summer School Committee will be remaining in touch with Demol to keep informed about the issues raised in her presentation.

#### SUMMER SCHOOL VALUES

Other events and happenings at the School—in no particular order—included a reading of his poem about Casement by Stephen McDonagh; talks by Ruairí de Búrca and Pdraig Yeates, the book launch and a ramble to the statue at which sculptor Stephen Richards regaled the company with stories about the challenge of depicting Casement. (I will provide an account of the Musical Evening in the Summer edition of *Church & State*.)

Being occupied with organisational arrangements I was unable to attend the de Búrca lecture on *Casement, Ireland and the UN* (chaired by Martin Mansergh), but I heard a favourable account of it and it may be possible to read the script of his talk and comment on it in the future. Pdraig Yeates has given numerous talks on historical topics in Dún Laoghaire: that he keeps getting asked back testifies to the breadth of his knowledge and popularity.

Given his anti-nationalist stance, it was inevitable that the discussion following his lecture on Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and the National War of Independence 1919-1922, would include comments from the opposing viewpoint.

One point that stands out for me was the question of local Councils voting to switch allegiance from Dublin Castle to the Dáil Government during those years. This entailed massive disruption and the cutting off of funding from the British Government—but the Councils voted to take that action and large sections of the electorate re-directed their local taxes to the Sinn Féin Councils. This aspect of the War of Independence—voting for an independent Republic and developing new institutions as a follow-up to the electoral outcomes—was more important in determining the outcome of the War than the actual military engagements. Yeates assented to that analysis, while standing his ground on the side of revisionist history in arguing that Eve Morrison's recent book on the Killmichael controversy transcends the

dispute by being scrupulously objective.

The important point regarding controversial subjects like revisionist history, is that a Summer School should be a non-sectarian space where differing viewpoints get a hearing, while still allowing opinions to be fully expressed.

One advantage of the Dún Laoghaire gathering is that it brings together people who admire Casement who would not otherwise meet; arguably, the exchange of ideas in society is enhanced by personal connections. In that context a welcome part of the 2022 School was the reception following the book launch.

The DLR Roger Casement Summer School is helping to copper-fasten the connection between Casement and Dún Laoghaire. Hopefully its ripples are also flowing further afield.

**Dave Alvey**

**(Dave Alvey is the current Chair of the Roger Casement Summer School)**

## War-Games !

Back in the early 1950s I was working on hydroelectric dam being built in the Scottish Highlands. One of the labourers there turned out to be a former officer in the Irish Army. He had been cashiered out due to theft of the mess funds. He liked a drink, and still did. He said Irish Army officers were trained in guerrilla warfare. In the event of an invasion their job was to organise the population. It stands to sense to use such tactics: direct confrontation with a larger nation armed to the teeth, with a far superior force is illogical.

PIRA eventually became better armed than the Irish Army, and fought for 28 years against great odds and survived. Now there are drones to be had.

Only the bare bones of guerrilla war tactics can be taught. It all depends on the how the enemy is going to fight the war, and the innovation of new tactics has to be thought up on the day the crisis breaks out, to be learned by the resistance.

PIRA was born in the school playground. I attended a Protestant school during WW2 and the children's war games in the playground was conventional British Army routines of English and German armies facing one another. The Protestant

children didn't say Ulster against Germany, It didn't seem to be their war)

Having occasion to play with Catholic children, during WW2, the war games were akin to guerrilla warfare, a whole new thing I had to learn. The Catholic games were rough. Being ambushed led to heavy bruising and almost strangulation. The Protestant school war games were more a game of human chess. When captured, you were out of the game, and put in the school boiler room that acted as a prison. You didn't try to break out.

In the Catholic games, when captured, you kicked your way out, if you could, and real painful fights broke out. There were no prisons.

I tried Catholic tactics at the Protestant school, and after battering one of the prison guards, to escape from the boiler room. I was told by the organiser, a boy (who was to go to join the British Colonial Palestine Police) that I couldn't be part of the war games anymore.

The boy who joined the Palestine Police at 18 came home badly wounded: stabbed six times by a Palestinian.

**Wilson John Haire**

## Fr. Brian Murphy RIP

It is with great regret that this magazine learns of the death of a contributor and supporter, Fr. Brian Murphy. Our *Michael Stack* Column on page 24 has a tribute to Fr. Brian and readers are invited to send any further recollections to this magazine, for the June issue.

The official obituary below does not mention the following works:

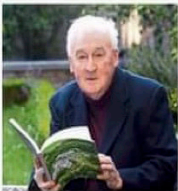


# BRIAN P. MURPHY OSB

MONK OF GLENSTAL

died, Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022

aged 86



John Patrick Murphy - known in his family as Paddy - was born in England to Irish parents, on 28 September 1935. Following his secondary education, he entered Douai Abbey, near Reading in Berkshire. He was professed in October 1955, taking the name Brian, in honour of the seventh-century Bishop of Dorchester, Saint Birinus. He was ordained priest in October 1963.

In 1974, Fr Brian discerned that he should leave Douai. He spent an extended period in Glenstal shortly after that, but eventually decided to return to lay life. He qualified as a teacher in Trinity College Dublin, and taught for several years at St Gerard's School in Bray, Co. Wicklow, eventually becoming Head of the Junior School. His book, *St Gerard's School: An Educational Initiative*, was published in 1999.

Brian arrived in Glenstal once again in September 1984, this time for good. Initially a guest, he spent his time on historical research and teaching. He was awarded a PhD in History from UCD in 1987. Sensing a call to return to monastic life, he was permitted to begin a period of probation that same year, and his definitive incorporation into the Glenstal community became effective on 1 August 1990. Throughout the decades that followed, Fr Brian had two primary occupations - scholarly historical work and the restoration and care of Glenstal's historic gardens. He was passionately committed to both, and brought them together most elegantly in 2014, with the publication of *Glenstal Abbey Gardens*.

His 1990 book, *Patrick Pearse and the Lost Republican Ideal*, offered a notable and somewhat controversial challenge to prevailing 'revisionist' interpretations of the history of the revolutionary and civil war period in Ireland, and he continued writing and lecturing on related topics to the end. Less controversial was his 2018 book on the traumatic experiences during this time of the family who built Glenstal castle, *The Life and Tragic Death of Winnie Barrington*.

Devoted to daily work in the terraced garden and the Lady Garden, Fr Brian was a familiar and welcoming face for countless visitors over the years. He had a loyal band of assistants throughout this time, including many 'men of the roads', who had come to stay in our hostel.

Fr Brian became ill on the afternoon of Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May and was transferred to University Hospital Limerick on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May, where he died later that day. He is survived by his brother Peter, daughters Miranda and Frances, and grandchildren, Amelia and Paul. The funeral arrangements will be announced later.



*Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him*

The Origins and the Organisation of British Propaganda in Ireland 1920 by Brian P. Murphy osb. Foreword: Prof. David Miller. ISBN 1 903497 24 8. 100pp, Illus. Bibliog. Index. Aubane Historical Society + Spinwatch., Feb. 2006. €10, £8

Envoi: Taking Leave Of Roy Foster, reviews of his MADE UP IRISH STORY, BY J.HERLIHY, B. CLIFFORD, D. ALVEY, & B. MURPHY OSB. INDEX. 204pp. ISBN 1 903497 28 0. AUBANE HISTORICAL SOCIETY. JUNE 2006. €18, £15

The Catholic Bulletin And Republican Ireland with special reference to J.J. O'Kelly ('Sceilg') by Dr. Brian P. Murphy osb. 314pp, Illus. Bibliog. Index. 1 0 85034 108 6. Athol Books, 2005. €24, £20

Kilmichael: The False Surrender: a discussion by Peter Hart, Pdraig O'Cuanachain, D.R. O'Connor Lysaght, Dr. Brian Murphy, & Meda Ryan, with: Why The Ballot Was Followed By The Bullet by J. Lane & B. Clifford. 48pp.

Michael Collins. Some Documents In His Own Hand. Introduced by Dr. Brian P. Murphy osb. 40pp A4. ISBN 1 90349719 1. July 2004. €6, £5

A Defence Of Cork's Political Culture During The Irish War Of Independence by one of the major authorities on the period, Dr. Brian Murphy. Audio CD of talk (with discussion, which is indistinct in a few places). 1 903497 22 1. €10, £8

TROUBLED HISTORY: A 10th Anniversary Critique Of The IRA & Its Enemies by Brian Murphy osb and Niall Meehan. Introduction Ruan O'Donnell. 48pp. ISBN 978-1-903497-46-3. AHS. May 2008. €10, £8

## Fintan O'Toole On World Affairs

Fintan O'Toole has been grappling with the "*incomprehensible vastness of the second World War*", as conveyed to him by a Western propaganda film, *The Longest Day*. That film is about *D-Day*, a Channel crossing by American and British forces in June 1944 which established a Western Front in the War for the first time since June 1940.

The War had begun as a war within the West—a war in defence of Polish claims on the German city of Danzig. Britain guaranteed Poland military support if it refused to negotiate over Danzig—but when this guarantee led to a German/Polish War, Britain did not deliver on its Guarantee, nor did France, which had seconded it. The French, having been deprived of the fruits of victory by Britain in 1918 were not going to fight to the death in a British cause for a second time.

Poland fought alone in September 1939. Britain declared a general war on Germany and conducted it by siege, hoping to starve the Germans by Blockade as it had done in 1914-19, but that was of no use to Poland, whose needs were immediate.

Germany, subjected to an Anglo-French declaration of war in September 1939, responded to it in May 1940. It had to win by fighting or be stifled gradually by the much stronger British world power. That was a repeat of the position in which Britain had put the Boer Republics forty years earlier. The Germans, like the Boers, decided to fight for survival.

The British declared war for some vacuous ideal when leaving Poland to go under. The French did not even have an ideal, and they had no credible territorial claims on Germany, having got back Alsace-Lorraine in 1918. So Germany fought and won in a short war. The French negotiated a provisional settlement, pending a final settlement when Britain withdrew its declaration of war.

But Britain, having brought its little Army home, and being safe behind its world-dominating Navy, refused to negotiate an end to its war, though unwilling—and therefore unable—to fight it. It kept Europe in an unstable condition with pin-pricks here and there, while hoping for something to turn up.

It wished for American entry into the

War, but America was profoundly neutralist because of its experience with Britain 1919. The practical expectation was for a German/Russian War which might enable Britain to maintain its pretensions.

From June 1940 to June 1941 Britain "*stood alone*", refusing to make either war or peace. Its object—as was said at the time—was to "*spread the war*", which meant getting others to fight it.

There was a war going on between Greece and Italy, which was not part of the British war. Britain pressed military support on the Greeks, who did not need it. General Metaxas, who knew Britain from the First World War, refused British aid as it would bring Germany into the local war in support of Italy. Metaxas died. His successor accepted British aid. Germany invaded Greece through Yugoslavia, where Hitler was supported by the Croat nationalists and opposed by the Serbs as the Yugoslav Government. German power was extended into the Balkans.

Britain between 1934 and 1938 had enabled Germany to break the Versailles restrictions on it, and to build up an Army and Navy. And it then gave him three easy wins: against Poland, which it betrayed; against itself and France, to which it had only committed a token force; and against Greece.

By means of these three practices wars Hitler had an army in perfect condition. He launched it against Russia.

The Russian state, according to Western experts, had undermined itself by terror, corruption, and purges of its best elements—both political and military. And yet the German Army never got behind the Russian Front. There was always a Russian Army in front of it.

Great battles were fought on a scale which "*blurs into the preposterous*", in O'Toole's mind. The encounter at Kursk alone had "*perhaps three quarters of a million casualties*". And—

"these are only the battles. In and around the war, Stalin's terror campaigns and Hitler's relentless butchery of Jewish and Slavic Untermenschen consumed ten million non-combatants. Such

gargantuan monstrosity cannot really be processed..."

Why not?

The *Irish Times* was gung-ho for Britain's first war on Germany. It hounded John Redmond until he started recruiting young Irishmen for it. And Britain declared it to be war of a new kind, war of the democratic era, a war of peoples. A war against evil. Progressive war.

Wars of the old kind could no longer be fought: wars for limited advantages, fought by regular armies, and concluded by negotiations which left both parties intact.

The era of limited war for tangible ends had been superseded by Total War, war without limits, in which the distinction between soldier and civilian no longer existed.

On the eve of the British Declaration of War in 1939 William Beveridge (an influential Liberal opinion-former and social reformer) explained all of this in an Oxford War Pamphlet. In the wars of the masses there are no civilians.

Britain itself, which got away relatively unscathed in its Great War, incurring three-quarters of a million casualties. France incurred a million and a half. Russia: 20 million. German casualties did not need to be counted as they were evil and didn't count. The combined Allied losses of over 22 million has often been mentioned as a total.

These are the modest figures one should bear in mind as the new norm when using words like "*gargantuan monstrosity*" for the German/Russian spin-off from Britain's second World War.

O'Toole is griping about a speech made by Putin on the anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany. He says that Putin—

"...played down two awkward truths. One was that the war did not begin in 1941 when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. It began in 1939 when Stalin joined with Hitler in the invasion and dismembering of Poland. This alliance of the two great mass murderers had to be forgotten. And so did the fact that the Nazis did not get all that far into Russia..."

The War that ended with the defeat of Germany began with the German invasion of Russia in June 1941.

The war declared by Britain in September 1939 ran into the sands in June 1940. It was going nowhere, except to the possibility of a German/Russian War.

When it did lead to the German/Russian War, it was no longer the war declared by Britain, and Britain was little more than a

by-stander in it until the USA joined in and hustled it back onto the Continent in 1944.

And the reason the Germans “*didn’t actually get all that far into Russia*” was that the Russian ‘mass murderer’ had established effective defences against them. The Germans displayed unprecedented skill in the prosecution of offensive mobile war, but whatever they did, they always ended up with a Russian Army in front of them.

If the Germans had *got all that far* into Russia, what would have happened? Fascism would have become the political order of Europe from Portugal to the Urals, and Britain would have made arrangements with it.

If it is the case that Putin did not mention Britain’s war of 1939-41, it is easy to see why. It was a reckless and futile war, launched without sufficient reason, over a trivial issue, against the German State which in 1934-38 it had helped to remake itself as a Great Power. (That it did help Hitler to break the Versailles restrictions is beyond factual dispute—though nothing is beyond the reach of ideological chicanery.)

The idea that the War began when the Russian mass murderer joined the German mass murderer to invade Poland is an official truth of the European Union—an ideological truth which transcends fact. It is a necessary truth of a Union that contemplated writing a history of itself but decided not to, lest it should undermine itself.

In 1939 Poland refused to be part of a collective security arrangement which also included Russia against Germany. It had defeated Russia in war in 1920 and taken a stretch of its territory and therefore would not have it as an ally. And Britain was only going through the motions of making an agreement with Russia while preparing to go to war with Germany over Danzig.

The issue was the German city of Danzig which was within the territory of Poland but was not under Polish government, or even under the *de jure* sovereignty of Poland (as Belfast was under Dublin at the time!). It was a League of Nations anomaly which might have been transferred to East Prussia without significant alteration to the balance of force.

When Germany proposed that transfer early in 1939, as part of a settlement of the German/Polish border dispute, Britain offered Poland a military guarantee which apparently put the military force of the

British Empire at the disposal of the Polish Government, and France did likewise. The South African Government, which was then active in Imperial affairs, when consulted about the Guarantee, said that issuing it would be a decision for war.

When the Guarantee was issued, the German Government saw the Polish acceptance of it as a revocation of the German/Polish Treaty of 1934, and prepared for war.

The Russian Government, being excluded from European Collective Security arrangements, made its own arrangements. Britain was setting up the conditions for a German/Polish War. Russia made a *Non-Aggression Treaty* with Germany. It did not intrude into a war in which it was not wanted. But it made provision for the possible collapse of the Polish State.

Less than twelve months earlier Britain had awarded the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia to Hitler. The European Parliament and Fintan O’Toole have nothing to say about this generosity with the territory of others!

Prague had Treaties with both Paris and Moscow. Britain persuaded it not to invoke them. It did not want Russia involved in European affairs. It broke up the Czechoslovak state, which was its creation, rather than have Russia involved in its defence, and it persuaded Paris, which had a close relationship with the Czechs, to betray them.

In deciding to dismantle Czechoslovakia, it did not act as Guarantor of the Treaty of Versailles. It acted on its own authority as an Empire. And it led Germany eastwards.

Russia got the message. It was excluded from European counsels. And Germany was being guided towards it. So it took itself off-side for the German/Polish War, only making provisions for the eventuality of a collapse of the Polish state.

The two ‘mass murderers’ did not join forces to invade Poland. Only the mass-murderer representing the German people invaded.

The two big Democracies, which had given military guarantees to the Poles, did not make war on Germany when it invaded Poland. The Polish State, having refused to negotiate a deal over Danzig, and aligned itself with the British and French Empires against Germany, was defeated in a couple of weeks. *In the third week*, a Russian Army entered what had been the Polish state, but which was a state no longer, and occupied territory conquered from it in 1920—when Poland was a competent national-socialist state led by Josef Pilsudski.

A book has been written about the critical battle of Britain’s second World War—*The Unfought Battle*—that is the great battle between Poland, Britain and France against Germany in September 1939. That battle, if it had been fought, would certainly have determined the course of events in a very different direction.

Since it was not fought, it would not be unreasonable to say that Britain had set up the Poles for a conquest by Germany which would probably have continued into a German/Russian War.

Russia did not make war on the Polish state. It was excluded from the arrangements that were being made for war by the democracies. And it made precautionary arrangements.

Lord Salisbury, a most prudent statesman, said to a Tory Conference in 1898, that Britain should not begin—

“anything that could lead to the dismemberment of China, but the result of the actions of others had been to place them in a most advantageous position... The nations of the world might be roughly divided into the living and the dying; the weak States were becoming weaker and the strong ones stronger. For one reason or another the living nations would gradually encroach on the territory of the dying and causes of conflict between the former would inevitably appear. We should not allow this country to be at a disadvantage in any re-arrangement that might take place...” (*Times* report, 5 May 1898).

The Russian mass-murderer prudently arranged that his state should not be at a disadvantage if British intrigues brought about a collapse of the Polish state. That is all.

Three months after letting Poland go under without firing a shot in its defence, and after declaring war on Germany but not attacking it, Britain tried to get involved in a war against Russia. Stalin acted to strengthen his defences against Germany. He pushed back the border of Finland (which was a Fascist State) to give scope for the defence of Leningrad.

Britain denounced this as an act of aggression and, along with France, it assembled what remained of the League of Nations, expelled Russia from it, and began to make arrangements, along with France, to send an Expeditionary Force to Finland. But, before they could get this force onto the battlefield, the Finns made a settlement with Russia, exchanging territories in front of Leningrad for other territory further north.

A year and a half later Finland joined Germany in the invasion of Russia. But then Britain went into alliance with the Russian mass-murderer, and became dependent on him to save it from the humiliation of having to call off its Declaration of War on Germany.

“*Western civilisation*” was saved because the Russian mass murderer defeated the Armies of European Fascism. Finland, though treated gently in the aftermath, was chastened by defeat. It did not join the American alliance against the State which defeated it and its allies. But now that the Russian State has been weakened by jettisoning the socio-economic system which enabled it to defeat the Fascist forces after capitalist democracy had failed miserably to do so, Finland wants to join the alliance against it.

That is how States behave. They are, as Nietzsche said, “*the coldest of all cold monsters*”.

And DeValera tried to explain this to Sinn Fein in August 1921 as it was preparing to negotiate with Britain. But Michael Collins thought he knew otherwise. He had a ‘friend’ at the heart of the British State—who led him up the garden path.

Wordsworth, in the throes of romantic subjectivism, said that “*mountains have a feeling*”. There is a name for that—is it the *anthropomorphic delusion*? And Fintan O’Toole is in the grip of it on the subject of a certain State which has let him down.

His article is directed against Putin—but also against “*the strange mentality that created Brexit*”. The two things have got thoroughly mixed up in his head. Brexit was driven by—

“a feeling that England somehow never got what it deserved for winning (in the more fantastical versions, single-handedly) the second World War. The Germans, having failed to defeat Britain in battle, had sneakily constructed the EU to achieve, by other means, Hitler’s ambition to dominate Europe. They had lured poor gullible England into its trap.

“Brexit is negligible when compared to Putin’s war on Ukraine, but the deployment of this self-pitying version of the Second World War should have been a warning of how toxic this mentality could become. For Putin, too, is obsessed with the same grievance—Russia also did not get what it deserved from victory in the second World War. It too was robbed of the fruits of its triumph. At the heart of this self pity is entitlement to greatness. By triumphing over the Nazis, Britain and Russia earned the right to be great powers. How unjust that one lost its empire in the 1950s and the other in the 1990s.

“This grievance mongering requires a rewriting of history. In Putin’s case, though, much of this was already done for him. For even during the war, Stalin was shaping it as a crusade in defence of the Russian motherland...”

Poor Fintan. Poor, poor Fintan !!

Can self-defence be described as a “*crusade*”?

And what was it but self-defence when more than three million German, Austrian, Finnish, Rumanian, Italian, Croatian, Slovakian and Hungarian troops invaded the Soviet Union—and the Russian Army fought them off until it defeated them in Berlin?

Is it crossing the Russian Border in the course of this defensive action that made it a “*Crusade*”. Should Stalin have stopped at the Border of 1941, leaving a powerful German Army intact—an Army that had been retreating in good order?

It would possibly have been a good thing for Europe if he had done so. It would have left Fascist Europe intact to evolve out of itself. But calling off a war before destroying the force that set out to destroy you is not really the done thing.

And, besides that, the nightmare of the Western Allies was that Stalin would do just that—that he would make a separate peace with Germany, leaving Hitler free to deploy his main force against them.

They made the unconditional surrender of Germany their war aim, and pleaded with Stalin to do likewise.

Fascism had been fine until 1939. Winston Churchill had described it as the force that saved European civilisation from Communism. But, when Britain decided to make war on Germany, it conjured Fascism into the ultimate Evil (as Kaiserism had been in 1914), which must be destroyed. And the only force capable of destroying it was the force from which European civilisation had been saved in the 1920s and 1930s: Communism. A paradox!

Fintan tells us that Putin said “*Not a word... about the immense suffering of Soviet Jews*”. We have not seen his speech and cannot comment. But, to the best of our knowledge it was the Soviet Union that saved Jews in large numbers from German and Ukrainian nationalist forces in 1941 to be the core of the post-War Jewish population. And part of the complaint of Ukrainian nationalists about the Soviet system was the degree of Jewish participation in it.

**Brendan Clifford**

## What is a House?

A house has two components: the building; and the land which it occupies. Both elements feed into the price of the property.

This is often forgotten about when householders insure their property. It is not necessary to insure the full price of a house since in the event of a fire, while the value of the building component is destroyed, the land component remains intact.

If the price of a house only consisted of the building it would be quite easy to calculate it. The building component has the characteristics of a normal commodity. In Marxist terms the price is determined by the amount of socially-necessary Labour contained within it, adjusted to give an average rate of return on capital outlay.

So, if the demand for housing increased relative to other commodities in the society, labour would be diverted into the house building sector of the economy.

In general, supply and demand does not determine the price of a commodity: they only determine the allocation of resources. Ultimately, it is the amount of socially necessary labour that determines the price. But the very specific characteristics of land mean that the normal laws do not apply.

The price of the land component cannot be determined by its labour content, since there is none. For this reason Marx believed that land was not a commodity. It is a free gift of nature. The reason why land prices are not zero is that legal arrangements are made to grant property-owners the exclusive use of that land.

The owners of land (including homeowners) are sometimes called *land monopolists* because they are the exclusive owners of a portion of the planet. This type of ownership is different from owning, say, a sack of potatoes or items of clothing. The potatoes or clothing can be produced elsewhere, whereas the land is specific to a defined location. The potatoes or clothing are transformed in the process of consumption whereas land remains substantially the same.

Unlike the market for potatoes the supply of land remains constant. The only element that fluctuates is the demand.

The fact that supply is fixed and there is no labour contained within it means that the demand for land is a key determinant of price.

Demand is determined by such factors as population density, income and the rate of return that can be obtained from the purchase. The greater the population density, national income and rate of return the greater will be land prices.

So in a society living at a subsistence level land prices will be zero. It's only when a surplus is generated that property prices rise. In 'primitive' societies existing on a subsistence level land tends to be held in common.

But it is possible that two countries with a similar population density and national income might have different prices for housing. It is even possible for such variations to occur when building costs, labour costs and labour productivity are identical.

There are three reasons for the variations.

A country with low density dwellings will tend to have higher prices than countries with higher density dwellings. For example, it stands to reason that a country with a preponderance of apartment dwelling will use less land than a country with semi-detached or detached houses.

However, it must be admitted that in Ireland there was a rational basis for a large number of semi-detached and detached houses. Average household sizes tended to be much higher than their continental counterparts. So, even though we had low density housing, we had high density households. But, as household sizes have dropped in Ireland, a move towards higher density housing makes sense.

The second reason for variations in house prices results from variations in tax policies. Tax reliefs or State subsidies drive up prices whereas taxes on land and buildings reduce prices. This is because a house is an investment good. Like all investment goods the purchaser must consider the rate of return over the useful life of the asset when he is considering the price he is prepared to pay. Property taxes reduce that rate of return and therefore reduce the price.

A final reason for variations in house prices is State policy on ownership. A high proportion of social housing has the effect of reducing the general level of house prices by taking demand out of the market.

**John Martin**

## The Ukraine War for the World

The current war in Ukraine has now been formally recognised as a Western proxy war against Russia by no less than the current British Foreign Secretary, Elizabeth Truss. And there are strong indications in her statement of intent last week that it is only the start of the shape of things to come. She did this in a landmark speech heralded by the British Government's website as "*The return of geopolitics: Foreign Secretary's Mansion House speech at the Lord Mayor's 2022 Easter Banquet.*"

The British Foreign Secretary, taking full ownership of the war in Ukraine, stated her state's position in the clearest possible terms:

"The war in Ukraine is our war—it is everyone's war because Ukraine's victory is a strategic imperative for all of us. Heavy weapons, tanks, aeroplanes—digging deep into our inventories, ramping up production. We need to do all of this. We are doubling down. We will keep going further and faster to push Russia out of the whole of Ukraine..."

"Britain has always stood up to bullies. We have always been risk takers. So we are prepared to be bold, using our strength in security and diplomacy, our economic heft, and our will and agility to lead the way."

When the British Foreign Secretary attempts to spread responsibility and ownership of the Ukraine war to the rest of humanity by claiming "*it is everyone's war*" she is being disingenuous. In point of fact, less than 20 per cent of the world is in support of the West's war in Ukraine. The vast bulk of states and peoples in Asia, Africa and South America are not supportive of it, politically, militarily or economically.

Of the world's 195 countries, only 30 have complied with the US sanctions on Russia meaning around 165 countries have refused to join. Of the top 10 countries in PPP-GDP, five do not support the sanctions, including China (No. 1) and India (No. 3). Only in Western Europe and North America and a few outlying areas with US troops in occupation (Japan and S.Korea) are there Governments (and not necessarily peoples) willing to fuel the Ukraine conflict, militarily and economically as a "*strategic imperative*".

This small and declining Western minority, which fails to reproduce itself,

and requires large migrations from the rest of humanity to keep its societies going, regards itself as the moral conscience of the world. It contains the great Imperialist Powers which extirpated and plundered the rest of humanity for centuries, and more recently set about destroying the Muslim world. "*All of us*" and "*everyone*", in the British Foreign Secretary's words, actually means, to take a phrase from US identity politics, the "*white privileged*" minority of humanity.

Britain has apparently "*stood up to bullies*", in the words of the British Foreign Secretary. That is a view that will not be widely shared amongst the mass of humanity who have undergone the British experience. What Britain actually has done in its history has been to cut down to size potential rivals to its world dominance, in alliance with everyone and anyone who would ally with it. Twice in the last century it allied with the Devil, Russia—authoritarian Tsarist Russia and Stalinist Bolshevik Russia—to cut Germany down to size. For Britain, whether Germany was led by Kaiser Wilhelm or Herr Hitler was of little consequence, nor was the form of government in Russia.

Ironically, having recovered from two world war defeats, it is the US/UK war on Ukraine that may finally do for Germany, and perhaps the EU with it.

Britain also briefly thought about cutting the emerging US bully down to size in the early 20th Century but thought better of it, after requiring American help to survive its two bungled World Wars. In fighting two World Wars to cut down Germany to size, it lost its Empire and handed over its global predominance, and world mission, to the United States. From then onwards, Britain has adopted a supporting role in the reordering of the world.

It would not be unreasonable for the world to consider Britain the greatest of bullies in world history. Certainly Britain has fought wars against all but a dozen countries in the world during the last 300 or so years, before handing over the main bullying work to its Anglo-Saxon cousin across the Ocean.

The gullible, with their thoughts moulded by the Western media, still believe that this a Ukrainian war of resistance against Russian expansionism.



The British Foreign Secretary is, herself, a NATO-expansionist. She is looking forward to the day when NATO tackles, not only Russia, but China too. In her Mansion House speech she declared:

“We need a global NATO. By that I don’t mean extending the membership to those from other regions. I mean that NATO must have a global outlook, ready to tackle global threats.

We need to pre-empt threats in the Indo-Pacific, working with our allies like Japan and Australia to ensure the Pacific is protected. And we must ensure that democracies like Taiwan are able to defend themselves.

Countries must play by the rules. And that includes China. Beijing has not condemned Russian aggression or its war crimes... They are commenting on who should or shouldn’t be a member of NATO. And they are rapidly building a military capable of projecting power deep into areas of European strategic interest. But China is not impervious. By talking about the rise of China as inevitable we are doing China’s work for it. In fact, their rise isn’t inevitable. They will not continue to rise if they don’t play by the rules.

The fact is that most of the world does respect sovereignty. It is only a few pariahs and outliers that don’t.”

This seems to suggest that the UK is prepared to fight a world war over Taiwan if it does not get one over Ukraine. The British Foreign Secretary does not seem to understand that Taiwan is a break-away separatist piece of China that the Chinese Government is determined to reintegrate within it, as Zelensky declares his intention of doing with Crimea and Donbas.

If she is a supporter of existing sovereignty and territorial integrity, why is she not calling for Armenia to abandon any claims to Karabakh, a sovereign part of Azerbaijan territory, one might reasonably ask? After all, some of this territory only remains *de facto* beyond the Azerbaijan state due to a Russian presence. Why is Armenia not treated as a pariah state by the UK and US for not respecting sovereignty and international law, if this is now a universal principle?

The war on the ground in Ukraine is presently a Ukrainian/Russian War, with some features of a Ukrainian civil war within it. However, the individual states that make up NATO are waging this war, in conjunction with the Ukrainian Government, through every possible means — as though they were actually fighting it themselves — short of formal declaration of war and active participation by their military forces. The only thing they do not supply to the war is mainstream military forces, instead maintaining an arm’s

length, hands-free position that confines casualties to the Ukrainians.

But the British Foreign Secretary confirms that, for the US/UK at least, Ukraine is simply a battle within a wider geopolitical war for world predominance, with Russia the initial target and China the longer-term objective for cutting down. Is it likely that nuclear powers will allow themselves to be cut down?

The series of proxy wars that are envisaged by the British Foreign Secretary spell, not only disaster for people and states around the world who may be chosen to be part of the West’s expanding geopolitical war, but also for the British and European working classes who will bear the economic pain in supporting the heroic self-sacrifices of the catspaws.

The British Foreign Secretary has bought into the “*End of History*” narrative that I have mentioned in previous articles about Ukraine. She concluded her Address in the following way:

“Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, geopolitics is back. After the Cold War we all thought that peace, stability and prosperity would spread inexorably around the globe. We thought that we’d learned the lessons of history and that the march of progress would continue unchallenged. We were wrong. But this is no counsel of despair. In the face of rising aggression we do have the power to act, and we need to act now. We must be assertive. Aggressors are looking at what has happened in Ukraine. We need to make sure that they get the right message.”

This narrative asserts that, after the internal collapse of the Soviet Union and the entry of China into the global capitalist market, a new liberal world order was going to be established and reign for ever and ever, Amen. Humanity would forthwith exist in an American/Anglo liberal utopia in which life would be given meaning through globalised free market capitalism. Social living and traditional cultures would be whittled away by individualised relations and identity constructions so that humanity would be remade on American terms.

The first place in which this project broke down was when US power was frustrated in attempting to destroy and remake the Muslim world in its image. Despite the enormous destruction wrought by the US and its allies, the Muslim world proved impervious to remaking on American lines. It possessed long-standing and functional forms of living far more deep-rooted and valuable to its people than the transient fetishisms of Western capitalism.

The “*march of progress*”—US/UK

progress—was halted by popular resistance among humanity. So it seems that greater military power is to be applied by the West “*to make sure that they get the right message*” in future.

It is clear from all this, and from the actions and statements made by representatives from the US and UK Governments in recently, that continuous escalation is the intention of the West in Ukraine. The US Defence Secretary, Lloyd Austin, stated on 27th April that America will ensure that Russia is defeated in Ukraine. This goes with the British Foreign Secretary’s declaration that the reconquest of the Crimea by the Government in Kiev is a formal British War Aim.

In the UK the Armed Forces Minister James Heappey told *Thames Radio* that it would be entirely legitimate for British-supplied missiles to be launched deep into Russian territory if the Ukrainians saw fit. It would be understandable if the Kremlin made a special case of retaliating against UK targets in such an eventuality, given the British determination to be at the forefront of the War, while refusing to accept liability for its consequences for the rest of humanity.

A resolution (*The Kinzinger resolution*) has suddenly been placed before the US Congress, authorising the President to use the American military to “*assist in defending and restoring the territorial integrity of Ukraine*” in response to a Russian use of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons on Ukrainian soil. This resolution would give the President sole authority to determine whether such an event had actually taken place, without requiring any international investigation. This could only incentivise Ukrainian forces to stage such an incident in the hope of drawing the US into the conflict. A similar authorisation has given US Presidents legal clearance to attack more than a dozen countries since 9/11 — including Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Somalia and Yemen — without any formal declaration of war.

The US/UK policy on Ukraine seems to be aimed at preventing a negotiated settlement taking place, a determination that Russia does not come out of the war with anything that could be described as “*a victory*”, and in the meantime to supply weaponry to Ukraine for as long as it takes to bring about a “*Ukrainian victory*”.

The concessions that the Ukrainians were apparently willing to make at the Istanbul Talks, to conclude the war on their territory, are antithetical to the geopolitical objectives of Washington and

London. Prime Minister Johnson reportedly made it clear to Zelensky that the game, having been taken up by Ukraine, needs to be played out to the bitter end so that Russia is permanently disabled and could not act again. Nothing else is acceptable for Washington and London, who hold the purse strings of Ukraine, and can abandon the country tomorrow if Kiev displeases them.

Hence the enormous financial and military aid that has been promised in recent days to the Ukrainian Government, so they can “*fight to the last Ukrainian*” over the last inch of Ukraine. By April 28th a total of \$14.67 billion had been given or promised to Ukraine by the US alone (if approved by Congress). Congress has also passed the *Democracy-Defense Lend-Lease Act* to expedite aid to Ukraine. This contemplates the loan of the enormous sum of \$47 billion, or one third of Ukraine’s GDP. This is a financing of *total war*, fought by another state, in which direct US engagement is, for the moment at least, not on the table. It envisages a massive effort on Ukraine’s part to fight the West’s geopolitical war on Russia. This represents a truly great escalation of the conflict by Washington, supported by its cheerleader in London with Churchillian rhetoric, to inspire the Ukrainians to greater sacrifices. Its effect may be to provoke Russia into enhancing its limited Special Military Operation into a greater war which could in turn prepare the ground domestically in the West for full engagement.

Whatever the outcome, Zelensky is now a prisoner—an actor playing out a role within a script written in Washington, if you like. There can be no retreat, no surrender by Kiev. They must break the Russians or be broken by them.

The stakes are being dangerously raised by the West and there is sadly to be no escape from the tragedy in Ukraine. The only question is whether Washington has the will to see it through to the end itself, in the event of a Ukrainian collapse.

The Ukrainian Army ensconced itself in the cities at the outset of the war, intermingling with armed and unarmed civilians, daring the Russians to fight to take these urban fortresses. Washington’s plan for Ukraine was to produce the maximum amount of Russian casualties. It was repeated by the Western media that the Russians had failed, across the board, by failing to assault these cities. But all the time the Russians were pinning down these Ukrainian forces and denying them any mobility. Without mobility wars cannot be won. Whilst the more numerous

Ukrainians were pinned down, smaller Russian forces secured their flanks (east of Kharkov and west of Kherson) and got on with the business of carving a buffer state out of south and east Ukraine, across a 300 mile front. In the *glacis* in front of Donbas, Ukrainian forces are being systematically degraded and ground down in attritional warfare, primarily through artillery barrage, with increasing number of deaths and surrenders. Meanwhile, deep battle precision ballistic missiles are depleting the military support being sent by the West, which is largely defenceless against Russian aerospace operations.

In this way the Russians are demilitarising Ukraine on the Clausewitz first principle of defeating an enemy through the destruction of his army.

The Western decision to escalate the war through the unlimited provision of military supplies to the Ukrainians has left the Russians with practically no option but to partition the country and carve out a substantial buffer zone for future security. A negotiated settlement that might preserve the maximum territory of the

Ukrainian state, which was built by the Soviets, has been made impossible by Washington and London.

What will Washington do now, with its economic war misfiring, and its military support proving less effective as the war is fought in its decisive theatre?

The present writer had earlier thought that, whilst the US could afford to back down over its red lines on Ukraine and its proxy war, Russia—having chosen to fight for its national security—could not. Now, unfortunately it will be very difficult for Washington to wash its hands of its Ukrainian catspaw, having invested so much material and moral support in Kiev. Having declared the Ukraine conflict to be a war for democracy itself, it would be a great defeat for the US and the liberal world order at the hands of Russia if that crusade were seen to be lost. And that would never do! Or is it all bluff to keep the Ukrainians fighting to the end?

Let us hope we are not entering Armageddon time.

Pat Walsh

## Coincidences?

1956 was an eventful year. I was on strike at one of the biggest building sites in the City of London. We were a united group of Irish, Scots, Welsh and English workers, along with some Caribbean newly-arrived workers. The strike-leader was Brian Behan (brother of Brendan Behan the playwright then in vogue in London), an unskilled labourer, a magnificent orator, and a member of the EC of the CPGB.

The company manager had already been defeated when they proposed separate lavatories for the few black workers. Most of the management had worked in South Africa throughout WW2 in building power stations and industrial buildings. Now they were back in England full of South African apartheid notions, and were unhappy at the arrival of black workers to England, though they had been invited because of a skills shortage as Britain repaired the bomb damage from WW2.

But this strike was on the serious matter of a worker falling down a lift shaft and breaking his back and with the company denying any responsibility for health and safety. The scene was set of a united work force, though the few black workers had left to find other jobs, as some of them

had been frightened as newcomers about being highlighted in the argument over separate toilets. One said it was making trouble for them.

But, within a short time, black militants, who had fought for Trade Union values in their countries of origin, like Jamaica and what was then British Guiana, had arrived in Britain to bolster the British Trade Union movement.

It was on the picket line that a discussion came around to the incursion of Britain, France and Israel in Egypt. I was appalled that the English members approved of the invasion by their own country. Had they not also spoken out against the management idea of separate lavatories for the Caribbean workers? It was best to tone down the argument, as advised by Behan and the two English members of CPGB.

It was October, 1956, and Britain, France and Israel had invaded Egypt, after General Gamal Abdel Nasser, had, on Egypt’s behalf, nationalised the Suez Canal.

Not long after, on 4th November 1956, Soviet tanks rolled into Budapest after

discontent with rule by communism. It had been sparked by the Soviet Union and its de-Stalinisation, after the Nikita Khrushchev *coup*, and its uncertainty of what to do next.

This intervention, coming so quickly on the attack on Nasser's Egypt, just seemed too much of a coincidence, considering that Egypt was then an ally of the Soviet Union. The US was disturbed by this occurrence and was wondering where it would end. That's when Dwight D. Eisenhower, US President decided to intervene by threatening to damage the British financial system by selling the US Government's sterling bonds. That ended the tri-nation escapade.

The Soviet intervention in Hungary caused a split in the CPGB. To accept the Soviet intervention was to be a brutal Stalinist, even though it was carried out by the anti-Stalin Khrushchev. Some saw the intervention as an attempt to keep communism going, for it needed time to develop. These were the long-term thinkers who wanted the entire world to go that way and create a new civilisation. Communism to them was the only tool available to change the world around and eradicate the suffering of the Third World and to destroy the First World that was responsible.

Peter Fryer, a correspondent for the *Daily Worker*, was sent to Hungary to report on what was happening. He came back traumatised and condemning Soviet intervention. Hardier elements in the CPGB saw him as a milk-sop, who should have been kept in England to continue his academic exercise with the Young Communist League as a lecturer. He was sacked and left to take up his social democratic ideas somewhere else.

Brian Behan, who was living in near poverty because of his militant life in the Trade Union movement, was having marital problems because of his activities and saw the Hungarian situation as a way out of it all. He gave his story to the tabloids about his trip to Moscow, being in the presence of Stalin, and his feeling of being duped by the CPGB. He became a Trotskyite, joined their small organisations, which constantly split, and rode into the Thatcher era saying he would marry her if he were free.

The downward spiral continued, with him on daytime TV speaking against marriage, while his new wife sat beside him. Living in Brighton he became known as Brendan Behan's brother and lost his identity as one of the greatest Trade Union

organisers, and orator, in the UK, with MI5 on his trail.

The Communist Parties of the West—and their post-Hungary attitudes of morphing communism into social democratic ideas—probably brought the erosion that in the end affected world communism and helped end the Soviet Union.

Then came what was called the Cuban Missile Crisis, a 13-day standoff against the US in October 1962. In the same month of October, China struck at India over a disputed Himalayan border. There had been a series of skirmishes between the two countries after problems in Tibet with its religious orders. India had granted asylum

to the Dalai Lama. China swept quickly into India, capturing thousands of Indian troops. They forced high-caste officers to eat with the lower castes.

But soon afterwards China withdrew from India, when the US met with the Soviet Union and agreed that missiles be withdrawn from Cuba. The *quid pro quo*, which was little publicised at the time, was that US missiles on the Soviet-Turkish border would be withdrawn.

Was it a coincidence that timing of these interventions by Russia and China respectively, helped to relieve the pressure on Nasser's Egypt on the one hand and on Cuba on the other?

**Wilson John Haire. 24.5.22**

## Ukraine:

### ***Some facts for a Belligerent COVEney***

The Irish Foreign Minister wants to replace the Irish Defence Force with a war-making Army, and he wants to abolish the United Nations Security Council in order to facilitate war-making.

The *Irish Examiner* headline of 16th April sums up his position, *Coveney Urges Changes To Triple Lock On Military Deployment*. (The *Triple Lock* means that Irish Forces cannot be sent to war without: a Government decision; a Dail majority; and a UN Resolution.)

There is nothing in the rules of the United Nations, or any other international body, to prevent the Defence Force of a state from defending the state if it is attacked. Coveney concedes that—

"There hasn't been a case where we have wanted to send troops where the triple lock has prevented it. But, having said that, there is, theoretically, a problem of a veto being used at the Security Council and stopping us from sending troops".

The Security Council Veto does not apply to defence. It is unimaginable that an attempt should be made by any member of the Security Council to prevent an Irish Government from sending troops to the borders of the state in order to defend it. The UN recognises an absolute right of defence.

The Veto is the essential thing in the structure of the United Nations. Without the Veto there could have been no United Nations.

The United Nations was constructed across the most profound antagonism that has ever existed in the world. It was built across a fault line.

In 1939 Britain decided to start a second War in Europe over the trivial issue of Danzig. It declared war on Germany but did not wage war.

Germany responded to the Declaration of War by Britain and France, defeated the British and French Armies that were drawn upon its borders and became a Great Power.

Britain, safe behind its world-dominating Navy, refused to negotiate a settlement of the War it had declared.

#### **THE VETO: THE CORE OF THE UN**

Germany invaded Russia, expecting a quick victory—after which Britain would have to make a settlement. But the Russian Army did not buckle as the British and French Armies had done. Russia defeated Germany and became a World Power. But for the intervention of the USA, the Russian defeat of Germany would have led to the occupation of the whole of Germany and made France a Soviet sphere of influence. The American intervention met the Russian Armies in Berlin—and Western Europe became an American sphere of influence, while Eastern Europe fell to the Eastern victor.

Russia and America were accidental Allies for a moment, but were essential enemies. And in 1945 the world was divided between them.

They agreed to the establishment of the United Nations as a world structure, but on the condition that both of them should be excluded from its authority and that it could not be used by either of them as moral cover for making war on the other.

A General Assembly was set up alongside the Security Council. All states are formally equals in the Assembly but it does not command military power. It can adopt resolutions democratically but they are without effect. Only once has the Security Council conferred on it actual authority to decide affairs in the world. That was in 1948, when Britain wanted to wash its hands of the mess it had caused in the Middle East.

The issue was what to do with the Jews who had survived the 1939 German occupation of Poland and the Ukraine (thanks to Russia, which had transported hundreds of thousands of them Eastward before the German advance). The General Assembly decided to award the Jews a piece of Palestine in compensation for the atrocity committed against them in Europe. The Zionist Organisation accepted that award, ethnically-cleansed its bit of Palestinians, and seized a further tract of territory populated by Arabs beyond what was allocated to them by the UN. The General Assembly made no attempt to police the implementation of its award. It unleashed mayhem, and left it at that.

#### THE UKRAINE AS A STATE

It seems to have been a visit to the Ukraine that inspired Foreign Minister Coveney with these ideas. His article about his visit has the title: *“There is still beauty in Ukraine, including in the brave people there”*.

It must be the *“terrible beauty”* that Yeats said he saw in 1916! The beauty of a group of idealists taking their ideals in earnest and putting them to the test of war.

But what exactly is the Ukrainian nationalist ideal?

It is not national independence of Russia. It became independent of Russia without having to fight for it. It was Russia that created it as a state, and thirty years ago Russia conferred independence on the Ukrainian state that it had created.

Russia’s only demand on it was that it should not make itself the base for United States operations against it. But Ukraine rejected that demand, asserting that it was a sovereign state with the right to make whatever military alliances it pleased, and to bring American military power right up against the borders of Russia if it pleased. Russia begged to differ.

One can see that the independent Ukrainian state constructed by Russian statecraft might not have known quite what to do with itself when Russia cut it adrift thirty years ago.

It existed but it did not know why. The Irish state today is, in its official existence, very much like that. It had brought itself into existence by a combination of ballot and bullet in conflict with the greatest Empire in the world, but had somehow lost all sense of the purpose that had driven it in that conflict. Only a year ago the Foreign Minister was engaged in an attempt to lose the distinction between oppressor and oppressed in the Irish War of Independence by commemorating the Irish and British forces together as if they had been allied against some common enemy. And the force which it was less eager to commemorate was not the Black and Tans.

That attempt has been given up, but only for the moment I assume.

The Ukraine, however, had nothing at all to commemorate. It had no war of independence. It existed without a history, and therefore without much sense of a present. Its political life consisted of apparently meaningless *“colour revolutions”* centred on personalities. It drifted, and its inherited economy declined.

But a state—certainly a big state like the Ukraine—must find something to do with itself, and have some sense of itself as a historical existence.

#### THE DEFERRED WORLD WAR

What it decided to do was make itself available to the United States for a proxy conflict with Russia which would end the 1945 compromise on which the United Nations was founded.

General Patton had been eager to have a go in 1945. But it would have been ideologically problematic to go straight ahead and make war on Russia just after Russia was seen as having saved *civilisation* from being destroyed by German barbarism—and would also have been risky. But now an essentially purposeless Ukraine has provided the United States with the opportunity of fighting the deferred war of 1945 against Russia for unchallenged dominance of the world, but fighting it as a proxy war.

#### THE SOURCE OF UKRAINIAN NATIONALISM

A nation-state must find some national purpose. When Russia dismantled the Soviet Union, it was itself going through a phase of post-nationalism—it was living

in wonderland. It seems to have regarded the Ukraine as a second Russia against which no precautions need to be taken. It took no account of either strategic or ethnic factors—and there was at the time little appearance of ethnic or linguistic difference between Ukraine and Russia.

The Ukraine was bland. The Ukrainian nationalism, which had twice in the first half of the 20th century tried and failed to establish a Ukrainian State, seemed to have died away.

But nationalisms do not die easily. And it is not surprising that the Ukraine, in search of meaning for itself, remembered Petliura and Bandera.

Simon Petliura, around 1919, had a powerful vision of the Ukraine as a socialist nation-state and attempted to put it into effect. Bandera revived that vision around 1941.

Both of them were assassinated in exile after their nationalist efforts had failed. And both were assassinated on the ground that they were exterminators of Jews.

There is no doubt that Ukrainian nationalism was actively anti-Semitic on both occasions. All that is questionable is how much Petliura and Bandera personally encouraged it.

It seems that Petliura at least discouraged it, but had no effective control over the populace of the Ukrainian Peoples’ Republic which he set up.

He seems to have been an intellectual caught by a vision, rather like Patrick Pearse, with the difference that he had to govern the Republic he proclaimed, and that the nation on whose behalf he purported to act had a very doubtful existence.

Here is the opening paragraph of a booklet about him by V. Koroliv, issued in English translation, by the Ukrainian Editorial Company, based in Kiev and Prague in June 1919: *Simon Petliura: Ukrainian Chief and Popular Hero*:

“There are moments in the life of every nation when the collective will of the entire human mass seems to be turned towards some great aspiration: when the whole body of the people becomes saturated with one idea, when all his spiritual power is strained to the utmost, his soul being full of ecstasy bordering on fanaticism. These glorious epoch[s] of national regeneration are at the same time the birth ages of great heroes. Unfortunate would be the nation unable to give life to such a high guide whose heart is beating in harmony with her own. Such a nation is like a herd without shepherd, like a chaotic element uncontrolled by reason. And since nothing but cool reason works

the destroying forces of element into something of positive value, the nation in such conditions would not be able to achieve her enfranchisement.

"The history of the Ukraine contains not a few brilliant pages devoted to national heroes, presenting, each of them, the very essence of the national ideal of a certain epoch. The Hitman Bugdan Chmelnytzky, Ivan Syrko, Petra Doroshenko and others have been true popular heroes, created by national vital forces and born to be leaders. Indeed, they led the whole nation, they drew her towards a high goal.

"Yet these are all names of a better age when the earth swarmed with fairy knights and paladins sans peur et sans raproche. Could we possibly equal it, we feeble heirs of past fame? Could we have been chosen by fate for seeing eye to eye such regenerated legend. Did we ever dream of witnessing such giant deeds? Our life has been so quiet, so well regulated in the monotony of everyday work that we should but marvel and respectfully bend our heads at the sight of great men, creators of things.

"Life, however, chose to give us, children of the XXth century, a reproduction of the past. The great war, the prodigious proceedings we did experience brought about real heroes—men of titanic moral power...

"The most powerful individuality between such guides is our actual chief Simon Petliura, known among country folk and soldiers as their "Batka" (that means "father")..."

#### RUSSIA AND NATIONALISM

But Petliura did not at first support separation from Russia. At a Congress of the newly organised Army he adopted a cautious, long-term approach comparable with Kerensky's and advocated a federal relationship with Russia.

But—

"the Russian intellectuals having lost the organic tie with the people-mass—got out of balance and in their panical fear of the anarchical mob they let fall the reins from their hands. And as they were standing on the cross-road the flood of human masses which had been let loose came swelling over them..."

"Why is it so? We never doubted that the essential reason lies in the lack of nationally minded Russian leaders on the whole surface of Russia... The Russian leading men have been, so to speak, parvenues. They felt equally at home in every town in their immense fatherland: would it be Moscow or Petrograd, Kiev or Tiflis, Riga or Tashkent. They were the same everywhere. As to the natives they did not know them, having no immediate contact whatever with the folk. Under the name of 'natives' Russian politicians understood the entire population of the Russian state while they treated every single individuals out of the people

as "maujiks" that, naturally, had to be taken care of and educated "to grow up to the level" by means of evolutionary progress."

The absence of nationalist feeling in Russian society was something I had come across before. In the era of the French Revolution when nationalism was the order of the day, a Moscow intellectual, whose name I have forgotten, published a book suggesting that Russia was not a nation. There was an outcry against him. There was talk of treason. Fortunately the writer was a friend of the Tsar and the Tsar said his friend must have been momentarily out of his mind when he wrote that book and advised him to take a rest in the country.

But Moscow understood itself to be a civilisation rather than a nation. It was the third Rome, and Rome certainly had not been a nation. Rome was perhaps a source of nations in its engagement with the barbarians who destroyed it and then ruled in its name, preserving it as a ghostly name: the Holy Roman Empire.

Koroliv continues:

"Now the other nations living on the territory of ex-Russia had each of them a class of educated men, an intellectual set, issued from the very source of the nation. Therefore with the outbreak of the revolution the national intellectual classes of the nations forming Russia sought the head of their respective people which did understand to respect their natural leaders. This was not the case with the Russian leaders. For the great Russian people did not acknowledge his leaders to be his very blood and bone and definitively gave them up. So it came to pass that at the head of the Russian people we beheld either men foreign by birth as Trotzky—Bronstein or Russian only by name, internationalists as Lenin. They lead its unhappy people on the terrible road that accomplished the disaster of Russia and is menacing all Europe and, possibly, all the world with unexperienced terrors.

"Meanwhile the Ukrainian leaders (as likewise other national groups) being the creation of general national *milieu*, and having preserved a deep bond with the masses was executing the collective will of the nation. The deepest impulse out of the national soul served to the Ukrainian upper class as a leading principle. That is the reason why in Ukraine the leading men do not lose their posts, do not leave the nation err dangerously about as a lost sheep. The Ukrainian intellectual class itself is in the process of evolution in connection with the general national movement..."

Kerenskyian socialism tried to continue the Tsarist war on Germany as a national war, without disrupting the Russian social

structure. It was swept aside by Lenin's movement—which ended Russia's participation in the War, destroyed what there was of a ruling class, and established a regime of state whose sphere of action was the world. Petliura became a national separatist, committing himself to "the folk". But he was not in fact a representative figure of the folk. Whatever his origins, he had become a member of the Russian *intelligentsia*. When he committed himself to separatist Ukrainian nationalism, he took an even greater leap in the dark than Lenin did. It does not seem that there was any groundwork of Ukrainian nationalist development for Petliura to act on. Lenin had levers by means of which he could act. Petliura depended on spontaneous action by "the folk", and what "the folk" did could not meet with his approval.

Pearse, at the founding of the Volunteers, described the Irish people throughout the 19th century as having been a mob desperately trying to realise itself as a nation. The Irish had certainly been reduced to something like a mob by the century of Penal Laws but, when the Ascendancy Parliament was abolished, they were easily assembled into a purposeful mass for a realisable political purpose by O'Connell, and were a coherent national force by Pearse's time.

In the Ukraine in 1919, however, the herd and the shepherd just did not belong together. The herd that seemed to follow Petliura took little heed of him—And it was in any case just one amongst many herds. There were three local armies in conflict with each other, and then a fourth Army appeared, an Army sent by Britain and France to restore the Tsarist State.

#### THE PROSKUROV POGROM

A couple of months before this booklet about Petliura was published, the great Proskurov Pogrom happened. It was one of many pogroms that happened after the fall of the Tsarist State and the establishment of the Ukrainian People's Republic, but it has been the most noticed of them.

Proskurov was a village—a town by Irish standards—in the Jewish Pale of Settlement, a huge area where Jews lived almost a normal social life.

A book by Abraham Rechtman of Proskurov has been published recently: *The Lost World Of Russia's Jews: Ethnography And Folklore Of The Pale Of Settlement*. (For "Russia's Jews" read "Ukraine's Jews".)

In 1914 Rechtman was engaged in a survey of Jewish life in the Pale, on behalf of the *Jewish Ethnographic Expedition* from St. Petersburg, when he was

arrested on suspicion of being a German spy. Who else but a German spy would be going around a frontier area in wartime taking photos and acquiring information? He was released but the Expedition was cut short. His Report of the Expedition received little notice, possibly because it was written in Yiddish, the actual language of Jewish life in the main region of Jewish society—which Zionism suppressed and replaced with Hebrew.

Rechtman got the Yiddish version published in Argentina in the 1950s. An English version was published by Indiana University last year, with an Introduction by Nathaniel Deutsch in which the 1919 Pogrom is described.

Proskurov, in Podolia, “*the cradle of the Hasidic movement*”, had a population in 1900 of just under 14,000, of which 11,000 were Jews:

“On February 15, 1919, soldiers in Simon Petlyura’s army under the command of the Heterman Ivan Samosenko entered Praskurov. While a military band played, the soldiers cried out ‘Kill the Jews and Save the Ukraine’ and began to slaughter, maim and rape the town’s Jewish residents, employing bayonets and lances in order to conserve ammunition. More than fifteen hundred Jews (some estimates exceeded four thousand) were murdered and many others were injured in a pogrom that became emblematic of the tidal wave of violence that swamped Jewish communities in the borderland regions of the former Russian Empire...”

In the notorious Kishinev Pogrom of 1903, 49 Jews had been killed.

Petliura, in exile in France, was assassinated in 1927 by a Jew, Symon Schwartzbard. Schwartzbard’s defence was an indictment of Petliura as a killer of Jews. Petliura was found guilty.

#### JABOTINSKI & PETLIURA

I know of only one modern—post-Soviet—Ukrainian publication about Petliura in English translation, *Symon Petliura And The Jewry* by Professor Volodymyr Serhiychuk, of the Kyiv National Taron Shevchenko University, published in Kiev in 2000.

The Professor does not deny that the establishment of the Ukrainian nationalist People’s Republic was accompanied by widespread killing of Jews. Indeed he explains why that should have been the case. But he claims that Petliura had no personal responsibility for it. And he quotes an article in defence of Petliura, which appeared when he was assassinated and the French Court justified the assassination, written by Zhabotinsky—whom I take to be the revisionist Zionist Jabotinsky, who insisted in the 1920s that a Jewish

State could be established in Palestine only through colonial conquest and the subjugation of the native population.

Jabotinsky said he had known Petliura well and had campaigned with him for progressive causes and therefore he knew that he was not an anti-Semite. A year later, however, Jabotinsky, under Jewish pressure, agreed that Petliura had to be found guilty of the purges of the Jewish population by the forces of the People’s Republic, as he was Head of its Government.

There was an abstract, theoretical affinity between the socialist pioneers of nationalism. As socialists they stood for nationalism against the over-riding of nationalist development by trans-national socialism. They approved of each other in principle against the internationalism of the Bolsheviks, even though in practice they were bound to come into conflict with each other, as nationalism is not internationalistic.

Petliura, the Ukrainian national-socialist, went into alliance with Pilsudski, the Polish national-socialist, in his war against Lenin—the international socialist. Pilsudski won, but the effect of his victory was to extend the Polish State into the Western Ukraine—where Polish influence had been locally dominant in the Tsarist Empire.

#### NATIONAL-SOCIALISM

National-socialism was far from being peculiar to Germany. It was common to most of Europe—as remade by the Versailles Conference—and it had a strong presence even in Jewish politics. The Empires in which the Jews had a specialised place were broken up. If they could not hold that place in the multitude of nation-states created by Versailles, then they would have to make other arrangements.

The difference with German national socialism was that Germany was a powerful nation-state when the British, French and Tsarist Empires, along with the American Republic, made war on it; plundered it after the War; and deliberately humiliated it and subjected it to disabling restrictions. Having been treated like that, it needed to be kept down. France, which had borne the main cost of defeating it, wanted to break it up into three or four states. Britain would not allow that. It insisted on maintaining the unity of the German state as a counter-weight to France, and then it enabled Hitler to break all the Versailles restriction and directed him eastwards towards the Bolshevik enemy. It made him the hegemonic power in Eastern Europe in 1938. Its sudden

decision in March 1939 to make war on him has never been explained—except in *kindergarten* terms.

#### BABI YAR

What Germany did in the Ukraine, when it returned in 1941, was not different in kind from what had been done by Ukrainian national-socialism in 1919-20. Jews and Bolsheviks—which were taken to be two names for the same thing—were dealt with. The Ukrainian nationalists co-operated. But the Germans would not agree to a restoration of the Ukrainian nationalist State which had been destroyed by the Bolsheviks. Petliura’s successor, Stepan Bandera, was therefore detained.

But the Germans in Kiev in 1941 did not find themselves in a socially-hostile environment. A Ukrainian military force fought with the Germans against Russia, even though the formation of a Ukrainian Government was not allowed.

Jews, Bolsheviks, and some others were rounded up, killed and thrown into a ravine called *Babi Yar* in the neighbourhood of Kiev. One of the books written about this is by a Patrick Dempsey, who includes some *Einsatz-gruppe* Reports on how the work was going.

*Report of October 7th, 1941.* (The number of Jews in Kiev said to be about 300,000).

“The population cooperate very readily by furnishing information on explosives or secret membership in the NKVD, the Party and the Red Army. Unlike the first days, one could note that information was 90% correct. The reason for this is that the city inhabitants are less frightened than is the rural population, since they do not fear the possibility of the return of the Bolsheviks” (Dempsey, *Babi Yar*, p165).

“The population was extremely infuriated against the Jews because of their preferential economical status under Soviet rule. It could also be proved that the Jews had participated in arson. The population expected adequate reprisals from the Germans. For this purpose, in agreement with the city military command, all the Jews of Kiev were ordered to appear at a certain place on Monday September 29, by 6 o’clock. The order was publicised by posters all over the town by members of the newly organised Ukrainian militia. At the same time, information was passed that all the Jews in Kiev would be moved to another place...”

“The population agreed with the plan to move the Jews to another place. That they were actually liquidated has hardly been made known. However, according to the experience gained so far, this would not meet with any opposition...” (p166).

According to Dempsey:

“On Friday July 25th [1941] the

aptly called Perliura Days commenced a pogrom in Lvov, which saw a murderous reign of terror waged against Lvov's Jews... At Lvov, at Vilna, at Vinnitsa, and then at Kiev a line has been drawn by which humankind now knows the degeneracy of man..." (p67).

I assume that the "arson" mentioned above was the destruction of a complex of buildings that was the heart of Kiev—its Piccadilly, Leicester Square and Shaftesbury Avenue. Anatoli Kuznetsov in his *Babi Yar* (published in censored form in the Soviet Union and later—as written—in the West) says, disapprovingly, that the Red Army networked the complex with explosives as they were about to leave, and later set off the explosives as the city was settling down under German rule, provoking reprisals, and spoiling the harmony of the scene.

Kuznetsov describes how German re-occupation had been expected and how his parents had different opinions about it, one of them looking forward to it and the other being apprehensive about it, while he himself, experiencing the event, concluded that "...in this world there is neither brains, nor goodness, nor good sense, but only brute force... The world was just one big Babi Yar. And there two great forces had come up against each other and were striking against each other like hammer and anvil, and the wretched people were in between, with no way out" (*Babi Yar*, 1972 edition, p204).

How did these two fundamentalist forces erupt out of 19th century European civilisation, and come to dominate world affairs by their conflict in the mid-20th century?

The only explanation I can find is that Britain, by entering the European War without sufficient reason in August 1914, and fighting it as a Total War, a war against Evil, a People's War (so it was described at the time), a war of extinction, destroyed European civilisation and set its elements loose, and then manipulated them ham-fistedly. And Europe has never been itself since.

The outstanding fact about the Ukraine in that period is that its large Jewish population disappeared, that Ukrainian nationalists cooperated actively with the Germans though denied statehood, and that the Bolsheviks broke German power and restored the Ukraine as a stable Republic within the Soviet system—bearing out Edmund Burke's opinion that the basic right—in the sense of the basic need—of a people is to be governed with a reliable degree of regularity.

The present trouble began when the Ukraine—through no effort of its own—was made an independent state by Russian decision, and did not quite know what to do with itself until the United States took it in hand as a means of concluding the conflict with Russia which it drew back from in 1945.

When independent Ukraine looked for something in its own history to mould itself on, what was there but Petliura and Bandera.

Bandera was assassinated in West Germany by a Jew in 1959. The defence was the same as in the Petliura case, but the country was different and so was the Spirit of the Age. A Cold War verdict was brought in: the assassination of Bandera as a Pogromist was denounced as a murder committed by Moscow.

Ukrainian nationalism seemed to appear from nowhere when the Russian State crumbled in 1917. It was a national-socialist development of Russian Social-Democracy and was anti-Semitic in fact, though not by declaration. It was an incongruous ideal, which failed utterly to dominate the Ukrainian situation by governing it.

It revived in 1941 in alliance with Germany, and was suppressed again by Bolshevism. And, fourteen years after Ukraine was made an independent state by Moscow, its slogans and symbols appeared again in the anti-Government demonstrations in Kiev.

In 2014 an elected Government negotiated trade deals with the EU for its agricultural goods, and with Russia for its industrial goods. The EU objected. It wanted the Ukraine within its sphere and cut off from Russia.

The EU Parliament, of which our own Pat Cox was a prominent member, made noises. Anti-Russian street politics erupted (or should we say *were stoked up?*) in Kiev. The EU got worried about breaking Parliamentary forms. It tried to calm the situation and get the elected President, Yanukovic, ousted at the next election. Washington, which understood the dynamics of such things, said "*Fuck the EU*", and drove on the street-politics to the point of a *coup d'etat* and the assault on the Russian minority.

#### EUROPE REJECTS COMPROMISE: MAYDAY SQUARE

Europe, having been fascist and anti-Semitic, and having been put on a different footing (with the same population) by outside forces in 1945, was working hard at *being good*, and was uneasy about

phenomena which reminded it of what it had been so recently, and which it had not rejected by its own efforts. But Washington had no such concerns. The state it governed had its origins in a form of British religious fanaticism. It was constructed by means of multiple genocides—real genocides, not mere massacres. President Wilson, at the end of the Great War for Democracy and Civilisation, praised the Ku Klux Klan for saving the Union in the South at the end of the Civil War and many US citizens remain of that opinion. And an effective Anti-Semitism was maintained in many areas without the need for legislation.

These things may now be seen as deplorable but they were the case, and if they had not been the case the USA would not be anything like it is.

Many states had miscegenation laws until recently: I don't know if any still have them. But I know that, when the Nazi movement was being forged, mainstream US publications were asserting that, if race-mixing with the natives had not been prevented, the USA would be a mess like Latin America was.

The USA lives out of its own experience. It is in that respect the only independent country in its Free World. And, out of its own experience, it could have seen nothing problematic in the features of actual Ukrainian nationalism that make most Europeans feel queasy.

Europe, to use Koroliv's description of the Russian intelligentsia, is a *parvenu* phenomenon. It is in basic matters a kind of Toy-Town, set up by the US after 1945—the first instalment of an universal Disneyland.

And now Ireland wants to be part of it. It owes no historical debt to either Europe or the USA. It brought itself into existence, against Imperial opposition, through its own efforts, entirely without American or European support. It was nobody's catspaw or proxy. It had its Fascist movement in the 1930s, led by eminent Treatyite academics and politicians, but the system of Parliamentary party-politics was upheld by the Anti-Treaty party, relying in the main on the small farmers. And then it refused to take part in Britain's 2nd World War—the only English-speaking democracy to do so.

But now it is behaving just like a European country that had been Fascist and had been defeated in the War, and must make amends forever after.

That World War, entirely of England's making, was unnecessary, purposeless, and counter-productive from England's

viewpoint. But England has a hankering for war which must be indulged. It has now declared war aims for the Ukrainian State which require the destruction of the Russian State.

In 1939 it provoked a German/Polish War, and expanded it into a World War,—in which the Russian State, in the course of defending itself, had to fight its way into Central Europe—a fact that was noticed in Ireland at the time, and was not considered a good thing. And the Ukraine is clearly not of the opinion that the defeat of Germany by Russia was a good thing.

Russia was attacked by Fascist Europe in 1941: Finland, Germany, Hungary, Rumania, Italy.

The Baltic countries were occupied by Russia as a defensive action against Germany in 1940 when, Britain—having taken its army off the French battlefield—was intent on “*spreading the war*”, so that others would fight it. The only substantial ‘Other’ in prospect being Russia.

In 1941 the Baltic countries were lib-

erated by Germany and were content to settle down in the New Order. But they were subjugated again when Germany was defeated.

It is reported that the Lithuanian Government has made it a crime to celebrate the anniversary of the World War—the defeat of Germany and its allies by Russia. Could it be that this signifies the end of simulated experience in Europe, an end of humbug, and an admission that the overthrow of the Fascist order by Russia was experienced as a defeat, rather than a liberation?

The Germans were not the only people who fought against liberation by Russia to the bitter end: so did the Ukrainian nationalists.

The EU may share Henry Ford’s opinion that *history is bunk*, and that the best thing to do with it is to make up fairy stories about it. But in the long run facts matter: and facts are beginning to matter very much for Europe just now.

**Brendan Clifford**

[www.historyireland.com/category/letters-extra/](http://www.historyireland.com/category/letters-extra/). We didn’t have room for it here.”

*Joseph E.A. Connell Response:*

Sir—In his letter, Mr Lane indicates that I wrote in the November/December 2021 issue of History Ireland:

‘Later de Valera told the Dáil “now I would like everybody clearly to understand that the plenipotentiaries went over to negotiate a Treaty, that they could differ from the Cabinet if they wanted to, and that in anything of consequence they could take their decision against the decision of the Cabinet”.’

Mr Lane continues, ‘The sentence was quoted in T. Ryle Dwyer’s *De Valera*, the man and the myths (Poolbeg Press, 1992), but it is a truncated sentence from de Valera, who had concluded “but of course they would know the consequences”. This omission changes the implied meaning completely, as it clearly indicates that de Valera meant that the plenipotentiaries could take decisions against decisions of the Cabinet but that they should not do so because of the consequences’. In addition to the sentence in Mr Dwyer’s book, Michael Hopkinson (*Green against green*, p. 25) indicates that ‘At the start of the Dáil Treaty debates, de Valera admitted that the plenipotentiaries had not exceeded their powers by signing the Treaty without consulting Dublin first’.

I do not know Mr Dwyer’s intent, nor that of Mr Hopkinson, but I do not think the omitted words ‘changes the implied meaning completely’ of the sentence. It would never be my intent to ‘truncate a quotation’ in order to change its meaning, nor to assert an unwarranted position. I would suggest that the five men who were appointed plenipotentiaries clearly knew the consequences of any negotiation in which they could be involved, and those consequences that would result from their negotiations, even if they differed from de Valera’s conflicting notices to them or his wishes, and that they were prepared to accept those ‘consequences’. No one would have undertaken the task without realising the gravity of all of their actions, and their results, as delegates. I further suggest that the real question is that of the plenipotentiary status of the delegates, as opposed to the instructions later given by de Valera.

To present the case fully, I believe a review of the sequence of the appointment is necessary. On 7 October 1921, Letters were issued to the delegates.

**‘TO ALL WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME, GREETING:**

In virtue of the authority vested in me by Dáil hÉireann, I hereby appoint

Arthur Griffith, TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Chairm.

Michael Collins, TD, Minister for Finance

## A correspondence in History Ireland on de Valera and the plenipotentiaries

To: The Editor  
History Ireland  
04/12/2021

Dear Editor,

Joseph E.A. Connell Jr. writes in the November/December issue of History Ireland:

“Later de Valera told the Dáil, ‘now I would like everybody clearly to understand that the plenipotentiaries went over to negotiate a Treaty, that they could differ from the Cabinet if they wanted to, and that in anything of consequence they could take their decision against the decision of the Cabinet.’”

This is taken from T. Ryle Dwyer’s *De Valera, the Man and the Myths*, but it is a truncated sentence from de Valera, who had concluded “*but of course they would know the consequence*” (Dáil Éireann, 14 Dec. 1921, Private session.)

This omission changes the implied meaning completely as it clearly indicates that de Valera meant the plenipotentiaries could take decisions against decisions of the Cabinet but they should not do so because of the consequences.

The consequences obviously being that it was a clear breach of their Cabinet instructions of 7 October. Those instructions were

that as plenipotentiaries they could negotiate any document they deemed adequate, but not sign anything until so agreed and instructed by cabinet. Which of course is exactly what they didn’t do, a breach they later justified on the basis of a British threat of unleashing “immediate and terrible war”.

Those instructions sought to maintain Cabinet unity at all costs and the decision by the plenipotentiaries to act independently of the Cabinet broke that instruction and inevitably maximised Cabinet divisions, which was the crucial fact that led to the débâcle that followed.

(Ryle Dwyer distorted the historical record on a crucial point and ensured that his book was very appropriately named as a result of his own myth-creating about de Valera.

This particular myth should not be left stand by Joseph Connell or History Ireland.)

Yours sincerely

**Jack Lane**

*Aubane Historical Society*

Published in *History Ireland*, March-April 2022, with sentences in brackets omitted.

*Note added by the Editor of History Ireland:*

“For Joseph E.A. Connell Jr’s response, go to ‘Letters Extra’ on our website, <https://>



Robert C. Barton, TD, Minister for Economic Affairs

Edmund J. Duggan, TD

George Gavan-Duffy, TD

As Envoys Plenipotentiary from the Elected Government of the REPUBLIC OF IRELAND to negotiate and conclude on behalf of Ireland with the representatives of his Britannic Majesty, GEORGE V, a Treaty or Treaties of Settlement, Association, and Accommodation between Ireland and the community of nations known as the British Commonwealth.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I hereunto subscribe my name as President.

[signed] Eamon de Valera

Done in the City of Dublin this 7th day of October in the year of our Lord 1921 in five identical originals.'

Those Letters were issued to the delegates, though there was never a formal presentation of the Letters to the British.

While de Valera was not prepared to lead the delegation in London, this did not stop his attempt to direct events from Dublin. Accordingly, he drew up the following document of instructions that he circulated to the plenipotentiaries:

'(1) The Plenipotentiaries have full powers as defined in their credentials.

(2) It is understood before decisions are finally reached on a main question, that a dispatch notifying the intention to make these decisions will be sent to members of the Cabinet in Dublin, and that a reply will be awaited by the Plenipotentiaries before final decision is made.

(3) It is also understood that the complete text of the draft treaty about to be signed will be similarly submitted to Dublin and a reply awaited.

(4) In case of a break the text of final proposals from our side will be similarly submitted.

(5) It is understood that the Cabinet in Dublin will be kept regularly informed of the progress of the negotiations.'

Those 'instructions' were never made public. Consequently, the British delegation always dealt with the Irish negotiators as 'plenipotentiaries'.

De Valera clearly intended that these instructions, particularly clauses 2 and 3, would enable him to veto any draft document that he considered unacceptable. It is also accepted that these 'instructions' were formulated to placate Cathal Brugha and Austin Stack, who were much more doctrinaire and ideological than the Irish people, who were desperately anxious for a settlement. However, Griffith and Collins, for their part, were unhappy with the limitations, and they chose to ignore these further instructions, which had not been approved by the Cabinet, considering them only as guiding principles, not mandatory.

There are contrasting views on these 'instructions'. A rigid interpretation is not reconcilable with the plenipotentiary credentials, defined as one who is invested with the full power of independent action on behalf of the government. Since the Dáil had already conferred full plenipotentiary powers, the instructions from de Valera or the cabinet, an inferior body, were not legally binding in any instance in which they limited the powers of the delegation. As Desmond Fitzgerald notes, however, Brugha and Stack viewed the 'instructions' as requiring the delegation in London to keep the cabinet in Dublin duly informed at every step and not to sign the final draft without submitting it to the cabinet and awaiting a reply ('Mr Packenham on the Anglo-Irish Treaty', *Studies*, Vol. XXIV (1935)).

There was always an implicit contradiction overhanging the negotiations. Were the delegates plenipotentiaries or acting on instructions to report back to the cabinet? The plenipotentiary status conferred by the Dáil was superior to instructions from the cabinet. In fact, the delegates in London were not pleased with what they deemed to be interference from de Valera. In October Griffith sent a letter to de Valera saying that they were plenipotentiaries and that they were not to be instructed on all the minutiae of the negotiations.

There is no doubt that there were disagreements between the delegates, the cabinet and de Valera throughout the negotiations. The Irish delegation was so divided that after the last cabinet meeting in Dublin on 3 December it returned to London in two groups by two different routes. Clearly it was not a delegation in which the cabinet could have confidence that it would conclude a Treaty on grounds solely discussed in cabinet. The intention to negotiate further is implicit in the circumstances and was explicit in the cabinet minutes.

Following the signing of the Agreement, there was another cabinet meeting in Dublin. Those in attendance at that meeting of 8 December were Barton, Brugha, Collins, Cosgrave, de Valera, Griffith, Stack, Childers and Gavan-Duffy. Collins, and especially Griffith, returned from London thinking that there could be dissatisfaction over the Agreement but that de Valera would believe that the delegation had acted as he would have wanted. In his biography of Griffith, Padraig Colum wrote: 'Griffith expected objections to [the Treaty], but he was reckoning on the President's support'. Desmond Fitzgerald had to tell him, in the words he had heard himself from Austin Stack, 'He's dead against it now, anyway' (Arthur Griffith, p. 309). The delegates were quickly disillusioned. De Valera was furious and felt that the delegates

had folded under pressure. Moreover, he felt personally betrayed. At the end of an extremely angry six-hour meeting, Brugha, de Valera and Stack voted against the Treaty. Barton (angry, opposed in principle but honour-bound to stick to his signature), Collins, Cosgrave and Griffith voted for it. De Valera denounced the delegates for their breach of faith in failing to consult him before signing, but Robert Rees in his book *Ireland* (p. 289) notes that Barton countered by insisting that the real problem had been caused by de Valera's refusal to attend the conference.

On 14 December 1921 the Dáil assembled but there was no 'debate' on the Treaty, just a discussion of the actions of the plenipotentiaries in signing the Treaty without 'permission' from the cabinet. As noted in Hopkinson, at the start of the debates, de Valera admitted that the plenipotentiaries had NOT exceeded their powers by signing the Treaty without consulting Dublin first. Immediately upon mention of the 'Treaty', Collins pointed out that no 'Treaty' was signed but rather 'Articles of Agreement', and that the signing implied referral to their respective legislatures, not acceptance. Both the Dáil and the British House of Commons had to ratify the Articles before they would take effect. He pointed out that the Irish plenipotentiaries had done nothing irrevocable: the Treaty still had to be ratified by the Dáil. (The British wasted no time in ratification, as the Articles were approved quickly by both the House of Commons and the House of Lords and received the assent of the king on 31 March 1922.)

During the debates, de Valera stressed that 'the plenipotentiaries went over to negotiate a Treaty, that they could differ from the cabinet if they wanted to, and that in anything of consequence they could take their decision against the decision of the cabinet'. I suggest that all knew the gravity of their actions and were willing to accept the 'consequences'—for the delegates, even if the 'consequences' were a disagreement with the cabinet or de Valera. I further suggest that the issue of 'plenipotentiaries' versus 'instructions' is a never-ending argument and is incapable of absolute resolution.

There was no attempt in the column to skew the arguments, nor to 'perpetuate a myth' by reducing and paraphrasing de Valera's words to the Dáil: 'the plenipotentiaries went over to negotiate a Treaty, that they could differ from the Cabinet if they wanted to, and that in anything of consequence they could take their decision against the decision of the Cabinet'.—Yours etc. JOSEPH E.A. CONNELL Jr

## Reply to Mr. Connell

To: The Editor, History Ireland

10/3/2022

Dear Editor,

Mr. Connell, in his long, unprinted, reply to my letter says in effect that the delegates, appointed to negotiate a Treaty with Britain, had authority independent of that of the Government, and superior to it, because of their "plenipotentiary status conferred by the Dáil".

The delegates never asserted this superior status in their meetings with the Dáil Government, of which most of them were members. They asserted that independent authority only after they had acted against Government instructions and had split the Government and the Dáil by doing so.

If the Dáil had conferred on them the dictionary status, quoted by Mr. Connell, of "full power of independent action on behalf of the government" it would in effect have established a second Government.

The conditions under which Plenipotentiaries were appointed by Governments in the past had to do with long distances and consequent delay in communications.

But the Irish "Plenipotentiaries" frequently attended meetings of the Government which appointed them with the consent of the Dáil.

The obstacle which caused the Irish representatives to be called Plenipotentiaries was the refusal of Britain to recognise the Irish Government or to acknowledge its representatives as its representatives. The credentials given to the delegates as "Envoys Plenipotentiary from the Elected Government of the Republic of Ireland" were not presented to the British Government. They would not have been accepted if they had been.

Games can be played with the word plenipotentiary. Lloyd George played them very well, his intention being to break the Irish Government, but he never recognised them as actual Plenipotentiaries in the sense of being Envoys from the Irish Government. De Valera accepted nomination as President in the Second Dáil on the condition that he should have wide-ranging authority. If, as Mr. Connell suggests, it was clear that the delegates could not be relied on to act according to their instructions, he would presumably have done something about it.

Their unreliability, however, only became clear when, under Lloyd George's handling of them during the night of December 5th/6th (which puts one in mind of Hitler's handling of Austrian Chancellor Schusenegg in 1938), they broke and did his bidding. Yours, Jack Lane

## COMMENTS

Ryle Dwyer takes us back to the notorious methodology of the late Professor Peter Hart which entailed, inter alia, the omission

of evidence from records that flatly contradicted his thesis, which in his case was that the War of Independence was a war against Protestants and particularly so in the Bandon area of West Cork.

Readers may recall what he actually did. The British Army's official history of its Irish campaign: "*Record of the Rebellion in Ireland (vol. II)*" said that:

"in the south the Protestants and those who supported the Government rarely gave much information because, except by chance, they had not got it to give".

And he then omitted the next sentence:

"An exception to this rule was in the Bandon area where there were many Protestant farmers who gave information ... it proved almost impossible to protect those brave men, many of whom were murdered while almost all the remainder suffered grave material loss."

This deletion occurred both in his thesis of 1992 (p. 413) and his book of 1998 (ps. 305-6). All sanctioned by his internal and external Professorial supervisors and publisher.

Ryle Dwyer's ongoing thesis for decades is that de Valera bears responsibility for the 'civil war' by his handling of the negotiations. He and Tim Pat Coogan competed in belabouring this charge. This truncating of de Valera's statement is an attempt to back up the charge by changing the record which happens to be about the single most important issue in the negotiations with the British – who should make the final decision? The truncating/deleting served a clear purpose as did Professor Hart's – to back up a flawed thesis.

In his reply Mr. Connell uses a lot of bluster in his letter to knock down a straw man - that de Valera objected to the plenipotentiaries agreeing and signing an agreement. He has no need to quote anybody else to 'prove' this as de Valera himself made and reiterated the point clearly in the debate on the 'Treaty' on 14 December 1921. His objection was not that they should not sign an agreement but that they should not have signed the agreement that they did sign. He explained this fully and at length and it is available online on the Oireachtas website: "DEBATE ON TREATY RESUMED – Dáil Éireann (2nd Dáil) – Wednesday, 14 Dec 1921 – Houses of the Oireachtas." Its Oireachtas reference is Vol. T No.2 (14/12/21)

The substantial issue was the acceptance or not of the Crown and Dominion status - not the technicality of signing. He reminded the Dáil that what turned out to be the last Cabinet meeting on 3rd December discussed this issue at length and eventually agreed that the latest draft was unacceptable because of that issue and the plenipotentiaries agreed to go

back and try to get a better deal and follow the instructions originally agreed. He trusted them to do what they agreed to do - they did not do so.

Mr. Connell seeks to explain away and justify this basic fact by finding a contradiction between the instructions and the negotiators as plenipotentiaries. There was no such contradiction. The instructions were how the plenipotentiaries would relate to the Government that they were representing during the negotiations. It complemented their efforts and is a normal procedure in such negotiations. Are there any negotiations carried out by representatives of any Government on such a serious issue where there are not detailed instructions given by their Government as to how they should negotiate and conclude the negotiations? It is inconceivable that any other approach would be taken by any serious Government deciding on the future of the state.

He claims the instructions were not Cabinet decisions even though they are recorded clearly as such in the Cabinet records see: "*No. 160 UCDA P150/1925 Instructions to plenipotentiaries from the Cabinet (Copy) Dublin, 7 October 1921.*"

Then he argues that in any case they were not valid as the Dáil voted for the plenipotentiaries but not for the instructions and that the Dáil was superior to the Cabinet - "*an inferior body*".

He introduces a constitutional novelty to justify this claim. The Irish did not adopt the American concept of separation, or competition, of powers. They choose a Parliamentary democracy where Cabinets govern and Parliaments agree or disagree and if the latter they vote against the Cabinet and if necessary vote it out of office. No evidence exists that the Dáil objected to the instructions or even contemplated doing so. Cabinets govern—period.

The Cabinet agreed on 3rd to December to reject the latest draft from Whitehall and asked the "*Delegates to carry out their original instructions with same powers*" (Minutes)

Mr. Connell claims that "*Clearly it was not a delegation in which the cabinet could have confidence that it would conclude a Treaty on grounds solely discussed in cabinet*". So Mr. Connell creates another constitutional novelty. The plenipotentiaries become their own authority on what was to be concluded as a Treaty. Another separation or rather another power is created.

Of course that is exactly what happened and by doing so the Cabinet was irrevocably split and a débâcle inevitably ensued when Cabinet authority is so compromised in a Parliamentary democracy.

Jack Lane

# The UN Enigma Of Eichmann

Karl Adolph Eichmann was born on the 19th of March, 1908, in Solinger, Germany. He was a salesman for an oil company but lost his job during the pre-1930s due to Germany's disastrous economic decline. After that he joined the Nazi Party, and became a high official and took part in the extermination of the Jews during WW2.

After the Soviet Red Army defeated Nazism, he was captured by US troops and sent to a prison camp for SS officers. He escaped from there and lived under an assumed name for a few years in Germany, before making his way via Austria and Italy, along a pro-Nazi escape route, to Argentina, arriving in Buenos Aires on July 1950.

He was found by the Israeli Mossad on 11th May 1960. Nine days later it smuggled him out of the country to Israel.

After settling the controversy that arose out of the Israeli violation of Argentine law, the Israeli Government arranged his trial before a special three-judge court in Jerusalem.

Eichmann's trial was controversial from the beginning. The trial—before Jewish judges by a Jewish State that did not exist until three years after the Holocaust—gave rise to *ex facto* justice. Some called for an International Tribunal to try Eichmann, others wanted him tried in Germany.

Buenos Aires, 1957, some three years before he was caught by Mossad, he met with Willem Sassen, a Dutch man with Nazi sympathies. He engaged in a long interview, into a tape recorder. *Life* magazine published parts of it in 1964. Finally parts of it became a film: *The Devil's Confession, Eichmann's Lost Tapes*. It was screened several times, and became an expanded version as a three-part documentary series broadcast in Israel in October 2022.

His confession is said to contain some of his philosophical thinking to do with Nietzsche and Kant. But I think the deed comes before the philosophy, and then later, after the deed, it's philosophising.

Eichmann being German, and of that old culture just had to be Nietzschean.

Being a British mass killer in the colonies, Rudyard Kipling would suffice. In the latter 19th Century, upon retirement, the operators of colonialism, with their loot, built their fine houses, in Upper Holloway, London, and later, post WW2, went further up the hill, when Upper Holloway became less

fashionable, to the village of Highgate. In the 1970s there remained colonial administrators about there, still alive, and proudly showing off their various language skills of Hindi and Bengali, to the Indian/Muslim staff running the Post Office.

There certainly was no trace of colonial guilt.

Like Eichmann, they had a Government behind them during the time of their darkest deeds.

Eichmann would be aware of European colonialism, especially German colonialism which came third after British and French colonialism, and the need to splash blood around to keep order.

Germany united in the early 1870s and, with the scramble for Africa, managed to gain parts of Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Namibia, Congo, what is now the Central African Republic, Chad, Cameroon, part of Nigeria, a part of Ghana and Togo. They also shared New Guinea and other West Pacific islands, like the Micronesian Islands.

Germany lost control of its Empire after the 1914-18 War. Plans to regain it persisted all through WW2. Hitler's respect for the British Empire must have come from his longing and memory of Germany's own colonial empire.

That could have triggered Britain's fear for its own empire when it turned against Nazi Germany in 1938, having earlier helped it to its feet.

If you look at the extent of European colonialism over the centuries properly, then Nazi Germany and its 12-year reign becomes a mere blip on the horizon. Yet the German shadow of Nazism covers all, and is the source of projected accusations of war crimes by all the European former colonial powers, and the not so former.

Though the Anglos were responsible for killing one million Iraqis, quite recently, and killing 500,000 of its under-fives through sanctions, German Nazism is still made out to be the greater war criminal.

Similarly with Afghanistan: despite torture and wholesale murder. And then there is the numbing reality of the Guantanamo Prison Camp illegally on Cuban soil: with its sleep deprivation, ear-splitting music 24 hours a day, and water-boarding.

There is also the destruction of an advanced Libya—with its social benefits and social housing, a first on the continent of Africa.

Not to forget the US-backed ISIS attack

on the secular and Arab socialist Syria.

Looking back in history there is the British Army suppression of the Irish nation; Britain's near genocidal Great Famine of the 19th Century; and the artificial Bengal Famine of 1943-1944 engineered by Winston Churchill. After the great 'anti-Fascist' War came Britain's brutal suppression in Malaya and Kenya, and its massacres in Northern Ireland: all tail-end the crimes of Nazism.

Israel can continue to kill Palestinians at will, without international condemnation, including the very recent blatant public killing of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Aqleh, and still plead Eichmann as the greater evil. The rise of Nazism let the European colonial powers off the hook and it still does so today as they continue to engage in their Imperial crimes.

Portuguese and Spanish colonialism started with an agreement between the two countries in 1494. They agreed to the right to colonise all lands outside Europe on June 7, 1494 with the *Treaty of Tordesillas*. They first divided their spheres of interest in the New World of the Americas.

In the 16th Century Britain began to establish overseas colonies, after the conquest of its neighbour Ireland.

By 1783 they had built a huge empire that included parts of America and the West Indies.

The French began theirs on 27th of July 1605 with the establishment of Port Royal in the colony of Acadia in North America, in what is now Nova Scotia in Canada, and then expanded into Africa.

Dutch colonialism started in the 17th Century, taking what is now Indonesia, and calling it the Dutch east Indies, and also expanding to Africa.

Belgium colonised the Congo in Africa from 1908 to 1960, a country 74 times bigger than its size. It also moved into what is what is now Rwanda and Burundi from 1922 - 1962. The Belgium Congo was the personal property of King Leopold. That resulted in the deaths of more than 10 million Africans.

An estimation of British killings in its colonies is said to be a rough estimate at 150 million over the centuries.

If Belgium could kill 10 million in 52 years then the British estimated could be very conservative.

Dutch efforts to regain Indonesia after WW2 resulted in 5,000 Dutch deaths and 150,000 Indonesian deaths—through rape

and torture and massacres.

In the fight for Algerian freedom, the French killed an estimated five million Algerians over its 132 year rule.

Portugal and Spain were in involved in the genocide of the indigenous people in Latin America. Spain is said to be responsible for 70 million deaths out of 80 million indigenous people.

The United States attempted to wipe out its indigenous people as did settler Australia and New Zealand. Australia was totally successful in the island of Tasmania where the last aboriginal, an elderly woman died in 1936. Whole indigenous peoples were made to disappear in the West Indies, Cuba, and Latin American, through being forced to do hard labour for the settler-colonialists, like working in mines and on plantation, for which they were physically totally unsuitable.

Their dying saw the stronger African people being brought in as slaves.

In this modern era belligerent imperialism is only too ready to push forward its own scanty loses of military and administrative suppressors and hide civilian deaths to a minimum, but mostly ignoring them. The US could have killed 5 to 7 million civilians during its occupation of Vietnam. Casualties are better documented in Cambodia when by US airstrikes alone 600,000 died, as the Cambodian government still retained most of it territory despite US and South Vietnam incursions.

For 9 years, every 8 minutes 24 hours a day, the US dropped bombs on the mainly civilian population of Laos. By the end of 1975 one tenth of its population, 200,000 civilians and its military defence forces, were dead. Recent statements by survivors from that period tell of having to till the fields at night to escape the eyes of the bombers. Any light, from fires used for cooking shown at night, any sighting in the fields, and the cluster bombs fell. Today people, including children, are still dying from hundred of unexploded bomblets, coming from one cluster bomb, scattered over a wide of the rural areas. When the government of Laos asked the US to clear up unexploded ordnance they were told:

‘Super powers don't do dishes.’

Every time the war crimes of Western colonialism and Imperialism, and the subjugation of the Palestinian people by Israel is mentioned it must be time to wheel out Karl Adolph Eichmann as the Devil versus the God-fearing nations

**Wilson John Haire**  
26.5.22

## The Ukraine And Russia's 'Useful Idiots'!

[The term ‘useful idiot’ was applied in modern times to describe democrats who joined post-WW2 coalition governments with Communist Parties. And it is symptomatic of the Cold War rhetoric now being revived in the Anglo-American sphere that it is being applied to anyone who takes an objective view of the current Anglo-American drive to enforce a new Cold War. The Cold War of the 1950s was directed against socialised production, and was won comprehensively with capitalist restoration in Russia. This time it is President Putin’s refusal to allow President Assad’s Syria to be knocked over by the USA and Israel as a sequel to the pernicious destruction of the Iraqi State by Britain and America. That act of rebellion marked Putin’s Russia down for destruction. Eamon Dyas’ letter below was written in response to an objection to a Facebook Posting by a supporter of Sinn Fein.]

Am I a ‘useful idiot’? Or is it that I’m merely looking at the situation in a more balanced way? How does pointing out the West’s culpability in this situation mean that I am a “*useful idiot*” or justifying “*what Putin is doing*”? Unlike you, who should surely know better, I prefer not to take my lead from a media that is uncritically going along with an agenda that suits nobody other than that of the US. That agenda, as has been stated on more than one occasion by US officials, is to use the conflict as a proxy war on Russia in order to bleed it of men and treasure. In other words, an agenda that needs to ensure that the conflict goes on as long as possible and that there is no negotiated resolution.

To succeed in prolonging the conflict the US needs two things. It needs to guarantee a continuing and increasing supply of arms into the country without any regard for the numbers of deaths that ensue (after all its not US deaths that are involved) and they also need a public that is blinded to any thought of where the US strategy is leading. Do you honestly believe that the US is concerned about sovereignty—the country that has, more than any other, shown in its actions to have a complete contempt for the principle of national sovereignty when it suits its interests anywhere in the world?

This is a conflict that has been fuelled by the US as part of its geopolitical objectives that began as a means to destroy the natural economic convergence of Europe and Russia and has become one in which the US sees offering the prospect of casting Russia back to the 1990s when its old friend Yeltsin was in power.

I refuse to be duped by the Western narrative on this. It is a catastrophe that has been engineered by the US from before 2014 and which could have been solved peacefully if the US did not set out to use its influence on Ukraine (an influence that by the way resulted from the overthrow of the elected government in 2014) in order to sabotage the Minsk Agreement that had been signed in 2014 in the immediate aftermath of the coup.

The entire situation now being played out in Ukraine is the outcome of what happened in 2014 and it is a situation that has the fingerprints of the US all over it. From the perspective of the Ukrainian people, it would have been far better if the US, instead of encouraging the fantasies of an inexperienced President whose administration was underpinned by the most extreme anti-Russian elements, if it instead had encouraged an accommodation with Russia that recognised its security concerns.

But that did not suit the US strategy and so the inexperienced President and his anti-Russia nationalists were encouraged instead to adopt an intransigent policy of asserting their desire to join NATO and then, as if designed to ensure a Russian reaction that could be portrayed as mindless Russian aggression, Zelinskiy announced the intention of Ukraine to acquire nuclear weapons.

Two days later Russian tanks crossed the frontier. That is the context of the way that this tragedy has evolved. If I base my perspective on an awareness of this context means I am a “*useful idiot*” in your eyes then so be it. I have to say I have been called worse from people who wish to shut down any dissenting opinion but then again, that’s democracy for you. Funny old world.

**Eamon Dyas**

# Does It Up

## Stack ?

### NATO

*Do You Want to Die for NATO?* is the title of a book written by Patrick Comerford and published by Mercier Press, Cork in 1984 as part of a series of books called 'Make Up Your Mind Series', of which the general editor was one Carol Coulter, a sometime *Irish Times* writer from Mallow, Co. Cork. The author Patrick Comerford worked for 'The Irish Times'.

Comerford begins his book with a quotation from Martin Luther King:

"Our world is threatened by the grim prospect of atomic annihilation because there are still too many who know not what they do."

Though this book was written and published in 1984, almost forty years ago, it is still as relevant today as it was then.

There is still today great pressure being put on Ireland to join NATO – *The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation* – which is headed up by the USA, UK and most of the EU.

(I must stop writing for awhile, I cannot continue, we have just received the sad and awful news that our great friend, Father Brian Murphy *osb*, had died suddenly in Limerick hospital.)

#### Personal Testament to Father Brian Murphy, *osb*.

He was a very good friend and an exemplary Christian. He never spoke ill of anyone—even those we knew who had wronged him. There are some people who, when they deal with a Christian forgiving soul like Brian, cannot resist the impulse to do him a wrong turn. But Brian just turned the other cheek and carried on.

He was an accomplished gardener and created the *Bible Garden* at Glenstal Abbey! Here he searched out every plant mentioned in the Bible and planted it in the Bible Garden.

It was a great pleasure to me to be invited by Brian to pick a fig from his fig tree there. It is a luscious nourishing fruit. It is not at all like the dried figs we are used to in Ireland.

Where possible, Father Brian planted

seeds sent to him or brought to him by Benedictine monks who were studying at the University of Jerusalem.

Adam and Eve are represented by an apple tree: and next to the Bible Garden is an orchard from which Father Brian gained great satisfaction in supplying the Abbey kitchens with a big crop of cooking apples every Autumn, for the making of apple pies for the Abbey and for the College attached to it.

For many years also Father Brien kept a small herd of *Jacob sheep*, as in the *Old Testament*. They were bigger and hardier – looking than modern breeds of sheep: and I could see the difficulty there might be in "*separating the goats from the sheep*", as referred to in the *New Testament*. *Jacob Sheep* have the look of a goat to them.

The sheep required a lot of attention, not the least of which was to protect the young sheep from marauding foxes. The sheep shed their piebald wool naturally when it grew very long: Father Brian did not have the tools or the expertise to shear them and so he gave them eventually to a specialist farmer in the locality.

Near the Bible Garden is another garden, called the *Lady Garden*, along one side of which Father Brian planted sixteen trees—one for each of the patriots who were executed by the British in 1916 when first our Rising and then our War of Independence started.

At the foot of each tree there is a cutstone block on which is sculpted the name of the patriot to which that tree is dedicated. And then to the side there is a tree for that other great patriot Roger Casement.

All of this took quite an amount of work and effort. But one of the monks in charge did not like it and one day when Father Brian was not there the monk—who shall be nameless but not before God, even though Father Brian had forgiven him—he organised men and gear and uprooted the memorial stones and took them away.

Father Brian was visiting me and my wife and he had requested a motor car from the Abbey carpool, so it was known he would be away. Nothing was said to Father Brian when he returned but at supper-time that evening someone alerted him to what had been done in his absence. His fortitude amazed me: the following day he inspected the site of the memorial stones. Gone! All gone!

But Father Brian told me to make nothing of it when I expressed anger. Months later, he discovered where the carved

stones were and, by gentle persuasion, he was able to bring the stones back and re-position them, working with his friend Séamus who was always helping him with the gardens.

Between the Bible Garden and the Lady Garden is situated the monk's cemetery where Father Brian said one day "*our mortal remains will end up here*", and he said he prayed for their souls each time he passed by.

One of the graves is for Father Corkery, who was a teacher in the Abbey College and who died in his sleep one night when he was forty-two years of age. A good example of the New Testament saying,

"...death will come like a thief in the night. We know not the day nor the hour."

Himself he passed away unexpectedly and suddenly about 5 p.m. on Monday 16th May 2022.

He was the world expert on the War of Independence 1916-1922. He told me he had made a diary for every day in those seven years, itemising everything that was known of the movements of each of the leaders as well as the behind-the-scenes negotiators, English as well as Irish. He knew the addresses and the very rooms they slept in and met in. He pored over the minutes and notes and remembrances of Conragh na Gaelige, Cumann na mBan, the GAA, the IRB, the IRA and other societies and associations; and Father Brian had a quiet genius at getting people to talk about those years and to bring out and let him have access to letters and memos of their forbears. A true and great historian indeed.

He was unstinting in the generous help he gave to other historians and he was himself working and planning so many more publications. But it is not to be. *Ce la vie*. As he lived, so he died, causing no bother to anyone.

### NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation has continued long after the Warsaw Pact was wound up by the countries which were joined in it. NATO has been subverted by the USA, the UK and Europe into an outlet for their arms industries. Stockpiling armaments is a very dangerous activity because there is a finite limit to the warehousing and so a war **has** to be started so as to keep the industries going.

The USA and the UK are always engaged in at least one war and sometimes several wars at the same time. Ireland

declares itself to be neutral on the one hand, while on the other hand Ireland's political leaders very dangerously openly criticise Russia for its Special Operations in the Ukraine. The anti-Russian propaganda is unprecedented and relentless—the anti-Russian propaganda has even emerged on the cooking pages of magazines and newspapers. The media is saturated with propagand: so much so, that some of it is counter productive by looking too much like propaganda.

The initial surge of “refugees” seems to have abated but what was remarkable was that many Ukrainian mothers had contacts already in Ireland and it has emerged that Ireland was one of Ukrainian's bigger customers for its rent-a-womb business.

So unknown to most people in Ireland there is a relatively large number in the population who have been over and back to Ukraine and who have children whose birth-mothers are Ukrainian. Therefore there was a huge groundswell of sympathy in Ireland for the Ukrainian view of events. Nicely ignoring or not knowing that the Ukrainian militia has been battering the Donbass region for the past eight years or more with about 14,000 killed by Ukraine's

military activity. USA, UK, and the EU, using NATO, were pouring military equipment into Ukraine—and extracting payment for it of course! NATO was actively promoting Ukrainian aggression so as to provoke Russia and it succeeded eventually.

USA has meddled in Ukraine politics and has got its puppet put in as head of state. And all this is basically over oil and gas and wheat. The USA is prepared to ruin European countries so as to sell USA oil, gas and wheat.

It is difficult to get at the facts and difficult again to decide which facts to believe but one version is that the USA has sanctioned Venezuela oil and Iranian oil but is itself importing cheap oil from these countries which it has sanctioned and now USA wants to offer us this oil to Europe and so it is necessary to cut off Russian oil and gas.

Is the European Union going to kill its own member's economies just to placate a belligerent USA? Do we want to die for NATO? Ukraine is a long long way from the North Atlantic!

Michael Stack ©

"We might be waiting another 20 years for that now" said one.

We won't—it will be forced on us if we don't wake up, especially if the Public Service Unions don't cop on.

"Union leader Tom Geraghty said his union [Public Service Executive Union] had worked the social partnership process as far as possible to increase pay.

"He said: "In the 20 years of prosperity after 1987, we more than doubled members' real pay and we managed from the mid-1990s on to secure pay increases of a cumulative value of between 20% and 25% over and above the terms of the national agreements for our members in the exchequer-funded public service, through the full use of the available mechanisms in the agreements."

"Mr Geraghty said there could be no dispute about the success of the process for members but suggested that further pay rises could not be expected in the current climate.

"At some stage, we can hope to get back to that type of scenario", he said. "In the meantime, we have an absolute priority to stabilise our public finances."

"He said the alternative, of handing over financial responsibility to an international body such as the IMF, was "simply terrifying".

"Delegates at the conference backed an emergency motion urging the Government to relieve staff at local social welfare offices following a dramatic 80% rise in their workload" (Irish Independent, 25.4.2009).

It is hard to believe that Tom Geraghty spoke those words just eight months ago, in a few short sentences he summed up our entire problem: thanks to Benchmarking, the public service were the single greatest beneficiary of Social Partnership, now "we" must stabilise our public finances; keep the International Monetary Fund at bay and engage a few hundred more staff to help Public Service Executive Union members deal with the half a million dole queue.

And yet, with a Taoiseach and a Tanaiste who were prepared to play ball, the ICTU, effectively the Public Service Sector of it, could not come up with a formula that would have saved the Social Partnership process. It beggars belief, it really does.

The sacrifice of one day's pay for each of the next twelve months would probably have carried the day, without condition or qualification—would that alone not have been a small sacrifice to save Social Partnership? ■

## Organised Labour!

continued

what Jack Lynch did when he 'dummied' his way through Haughey and Colley to gain the Fianna Fail leadership in 1966.

Then a heated Fianna Fail Parliamentary Party meeting took place on the Thursday evening (3.12.2009), where the majority of TDs poured scorn on the ICTU's "Twelve Days", led by Mattie McGrath, Chris Andrews, Noel O'Flynn and Michael Mulcahy.

A particularly vocal opponent of the ICTU proposal was Health Minister Mary Harney, former leader of the Progressive Democrats, who got so carried away some Cabinet Ministers thought they were attending a PD Executive meeting, not that there is very much to differentiate either party today.

The Sunday Independent summed up the anti-trade union media strategy in the current financial crisis:

"After totting up the numbers, ministers and TDs were conscious of the 317,000 public servants against the 1.7 million in the private sector and 428,000 people on the dole." (6.12.2009).

The "divide and conquer" policy of the media, IBEC and the economists was finally bearing results.

As Taoiseach, Cowen ate humble pie, he surely must have sensed that this was much more than a tactical defeat—his leadership is now on the line!

Among the public service unions there was clear anger at the collapse of the talks.

According to one, there was "a clear acceptance" among Union leaders of the need for public sector reform and they believe they could have delivered a package that would cut the public service pay bill in the long term.

## Connolly continued

may be put into operation whenever the working class democracy are enlightened enough to demand it.

The taxation of unlet houses would compel the owners of property to accept rents much lower than they now demand, in order to avoid the disagreeable necessity of paying taxes upon unremunerative property.

But the erection of houses to be let at cost of construction and maintenance would place in competition with the speculative

house landlord, dwellings which, not needing to yield a dividend, could easily beat down his rents to a point more within the compass of the working man's purse.

One point more needs to be noted. It is that a large proportion of the houses in Dublin are owned by persons too poor to keep them in a habitable state. When this is the case such houses should be taken over by the Corporation and made habitable at public expense, or where this would be too costly, razed to the ground. The owners could be compensated according to the condition of their property when taken out of their hands.

It must be remembered, however, that

all those measures are merely tentative. Our cities can never be made really habitable or worthy of an enlightened people while the habitations of its citizens remain the property of private individuals. To permanently remedy the evils of city life the citizens must own their city.

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**JAMES CONNOLLY**  
**An Adventurous Socialist**  
**May Day Address, Cork, 1984**

**A Labour Comment** publication  
16pp. €10 post free. P. Maloney, 26  
Church Avenue, Roman Street, CORK

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has taken 14 months and three budgets for the Minister of Finance to come to terms with his job and the country has paid a high price for his training period but in comparison to Cowen and Mary Coughlan he looks competent and in charge... My first prediction for 2010; Brian Lenihan to be Taoiseach before the end of the year" (George Hook, *The Cork News*, 11.12.2009).

Lenihan's opportunity arose through the ham-fisted effort made by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (I.C.T.U.) to sell the "12-day unpaid leave arrangement". In the words of Bernard Harbour of the public service union, IMPACT:

"There has been enough progress to suspend that strike. The Government has said to us that it is satisfied with the progress made over the last few days, which does have the basis to form an agreement on cutting payroll costs next year in a way that doesn't result in a cut in people's pay."

On that same evening, Tuesday, 1st December 2009, the Cabinet was divided on the proposal by five votes to eight, with one Minister uncommitted.

The Taoiseach, Mr Cowen, Tanaiste Mary Coughlan and Ministers Batt O'Keeffe, Eamon O Cuiv and Brendan Smith were all in favour of continuing the Partnership talks with the unions on the controversial issue.

But opposed to the proposal were ministers Brian Lenihan, Martin Cullen, Mary Hanafin, Willie O'Dea, Dermot Ahern and Mary Harney as well as the two Greens, John Gormley and Eamon Ryan.

Foreign Affairs Minister Micheal Martin was believed not to have come down strongly either way, perhaps prompted by

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[Readers are invited  
to send in their Trade Union news]

# Organised Labour!

## **New National Agreement— Civil & Public Sectors**

"In relation to the review, Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform Michael McGrath said that "in view of the impact of the current inflationary environment on living standards, we are prepared to go beyond the pay terms within the current agreement but we need to balance that against the risk of doing any long-term harm to the economy, the public finances and indeed the competitiveness of the Irish economy" (Irish Times, 20.5.2022)

"Mr Callinan [FORSA Senior General Secretary] acknowledged that the comments were positive in so far as they went but said Ictu negotiators would not know just how far beyond the 1% that is due to workers this year the Government side would be prepared to go until the process was properly under way.

"He suggested that the current situation presented an opportunity to broaden the financial aspect of the deal out beyond pay. He repeatedly mentioned the need for "social dialogue", a return to a form of social partnership, although one in which the "P-word", with all of its negative connotations from the Celtic Tiger era, is never mentioned.

"The absence of a social wage in Ireland is putting all of the pressure here on a pay negotiation," said Mr Callinan after the issue had been debated.

"If I was living in Germany or Sweden, I would certainly have all of the other cost pressures, but I'd also have access to affordable housing and childcare. If I needed to go to the GP or emergency department, I wouldn't have to worry about the cost.

"We're calling for serious negotiations, with outcomes, with Government over the coming weeks in order to place a context for collective bargaining in the public and private sectors."

"He said, however, that if the talks were to drag on beyond a few weeks then they might end in failure."  
(Irish Times, 20.5.2022)

## **Unions Fail To Save Social Partnership**

*(Irish Political Review*  
January, 2010)

"Yesterday's Budget heightened the perception that Lenihan is the tough guy and Brian Cowen the weak and indecisive leader. In 45 minutes on his feet, Lenihan opened as a Clark Kent figure and sat down as Superman, the man of steel. It



**LABOUR**

# Comment

ISSN 0790-1712

VOLUME 40 No. 6

CORK

ISSN 0790-1712

## James Connolly *Landlordism in Towns*

(*The Workers' Republic*, Saturday, 18th November, 1899)

In an early issue of the *Workers' Republic* we pointed out that the Corporation of Dublin had it in its power to sensibly mitigate the sufferings of the industrial population in the City by a wise and intelligent application of its many powers as a public board.

Among the various directions we enumerated as immediately practical outlets for corporate enterprise, there were two allied measures which, were they applied, might do much to at once relieve the most odious and directly pressing evils arising from the congested state of our cities. Those two measures were:—

- Taxation of unlet houses.
- Erection at public expense of Artisans' Dwellings, to be let at a rent covering cost of construction and maintenance alone.

The wisdom of the proposal to increase the funds and utilise the borrowing powers of the Corporation in this manner cannot be questioned. The housing accommodation of the Dublin workers is a disgrace to the City; high rents and vile sanitary arrangements are the rule, and no one in the Corporation seems to possess courage enough to avow the truth, or to face the storm of obloquy which would be directed upon the head of the councillor who would take the opportunity to expose on the floor of the City Hall the manner in which the interests of house landlords

are protected, and the spirit of sanitative legislation set at naught.

The so-called philanthropic companies which profess to cater to the needs of the workers by providing cottages, etc., in reality charge higher rents than do most individual house owners elsewhere. We all remember how the owners of the Coombe area property attempted to raise the rents on their cottages, because they were compelled to undertake the construction of some necessary drainage, which they culpably neglected to supply when their property was being built.

Now the *Dublin and Suburban Artisans' Dwellings Company* have in like manner initiated an attempt to raise the rents on their Cork Street buildings by another

sixpence a week, in spite of the fact that the property has lately been allowed to get into a most dilapidated condition—roofs leaking, footpaths all broken up, roadways full of holes and pitfalls, and lamps never lit in the darkest nights of the year.

We are glad to record that this attempt at extortion is being met by the tenants in a most spirited fashion, and that it is likely to prove successful. Councillor Cox has also stood by the tenants in this matter, and has used his position on the Corporation to stop the rebate of taxes which this company usually obtains on the score of its philanthropic character.

This action of our friend, Councillor Cox, shows how much influence for good can be exerted by our representatives when imbued with the proper spirit.

What a Socialist Republican could do in the way of remedying grievances, and pushing forward measures for the benefit of the workers, can be easily surmised by those who have observed the keen grasp of public questions which at all times distinguishes the Socialist above his fellows.

But, lacking the measures spoken of at the beginning of this article, all other measures must be only of a partially remedial character. Each proposal bears the stamp of a truly practical measure; each can stand the test of rigid economic analysis, and

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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:  
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Sterling-zone: £25

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