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Dublin: *Policing The Peace !*

Ireland, under the present Government, threw itself open to the people of the world to come and live in it. It advertised across the world for immigrants, acting as if the era of nationalities was over and done with.

This was in accordance with the conviction of the Irish founder of the World Trade Organisation, Peter Sutherland, that the free movement of populations, following the movement of capital, was the new order of things.

The same Government is bewildered by the riot that erupted in Central Dublin in November and laid it waste. That riot has been threatening to happen since Dublin became one of the most expensive places in the world to live in.

Fine Gael Taoiseach Leo Varadkar explained that it was caused by evil. That means, in these days of enlightenment, that it had no cause. Evil, as a category of understanding, was abolished—along with Christian Doctrine as a general system of Belief—about forty years ago. Then it was a force from another world, dedicated to badness for its own sake, which intruded disruptively into the affairs of this world when this world was trying to be good.

But we have broken off relations with that other world—and yet its language persists as the last resort of a Government that aspires to govern but does not know how.

The specific form of Evil now at work is not any of the human attributes that used to be Cardinal Sins—pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, sloth. It is Hate.

Darwin wrote a Treatise on the Expression Of Emotions In Animals. That is, he expressed the muscular contractions by which feelings were expressed. Were the feelings caused by the muscular contractions which accompanied them, or were they generated behind the muscles and express themselves by means of the muscles.

continued on page 2

The Moment Of Truth For The EU!

The EU has been a sorry and despicable spectacle over the Israeli War on Palestine. In condoning attempted genocide it has sown distrust and divisions among Member States and lost moral authority in world affairs. This follows on from divisions over the War in Ukraine and the Sanctions against Russia. These internal differences are becoming intolerable to the 'Powers That Be' in Brussels. That is why the German Foreign Minister has proposed a way forward:

"German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock has called for an end to the requirement for unanimous agreement of European Union member states for taxation and foreign policy decisions, so the union can continue to function as it adds new members.

"In a key speech on enlargement at Germany's foreign ministry, Ms Baerbock argued that national vetoes should be removed to ensure the EU can have a stronger international voice and not be

continued on page 2, col. 3

The Truth About Irish Neutrality

Irish neutrality during the Second World War is sometimes presented in whimsical terms. Books from Irish Times writers recount amusing anecdotes about how the Editor of the newspaper outwitted the censor.

Apparently, there is at least one academic who thinks that the Irish didn't know there was a war on and only referred to it

as the "*emergency*".

Another line that is put is that we weren't really serious about neutrality and that we were really neutral in favour of Britain and the Allies. As indicated in a previous article for this magazine, that is precisely the line that The Irish Times wished to present at the time so as to push us into active participation in the war.

In recent times Irish academics and politicians largely accept this false narrative. This may be because of what we now know about Nazi Germany. How can we say that we were neutral between *Good and Evil*!?

But that was not how it appeared at the time. The Soviet Union and the United States only entered the War after being attacked by the Axis powers. And Britain did not fight the war because of any principled objections to Nazi ideology. On the contrary, it connived in Nazi Germany's

continued on page 4

CONTENTS

	Page
Dublin: <i>Policing The Peace!</i> . Editorial	1
The Moment Of Truth For The EU . Jack Lane	1
The Truth About Irish Neutrality . John Martin	1
Readers' Letters: "Terrorists" ? Eamon Dyas	3
Es Ahora . Julianne Herlihy (Books, Culture and History)	4
The Brian Murphy osb Archive , No. 7, Part 3: <i>Our Lady Of Limerick</i> continued— <i>The Statue of Our Lady during the Penal times of persecution: from Cromwell to William III</i>	5
The Long Arm Of Palestine . Wilson John Haire	7
The Truth About Irish Neutrality . John Martin	9
Ireland, Britain And Zionism . Pat Walsh	10
German Perspectives: <i>The German Left Is Broken</i> . Herbert Remmel	12
The Road To A New Casement Park, Belfast . Mark Langhammer	14
Israel And Real-Politik . Brendan Clifford	16
Remarks On The Second Issue Of <i>Duchas</i> . John Minahane	20
Politics And Economics . Peter Brooke, with a response from John Martin	23
Index To Irish Political Review, 2023 .	24
Power Played Out! Pat Walsh comments on Samantha Powers interventions	27
Biteback: <i>Nakbas</i> : Ireland And Palestine: Letter in 'Evening Echo (Cork), Pat Maloney	28

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

Difficulties Of Socialism

James Connolly (back page)

Organised Labour:

New Pay Deals To Be Negotiated (page 30)

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The Government has decided to abolish the feeling of Hate. It has a Bill going through the Dail to criminalise it. It is a Utopian undertaking—a dehumanising undertaking—even less feasible now than it was in the days when we had a transcendental force of Evil which we were encouraged to hate. And now, on the eve of its abolition by Government Decree, Hate has a field day—and the Government can only splutter.

The Garda Commissioner Drew Harris explains the root as being caused by a radical ideology of the Right. He is a foreigner, not used to our ways. And, only two months ago, the Garda Trade Union passed a motion demanding his replacement.

It appears that the Gardai assembled themselves to come and deal with the riot when they heard about it in the news. They were not deployed beforehand around the top of O'Connell Street, the heart of Dublin—thick with tourists, even though everybody knew it had become a danger area.

The Guards were established in 1922 as a centralised State Force by the Treaty party, which was forging itself into a State with active British support. In that respect, the Guards were patterned on the police force it was replacing. The Royal Irish Constabulary was a British State force, conducted by the British Government in Dublin Castle. However, the police force in Britain itself consisted of County Constabularies, which had a considerable degree of autonomy, while being under the purview of Local Authorities.

British policing of Ireland was directive, not representative. Britain knew very well that the condition of things it had brought about in Ireland was unsuitable for policing in the English mode. It established its Irish police as a caste above the society it policed, designed for action against it.

The Treaty party, when establishing its police, was in a similar position to the

British. Much of the country was against it, submitting to it because British reconquest was presented as the alternative. The State felt insecure in relation to society and could not trust large tracts of it with local policing.

The justification was later given that State policy, over-riding local interests, averted the possibility of 'corruption' under local influence. But what is called corruption is not something simple in these matters. It is often part of a two-way process of connection, in which local difficulties could be made known to, and be acted upon, by local authority, in a way not possible to centralised State authority.

And, anyhow, centralised State policy generated problems that the State tried to solve by bringing in a foreign policeman to be Commissioner.

Moment Of Truth

continued from page one

come hamstrung by differences of opinion as new countries join. "In areas where the principle of unanimity still applies, decisions become ever more difficult because there are individual countries that block decisions", she said in a speech at the foreign ministry in Berlin.

"We should be able to take more decisions on the basis of qualified majority voting, be that in the field of taxation or external action", she added. "This will also mean that countries like Germany can be outvoted. Any country can be outvoted"..." (*Irish Times*, 3.11.23).

To Ms Baerbock—a member of the Green Party—it's a matter of reorganising and streamlining the voting and decision-making procedures. In her view differences are a threat to the enterprise of building a united Europe: they should be ignored. Restricting voting rights and majority rule are to be the silver bullet to harmonious development!

Foreign Minister Baerbock seems to be totally ignorant of the factors that underline voting in any political entity. She needs to understand this primary principle: there are more important factors than the mathematical procedure of counting votes, whatever the way that is done.

Political life proceeds on an organic basis, not on a mathematical one. It cannot be conducted in a predictably mechanical way.

The first thing to take into account in any plan for running a complex body is the state of the organism: and that means the state of the demos in question.

She takes for granted that there is a demos called Europe. If there is one, it

is a very recent growth! After all, its constituent parts have been waging war against each other for centuries!

The whole point of creating the European Union was to bring an end to that. And it must be recognised that—as the Continent of Europe historically has been defined by conflicts within itself since Columbanus first conceived of an idea called Europe in the sixth century—it is going to take more than a few decades to reorientate its component parts, and fuse them into something totally different. (It should be mentioned here that Robert Schuman proposed that Columbanus be the patron saint of Europe!)

The founders of the EU, like Schuman, fully realised the enormity of this task, and they did not and could not conceive of an organic entity simply being voted into existence, or it surviving by voting alone. One cannot vote for something that does not yet exist!

The founders set up the Commission to try to create the 'nuts and bolts' of a European demos, realising that it could only be done by consensus. That is the reason for the unanimity requirements.

When that demos appears to be coming about, it would make sense to suggest a voting mechanism to enhance it. But introducing majority voting prematurely would wreck the gradual fusion that must occur during the initial stage. It must be remembered that we are at a very early stage in the life of the EU project.

Unfortunately, the successors of the founders do not seem to appreciate the task before them. They started acting like 'men in a hurry'. They have been intent on enlarging the original Union, rather than consolidating what had been created—a project which had some hope of creating the required demos.

To make matters worse, they then changed from the Listian attitude toward economic development—with the necessary economic measures to protect the emerging unified market. Instead, they have taken up Free Trade.

On top of that, they went in for random expansion eastwards, perhaps motivated more by geopolitical concerns than the desire to enhance a united Europe.

These political and economic events have prevented a European demos developing.

It must be said that these policies were initiated and encouraged by the UK when it was a member. And, having been adopted by the EU, Britain promptly left—job done!

It might be added that there is now an

"Terrorists" ?

"You won't see rape, there's no rape in this video... We won't show you beheaded babies", a senior Israeli officer said to a small group of journalists, saying such images existed but would not be shown.

And also during the 'showing' of this evidence:

"Journalists were not allowed to record or use the video presented, and our phones were deposited outside the room." (See: <https://abcnews.go.com/amp/International/horror-israeli-authorities-show-footage-hamas-atrocities-reporters-notebook/story?id=104015431>)

Consequently, the only journalists who claim to have witnessed the evidence were those who enjoyed the confidence of the IDF by being singled out for invitation to the Press Conference. What these journalists witnessed - or thought they were witnessing - in terms of evidence has not been subject to independent scrutiny or any form of rigorous analysis.

Until that happens all the claims of the IDF and the Israeli government must be treated as propaganda. It is a terrible indictment of the MSM that the discrepancies between claim and evidence is not being constantly raised with the IDF and the Israeli Government.

I notice that Israel has justified its lethal attack on an ambulance outside the Al-Shifa hospital in Gaza by claiming that it was being used by "*Hamis operatives*" (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-67316463>).

This begs the question, why did Israel not use the terms that they have always used in this conflict when describing Hamas involvement — "*Hamis terrorists*" or "*Hamis fighters*"?

I suspect the reason is because Israel knew they were not fighters, but merely employees of the Hamas governing authority acting as medics and ambulance drivers.

Hamas is the governing authority in Gaza and has been for the past 17 years or so. As such, it manages directly or indirectly much of the critical civil operations in the enclave. In that sense the term "*Hamis operative*" could be applied to a whole range of working activities that have nothing to do with actual fighting.

Eamon Dyas

inherent flaw in the structure of the EU. A Parliament was set up which has no legislative or executive power. It therefore inevitably became an irresponsible talking shop. And, unfortunately, another innovation of the British era in Europe was the concession of increased powers to that incoherent body.

The present position is that, rather than consolidating what was being achieved, various innovations only serve to expose the inherent traditional divisions of Europe. What we see more and more clearly is the expression of numerous national *demoses*.

To counter the internal dissensions, there has been a desperate attempt by Brussels to promote a common feeling

in the traditional manner: find a common external enemy. Fitting the bill at the present time is Russophobia, along with full support for the Zionist project in Palestine, and total subservience to the US in world politics.

The result is the emergence of a despised, pathetic, self-destructive entity on the world stage. This is the end result of Europe trying to be something more than the sum of its parts.

It would be far better for the world if the various parts of Europe concentrated on their own destiny and realised that the dream of an integrated Europe is fast becoming a nightmare.

Jack Lane

Books, Culture and History

When Sir Martin Amis died on 19th May 2023 at one of his homes in the US—he had bought a brownstone residence in Cobble Hill, Brooklyn (when he relocated from Camden Town in London), but spent more of his time in Lake Worth Beach, Florida. He had been a prolific smoker all his life and needed a warm climate, which he found in Florida: but he succumbed at the age of 73 to oesophageal cancer. His best friend, Christopher Hitchens—also a prolific smoker—had died in 2011 from complications of the same cancer.

It would be hard, in my opinion, to find two more unlikeable people: especially where their politics were concerned! And the politics were very evident in the novels Amis wrote, and in the books that the 'pubic intellectual', Hitchens, wrote.

It Is Time

I was surprised to find that Amis had been knighted, but there is some doubt whether this was after Amis's death: when the new King Charles III bestowed the title in his Birthday Honours, or on the night of the former's death. Whatever, he is now to be known as Sir Martin; while his father, Sir Kingsley Amis, received his gong in 1990 after a literary career that—if it included only one book, his debut 'Lucky Jim' (1954), was well deserving of such an award.

I was reading something or another and had the TV on when I became aware that one of my favourite English authors, William Boyd, was on and I upped the sound to hear him announce the death of Amis fils. Boyd, born to Scottish parents in present-day Ghana, Africa, is a thoroughly decent man—unlike the rather detestable Amis, whose works reflected his own world view. But Boyd, true to his nature,

only stated how important Martin Amis was in the English canon of writing, something that in the days ahead was repeated. 'The New York Times' stated:

"To come of reading age in the last three decades of the 20th century—from the oil embargo through the fall of the Berlin Wall, all the way to 9/11—was to live, it now seems clear, in the Amis era."

As far back as 2008, 'The Times' named him "one of the fifty greatest British writers since 1945". So his canonical status was assured, and Boyd echoed that for the BBC the same night. He said that Amis's first book, 'The Rachel Papers' (1973), was a very fine book and won the Somerset Maugham Award; and that his fifth, 'Money' (1984), was also just as good: with a wonderful central character—an anti-hero called John Self. 'Time' magazine "included the novel in its list of the 100 best English-language novels of 1923-2005".

What I find interesting is that whatever recognition is given to the Irish contemporary novelists (or even the former Anglos)—included in long-lists and short-lists for various prizes—in the end it is the English novelists that make the cut for the canon.

Julianne Herlihy. ©

To be continued.

The Truth About Irish Neutrality

continued from page 1

breaking of the Versailles Agreement. Its purpose was to use Germany to fight a war against the Soviet Union. It was for this reason that it allowed Germany to take over the Czech arms industry in the Sudetenland.

However, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between the USSR and Germany cut the ground from under the British strategy. Instead of moving east, the German Army moved westwards. Britain's foreign policy had failed and therefore Prime Minister Chamberlain had to resign.

In 1939 Ireland remembered what had happened 20 years before, when it was still ruled by Britain. The attempt at Conscription had led to the 1916 Rising. And then the Versailles Treaty at the end of the First World War had exposed Britain's fraudulent claims that the War was about the rights of small nations.

As the Jews say: "*Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice shame on me*".

The Irish were not going to fight another

British War, now that they had achieved independence. They had no illusions as to which country was the greatest threat to their independence and it certainly was not Germany!

By 1939 the enmity between the 'Civil War' parties had largely dissipated, which meant that there could be a political consensus on Ireland's response to the War.

Neutrality wasn't just an abstract ideal; it was a practical matter that had to be defended. On 6th June 1940 Taoiseach de Valera and Opposition leader W.T. Cosgrave issued a united appeal for recruits for the Defence Forces. The response was overwhelming. Before the War, the army was about 20,000 strong—which is about twice the current complement. By 1943 that figure had more than doubled to 41,442. In the same period the number of people in the army reserves had gone from zero to 152,000 (see Note 1 below).

There was tremendous pride that Irish people—used as cannon fodder for the British during the First World War—were now in the Irish Army.

Churchill openly admitted after the War that he had considered re-occupying the Treaty Ports which Britain had retained, but which Eamon de Valera had regained in a 1938 deal. But what prevented the person who had sent the Black and Tans to this country twenty years before from doing so? It is likely that the impressive mobilisation of the Irish defence forces led Churchill to the hard-headed conclusion that the military costs would far exceed the benefits.

That is the truth about the Second World War from an Irish perspective.

By slavishly succumbing to a British view of the Second World War, we have disabled ourselves from penetrating the Churchillian mush that pervades current historical understanding of that period. We have also erased from the national memory a time in our own history in which our independence was reinforced.

That is a price that we need not pay. With a little courage and independent spirit we can reclaim that history in order to fortify ourselves against current threats to our neutrality.

John Martin

Note 1: Essay by Col. Ned Doyle in *Bright, Brilliant Days*: Douglas Gageby and The Irish Times, edited by Andrew Whittaker, A & A Farmer, 2006

The Brian Murphy osb Archive

Our Lady Of Limerick

continued from November *Irish Political Review*

The statue of Our Lady during the penal times of persecution: from Cromwell to William III

The rule of Cromwell (1649-1658) was marked by an attack on the lives, land and liberty of the Irish people and there was no place for the Catholic religion, let alone a statue of Our Lady. From the beginning of Cromwell's rule it was decreed, in the Spring of 1652, according to Lenihan (page 185)—

"that every Romish Priest was deemed guilty of rebellion, and sentenced to be hanged until he was half dead; then to have his head cut off and his body divided in quarters; his bowels to be drawn and burnt, and his head fixed upon a pole in some public place. The punishment of those who entertained a Priest was by the same enactment, confiscation of their goods and chattels, and the ignominious death of the gallows."

It has been calculated that over one thousand priests were forced to go into exile abroad; that thousands of men were forced to undertake military service in Europe; and that many men, women and children were sent to the West Indies where they were used as slave labour.

The policy of Cromwell was, in many ways, a continuation of that enacted by Charles I in 1641, when it was decreed that two and a half millions of acres of land would be assigned to those who advanced money to put down the Irish rebellion. The name of 'Adventurers' was given to these donors. It was in line with that policy that Cromwell's Parliament, in August 1652, passed an Act of Settlement for the confiscation of Irish land and its allocation to new owners. As a result of that policy, some 30,000 acres of County Limerick were assigned for that purpose in 1653.

William Petty (1623-1658) was given the task of assessing the amount of land to be distributed. Petty's survey of the land took place between the years 1656 and 1658 and over a thousand recruits were employed on the project. The result was a magnificent record, not just of the amount of land in every County in Ireland,

but also providing detailed maps of all the Counties.

This, incidentally, was the first such record to be made in the world and merits recognition for that fact alone. Munster is recorded as having 3,289,932 acres—of which 375,320 acres lay in Limerick. Petty, himself, who had been created the Earl of Lansdowne for his efforts, became the owner of some 30,000 acres of land in Kerry. Most of Ireland was donated to others in a similar manner.

The reign of King Charles II (1660-1685) brought no change to the English policy of securing its hold on the land of Ireland and of prohibiting the practice of the Catholic religion. Despite the fact that his mother, Henrietta Marie of France, and his wife, Catherine Braganza of Portugal, were Catholics, Charles enforced the rules that had been introduced under Queen Elizabeth and renewed under Cromwell.

The Corporation Act (1661) and the *Act of Uniformity* (1662) dictated that all Office Holders should be members of the Church of England, and that all religious services should be based on the Book of Common Prayer. The fidelity of Charles II to the Protestant faith was manifested most strikingly in his treatment of Oliver Plunkett (1625-1681) who, after studying in Rome, was consecrated as Archbishop of Armagh in 1669 and arrived in Ireland in 1670 to begin his episcopal ministry. His work as Archbishop led to a renewal of the Catholic religion and, as a result, Plunkett was arrested in 1679; taken to England for trial; and hung, drawn and quartered on 1st July 1681.

As an aside, it may be mentioned that, a year later, on 31st July 1682, in a remarkable connection to our local history, Charles II signed a charter which granted a deer park to George Evans, the younger, (1655-1720) at Cappercullen, Barony of Ownybeg, County Limerick. This grant was on the former land of the Mulryan family, which was connected, as has been

noted, to Sir John Burke by marriage, and it led to the building of a three-acre walled enclosure which is now part of Glenstal Abbey gardens. It was also at about this time (1650-1680) that the glen of Cappercullen, which was close to this walled enclosure, began to be used as a secret place for the saying of Mass. The finding of a William III coin in the vicinity of the rock would seem to confirm its existence at that time. Some old people in the area referred to the Mass-rock in the glen as 'an seipeil' (the chapel) and, much restored, it remains there today.

When King Charles II died, on 6th February 1685, a ray of hope appeared for Irish Catholics with the accession to the throne of his brother, James II, who was a Catholic. The Dominicans built a small chapel in the grounds of their former priory at St. Saviour's and there Mass was said and the statue of Our Lady was venerated. However, the reign of James II was very short and he did not champion the Catholic religion in the manner that had been expected.

James II (1633-1701) had converted to Catholicism in 1668 and, prior to his conversion, he had married Anne Hyde in the Protestant Church and this marriage produced two daughters. After her death, on 31st March 1671, he had married, Mary of Modena in 1673. She was an Italian princess, who was a Catholic. In 1677 James had agreed with his brother, King Charles, that Mary, his daughter, would marry King William of Orange who was a Protestant.

These family connections, including that with King Louis XIV of France, who was a cousin of James, were to prove vital in the short reign of James II (1685-1688). At the start of his reign, James appointed several Roman Catholics to Government positions and passed measures which granted freedom of religious practice to both Catholics and Dissenters.

However, the birth of his son, also James, on 10th June 1688, and the perceived threat that this would bring a new Catholic monarchy, led many Members of Parliament to invite William of Orange to come to England and replace James on the throne. This was done: William, who was married to James's daughter Mary, landed in England in November 1688; and James went into exile in France in December 1688. In February 1689 the English Parliament declared Mary and William to be the sovereigns of England. This action led James, with the help of Louis XIV, to begin military action to regain his throne.

James and his army landed in Ireland at Charles Fort, Kinsale, on 12th March 1689, and proceeded to Dublin. From a religious point of view it was highly significant that Pope Innocent XI supported William of Orange, a Protestant, and was opposed to Louis XIV, a Catholic. The Pope also explicitly refused to lend public support to James. The Pope's opposition to Louis XIV was based on religious reasons: firstly, he objected to the King appointing the Bishops of France; and, secondly, he was not pleased that the King had revoked the *Edict of Nantes* (1685), which had granted freedom to Protestants to practise their religion.

This truly ecumenical action led some Protestants, in the past, to acknowledge the Pope's gesture as they commemorated the Battle of the Boyne. Despite clear signs of opposition to his rule, notably in Derry, James summoned a meeting of the Irish Parliament in Dublin for 7th May 1689 and it lasted until 18th July. For the record, there were 115 Constituencies and two representatives from each.

Although the Parliament passed a measure stating that the English Parliament could not legislate for Ireland, James was not happy with the Act. He preferred that Ireland should be under the rule of the English Crown and Parliament. While reluctantly agreeing that land should be restored to those who had lost it in 1641, James did not help Gaelic landowners nor did he give the Catholic religion a position of primacy; although he did grant liberty of conscience to all to practise their religion.

Like Louis XIV, James also expressed the wish to appoint the Catholic Bishops. The French adviser to James on this mission, D'Avauz, was not pleased with the actions of James and very soon the native Irish Catholics expressed their discontent with his policy and began calling him '*James the Shit*'!

One has come a long way from the statue of Our Lady, but the actions of James were already putting the Catholics in Ireland, and thereby the statue, at grave risk. When William of Orange arrived in Ireland in June 1690 with c36,000 troops, that risk became even greater. James, with an army of c23,000 men, confronted William's army at the River Boyne, near Drogheda, on 1st July 1690, but was defeated. James managed to escape to Duncannon [sic] and sailed from there to Kinsale and then on to France. It was left to his supporters to champion his cause

and the vital battles in that regard took place during the two Sieges of Limerick in 1690 and 1691.

During the first siege of Limerick, which began on 7th August 1690, barely a month after the Battle of the Boyne, William's army of c25,000 men occupied the fort that had been constructed by Ireton and which faced the eastern defences of Irishtown. Inside the city, the Marquis de Boisseleau was in command of some 14,500 infantry and, outside the city, Patrick Sarsfield (1655-1693) led a cavalry force of some 2,500 men. Sarsfield's troops, in an engagement with William's troops at Ballyneety, a small village some ten miles west of Limerick, destroyed a supply of siege cannon, designed to be used in the attack on the city. This action greatly weakened William's forces. Finally, on 27th August, William ordered an attack on Irishtown. The walls were partially breached but Boissleau managed to repel and to drive back William's forces. The role of the women of Limerick in resisting this intrusion has become a matter of legend as they confronted William's troops in hand to hand fighting.

Some 3,000 of William's troops (Dutch, Danish and German) were killed in the engagement. William returned to Holland to resume the war in Europe and he left Godard de Ginkel in charge of the army. In this way the first Siege of Limerick ended. Sarsfield received the title of Lord Lucan for his endeavours during the siege. William, however, immediately began preparations to subdue Ireland. He sent an army there and, on 22nd September, Cork was taken and in October his army of c 10,000 men captured Charles Fort in Kinsale. (The fort had been built in the reign of King Charles II.) By the terms of the surrender, some 1,200 troops who were loyal to King James II were allowed to make their way to Limerick. There preparations were being made to resist the advances of William's Army.

The statue of Our Lady remained in the safety of the chapel at St Saviours. It was not to remain in safety for long.

The second Siege of Limerick began in August 1691 and took place as the culmination of Ginkel's campaign against the Jacobite forces in Ireland. On 12th July Ginkel had won a major victory at Aughrim in Galway, during which some 4,000 Jacobites had been killed and a similar number had deserted. His army then advanced on Limerick where he was faced by a contingent of Irish troops at Thomond Bridge. Owing to an order

from the French major in charge of the drawbridge, it was raised and, according to Lenihan, many Irish troops (c 600) were killed by Ginkel's Army. The main French commanders were Chevalier de Tesse and the Marquis d'Usson.

This incident precipitated talks between Sarsfield and Ginkel. George Storey, chaplain to the English army, has described how eventually a Treaty was signed in Ginkel's tent on 3rd October. His headquarters were based north of Thomond Bridge, near the site of the present Thomond Park rugby stadium, and tradition relates that the Treaty was signed on a stone. The stone is 2 feet 6 inches in height, 3 feet in length, and 2 feet in width and, at a date unknown, was moved close to Thomond Bridge.

On 3rd November 1864, at a meeting of Limerick Corporation with the mayor, Eugene O'Callaghan, presiding, it was agreed to improve the setting of the stone; and on 12th January 1865, with the Mayor, John Tinsley, presiding, it was agreed to place the stone on a pedestal. This was done and resulted in the fine monument that stands on the north side of Thomond Bridge. It was during this period of the Sieges that the ancient Latin motto taken from Vergil, '*urbs antiqua fuit studisque asperrima belli*' (an ancient city well versed in the art of war), began to be used in relation to Limerick City. However, it was not until 1840 that these words were incorporated into a new seal for Limerick Corporation which is still used today.

Sarsfield had consulted with leading figures in Limerick, both lay and clerical, before agreeing the terms of the Treaty, which were, in fact, a form of surrender. The French, however, did not sign the Treaty as their war with William continued, despite the submission in Limerick. The military articles of the Agreement made three possible provisions for Sarsfield's army: they could take an oath to King William and return to their estates; they could enlist in the English army; they could depart to France in English or French ships. As a result, some 2,000 returned to their estates; some 1,000 enlisted with Ginkel; and c 11-12,000 accompanied by c 3,000 women and children, left Limerick on 22nd December. This departure to France became known as '*the flight of the wild geese*'. While these negotiations were taking place, some bishops and clergy had addressed Sarsfield's troops and encouraged them to serve the cause of James II in France. Sarsfield was killed soon afterwards, in 1693, fighting for Louis XIV, but others who fled with him—including

Count Peter de Lacy, who was related to Sir John Burke of Brittas—created new lives for themselves in Europe.

There were thirteen Civil Articles in the Treaty of Limerick. The first permitted Catholics to enjoy the privileges that they had enjoyed in the reign of King Charles II. When one recalls that Oliver Plunkett had been put to death in the reign of Charles, it is difficult to see what benefit that Catholics might have received from this Article. However, other Articles made it clear that Catholics should be free to practice their religion, to retain their property, and, while taking an oath to King William, were not bound to recognise the King as Head of the Church.

The terms of the Agreement were soon broken. On 24th December 1691 Parliament imposed a new Oath, and an anti-Catholic Declaration which effectively barred Catholics from a place in Parliament and other public offices. The Quakers were also restricted by these laws, as Hiram Wood has made clear in his book, *History of the Quakers of Limerick 1655-1900* (2020).

The laws prohibited the practice of the Catholic religion and, in 1698, there was an edict expelling priests from the country. The confiscation of land belonging to Catholics also lessened the support they could give to the Dominicans, not only in Limerick, but also in Ireland. Hugh Fenning (page 6) calculated that "the proportion of land in Catholic hands fell in fact from 22% in 1688 to 14% in 1703", with the result that the friars lost many of their benefactors.

The civic rights of Catholics were also curtailed. To make matters worse, there was no Catholic Bishop of Limerick between 1702 and 1720, and Bishop Cornelius O'Keefe (1720-1737) not only faced many challenges but also caused division and difficulties by his support for the Jacobite cause. Indeed, there were many examples of disunity among Catholics at this time: competition existed in regard to the appointment of bishops; the intervention of Rome was not always helpful; and young men were ordained priests before they had completed their studies abroad. It was in this context that the Dominicans attempted to survive, and efforts were made to preserve the statue of Our Lady

(To be continued)

The Long Arm Of Palestine

In the Middle East it's an-eye-for-an-eye. Both Judaism and Islam mention this in their religious culture. The Palestinian break-out from the prison camp—and now a concentration camp with its collective punishing of its population through sudden death, injury, starvation, lack of water, lack of a safe place, destruction of infrastructure, bombing of hospitals and schools, the death of over 11,000, including 5,000 children—amounts to a bucket of eyes for one eye, after Hamas and its ally Islamic Jihad decided to give Israel a taste of its own medicine.

Islamic Jihad, formed in 1981 by Palestinian students in Egypt, scorned phony peace deals and negotiations. It seems to have influenced Hamas to some degree: but not in installing Sharia Law in Gaza.

Wikipedia says:

"Legislative elections were held in the Palestinian territories on 25 January, 2006 in order to elect the second Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), the legislative of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). The result was a victory for Hamas, contesting under the list name of Change and Reform, which received 44-45% of the vote and won 74 of the 132 seats, while the ruling Fatah received 41-43% of the vote and won 45 seats.

"The newly elected PLC met for the first time on 18 February, 2006. Incumbent Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei tendered his resignation on 26 January, 2006, but remained interim Prime Minister at the request of President Mahmoud Abbas. On 20 February, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was nominated to form a new government. The new government with Haniyeh as Prime Minister was sworn in on 29 March. These were the last contested elections to be held before Hamas took over the Gaza Strip in 2007. No elections have been held since.

"The United States spent \$2.3 million in USAID in support of the Palestinian elections, allegedly designed to bolster the image of President Abbas and his Fatah party."

Abbas didn't want Hamas, while Israel wanted Hamas in Gaza in order to split the Palestinian movement. As the nursery rhyme goes:

"Betwixt them both they licked
The platter clean".

Israel then felt Hamas was their chicken coop, with the wringing of necks happening anytime they felt like it. A paraplegic,

in a wheelchair, the leader of Hamas, was assassinated by an airstrike some years ago. There followed some individual deaths caused by mobile phones embedded with an explosive content. (possibly Semtex). It is hard to know how these free gifts reached some Hamas activists but, on receiving a call and answering it, they were dead.

Incursions into Gaza by the Israeli Army caused 6,000 Palestinian deaths in 15 years during peacetime.

Retaliation by Palestinians on the Israeli public was through the odd suicide bomber, or death by car running into a group of Israelis. The driver usually ended up being shot dead by the police or army.

Hamas and its allies took on the Israeli Défense Force each time they made an incursion. It only seems right as the only protection the people of Gaza has.

On a personal note, I found the atmosphere in Israel to be harsh. It was a country living on its nerves. People shouting at each other in buses, their faces inches away from one another over some trivial incident like bumping into them or grabbing a seat in front of them. The most bizarre thing I saw was in a Tel Aviv Park, where the park benches were occupied totally by elderly women, watched closely by a few other standing elderly women, who wait until one woman went to the nearby toilet, then they would seize it. The returning woman would then scream her head off for her seat to be given back.

I was staying with an Israel couple who told me these women would all sit there until the park closed. They examined the park benches and found them covered in urine as some women determinedly held on to their seats. The couple had no explanation for this behavior. Maybe it was the result of the trauma of the Yom Kippur War that had happened only a number of months earlier. The husband of the couple had been in that war as a conscript. He had an unhealed stomach wound and felt neglected by the medical authorities. He was disgusted by some Israeli troops, holding pliers, as they sorted through the corpses of dead Egyptian soldiers for gold teeth.

Sit at an outside café and nearby is a girl in the Israeli Defence Forces, her Uzi sub-machine gun beside the sugar bowl. Don't try grabbing it for she has a small pistol in

her lap. You find that out as she has dropped it. All around Israelis are shouting at her. The pistol might have gone off!

An elderly man wearing civilian clothes is patrolling with an old .303 rifle. What could be his teenage grandson walks with him carrying a more modern weapon. He also wears civilian clothes. The way the old boy looks at you, an obvious foreigner, it's a relief when he walks on.

This is a nation at war. Backyards and balconies have lines full of khaki clothing.

The area where the oriental Jews live (from North Africa) is a slum of poor housing.

Huge piles of chicken feathers are everywhere, waiting to be picked up. A young woman in army uniform, also armed, looks around quickly then lowers her head as she disappears into the narrow streets. You get the feeling she is ashamed to be thought of as living there.

A lot of clashes on the Tel Aviv beach are between the European Jews, dressed in their suits and ties, and the Oriental Jews in washed-out tee shirts. It seems racist. The beach is mostly occupied by dozens of young men simply batting balls between one another for hours at a time. All in silence. It's a sort of zombie scene. Then there is a shout of command and you notice they are picking up their army uniforms. One has been swimming and had buried his rifle in the sand in order to do so. That causes a lot of shouting and a slap in the face for the swimmer.

The beach guard has suddenly knocked someone off a deckchair. It seems he was blocking the view of a watch tower. I can't see how this is possible because of its height in relation to the deckchair. The beach personnel continually gaze out to sea. All you see are watchtowers throughout Israel, the sun glinting off army binoculars.

Some Palestinians living within Israel run food stalls near the beach and most times they seem to be taking a lot of abuse for no reason at all. What looks like a young Israeli Jewish girl intervenes on behalf of a young male Palestinian stall-holder. There is a lot of shouting in Hebrew and Arabic. It looks like this is the girl's boyfriend. Then she starts to take abuse as she kisses her boyfriend to console him.

I stayed with a young Israeli couple in Tel Aviv, whom I got to know through the late Ken Campbell, actor and comedian (famed for his ferret down the trouser-leg act), and with him I spent a mad month, travelling all over Israel and as far down as the then occupied Egyptian Sharm El Sheik in the

Sinia Desert. This was one of my two visits to the country. Campbell was very much pro-Palestinian, as he admired their culture, but he also supported Israel, not politically, but in his own zany way;

The husband of the young couple was into investigating some of the peculiarities of the religious sects. Campbell was only too eager to go along with that. We were brought to the area of the extreme religious. In their backyards were bed sheets on the line, with a hole in them, the purpose of which was to cover the female body with the sheet during sexual intercourse, using the hole in the sheet for procreation. Usually, Judaism teaches the joys of sex but this religious sect obviously thought otherwise.

Later we were promised the sight of Swastikas on the wall, not for the purpose of peace, which the ancient sign was meant for, but for an aggressive campaign against the Palestinian. But the walls had been recently painted. We didn't carry cameras as it would draw too much attention to ourselves. Nevertheless, people were beginning to come out of their houses to stare at us, as if we were aliens—me as an Irishman, Campbell the Englishman, and the Israeli. It was time to leave quickly. It was the Sabbath and even ambulances were stoned around here for daring to run on this day.

The Palestinian was likened to the Oriental cockroach. It's a lot bigger than the European kind. Sleeping on a mattress on the floor I heard tiny feet on the tiled floor about 3 am. Turning the light on, I saw them squeezing through the gap at the bottom of the door. The young wife knew what time they came at and came in, wearing her nightdress, and carrying a huge can of pesticide. She sprayed them until they died and then shoveled them up and said they would be here, forever. I thought of the Palestinians and their longevity.

I doubt if much has changed. Israel is just a mini-United States, with those of different national backgrounds living the life of the old country. The Austrians have their patisseries and the Germans plonk a tankard of beer in front of you after you enter their cafes. Even then I felt it was all being held together by the religious parties. The religious assert themselves constantly in the streets acting as a kind of citizen police.

A large bus station in Jerusalem had a café beside it. A bus mechanic enters and orders a meal during his lunch break. A row breaks out as he won't separate the milk from the meat by using two separate tables, according to rules of religion. A religious Jew, in his religious attire has intervened. More shouting.

The mechanic takes his tray and sits down on the pavement outside to have his meal.

On top of this you have to take the wrath of the Palestinians in the Jerusalem Mahane Yehuda Market, known as The Shuk. They sound like they are abusing you in their own language. Four armed members of the IDF pass through and a bunch of Palestinians each spits four times on the ground as they pass, before they pass their anger on to you, as a visitor.

The streets are full of the religious Jews wearing different kinds of suits. I'm told you can tell what sect they belong to by the cut of their suits. Some have bell bottoms trousers, others have the bell further up and narrowed at the bottom. Different hats, different overcoats, all worn in the hottest of weather.

The working class is easy to recognise. They look like the working class anywhere in the world as they crew the bin lorries, or work as carpenters or electricians on building sites. The Palestinians are also easily recognisable as such, but you get to know both working classes are totally different people, with religious and national backgrounds. It is unlikely there will be any coming together any time soon. Best to leave any socialist beliefs behind when visiting there. It would take the power of the former Soviet Union, at its best, to change things. But, on a day-to-day basis, both Israeli worker and Palestinian worker seemed to mix amiably.

I made a second visit to Israel, thinking I had to because I now had a Jewish wife and I felt I should bring her to her spiritual homeland. I must have been blinded by love. I learnt afterwards, when we had got home, that she hadn't wanted to go there: she only went because she thought I wanted to!

But she had Australian relatives living there and she knew their address. They sure didn't like me as a non-Jew. They were a military family with the usual guns standing in the corner ready for trouble as their khaki clothes dried on the line. They weren't going to put us up and couldn't get rid of quickly enough.

My wife's spiritual home happened to be Sydney. When she had had enough of London she decided to return. I couldn't be separated with my five children from another marriage, so we parted.

The Palestinians are indeed a very tough people. Their losses since 1948, and today in 2023, must amount to a tsunami of emotion: yet they seemed to be in control, by comparison with the Israelis, who are subject to hysteria and forever unfulfilled anger.

Israel has gained a lot of territory since 1948 and killed a lot of Palestinians, and the killing will go on. They form a country capable of using nuclear weapons and, even if they don't use them, the next 75 years could see the advent of a Greater Israel, should no outside force intervene in the meantime.

The Heinz-like Variety of 57 Muslim nations recently held an Emergency Summit in Saudi Arabia to discuss Gaza and what to do about it. Mahmoud Abbas was there representing his contracted-security-org.-for-Israel—the Palestine Authority—not Hamas!

The discussion was over an arms embargo to Israel: with lots of pious statements, delivered in an enormous hall dripping with gold leaf. Luxury hotels for the guests. A Palestinian spokesman, on Al Jazeera TV, declared the Summit a farce. He said many of the Muslim nations were hostile to one another, some had made recognition deals with Israel, some were relying on US military help to stay in power against their own people, some were anti-US, some had been wrecked as nations by US/UK/UE invasions, and by the Saudi attack on Yemen, that they were incapable of intervening against Israel's mighty military force.

All in all, though some thought such a diverse group meeting about Gaza was a miracle, the reality of it was that it was just an effort to convince their own populations that they were about to do something about Gaza. But nothing concrete would be done when the only possible solution could be a combined military feint, at least, on Israel's borders, that might change the situation.

It is thought that there are 6,778 million Jews in Israel, with another 413 million in the West Bank: 7,191 million in all (2020 figures, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_population_by_country#:~:text=With%20nearly%206.8%20million%20Jews,the%20only%20explicitly%20Jewish%20state).

Gaza had a population of 2.3 million (before the murderous bombing). The West Bank has 3 million. Arab Israelis amount to 2.1 million, representing 21% of Israel's population.

Arab Numbers Abroad:

Jordan 3,240,000
Syria 650,000
Chile 500,000 (the largest population outside the Middle East)
Lebanon 402,582
Saudi Arabia 280,245
Egypt 270,245
United States 255,000

Honduras 250,000
Guatemala 200,000
Mexico 120,000
Qatar 100,000
Germany 80,000
Kuwait 80,000
El Salvador 70,000
Brazil 59,000
Iraq 57,000
Yemen 55,000
Canada 50,975
Australia 45,000
Libya 44,000
Puerto Rico 30,000
Greece 30,000
United Kingdom 20,000
Peru 19,000
Denmark 19,000
Columbia 12,000
Japan 10,000
Paraguay 10,000
Netherlands 9,000
Sweden 7,000
Algeria 4,030
Austria 4,010
Norway 3,825

The rest of Latin America, India, Russia, sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia have fairly small Palestinian populations. (Wikipedia)
There are no numbers for Ireland so far.

Total overseas Palestinians number over 6 million.

Wilson John Haire. 13.11.2023

The Truth About Irish Neutrality

Irish neutrality during the Second World War is sometimes presented in whimsical terms. Books from Irish Times writers recount amusing anecdotes about how the Editor of the newspaper outwitted the censor.

Apparently, there is at least one academic who thinks that the Irish didn't know there was a war on and only referred to it as the "emergency".

Another line that is put is that we weren't really serious about neutrality and that we were really neutral in favour of Britain and the Allies. As indicated in a previous article for this magazine, that is precisely the line that The Irish Times wished to present at the time so as to push us into active participation in the war.

In recent times Irish academics and politicians largely accept this false narrative. This may be because of what we now know about Nazi Germany. How can we say that we were neutral between Good and Evil?!

But that was not how it appeared at the time. The Soviet Union and the United

States only entered the War after being attacked by the Axis powers. And Britain did not fight the war because of any principled objections to Nazi ideology. On the contrary, it connived in Nazi Germany's breaking of the Versailles Agreement. Its purpose was to use Germany to fight a war against the Soviet Union. It was for this reason that it allowed Germany to take over the Czech arms industry in the Sudetenland.

However, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between the USSR and Germany cut the ground from under the British strategy. Instead of moving east, the German Army moved westwards. Britain's foreign policy had failed and therefore Prime Minister Chamberlain had to resign.

In 1939 Ireland remembered what had happened 20 years before, when it was still ruled by Britain. The attempt at Conscription had led to the 1916 Rising. And then the Versailles Treaty at the end of the First World War had exposed Britain's fraudulent claims that the War was about the rights of small nations.

As the Jews say: "Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice shame on me".

The Irish were not going to fight another British War, now that they had achieved independence. They had no illusions as to which country was the greatest threat to their independence and it certainly was not Germany!

By 1939 the enmity between the 'Civil War' parties had largely dissipated, which meant that there could be a political consensus on Ireland's response to the War.

Neutrality wasn't just an abstract ideal; it was a practical matter that had to be defended. On 6th June 1940 Taoiseach de Valera and Opposition leader W.T. Cosgrave issued a united appeal for recruits for the Defence Forces. The response was overwhelming. Before the War, the army was about 20,000 strong—which is about twice the current complement. By 1943 that figure had more than doubled to 41,442. In the same period the number of people in the army reserves had gone from zero to 152,000 (see Note 1 below).

There was tremendous pride that Irish people—used as cannon fodder for the British during the First World War—were now in the Irish Army.

Churchill openly admitted after the War that he had considered re-occupying the Treaty Ports which Britain had retained, but which Eamon de Valera had regained in a 1938 deal. But what prevented the person who had sent the Black and Tans to this country twenty years before from doing so? It is likely that the impressive mobilisation of the Irish defence forces led Churchill to the hard-headed conclusion that the military costs would far exceed the benefits.

That is the truth about the Second World War from an Irish perspective.

By slavishly succumbing to a British view of the Second World War, we have disabled ourselves from penetrating the Churchillian mush that pervades current historical understanding of that period. We have also erased from the national memory a time in our own history in which our independence was reinforced.

That is a price that we need not pay. With a little courage and independent spirit we can reclaim that history in order to fortify ourselves against current threats to our neutrality.

John Martin

Note 1: Essay by Col. Ned Doyle in *Bright, Brilliant Days*: Douglas Gageby and *The Irish Times*, edited by Andrew Whittaker, A & A Farnar, 2006

in the secular crusade against Prussianism. And then it appeared in *The Irish News's* history lesson on Jerusalem, as the Last Crusade closed in on Jerusalem.

The Irish News noted that there was not a great deal of enthusiasm for a return to the Jewish Homeland on the part of the Jews. They seemingly preferred the comfort of the European “*flesh-pots*” to a life of pioneering hardship in honest colonial work, or indeed were reluctant to leave the Ottoman cities where they lived a good life with peoples of other races and religions, to the mutual advantage. But the all-conquering British Imperial Power, which the *Irish News* supported at that stage, had the objective of changing all that, in alliance with the small Zionist movement it was employing as its instrument.

One suspects that the editorial writer did not have much time for the Jews (note the mention of Judas—who must be the least favourite Jew of Christians!). But adjustment to the Imperial will was a requirement for the winning of Irish Home Rule: and such adjustment can be seen in the Editorial of the *Irish News* a month later, marking the fall of Jerusalem. This is how Belfast Redmondites saw the culmination of the last Crusade:

“Fallen is thy throne, O Israel! The power of the Moslem in ‘the Land of Promise’ has fallen at last: we may assume that with the entrance of General Allenby’s troops to Jerusalem an end has practically been made of Turkish rule over Palestine... When the Holy Land has been fully rescued from Turkish domination, who will possess and administer it? Official statements regarding the re-colonisation of the country by the scattered Jewish race have been made. Observers can discover no traces of enthusiasm for the project amongst Hebrews themselves. As an idea, nothing could be more sentimentally attractive; as a practical proposition, we believe each child of Abraham would bestow a benison on his brother who migrated from the lands of the Gentiles to the shores of Lake Galilee and the slopes of Mount Olivet. Thus might the storied little territory become once more ‘a land flowing with milk and honey’—greatly to the content of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who remained where they were.

“But an independent Jewish State cannot be established all at once, even did all the Rothschilds lead all their compatriots back to Jerusalem. The country must be ‘protected’—in plain terms, annexed: a useful synonym in dealing with Oriental transactions might be ‘Egyptised’. And the conquerors are, of course, the natural ‘protectors’ of the territory won by force of arms. Such has been the rule and practice from before the era of Moses and Joshua. We know all about it in Ireland. When the objects of the campaign in Palestine and Mesopotamia have been completely achieved, a solid ‘block’ of Asian territory

Ireland, Britain and Zionism

Today, the attitude of Ireland, Government and people, stands in marked contrast to that of Britain and its Government—at least.

There was once a time when Ireland was an enthusiast for the Zionist project.

The Belfast *Irish News* commented on the Balfour Declaration in the context of a potted history of Jerusalem, which appeared in the (London) Times on the day of its publication in 1917:

“In Palestine General Allenby is beating the Turks. He has captured Gaza—the scene of Samson’s final display of untoward might—at last; and he may press on to Jerusalem, fifty miles away. The ancient capital of the Jewish Kingdom has stood many sieges. It was an old centre of population 3,000 years ago—before David the Psalmist extended and beautified it. Jerusalem was attacked by the Egyptians, the Philistines, the Israelite ‘seceders’, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians between 1000 B.C. and 300 B.C. The Greeks plundered it after the death of Alexander of Macedon, and again at various periods down to the advent of the all-conquering Romans, into whose possession it came under Herod. In 70 A.D. the Jews revolted against Rome, and Titus captured their capital and levelled it to the ground... The Persians assailed it in the year 614; and 28 years thereafter the Caliph Omar and his Islamites seized upon it. Since that date it has been controlled by Mahomedans—with a brief interval. The Arabs were succeeded, as masters of Jerusalem, by the Seljuk Turks; and the atrocities committed by these ancestors of the present Turkish nation

inspired Peter the Hermit with the idea of preaching a ‘crusade’. Godfrey of Bouillon and the Christians of the West rescued the city in 1099; but it was retaken by Saladin in 1187. The Egyptians appeared on the scene as conquerors in 1247; but the Sultan Selim I., annexed it to the Turkish Empire in 1517. Now a new chapter will be added to the long and troubled history of the ‘Holy City’. A great scheme of Jewish ‘re-colonisation’ has been adumbrated; but we cannot observe any evidence of sincere enthusiasm for the project amongst the masses of the world-scattered Hebrew race. Perhaps they are, with characteristic prudence, awaiting events before definitely committing themselves: or a vast majority of them may prefer the ‘flesh-pots’ available amongst the Gentiles to the prospect of figs and olives in the land of Solomon and Judas Maccabeus” (*Irish News*, 9 Nov. 1917).

The *Irish News* piece is an extremely partisan reading of history. All the violence and destruction directed by Christians at Jerusalem is ignored, with no reference to any atrocity. And everything Muslims did around the city is described in terms of absolute evil.

It seems that Peter the Hermit and Redmondite Ireland had a lot in common. Atrocious propaganda directed against Muslims had inspired the Crusaders in 1099 to “*rescue the city*” of Jerusalem (by massacring up to 10,000 around the al-Aqsa Mosque, and wading knee deep in the blood of surrendered civilians). It reappeared again through Redmondite Ireland during August 1914 to inspire it to fight the battle for civilisation

will lie between the Germans and the Indian Ocean.

“The Turks gave the Kaiser’s people a free passage from Constantinople to the Persian Gulf. The new occupants of Palestine and Mesopotamia will not be quite so accommodating. No one has hinted as yet at the ultimate fate of Constantinople itself: it was to have been the Czar’s property, but poor Nicholas would rest satisfied with less nowadays. England, at all events, is carefully building up a wall against German ‘aggression’ along a line on which German eyes were cast covetously many years ago... There are really some arguments against a precipitate disclosure of the Allies ‘war aims’: one excellent reason for silence being that the Allies do not know how much they can aim at with a prospect of getting it” (Irish News, December 11, 1917).

This is a good indication of how Ireland, and indeed West Belfast, would have viewed the world if there had not been Republican Ireland.

By 1921, however, the Irish News began to show some scepticism about what was happening in Palestine, believing that the Zionist scheme was something of a fraud, and all just a cover for British conquest. It saw Palestine, like its Imperial Governor, Ronald Storrs, as “a little loyal Jewish Ulster”. On 7th September this editorial appeared on “*The Holy Land*”:

“England is committed to an immense and revolutionary experiment in Palestine. Mr. Arthur Balfour—curiously enough, when his political record as a condemner and enemy of small nations is recalled—was the chosen exponent of the policy which he declared was adopted to make Palestine “the national home for the Jewish race”. But are the members of the Jewish race—95% of them— anxious to make the Holy Land of the Christian world their “national home”? Apparently not... Mr. Henry Morgenthau is a Jew; he is also one of the most eminent men in the public life of the United States... He acted as U.S. Ambassador in Constantinople until America came into the war; he knows the Jewish world; he knows the Near East; and he has written recently: “Zionism is the most stupendous fallacy in Jewish history; a surrender, not a solution, a retrogression into the blackest error, and not progress toward the light”. These are stern words of condemnation for the policy England is seeking to carry into effect at the point of the sword.

Mr. Morgenthau proves that the Balfour scheme is a physical and economical impossibility. Zionists had been working for 30 years in the same direction before the British took possession of Palestine; they had spent millions; “and in 1914 all they had accomplished was the return of 10,000 Jews to Palestine”. During the same period 1,500,000 of the scattered race emigrated

from Europe to the USA. The Jewish population of the world is 13,000,000. There are now 5,000,000 people in Palestine. That small and rather barren country cannot support more than an additional 1,000,000 even under the most favourable conditions. Fully 85% of the present inhabitants are Mohammedans—and there are as many Christians as Jews. Where is there room for the Children of Israel in their ‘National Home?’ Mr. Henry Morgenthau hammers the delusion mercilessly. He reveals the hypocrisy behind the British scheme: “Politically, Zionism is ridiculous. British influence must be omnipotent on both sides of the Suez Canal. Moreover, Britain cannot afford to trifle with the susceptibilities of its Moslem subjects”. ... Yet the British Government are maintaining a Governor, a host of administrative officials and a large army in Palestine at an immense annual cost on the pretense that they intend to accomplish an impossibility and establish a new state, predominantly Jewish.”

Morgenthau had been behind a petition, signed by 30 other prominent American Jews, including Adolph Ochs, the publisher of *The New York Times*, to President Wilson, protesting at the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine. The petition stated that the setting up of such a state would be “utterly opposed to the principles of democracy... for which the world war was waged”.

It was never imagined in 1921—or if it was, no one suggested such a possibility in public—that the problem of living space in Palestine, brought about by the moving in of Jews under Imperial auspices, might be ultimately resolved by the moving out of the current inhabitants.

What appeared to Morgenthau and to the Irish News as British hypocrisy was, in fact, the product of reconciling the contradictory promises made to the different parties Britain had involved in its Great War on the Germans and Ottomans in the post-War situation. Looked at from the vantage point of the pre-War world, it looked as though England was about to grab Palestine for itself on the pretence of installing a small nation in its historic homeland.

But Britain was no longer complete master of the situation it had brought about. Before it had even occupied the area, it had promised Palestine to the Arabs as part of a much larger Arab State in return for an insurrection against the Ottomans, organised by Colonel Lawrence. At the same time, it had promised the same land to the Zionists to bring about a change of sides by American Jews in the War: removing a major obstacle to US participation—a move Britain found necessary to defeat Germany and its allies. And it had engaged in the pretence of fully supporting the democratic anti-Imperialist demands of President Wilson in order to guarantee America’s entry into the War.

So, England was restricted on what it could do when it began to administer Palestine after the War; and there was a balancing act to perform between the League of Nations, the Arabs, and the Jews—all within the Mandate constrictions. (The Jews, of course, gradually got the best of this balancing act, and the Arabs the worst.)

Britain calculated that the situation it had created in Palestine—with two antagonistic peoples competing against each other in a small territory—would ensure its continued control of the territory: since the divide meant that Palestine could never be trusted to govern itself. In this context, Britain facilitated the steady immigration of Jews into Palestine: so that it could ultimately hand over a limited form of self-government to them, when they had attained a majority. The aim was to remain as overseer, to manage the gradual production of a Jewish State, in the Imperial interest. At the same time Britain kept reassuring the Arabs—while anticipating trouble ahead. But all the time England believed the trouble could be kept within bounds and handled by its power.

Nevertheless, the Imperial Power was not the Ottoman Empire, and neither was it what it had been before it took on the Great War of 1914. Circumstances, for which it had been directly responsible, conspired against it. And, when these circumstances also brought about another World War, and the killing of European Jews in large numbers, British Palestine came under pressure—with the result that the Imperial Power finally walked away from the mess it had created. Leaving behind the Arab nationalists it had cultivated, and the Jewish nationalists it had made into a force in the region, to settle accounts among themselves.

Ireland may have expressed joy in the recapture of Jerusalem for Christendom, but it did not fight the Great War to establish a Jewish Colony in Palestine (and see the native inhabitants driven out). If any Redmondite leader had proposed such a thing it is pretty certain they would not have recruited many soldiers on the basis of it. Colonisation and the destruction of native peoples were not popular causes in Ireland given its history.

But that is the problem with joining catastrophic wars in which the outcomes are unknown. War is a catastrophic activity and catastrophe on a large and wide scale was definitely the outcome of the Great War that John Redmond signed Ireland up for and which the *Irish News* supported.

Storrs, as Imperial Governor of Jerusa-

lem, set out what he imagined the Jewish Colony might become in an emotional passage in his book:

“In spite then of non-Zionist and anti-Zionist Jews, world Jewry was at last within sight of home. No more would an infinitesimal minority out of all her sixteen millions creep to Jerusalem for the privilege of being allowed to die on sufferance as if in a foreign country. No longer would the Jews remain a people without a land, in exile everywhere... Civilization had at last acknowledged the great wrong, had proclaimed the word of Salvation. It was for the Jews to approve themselves by action worthy of that confidence: to exercise practically and materially their historic ‘right.’ The soil tilled by their fathers had lain for long ages neglected: now, with the modern processes available to Jewish brains, Jewish capital and Jewish enterprise, the wilderness would rejoice and blossom like the rose. Even though the land could not yet absorb sixteen millions, nor even eight, enough could return, if not to form the Jewish State (which a few extremists publicly demanded), at least to prove that the enterprise was one that blessed him that gave as well as him that took by forming for England “a little loyal Jewish Ulster” in a sea of potentially hostile Arabism.” (Orientations, pp.357-8)

Before the War the Arabs had been unaware of this mysterious “principle of self-determination.” The Ottoman State had done nothing to foster nationalism in order to subordinate people to its dominion, as England had, so there was no need of such a concept for the living of life. The Arabs were made aware of the concept of self-determination by their exposure to the Great War that the Christians took to the Ottoman Muslim State.

The War propaganda led peoples across the world to understand the idea of self-determination as a general political principle, for which the War was being fought, and which would be universally applied after it was won. However, it soon became clear that self-determination was not for universal application—it was a prize that was in the gift of those who won the War. And it was only to be applied in cases that suited the interests of those who won that War.

The British Mandate for Palestine had one fundamental difference from the other Mandates that were awarded. All the other Mandates were instituted on the premise that the Mandated Power would bring the inhabitants of these countries considered unfit to govern themselves up to a level whereby, in the future, they were capable of self-government. But in the case of Palestine the inhabitants were to be kept under control by the Mandated Power while another group

of people were brought in from outside - until they achieved such numbers that they would be capable of government. And then, and only then, would self-government be awarded.

Essentially, the scattered Jews of the world, though not at present resident in Palestine, were given as much right to the country as the actual inhabitants—until the time came that the build-up of Jewish nationalists in Palestine was sufficient enough that they could become the predominant receivers of government.

The self-determination that was applied to Palestine involved a very novel application of the concept indeed. Self-determination is usually based on the people who had been inhabiting a region over a sustained period of time. But in this instance the right to self-determination of the actual inhabitants of the region was being over-ridden by a right of self-determination based on a two thousand year old Book and the view that the land should be possessed by those most likely to develop it to its fullest, and contribute to ‘progress’ of a Western kind.

That, of course, is usually called colonialism, rather than self-determination.

The British scheme for Palestine did not envisage the establishment of an independent Jewish state. It was realised that from the time of the Romans Jewish states had been conducted in a way that did not lead to stability and tended more toward catastrophe. A Jewish state would have been anticipated to go the way of all the others in 1918 but one was possible under British auspices - if a balancing act could be accomplished between the Jews and Arabs.

But if Britain imagined that the Jews could be turned into a loyal garrison of British interests in the region they were to be disappointed. The Jewish colonists were not content to meekly accept a role within a communal contest of attrition with the Arabs, in the British Imperial interest, and in perpetuity. They were of far more substantial stuff than the other group which Britain was embarking on this project with, the Ulster Protestants, and having been re-orientated as nationalists by the Balfour Declaration they developed full-blown ideas of nationhood of their own.

The Jews might have started out like the Protestant planters in Ireland but they almost instantaneously turned out to be more like the Irish Catholics, whom England had been intent on denying nationhood to.

The British objective of establishing a Home Rule State of Jews, or a Jewish Dominion, in Palestine, for strategic purposes, had that great potential flaw—that the Zionists,

like the Irish, might really want more. The Jews might become whole-hearted nationalists and desire independence, rather than be just Britain’s garrison in the Near East. And what would become of Imperial plans then?

Britain, in turning the Jews, made a miscalculation in an ecstatic state of Biblical fervour in 1917. If Britain believed the Jews to be mere mercenaries of Germany and the Ottomans why could they not also be the same of Britain? It was never considered that in turning the Jews into nationalists of Zion that might not cause them to cease being mercenaries? Would they then not see themselves, after their return to Zion, as real nationalists with national independence as their aim - the only objective worthy of the name of self-respecting nationalism? And would that not repel them from the Imperial motherland - which was not really a mother to them at all but really just a surrogate?

What would the attitude of thoroughgoing nationalists, imbued with notions of religious and racial superiority, make of a large and hostile group within their midst? That seems to be what happened in 1947/8, and then ever since, is it not?

Ronald Storrs, the British Imperial Governor, had despaired of Zionism after witnessing the experiment, and he saw it as a terrible mistake. When contemplating a note for a 1948 edition of Orientations he wrote the following:

“Re-reading these chapters I compared what Britain had done for Zionism with what Zionism had done to the British, to the peaceful inhabitants of the Holy Land and to the Middle East, to Judaism and to world Jewry, to the fair name of the United Nations, to the Anglo-American relationship, upon which the future of humanity depends - then, in the speech of our book of common prayer - “I held my tongue and spake nothing.” I kept silence, even from God’s words, but it was pain and grief to me.” (Rory Miller, Sir Ronald Storrs And Zion: The Dream that Turned into a Nightmare, Middle Eastern Studies, July 2000, p.138)

Britain made the nightmare of Zion possible and then suffered for it, before washing its hands of it and leaving the suffering to those it had inflicted its project upon. Storrs, in knowing his Bible well, should have realised he was the successor of Pontus Pilate.

But there has been no escaping the nightmare for “the peaceful inhabitants of the Holy Land and the Middle East” from what Britain and Redmondite Ireland inflicted upon them.

Pat Walsh

The German Left Is Broken – A Drama for the Country

Some elements in the "Die Linke" [The Left Party] in the German Bundestag (Federal Parliament) have announced that the Parliamentary Party will be dissolved on 6th December 2023.

The background to this decision was the resignation of the former Parliamentary Party leader, Sarah Wagenknecht, along with nine other Party Deputies, and the announcement that a new left party is to be formed.

The fact is that, with the loss of these Deputies, the Linke falls below the threshold of 38 Deputies required to form a Parliamentary Fraction in the Bundestag. While the Deputies will retain their Parliamentary mandate, it will be as members of Groups. Under Bundestag Regulations, a Group is endowed with a much lower status than a Fraction.

Leaving aside Parliamentary procedure: the question that springs to mind is whether the two new Parliamentary groups will come into conflict in the Bundestag: will they be rivals or will they co-operate in a fraternal/sisterly spirit? There is no knowing!

But they are already fighting about which of them is the more significant. The group

which continues to call itself "De Linke" bluntly declares: "We are the only relevant Left Party in Germany. On the other hand, the Wagenknecht Group currently has neither name or programme. At the moment it is operating as the Sarah Wagenknecht Alliance: no word so far as to what the party name is to be.

Whatever about that: the dissolution of "Die Linke" fraction is a deep—I would even say dramatic—setback for politics in a Germany which, under Social Democratic leadership, is in the process of raising military capacity to Prussian and Führer levels, and which is aspiring to take over the military leadership of Western Europe and of NATO. This Germany will seek, in alliance with the USA, to enforce the 'rules-based Imperialist order'—by military means when necessary.

Sarah Wagenknecht has been one of the best-known faces of the Left Party in recent years.

She was born in Jena [German Democratic Republic: former East Germany]—the daughter of a German mother and an Iranian father—in 1969.

In 1989 she joined the ruling party of the GDR, the SED [Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschland: Socialist Unity Party, Germany]. And she later became a member of the 'Communist Platform' within the subsequent PDS [Party of Democratic Socialism], and in the Linke Partei [Left Party].

Sarah undoubtedly went on to become the best-known face of Die Linke, and was co-leader of the Linke parliamentary group between 2015 and 2019. However, she was often at odds with the Party leadership. In 2018 she created an uproar in the party when, together with her husband, Oscar La Fontaine [a former leader of the Social Democrats], she founded the 'Stand-Up Alliance', hoping to unite everyone in the Left spectrum—with absolutely no success.

In 2021 she published a book, *Die Selbstgerechten* [The Self-Righteous], in which she took sharp aim at her former comrades in Die Linke, describing them as Lifestyle-Leftists.

But this again is a simplification: for there is a lot more that could be said and written about the cleverness and political intelligence of Sarah Wagenknecht.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about the political programme of her future party. Up to now this has been clothed in meagre words:

- " — Economic Rationality
- Social Justice
- Peace".

What German bourgeois would not include these words in their programme?

Gregor Gysi, a bedrock of the Left Party, expressed what is known of Sarah's programme in these words:

"Sarah wants a mixture:

Social policy like that of the Left Party,
Economic policy like that of Ludwig
Erhard (who invented the Social
Market-Economy),

Refugee policy like the AfD (the right-wing conservative party)

I will hold back from giving an assessment of Sarah Wagenknecht's policies until I have seen and studied her Programme.

But one thing I will say: it is Sarah Wagenknecht's unforgivable political and moral failure to have split the German Left Party.

Herbert Rimmel

IRISH FOREIGN AFFAIRS, December 2023

Britain, the destruction of the Ottoman Empire and Zionism

Pat Walsh

The bitter legacy of the alleged occupation of Istanbul.

Dr. Yusuf Turan Çetiner

The most important speech of the 21st century?

Vladimir Putin

XV BRICS Summit South Africa 2023

Johannesburg II Declaration

From Ukraine to Israel – what happened to the Jews?

Peter Brooke

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The Road To A New Casement Park, Belfast

INTRODUCTION

After the closure of the Maze (Long Kesh) prison, a monitoring group set up in January 2003 to explore the future of the 360-acre site. Strategically placed, with close motorway and rail links, there were many proposals, including a museum, a multi-purpose sports stadium, and an office, hotel and leisure village. In January 2006, the UK Government unveiled a master-plan for the Long-Kesh site, incorporating many of these proposals—including a 45,000 seat national multi-sport stadium for football, rugby and Gaelic games. It was clearly a ‘flagship’ project of the Blair Government, seeking to boost an unsteady peace-process.

The Government's infrastructure organisation, the Strategic Investment Board, was tasked to progress the proposed stadium idea, and appointed a senior adviser, Tony Whitehead, to manage the project. The capacity of the proposed stadium was later adjusted to 38,000 and the organising bodies of all three sports, the Irish FA, Ulster Rugby, and Ulster GAA, agreed in principle to support the integrated scheme. In October 2006, demolition work started in preparation for construction on the site.

In reality, much of Protestant opinion opposed the development. The museum project was pilloried by Unionists as a “shrine to terrorism”. The Irish FA, football's governing body in Northern Ireland, was nominally in favour of the project. It was to be fully funded by the UK Government. Its modernising Chief Executive, Howard Wells, described the scheme as a “no brainer”. However, many Unionists and soccer fans remained bitterly opposed to the development, and the traditionally Protestant lay elected officials of the IFA followed suit—favouring remaining at Windsor Park in the loyalist ‘Village’ area of Belfast. The Irish FA then contrived to sack Wells—a dismissal which ultimately cost them £500,000 in an out-of-court settlement.

With the return of devolved government, DUP Minister Gregory Campbell decided to formally abandon the £300m multi-sport stadium project, claiming it would not represent value for money

and would cause community divisions. Campbell authorised plans to explore other options involving major investment in upgrading existing facilities—Ravenhill Stadium for rugby, Windsor Park—where Northern Ireland play all their home soccer games—for football, and Casement Park in Andersonstown, Belfast, home to Antrim GAA—for Gaelic games.

The Ravenhill (now Kingspan) Stadium was first to complete in April 2014, with a capacity of 18,196. Windsor Park Stadium completed in late 2016 as an 18,000 capacity “National” Stadium of Northern Ireland football.

The Casement Park redevelopment plans were announced in 2009, though it was not until 2011 that the Northern Ireland Executive announced that it had granted £138m for the three stadium redevelopment projects throughout Northern Ireland, of which Ulster GAA would receive £61.4m to be used to redevelop Casement Park into a 40,000 all-seated stadium. To ‘balance’ community benefit, League soccer clubs were to receive £36.2m in addition to the estimated £33m of grant aid for the football “National” stadium.

The Casement Park project was beset with opposition and planning delays from the outset. Many local residents of West Belfast objected to the proposal and in September 2013 the Mooreland and Owenvarragh Residents Association (MORA) issued a formal petition and letter of objection to the Northern Ireland Department of Environment, describing the new stadium plans “a monstrosity” and too expansive. The residents filed a lawsuit and, in December 2014 the High Court ruled a ministerial decision granting planning approval for the redevelopment of the stadium was unlawful, setting the proposal back further. Ulster GAA responded, in time, by submitting an amended design in October 2016, unveiling a smaller scale project with a reduced capacity of 34,500.

While planning permission for the redevelopment of Casement Park was eventually confirmed in July 2021, by March 2023, the stadium remained closed and had been effectively left derelict for a decade.

Deliverance for Casement came out of the blue with a successful combined bid by the Football Associations of England, Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Scotland & Wales to host the UEFA Euro 2028 competition.

UEFA criteria required a stadium of a minimum of 30,000 spectator seats. Northern Ireland's “National” football stadium at Windsor Park fell 12,000 seats short, so the Irish FA, through Chief Executive Patrick Nelson sought involvement in hosting Euro 2028—a lucrative event in world football—through agreeing with the GAA to host games at the putative 34,500 Casement Park.

The bid to host Euro 2028 includes a proposal to redevelop the Casement Park stadium by 2028. And this now has the full imprimatur of the UK Government, with Northern Ireland's Secretary of State Chris Heaton-Harris pledging full funding support—“whatever it takes”.

This is the context to the article by Mark Langhammer, which appeared in Belfast Media Group's Andersonstown News on 28th October 2023.

Langhammer, formerly an independent Labour councillor in Newtownabbey, and an Executive member of the (Irish) Labour Party, now acts as Vice-Chair of Crusaders Football Club, a leading club in the Northern Ireland Football League, set in the strongly Unionist and Loyalist Shore Road district of Belfast.

We publish this article, in full, below.

**MARK LANGHAMMER:
Yes to Casement and the 2028 legacy**

**‘JUST DO IT’:
A new Casement Park as part of the
Euro 28 bid will leave a legacy
for the city**

The 2028 Euro-championship in Belfast—what's not to like? A lot, it seems. Kate Hoey says that the Irish Football Association (IFA) have “rolled over”. Former IFA chief Howard Wells thinks that a backward governing body will get “scraps off the table”. Sir Jeffrey Donaldson wonders where the money will come from and wouldn't it be better spent elsewhere? I disagree.

Accepted, the IFA were cornered in a mess of their own making. Back in the noughties, they were offered a free gratis 35,000 seater stadium at Maze-Long-Kesh (MLK) to be paid by the UK Government. Wells rightly described it as a “no brainer”. It was, but the IFA ‘blazers’ of the day thought otherwise.

The current IFA regime was faced with the dilemma of ‘No Casement, no Euro 2028’. Current IFA chief, Patrick Nelson, considers this another “no brainer”. He is right. Clearly many Northern Ireland fans disagree. Some chant “You can stick your Casement Park...” and vow not to attend. Given current form, neither Irish side, North or South, look likely to qualify anyway. Nor do football fans always see the wood from the trees. German, French, Spanish and Italian fans will show up. Scandinavians, Poles, Albanians and more will buy tickets. The ‘blazers’ will take their freebies and Belfast will glory in hosting a major international event.

Will it be “crumbs” from the table? I think not. Five matches will be played at Casement, subject to winning the construction race against time. Up to ten international teams will visit, with their fans. The teams will all need a training base up to UEFA standards. So, investment will arrive at two or three sites. That’s a handy legacy to start with.

Euro 2028 will also force proper traffic management planning on match-days. One conflict legacy is that Belfast remains ‘car-city-central’. The 2020 Carl Frampton/Luke Jackson fight at Windsor, otherwise brilliant, saw very poor event transport links on an atrocious night of heavy rain. By contrast, Aami Park—a 30,000 stadium in Melbourne—provides barely any car-parking but the excellence of its traffic plan means that buses, taxis, metros, along with park & rides, dissipate large crowds in short order. Learning to manage event traffic would be a boon for the city.

The West of the city will play its part in creating a welcoming environment. Bars, eateries, B&B’s, and Airbnb’s will thrive. New businesses may flourish, but we need more public infrastructure—meeting spaces, fan-zones, piazza’s even, to accommodate match-day revelry. And fans will spend in all parts of the city, not just the West.

The design of the new Casement involved globally renowned stadium architect, Populous, and looks all the world like the Arup-designed Tele-2 Arena, Stockholm’s municipal stadium. The Tele-2 is higher ‘spec’ and has a roof, but they’re similar in design and spectator size. When Crusaders played IF Brommapojkarna at the Tele-2 in 2014, I was taken for a private tour of the stadium and was tickled to see the electronic ad-board advertise current and future events—IF Bromma vs Crusad-

ers shared billing with the Rolling Stones and Justin Bieber! Since, Paul McCartney, Adele, Celine Dion and Rihanna have all played the Tele-2, with Madonna attracting a crowd just short of 40,000. Casement will, of course, host GAA Ulster finals, County Matches and more—but with the SSE arena limited to 11,000 spectators maximum, Casement should evolve into the city’s largest concert and events space. Is that not a legacy worth having? Can we, as a city, not aspire to an events venue of serious size and scale?

The Green and White Army (GAWA) spokesman, Gary McAllister rightly raises concerns that the delivery of an expanded Sub-Regional Stadium Programme (SRSP) needs to be part of the legacy. The original £36.2m allocation isn’t enough. Patrick Nelson estimates that £120m is more realistic. I agree, though the failure of the IFA to spend a cent of its annual €1.1m allocation from UEFA’s Hat-Trick Fund on club stadia development over the past decade or more hardly breeds confidence. The non-delivery of the £36.2m SRSP ‘pot’ was scandalously botched by Stormont. Successive sports ministers from Sinn Féin and the DUP had their hands tied by a constituency carve-up ‘deal’ agreed by the then First and Deputy First Ministers.

Thankfully, pork-barrel politics has given way to sensible civil service ground-work and by Gerard Lawlor’s leadership as CEO at the NI Football League—plotting a course for Club Stadia development based on need. That, too, can only be assisted by Euro 2028.

Sir Jeffrey Donaldson knows the answer to his own ‘money’ question. The UK is a currency-creating state. Parliament can, by law, instruct the Bank of England to create money at a drop of a hat. That’s how Covid and Furlough were paid for. That’s how endless wars of choice are funded. And, since much of UK ‘debt’ is money that it owes itself, nobody worries too much. Unless, of course, money-creation overheats the economy and creates inflation. However, current inflation and the cost-of-living crisis have nothing whatsoever to do with an over-heated economy—and everybody knows that!

Casement has a chance to be realised because it’s part of a Euro 28 that has London and Wembley as its centre-piece. The IFA was right to back it. Direct-Rule and the absence of a Stormont block gives it a chance. The timetable is aggressive, so it’s no “gimme”. The Republic’s Government will make a contribution, at least

for the optics. Were it left to politicians at Stormont—who wrecked the sub-regional stadia programme—could the same be said? I think we all know the answer to that one.

The imperative is simple no—Just Do It!

Mark Langhammer is Vice-Chair of Crusaders FC, Belfast and writes in a personal capacity.

Post-Script

Since Mark Langhammer’s article in the Andersonstown News on 28th October 2023, a major Lucid Opinion poll published on 23rd November has shed more light on the ‘Casement’ issue. The Lucid tracker poll asked three questions

6a) How do you feel about Euro 2028 games being played at Casement Park?

- For: 54%
- Against: 31%
- Neutral/Don’t care/Don’t know, Not sure, No opinion: 15%

6b) Would you support Northern Ireland playing at Casement Park?

- Yes: 39%
- No: 31%
- I don’t support the NI football team: 19%
- Neutral/Don’t care etc: 11%

6c) If the choice had to be: Euro 2028 games at Casement Park or no Euro 2028 games in NI – which would you prefer?

- Euro games at Casement: 60%
- No Euro games in NI at all: 28%
- Neutral/ Don’t care etc: 12%

It is of note that the same Lucid tracker poll placed the ‘harder edge’ Unionist support at 32% (28% for DUP, 4% for TUV), broadly the same as the 31% against playing Euro 2028 games at Casement Park. The overall Unionist vote was 40%, including the Ulster Unionist poll number at 8%. This demonstrates that, whilst most Unionist are hardened against NI games at Casement, some unionists would be prepared to attend amongst the 60% in favour overall. West Belfast will support Euro 2028 games with gusto. They’ll have the political *nous* to put on a show. The games will be a success through UK Government support—“whatever it takes” as Secretary of State Chris Heaton Harris repeats.

In the final analysis, the Casement Park issue represents, in microcosm, the dilemma of the Protestant community in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland

is no longer their own “wee country”. Protestants just don’t have the numbers anymore to block things. And, by the time that the 2028 Euro championships come around, we will be 34 years on from the 1994 ceasefires. Isn’t it high time that going to an international sports event is a matter of choice? Buy a ticket, or don’t.

Hey-ho, life goes on!

For further commentary, access the ‘Second Captains’ podcast at Zero Skill Moments, The Case For Casement Park, Ken Batters His Pan - Second Captains The full discussion is via the Second Captains Podcast Patreon site.

Mark Langhammer

State had a very large Palestinian Arab minority in it—or possibly a small Palestinian majority. But, whether it was minority or majority, it was far too large for the functioning of a Jewish State.

The Jewish State was not to be a state based on general citizenship in a territory in which the Jews happened to be a majority. Many Jews may have seen it in that way, but the driving force of Jewish Nationalism did not.

Israel And Real-Politik

Anti-Semitism is on the rise in Europe. Surprise!?

Naomi O’Leary, European Correspondent of the Irish Times, discussed the increase in European Anti-Semitism with Pat Kenny on *Newstalk* [16.11.23] without mentioned the conduct of the Jewish State, which was committing genocide in Gaza, as a factor which might possibly have some bearing on it.

When General Sharon was in power in Israel, a group of Palestinians was deported into No-Man’s-Land and left to fend for themselves. The Irish Times published a cartoon about it, which suggested that Jews had some responsibility in the matter. A couple of days later it published an apology for the suggestion that Jews and Israel were in some way connected.

We had to explain that Israel was not a State established by those who happened to be living in Palestine at the moment when the Middle East was being divided into nation-states by Britain. It was conceived and implemented as a Jewish State, even though the Jews on the ground in Palestine made up a very small part of the population of Palestine.

Dermot Meleady has been writing letters to the papers, supporting the Jewish right of national self-determination, but he does not really do justice to it. The process of national self-determination which resulted in the establishment of the Jewish State was brought about by the conferring of national rights in Palestine on a population that did not live in Palestine.

The process was begun in 1917 when the British Government, apparently carried way by its conquest of Jerusalem from the Turkish Empire, made a gift of Palestine to the Jews to be their “national home”. A few years later Britain formed the League of Nations to be a world authority—along with the Empire—and gave itself an in-

ternational Mandate to give effect to its Balfour Declaration. It then opened Palestine to Jewish colonisation, and gave the Jewish Agency special status in Palestine in preparation for becoming a State.

The British intention was that the Jewish State should be a Dominion of the Empire. Whitehall was well aware of a dangerous quality in previous Jewish States but thought it could direct its Zionist protégé to more positive ends. In the mid 1940s, however, the Jewish colony, that had been built up in Palestine under British rule, declared its independence and made war on Britain by terrorist action. The British Labour Government threw in the towel.

It surrendered to Jewish terrorism—the most spectacular feat of which was the blowing up, without warning, of a fashionable hotel in Jerusalem (housing the British Palestine administration)—by disowning its League of Nations Mandate and passing the Jewish problem on to the newly-established United Nations. The Security Council of the UN handed the problem down to the General Assembly for decision by a two-thirds majority. This was the only major decision the General Assembly was ever allowed to make.

The General Assembly gave the major part of Palestine to the Jews to be a Jewish State. It gave the rest to the Arabs to be a Palestinian State. The decision was made possible by Russia and the USA directing their client states to vote for it, and by inducements that were given to other States.

The Jewish nationalist view was that it had a legitimate right to the whole of Palestine, dating from God-knows-when, and that almost half of Palestine was taken away from it by the General Assembly. But the Zionist leadership decided to accept the Partition arrangement for the moment in order to get an internationally-recognised Jewish State established.

The territory awarded for the Jewish

The first major action of the Jewish State was a terrorist assault on the Palestinian population of the territory allocated to it. The outstanding act of terrorism was the slaughter of the villagers of Deir Yassin, in a public display of killing that puts one in mind of the public killing of Jews in a couple of the Baltic States seven years earlier, after these States were liberated from Communist rule by Hitler.

A decent pretence used to be made that Deir Yassin rebelled against the Jewish State and was dealt with by law. That pretence seems to have been discarded under pressure of recent events. The statement that over half a million Palestinians were quickly cleared out, by Jewish-nationalist terrorist action, from the territory awarded to the Jews for a state, has been clearly stated on publically broadcast television in recent weeks, and it has not been disputed angrily, like it used to be.

The distinction between Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing is not very clear—not in the way the words have been used in British and American propaganda in recent times. The least that has to be said about the Jewish State in its first months of existence is that it engaged in massive ethnic cleansing, accompanied by mass plunder of Palestinian property and extensive killing.

The Palestinian population, awarded less than half of the territory of Palestine for a state, were not ready for statehood in 1948, and the deluge of refugees, driven into that area by Jewish-nationalist terrorism, created chaos.

The British had made no preparation for Palestinian statehood. The Palestinians were accustomed to the tolerant conditions of life in the Turkish Empire, in which many varieties of people could live mixed up with one another without being murderous. The British purpose, after conquering Palestine, was to string the Palestinians along while Jewish colonisation laid the basis for a Jewish-nationalist state.

The Palestinians initially had no problem with Jewish immigration. Jewish immigration was allowed in the Ottoman Empire, which prevented colonisation. (The immigrant went there just to live: the colonist went there to take over.)

The Jewish problem in the Middle East is the problem of settling a conquest while substantial numbers of the conquered people remain present in the situation.

An Ulster Unionist intellectual (Frank Frankford Moore) explained, at the time of the First Home Rule Bill that conquest can be settled only by exterminations of the conquered. If the conquered are not exterminated, but are allowed to hang around nursing resentment over what had been done to them, they will eventually get themselves together and fight back.

The Jewish conquerors of Palestine understood this well enough. They were themselves survivors of an attempted extermination, and they were energised by their escape to hit back. They felt justified in what they were doing in Palestine in 1947-8 by what was done to them in Europe in 1941-44. It was unreasonable but it was deeply felt. In the realm of feeling their victims functioned as proxy-substitutes for their persecutors.

In the Zionist conception of things there is an inherent antagonism between Jews and Gentiles. All Gentiles are Anti-Semites. And the Arabs, though Semites, are 'Gentiles' in this matter.

It might be that Palestine Arabs found the Jews obnoxious because of what the Jews were doing to them, but that was merely superficial. The Palestinians, being Semites but not Jews, shared in the general Gentile guilt of inherent Anti-Semitism. That was the Jewish view.

Chaim Weizmann, the sophisticated diplomat of Jewish Nationalism, agreed with British Labour Minister Richard Crossman that all Gentiles are anti-Semitic by nature. It is their original sin, and the only thing they can do about it is confess it.

Crossman played a part in causing the British Government to surrender Palestine to Jewish nationalist terrorism in 1948. He considered that Britain failed in its Imperial duty when it did not clear Palestine of Arabs in preparation for the Jewish State. He was honoured as a Righteous Gentile by Israel.

The work of establishing the Jewish State, as a continuous work in progress,

was done on the Jewish side by Chaim Weizmann, the suave diplomat who knew very well how to play on European complexes, and Ben-Gurion, the fanatical terrorist who didn't give a damn for European sensibilities.

Ben-Gurion kept the expansionist dynamic of the State alive whenever it was in danger of withering. He knew what Frank Frankford Moore of Belfast knew. He did what he could by direct action in the confusion of 1948 — until Britain acted through one of its 'Arab States' to stop the expansion.

The period from 1949 to the present day has been a period of waiting for some event which would give cover for a resumption of direct exterminationist activity. Prime Minister Netanyahu decided, on the instant, on October 7th (the date of the Hamas attacks), that the opportunity for implementing the final solution had arrived.

The only question was whether President Biden, that good Irish Catholic who had saved the world from Trump, would allow it.

President Clinton, after one meeting with Netanyahu, said Netanyahu acted as if the Super-Power in the room was Israel. Is there any clear evidence that Netanyahu was mistaken? The US has issued many ultimatums. Israel ignored them, even though in every material way it is entirely dependent on the US.

Israel is the Jewish State, but its continuing existence depends entirely on the Jews who continue to live in the Diaspora and continue to exert pressure within the Gentile States.

The crucial influence is that exerted on US Governments. It is not based on voting power. Some other power must be at work.

That other power exerted its influence on the British Labour Party a few years ago. The Party was condemned for having infected itself with Anti-Semitism under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership. The Jewish newspapers said that, if Labour won the Election under Corbyn's leadership, the Jews would have to leave Britain.

*

A great increase in Anti-Semitism was brought about by means of a change in what was meant by Anti-Semitism. The Chief Rabbi said repeatedly that it was theoretically possible to be critical of the

Jewish State without being anti-Semitic but it was not possible in practice.

Other states might be criticised for being colonialist, for annexing parts of neighbouring states, or for conducting apartheid policies within their own system, but not Israel. Criticism of Israel for these things was not democratic: it was anti-Semitic.

This altered meaning of Anti-Semitism was given currency in the media, and it was used by the Tories as a stick to beat Labour with. Its adoption certainly led to an increase in what was called Anti-Semitism. Corbyn lost the 2017 Election — which he very probably would have done anyway — and resigned the leadership. His deputy, Sir Keir Starmer, posed as a Corbynite in order to win the leadership. As leader he quickly branded Corbyn an anti-Semite, excluded him from the Parliamentary Labour Party, and set about purging the Party of critics of Israel's policy, assisted by the Israeli Intelligence Service.

When Israel decided to deprive Gaza of food, water, fuel and medicines, and to bomb it into the dust, Sir Keir said he saw nothing wrong in that. But then it appeared that the Israeli vetting of the membership had been faulty because many members of the Front Bench came out in support of a Ceasefire in the Gaza War — which was surely an anti-Semitic act according to the standards applied to Corbyn.

The British Labour Party has now prohibited itself from discussing the Palestine situation. The Leader has ordered the Branches to think about something else instead — preferably, perhaps, not to think at all, until the Election is won.

And Labour was the Party that created the Middle Eastern mess. It did so in the years after 1945, when it was clearly in power, not merely in Office. It was its duty, at the very least, to police the implementation of the Partition settlement — instead of passing the matter on to the UN General Assembly, knowing very well that the General Assembly had no police powers at all.

It was its business act as an Imperial Power to resist Jewish terrorism, to confine Jewish nationalist activity within the territory conceded to it, and to establish the Palestinian State as a going concern, and provide it with securities against Jewish nationalist aggression.

Labour was in 1945 the Government of a secondary Imperial Power. It cast aside

Imperial authority in Palestine when it was badly needed there. That had nothing to do with anti-Imperialism. It held Malaya within the Empire by means of a dirty war when the Malayan Anti-Fascists, having taken the propaganda of the "Anti-Fascist War" to heart, declared independence. It fought a dirty Imperialist War for tin and rubber while letting the Middle East situation go to pot.

Palestine is the last place in the world which Labour should forbid itself from discussing. It is the place for which it bears most responsibility.

*

The European continent was not wiped clean of Anti-Semitism in 1945. It was naïve of Naomi O'Leary—a professional commentator on European affairs—to suppose that it might have been.

The Second World War was not, in any of its dimensions, a war against Anti-Semitism. Insofar as Jews were saved by it in large numbers, it was through their position in the Soviet Union that they were saved.

The Communist movement that came to dominance in Russia in 1917 was widely regarded in Western Europe as being the work of a Jewish Conspiracy. Winston Churchill, the Western hero of what was called the 'Anti-Fascist War', was of that opinion, and it was in the hope of removing the Jews from world affairs by bottling them up in a state of their own that he became an active Zionist. Zionism and Anti-Semitism were intimately related.

Insofar as Britain had a Jewish policy when deciding to start another World War in 1939, it was expressed in one of the Oxford War Pamphlets published in preparation for war. That pamphlet, Palestine (1940), by James Parkes, took it that there was a Jewish problem in Europe that was not merely the product of Anti-Semitic preaching for not good reason. Anti-Semitism occurred when the Jewish presence in a national population rose above a very small percentage. He therefore suggested that, in the post-War reconstruction, care should be taken that the Jewish percentage was kept below that number.

Britain did not have the opportunity to put this Jewish policy into effect after the War. It had lost control of its War very quickly. Its fumbling attempts to fight it brought Hitler to dominance from the Spanish border to the border of the Soviet Union.

The main source of spontaneous anti-Semitism was not Germany: it was the new nation-states that followed the fall of the two great Empires, Tsarist and Hapsburg. National Socialist action against the Jews found willing support in the populations from Ukraine to the Baltic States—with the exception of Belarus which, according to a Jewish account, was not progressive enough to be Anti-Semitic.

Anti-Semitism was a symptom of Progress—if the systematic replacement of Empires by nation-states, decreed by the Versailles Conference of victors in 1919, is taken to be Progress. The new nation-states, conjured into immediate existence by Britain and France, with little or no historical development behind them, found the Jews—the commercial and professional class of the Empire—standing in the way of the native middle class.

That was the situation foreseen by Theodor Herzl a generation earlier when he wrote *The Jewish State* and founded the Zionist Organisation. Hitler's remark at the end of his life that he had solved the Jewish problem for Europe may have been in bad taste, but it was accurate. And the prominent position of Jews in the post-War administrations in the East European States that had invaded Russia in alliance with Germany in 1941 enabled those States to enter the post-Fascist world without having to deal existentially with their very recent Fascist past.

Europe might be said to have lived an ideal existence since 1945, with Russia and America taking their different bits of it in hand in their different ways, and leaving the Europeans with no responsibilities but to think beautiful thoughts.

*

As to the Jews: it would not be quite accurate to say that they ceased to be victims in 1945 and became perpetrators. They had practised at being perpetrators before 1945. When they undertook to construct a Jewish State in Palestine, with the backing of the British Empire and against the will of the existing population, they became perpetrators in principle.

At first there was a belief—or a pretence at belief—that the Jewish State could be constructed in Palestine without damage to the native population. The native population was so backward that they would not notice the framework of this State being constructed in their midst; or their will to existence was so weak that they would just wither away as they saw it being done.

Ze'ev (Vladimir) Jabotinsky—the Jewish intellectual who founded the Jewish Legion during World War I—dispelled those myths and illusions. He said that the Palestinians were a people to be conquered and subjugated so that the Jewish State might be imposed on Palestine, and so that it might flourish. And so it has been. And so it continues.

*

The Jews were for many centuries a people dispersed among the Empires of the world. The Empires have become nation-states. Nation states require national allegiance, especially newly-constructed ones. There is now a Jewish State, but the Jews of the world have not congregated in it. And what it is doing has sparked off a rise in anti-Semitism in other States.

What have the Jews in other states to do with Israel?

To begin with they have, under Israeli law, a Right of Return to Palestine, whether or not they have any record of ever leaving it. Any Jew in the world has rights in Palestine which are denied to the Palestinians.

A Palestinian might have the key to the door of the house from which he was driven by the great ethnic cleansing of 1948—but the Jewish State does not recognise him as having any rights at all in Palestine, which the God of the Jews gave to Moses in perpetuity.

Indeed, the descendants of families of Jews driven from Europe in the Hitler era have a right to compensation from the States their parents were driven from.

No such compensation has ever been offered to Palestinians driven out of Palestine.

But it is not only under Israeli law that all Jews have rights in Palestine.

There was for many centuries no widely-agreed view of what the Jews were. Were they a people, or were they a religion, or were they a commercial freemasonry?

Herzl asserted that they were a nation and that they must therefore acquire a territorial state. In 1917 the British Empire recognised them as a nation and supported the claim of those organised in the Zionist Organisation that they had the right to form their State in Palestine. A couple of years later the British position was adopted by the League of Nations—which in substance was the Western Europe Imperial Powers—and it was transferred to the United Nations in 1945.

Every Jew in the world, like it or not, has prior rights over the Palestinians in Palestine.

About ten years ago, Melanie Phillips, a very sensible right-of-centre commentator on public affairs in Britain, was 'outed' as a Jew by an assimilated Jew in a BBC radio programme. She replied frankly, in a Jewish paper, that it was inconceivable to her that there could ever be a conflict of interest between Britain and Israel which would oblige her to choose between Britain and Israel—but, if the inconceivable happened, her loyalty would be to Israel. (But, as I recall, she deplored the increase of Muslim influence in Britain, and called London Londonistan!)

England is apparently easy-going on these matters, but it was known to have operated a discreet anti-Semitic policy by informal means (such as limiting intake into elite schools) to prevent the Jews, as a talented minority, from becoming excessively influential. Jews who were very successful in professional life have encountered the quota system and written about it. The last one I noticed was Princess Margaret's solicitor. The book was published, sympathetically reviewed—and ignored.

Within the upper regions of British public life there is a talent for doing something remarkably well with the air of not doing it at all. But English skills in those things were honed over centuries in complete freedom—a thing which England as an Empire has not allowed to any other state.

*

The Jewish State is an ongoing process of conquest. The colonising nationalism that was driving it never for a moment accepted the award of territory to it by the UN as something it would settle for. Today it will not settle for its conquests up to 1967. It is actively colonising the West Bank territory of the Palestinian Authority, over which it is in military command.

It has its own sense of its Rights and asserts them to the extent of its military power. It is an Occupying Power beyond the territory which, for the moment, is Israel proper, but denies that it is an Occupying Power with the obligations towards the occupied set out by the UN system. Its God seems to be the only authority it recognises and, according to the award made by its God, it is the others who are the interloping occupiers.

Dermot Meleady, who puts the Israeli

case, says that it takes two to make a reasonable compromise (see Irish Examiner, 11th October). What this means in practice is that the Palestinians must acknowledge Jewish conquests made in breach of UN provisions within living memory as legitimate and settle for whatever remains: they should recognise the Israeli State.

I made that suggestion, in the West Bank, about forty years ago—not pretending that it had anything to do with Justice or Morality. On the basis of mere realpolitik, I suggested that the Palestinians set out the limits of Jewish conquest they would settle with, and then make an all-out effort to gain it.

That policy would put the onus of defining the borders of the Jewish State on the Palestinians, so that they could agree to make a settlement with it. That suggestion came to nothing.

The State Power in the situation was Israel. It was the Superpower in the Middle East—the one armed with the weapon of mass destruction. It refused to set categorical limits to itself, to define the geographical extent of Israel. It was an open-ended development, and for that reason it could not be recognised—it could only be submitted to.

Meleady said: *"as long as Hamas is funded, guided and controlled by its ideological overlords in Teheran this will not happen"*

—*"this"* being submission to an (un) reasonable compromise.

(Perhaps Meleady is unaware of the fact that the Palestinian resistance to Jewish conquest pre-dated the appearance of the alleged ideological overlords in Tehran by 30 years!)

The UN decided to impose a Jewish State on the Middle East against the wishes, not only of the inhabitants of Palestine, but of all the existing states in the Middle East—even though the UN was supposed to function by means of regional associations.

That State was in origin and in working out a hostile act against the Middle East. It could therefore only be a safe haven for Jews if it had the power to destroy all its neighbouring States, and that was its understanding from the start. (The Middle East owed nothing to the Jews. It had merely resisted colonisation by Jews while Europe was trying to exterminate them.)

There were only two real States in the Middle East, Iran and Saudi Arabia. All of the others were brittle Imperialist constructions designed to serve British, French and Italian interests. And Saudi Arabia, though constructed by itself, is of very recent origin.

Iran (Persia) was a State of long standing, with deep cultural foundations. It was twice occupied jointly by Britain and Russia in the first half of the 20th century, but was never broken by them. It is dangerous to British and American (and therefore Israeli) interests because it stands on its own ground and is independent and self-reliant.

Its Islamic revolution, unlike Islamism elsewhere, was therefore a substantial national development.

Western-oriented and secularist Iraq blocked its expansion for a while by making war on it. The US seemed to be poised to continue that War in 1991, when it had just become the sole world Superpower, but instead of doing so, it came to the frivolous decision to make war on its ally, Iraq. It preferred to knock over skittles than take on a State which was a civilisation.

The destruction of the liberal secular regime in Iraq, and the consequent disintegration of the country, led to the increase in Iranian influence. The Palestinian issue then came naturally into the sphere of its concerns.

The Jewish State is the enemy of all that the Middle East was before the Balfour Declaration. It is a British Imperialist imposition on the Middle East, and it lives willingly in the necessary antagonism of the conqueror against the conquered. And, if the US has allowed it independent control of weapons of mass destruction, the Jewish State is now a completely wild card.

Brendan Clifford

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Remarks On The Second Issue Of *Dúchas*

Last year [October 2022] I reviewed the first issue of *Dúchas*, the new Duhallow local history journal, for *Irish Political Review*. I mentioned that it was a promising publication, with many interesting things, and it showed signs of being influenced by the work of the Aubane Historical Society. However, some of the writers did not engage with the relevant Aubane publications, and their articles would have been better if they had done so.

The second issue of *Dúchas* has now appeared. On the whole, it is lively and stimulating, with substantial material, and avoids the trap of over-academicism. But it has some of the first volume's faults, which we'll come to in due course. First, though, I will mention a few of the points of interest.

"Latin scholars, wattle stick fighters, lice and stormy weather: some of the experiences of an English government official, James Weale, on his first visit to Sliabh Luachra in April 1828", by John O'Regan, tells a fascinating story mainly based on Weale's letters to his wife. Weale was an open-minded Londoner with plenty of intellectual curiosity; O'Regan thinks he may have been *"a 'closet' Catholic and Stuart supporter"*. He was, however, a top bureaucrat, Chief Secretary of the Crown Commissioners of Woods, Forests, Land Revenues, Works and Buildings.

The Crown lands in Ireland were mainly bad lands, not parcelled out in the various Confiscations, and one such Crown portion was the mountainy Pobal Uí Chaoimh in North-West Cork. Weale had to decide whether Pobal Uí Chaoimh should be re-leased to the middleman—one Cronin, whose forebears had held the lease for a century—or whether the Government should take a different approach and try to develop the area more.

Weale, having gone up the mountains, decided to spend the night there and took a bed in the best-looking cabin. During the night a violent storm blew off half the roof. Worse still, he found he was infested with lice. However, the family deloused him as best they could, and the experience did not turn him against the local people. He was amazed that *"such a numerous and intelligent population (submitted) to*

the slavery they endure from the owners of the soil and the middleman"—though he did also remember that the Pobal Uí Chaoimh region had been at the centre of the Rockite Rebellion just six years previously! The people were sincerely and prodigally generous. Once they realised that he didn't want to raise their rents or evict them, they could not do enough for him and took him to places he would otherwise never have found.

Perhaps the most amazing thing was—

"their linguistic prowess. He was impressed that not only did the people speak and understand English but that all their men, young and old, had been taught to read Irish, some English and some Latin. To his astonishment, some of the Latinists could converse in it faster than he could follow them. To convince himself that 'this bog Latin' was not 'mere quizzery', he asked two or three people some rules of syntax which they answered correctly. He learned that the custom was for these lads to assemble at night at different houses to which the schoolmaster would come."

Unlike some others who came across this phenomenon in the early 19th century (the famous 'Martin Doyle' springs to mind), Weale did not deplore this impractical cultivation of the mind. He admired it.

BUILDINGS AND GAMES

The Cork architect Richard Rolt Brash (1817-76), among other things, designed the Sisters of Mercy Convent in Mallow, and 'embellished' some buildings on Cork's South Mall.

To my mind, the most interesting thing about him is his theory about the *round towers*. They are definitely not Christian buildings, he said. What remains of the old Irish Christian Churches proves that the pre-Norman Gaelic population was not capable of building anything like that. The round towers are in a different league! They must have been erected by some earlier, pre-Christian, pagan civilisation that had far better building skills.

As someone who has walked countless times past the splendid round tower of Clondalkin, I can follow his line of thinking. Logical, OK, but . . . Ireland

can come up with illogical surprises; Mr. Architect Brash didn't take sufficient account of that!

The unavoidable Elizabeth Bowen appears in an article by Ian d'Alton, who seems to think most people believe that the Big Houses in their great majority were destroyed in 1920-23:

"The myth of mass destruction looks to a comfortable confirmation of the Irish gentry as decayed, Dostoyevskyan, despairing, and driven out".

On the contrary, d'Alton indicates that the Irish gentry were extraordinarily snobbish, bored, boring, Goncharovian rather than Dostoyevskyan, and petering out as opposed to being driven out. [Sergei Gonchar, formerly a Russian ice hockey player, is now a coach in Canada: Ed.]

But, when d'Alton says that *"the fact is that 80% of these houses survived"*, there's a necessarily corresponding fact: 20% of these houses were burned: 20% . . . about 300 houses! That's a good deal of detestation and loathing. And it set the scene for the dull and tedious decline of the others (Malcolm MacArthur, the most Dostoyevskyan Big House product of recent times, was a son of newcomers, blow-ins, not even pre-1922).

"Taxation turned out to be a much greater threat than terrorism. Of those [Big Houses] which were burned, some were rebuilt, but not many. Function changed. In the post-independence world, many of the great houses purged their apostasy and guilt, seeking salvation by 'submitting to Rome' in the shape of the Catholic religious orders who bought them up for use as convents of nuns or houses for priests and brothers. Others simply died of old age and neglect. Some few have had near-miraculous resurrections as new money moved in, such as Castle Hyde and Ballynatray House, both on the Blackwater in Bowen's County Cork. Bowen's Court died a prosaic death in 1959, demolished for its stone by a farmer who had bought it from Bowen when she could no longer afford to keep it."

Did Bowen's Court miss the chance to become a centre of hospitality, as some others managed to, d'Alton wonders? But he can scarcely even pretend to be interested.

Never bored, and never boring, was Fr. William Ferris (1881-1971), who was active in various Catholic parishes of Cork and Kerry for over half a century. Among other things, he was a Sinn Féin activist, a political theorist, and a

local historian—his political theory (*The Gaelic Commonwealth*) didn't 'take', but his topographical survey of Millstreet has information one might not easily find elsewhere. And—

“In a unique sporting initiative, Fr. Ferris re-introduced the ancient Irish ball-carrying game of *caid* in a series of parish matches played during the 1926-27 Christmas/New Year holidays. It was the first time that *caid* had been played in the parish for over 40 (400? JM) years. In a three-way tournament, teams from Rathmore, Knocknagree and Gneeveguilla contested for possession of an oval ball (Fr. Ferris supplied rugby balls for the purpose) and victory was achieved by the team who succeeded in bringing the ball to the gate of their own church. As regards rules, there seemed to be few...”

Brendan McCarthy explains that during some of these matches the ball ended up more than once in the River Blackwater, and a number of the players jumped into the icy river to recover it. There were fears of drownings, and these cross-country *caid* matches were stopped. However, their organiser maintained all his life that *caid* was the genuine Gaelic football: what Michael Cusack had devised was only a glorified form of soccer, and “*rugby was the authentic successor of caid*”!

Otherwise,

“for proper health (Fr. Ferris) maintained that a person should remain in bed for a continuous period of thirty-six hours per month and during that time should put all cares and worries aside.”

Though sympathetic to this, I think maybe the resting period proposed might be slightly too long!

THE BATTLE OF KNOCKANOSS

A look at the Battle of Knockanoss in folklore (*Cath Chnoc na nOs sa bhéaloideas*) by Feena Tóibín, is one of two articles in Irish. Knockanoss was an important battle fought in 1647 near Mallow, where the Munster Army of the Irish Confederation was crushingly defeated by an army allied with the English Parliament, i.e. the Cromwellians. The leader of the Parliamentarian force was Murrough O'Brien, Lord Inchiquin, facing General Taaffe on the other side.

However, definitely the most colourful character on the Confederate side was the Scottish adventurer, Alasdair MacDonnell, commander of a body of Highlanders, and already a very famous warrior.

Drawing on the *Schools Folklore Collection* of the 1930s, Feena Tóibín shows

that there were vivid accounts of the battle still current at that time. (Indeed, “*the people speak of the battle of Knockanoss even at present with bated breath*”, one local teacher remarked. Or to be more precise, one of the two main Confederate accounts of the battle, which were current in the 1650s, was still current in the 1930s. This is the account which we get in *An Aphorismical Discovery of Treasonable Faction*, where it is said that General Taaffe acted as a traitor, causing the loss of the battle. And specifically, when he saw that Alasdair MacDonnell was in difficulties in the fighting, he refused to go to his aid (despite appeals from other commanders), and he therefore had responsibility for MacDonnell's death.

A totally different account is given by a political ally of Taaffe's, Richard Belings. He says that Taaffe did his very best to halt a panic flight of Confederate soldiers from the battle and regroup them, but unsuccessfully. But Belings also mentions a report that Alasdair MacDonnell was killed treacherously, although not by Taaffe's doing.

Feena Tóibín does not have any of this, because she has not consulted the Aubane publication *The Poems of Geoffrey O'Donoghue / Dánta Shéafraidh Uí Dhonnchadha an Ghleanna*. Instead she quotes a pretentious but absurd statement from the article on Alasdair MacDonnell (called *Mac Colla* in Irish) in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*:

“A persistent tradition, perhaps no more than a tribute to his supposed invincibility in battle, held that Mac Colla had been treacherously killed after yielding no quarter.”

The DIB writer, Aidan Clarke, has written his article as a hatchet job. Plainly he feels that Alasdair MacDonnell was one of the most detestable human beings of the mid-17th century, and he would like to deny credibility to any suggestion that those who eventually killed such a monster may have done so illegitimately. But Clarke doesn't actually know what he's writing about. What does it mean to say that MacDonnell was “*treacherously killed after yielding no quarter*”? Who yielded no quarter to whom?

When a soldier or group of soldiers in battle felt they were facing impossible odds, they had the option of asking the enemy for quarter. That is to say, they would stop fighting, and therefore cause no more casualties to their attackers, in return for a promise that their own lives would be spared. The attackers could either give quarter or deny quarter. Or indeed, the

attackers themselves could offer quarter, and the defenders could either accept or refuse. But if quarter was either denied or refused, then, according to the laws of war, the weaker party could all be killed. To do so might be cruel, but it would not be treacherous.

What Clarke has made confused and absurd, the contemporary historian Richard Belings makes perfectly clear:

“That gallant gentleman [i.e. MacDonnell] is said to have fallen in cold blood by the hand of an officer, after quarter was given him” (History of the Confederation and the War in Ireland, ed. John T. Gilbert, Vol. 7, p. 35).

In other words, allegedly he was promised his life would be spared, he surrendered, and then he was treacherously killed. Notions of invincibility had nothing to do with it—quite the contrary! You could not accept quarter without admitting defeat.

Feena Tóibín quotes a reference to the treacherous killing of MacDonnell by a poet writing in the 1650s, Dáibhí Cúndún. This is one of several indications that the story was believed widely. In the extraordinary poem that Seán Ó Criagáin addressed to the victor of Knockanoss, Lord Inchiquin, just a few months after the battle, calling on him not to be a traitor, to be loyal to his king (Charles 1) and to abandon those rebelling against him (Inchiquin's current allies, the Cromwellians), there is a kind of exasperated, mocking *caithréim* or ‘celebration’ of Inchiquin's many victories in battle.

In one of these bitter verses the killing of MacDonnell is mentioned, with the final phrase, *nár mhór an scéal sin*, “wasn't that a great story?” (cf. *Bone and Marrow anthology*, p. 364). I can't prove it, but I think that the double meaning of the word *nár* (shame, disgrace—“*that story is a great disgrace!*”) was meant to be picked up here.

What is certain is that, when Inchiquin died in 1673 and a poet called Brian Ó Briain was writing a calmer kind of poem in his honour, genuinely praising him, he mentioned Knockanoss as one of Inchiquin's victories, but felt obliged to say also, *Marbhadh Alasdruim measuim nár bhinn leat*, “Alasdair's killing, I think, did not please you” (Maynooth Ms M 107 p. 180). In other words, the chivalrous Inchiquin must have deplored the killing of his enemy by a breach of trust. This story as such is not evidenced in the 1930s accounts cited by Feena Tóibín, though the *Aphorismical Discovery* version comes across loud and clear.

A GHOST IN THE THROAT

An article by Finn Longman, "*Lament: a one-day celebration of the tradition of Irish keen*", raises issues too broad to be properly dealt with here. Certainly, though, it's a sign of the times. The one-day celebration was in Cambridge University in May of this year and focused on *Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire*. A Professor of Poetry at the other English university once said that this lament was "*the greatest poem written in these islands during the whole of the eighteenth century*". That could seem like it might be a back-handed compliment, but it wasn't meant as such. The lament for Art O'Leary, Hungarian officer and very defiant Irish Catholic, murdered at Carriganima (between Millstreet and Macroom) in 1773, is definitely in a class above elegies written in English country churchyards and things like that.

The *Caoineadh* has often been translated. Two new translations, by people who grew up in that Macroom region, have appeared during the last three years: by Doireann Ní Ghríofa in *A Ghost in the Throat* (the best English version by far, I would think) and this year by John FitzGerald. Ní Ghríofa weaves the poem through an autobiography, which becomes something of a bone in the throat for Finn Longman. "*This is a female text*", she begins, and launches into what becomes a story of a woman bringing up young children, daily making lists of basic tasks that have to be done, and methodically doing them... and not being bored in the least, in fact loving it! None of those Betty Friedan complexes . . .

But Ní Ghríofa does take on board the aspect of feminism which says that women's voices have been suppressed. She has the problem of how to speak without suppression. (In the background there's the powerful voice of that elusive eighteenth century woman, lamenting her murdered husband.)

Ní Ghríofa tells a life story and gives the full intensity of it. She doesn't seem to have energy to spare for fashionable posing. Finn Longman, who demands that culture must always have at least a pose of acknowledgement of LGBTQ-ness, finds this a problem:

"A Ghost in the Throat is, admirably enough, trying to centre erased female voices in a male-dominated literary tradition but, in doing so, enacts erasure of its own. Naturally for a work about motherhood, it is extremely focused on an experience of womanhood that is located within a child-bearing body, and it even extends that female identity as far as Art O'Leary's unnamed mare: 'She was a

female being'. The namelessness of this horse is of some concern to Ní Ghríofa, who sees it as another act of female erasure. But as somebody with a background in queer and gender theory, I find this a simplistic view of gender and sex, and I am uncomfortable with a view of womanhood that implies a human woman might have more in common with a mare than with a (cis) man, simply because the mare has a uterus and the man does not. Moreover, I am very aware that there are people with a womb who are not women, and people without who are. (And, indeed, many women who, regardless of their theoretical reproductive capacities, have no intention of ever bearing a child.) A Ghost in the Throat is a book about and for a certain kind of cis woman, which is fine, even admirable; it is a book where cis men are present, but only as not-the-audience, which is also fine; and it is a book where trans and genderqueer people do not and cannot exist within its paradigms, which is... uncomfortable. I do not expect to be the audience of every book and I do not mind being aware when I am not, but there is a peculiar sting to reading about a world that has no space in it for your existence."

Let's ignore the mare and keep to the main issue. Ní Ghríofa disdained to hang out ideological flags. She did not drag into her story anything that did not belong there. She gave an account of motherhood and heterosexual life, and a femininity that is never reductively labelled "*cis-feminine*". And part of the reason for her book's popularity was surely that it never even occurred to the author to be apologetic. Many readers must have felt, "*it's about time!*"

Trans activists may not expect to be the audience of every book, but they seem to expect to be part of the content of every book. Finn Longman, though more reasonable in tone than most, definitely suggests that no book can be quite legitimate otherwise. So the issue is whether all authors are required to indicate that they believe "*that there are people with a womb who are not women, and people without who are*".

The reality and possibility of such people's existence would be firmly denied in most of the world's cultures now. Even in Western cultures, these assertions would have been firmly denied until the present millennium. But of course cultures can change, cultural revolutions can happen. After all, the mainstream conception of marriage was fundamentally changed by the legalisation of gay marriage in many countries from the year 2000 on. Building on this astonishing campaign success, the LGBTQ+ movement now

proposes to establish it as orthodoxy that sexual identity has no necessary stability and that anyone can be boy, girl, both, neither, 70/30, one today and another next week....

Could it happen? Could it work? Could there still be a functioning society? Could there still be a coherent experience of youth, without a great plague of psychosis?

Without doubt, strange things are happening to Western mankind. Everyone must feel it in the air. Society is more and more high-interference. Many aspects of life seem over-ideologised, over-politicised and over-medicalised.

That a person could have planes of life and thinking which were let alone, not really noticed, which society with its necessarily crass conventions often "*saw but didn't see*"—to the modern ideologists this seems anathema. Everything must be dragged out in the open and spotlighted, labelled, messed with this way and that, and either given some formal mainstream recognition or condemned.

Among other things, I would say there's a long-term threat to the survival of any kind of sense of humour. (Longman, above, on Ní Ghríofa and Art O'Leary's mare—prior to our third millennium, could anyone have written like that with a straight face?)

WOMEN AND CAOINEADH

Elsewhere, Longman complains that the idea that "*caoineadh was a female tradition*" tends to erase the grieving of men and ignore the literary examples that Irish can show of male mourning. It seems to me there's a basic misunderstanding here.

Academic life is very compartmentalised these days, so perhaps there are scholars of Irish who do not know that there are surviving laments attributed to men from the sixth or seventh century on, and great numbers of them from 1200 or so: elegies in formal metres, composed by male professional poets. Incidentally, Cú Chulainn's lament in *Táin Bó Cuailnge* for Fer Diad whom he has just killed, referred to by Finn Longman, is in one of those formal metres. It's quite literary.

But there was a more rhapsodic, less formally polished, kind of mourning poetry which was always associated with women and their public lamentation ("*harsh shouts and woeful plaintive wails, bitter screams, faint cries, mournful keening, great shrieks, heavy tears, red palms, scratched cheeks, unbound hair, crushed hearts, copious lamentation, dejected*

raising of hands, bare breasts, grasping of knees, stricken bosoms, great gloomy grievous groans”, according to the *Leabhar Breac*). This connection is made, not just by modern academics, but by ancient writers too. In the *Leabhar Breac* there are laments attributed to women whose sons have been killed by Herod in the Massacre of the Innocents. They are formally like what Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill does in her lament for Art Ó Laoghaire.

What Eibhlín Dubh does is feminine. Males grieved in a different expressive zone. There will never be a reasonable argument which gets around that, whatever the third millennium may do with its identities.

However, arguments there will be. The old Irish literature is one of the wonders of the world, and anyone who is looking for different ways of seeing things will never fail to find inspiration there. It is a fact that this literature contains things that might appear very 'woke', and they are now being written about in that spirit. For example, take the story of the Abbot of Drimnagh.

The Abbot of Drimnagh, after celebrating Easter, incautiously falls asleep on a hill and wakes up to find he has turned into a woman. Distraught and desperate, she wanders off and meets the *erenagh* of Crumlin, who immediately falls madly in love with her and seduces her, and then (despite her firm refusal to provide any information whatever about herself) marries her. She lives with him for seven years and bears him seven children. But then she goes with her husband, the *erenagh*, to an Easter feast at Drimnagh, and by one means or another she finds herself back on the same enchanted hill, and . . . turns back into the Abbot of Drimnagh!

The Abbot returns to live with his wife, who is surprised to see him so soon, as she thinks he's only been gone for an hour. Be that as it may, there are seven children in Crumlin, produced by him/her as a woman. . . . The abbot makes a civilised agreement with his ex-husband, the *erenagh*, about their upbringing: three of them stay in Crumlin, three come to Drimnagh, and the seventh is given up for fosterage.

As far back as 1995 a solemn article appeared in the Harvard *Celtic Colloquium* on “*Gender-bending in Gaelic tradition*”. But now Tadhg Ó Síocháin has picked up the gauntlet:

“The story of the abbot challenges not only the distinction between male and female, heterosexuality and homosexuality: all binaries are challenged—Christianity and paganism; female attire

and male attire; the world and the Other-world; identity and form” (The Story of the Abbot of Drimnagh: A Medieval Story of Sex-change. Cork 2017, p. 50).

Very well, the genius who composed this story eight or nine hundred years ago may have challenged all those binaries! But we would be rather limiting him if we don't point out that he did so with a smile. The man had a sense of humour; Tadhg Ó Síocháin's book, I think, would have amused him greatly. Ó Síocháin is so wired to the binaries that he can't really notice anything else (nor can the Harvard scholars, indeed). If he wasn't quite so frantic to serve the millennial orthodoxy, he might have asked an idle question or two. For example, the sex-changed abbot stays seven years with the *erenagh* and bears seven children. Would it make any difference if the number was eight or six? . . .

Well, so much by way of response to Volume 2 of *Dúchas*.

John Minahane

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Politics And Economics:

Peter Brooke replies to John Martin

John Martin, in his article Politics and Economics [*Irish Political Review*, November 2023] argues that whereas Karl Marx concentrated his attention on the needs of manufacturing and the working class, J.M. Keynes concentrated on the 'consumer'. The consumer needs money in order to consume and whether that money comes from the service industries, retail or manufacturing is, in John's interpretation of Keynes, a matter of indifference.

It seems to have escaped John Martin's notice that workers are also consumers. Keynes argued that there was little point in manufacturing goods if people could not afford to buy them. There was a need to put money in peoples pockets (Henry Ford in the US argued much the same, the need to pay good wages in opposition to the instinctive desire of employers to pay as little as possible).

There is however little benefit to the national economy in putting money in peoples pockets if they spend it on imported goods. The serious critique of Keynesianism is that it presupposes a closed economy. In Keynes' own case of course the closed economy was the British Empire. Keynes supported the 1930s government policy of Imperial Preference under which Britain exchanged manufactured goods for raw materials from its imperial possessions and the Empire was closed to competitors, notably the

US. But even on the smaller scale Keynes expressed admiration for the protectionist policy of Eamon DeValera, which enabled an Irish manufacturing sector to develop on the basis of the domestic market.

It is one of the great good fortunes of the British people that in the 1930s they had a trade union leadership - Ernest Bevin, Walter Citrine and (despite his membership of the Communist Party) Arthur Horner - who recognised the merits of Keynesian economic policy. That is what gave us the post-war 'welfare state'.

John Martin's article only recognises three sides to the economy - manufacturing, retail and 'services'. He doesn't seem to acknowledge health, education, infrastructure (road and rail connections, water supply, energy supply etc) unless that is what he means by 'services'. These are all absolutely essential to the functioning of a national economy and they require substantial government spending. Ireland was in the peculiar position that

health and education were for a long time largely supplied by the religious orders. Subsequently a large part of the necessary infrastructure was provided by the injection of money from outside, from the EU. John Martin scorns the Keynesian/MMT preoccupation with full employment. Ireland was long able to export its own unemployed to Britain, its economically more successful Keynesian neighbour.

John seeks to portray Keynesianism and monetarism as two sides of the same 'liberal' coin. This implies a wide definition of liberalism, certainly going far beyond the much-maligned recently developed 'woke' culture, and I'd be curious to know what form opposition to such a wide definition of liberalism would take in modern Ireland. But leaving that aside, I would be inclined to the more mainstream view that monetarism and Keynesianism (for the moment recognising that so-called 'new Keynesianism' has nothing to do with what is distinctive in Keynes) are opposites, albeit within

John Martin Response To Peter Brooke:

Peter Brooke doesn't dispute my interpretation of Keynes which is that Keynes thought manufacturing didn't matter and the key driver of the economy was consumption. That at least is what Peter appears to say in his second paragraph. However, in his third paragraph he suggests that Keynes was interested in manufacturing. If that was the case there is no evidence of this in his classic work *The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money*.

If Peter is concerned about the decline in manufacturing in the West and, in particular Britain, he is silent about the matter in his reply to my article. And yet this was the main point of the article.

Of course, infrastructure is important for a productive economy. There were many factors in Ireland's economic success. Peter mentions the money from the EU. But there were two elements to EU money: one was through the Common Agricultural Policy which enabled farmers to be less dependent on the British market. The other element was the European Social fund which developed the infrastructure in the country. It was not merely an "injection of money" that stimulated demand.

My overwhelming impression is that Peter wants to solve problems that don't really exist. Britain has close to full employment (less than 5% unemployment) and has labour shortages in some sectors. It has been running a balance of payments

the common framework of capitalism. The great objection of the monetarists to Keynesianism is that it strengthens the position of the working class. And that is what it did. The government's (Labour and Conservative) desperation not to use the weapon of unemployment left employers powerless to resist the demands of the workforce made without regard to the needs of an overall productive economy. The solution would have been to engage the workforce and its representatives in overall decision making both at local and national level. That would have been the logical outcome for Keynesianism, but instead Keynes and full employment were abandoned and monetarism took their place with the ghastly consequences we all know. In the whole process Marxism, it should be said, had nothing of value to offer just as, if John Martin is to be believed, it has nothing of value to offer Ireland other than the nostrums of mainstream capitalist - IMF/ECB - economics.

deficit on its current account for many years. This shows that consumption is not a problem.

Does that mean that Britain has no economic problems? Of course not! In my view it has a declining manufacturing sector and a bloated service sector characterised by low wages.

Peter gives a brief view of Britain's political and economic history which basically characterises it as Keynesian up until it was abandoned (about 1979?). I have a slightly different view.

In my opinion the accession of power of Harold Wilson was a significant development. His programme wanted to eliminate the balance of payments problems that Britain had by developing the manufacturing sector. This put workers at the centre of economic development. Problems of labour costs and productivity were brought to the top of the political agenda. I think Peter will agree that that development came to an end with Thatcherism.

Thatcherism smashed the collective power of the working class (the trade unions) by undermining the manufacturing sector.

If socialism or working class power is ever to be restored in Britain there will have to be a revival of manufacturing. This can only be done with State planning.

Index To Irish Political Review 2023

January 2023

Problematic Economics And The Civil Service. Editorial
An EU About-Face? Jack Lane
Reichsbürger Raid In Germany. Herbert Rimmel
Readers' Letters: Wilde Senior. Chris Fogarty
Julian Assange. Chris and Mary Fogarty
The Brian Murphy osb Archive, No. 2, Part 4: Sean McGarry An Outline Of His Life, continued
Russia: A Rogue State? Donal Kennedy
Paddy Heaney Memorial. Pat Muldowney
Ireland's Shameful Two Years On The Security Council. Pat Walsh
Some Belfast Recollections. Wilson John Haire
A Federal EU? Eamon Dyas
Another Swipe At De Valera! Jack Lane responds to Prof. Colum Kenny
Index To *Irish Political Review* 2022
Ukraine: Victim Of Western Falsehoods. Song Luzheng (report)
Biteback: Some Bizarre Aspects Of President Biden's Draft Budget;
Brain-Washing? The Saker.
Craig Murray A Debate! Wilson John Haire
Labour Comment, edited by Pat Maloney: Ireland/Russia 1920

February 2023

Budget Surplus. Editorial
Is The War In Ukraine Unique? Jack Lane
Germany And Ukraine. Editorial
Mahaffy Was Here! Wilson John Haire
Readers' Letters: 'Sleeping-walking' Into WW3? Sean Owens
Israeli Judicial 'Reforms' And EU Standards. David Morrison
The O'Connor Column (Polish Moves, Polish Dreams; Target: Haughey; Comic-Opera German "coups"; A More Substantive German 'Coup'; Lesbian Nazi Victims)
Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (Sean O'Faolain And Canon Formation, Part 10)
Poland And Germany. Donal Kennedy
Charles Haughey: Some Real History. John Martin (Book Review: An Enemy Of The Crown, The British Secret Service) Campaign Against Charles Haughey by David Burke)
The Brian Murphy osb Archive, No. 2, Part 5: Sean McGarry—An Outline Of His Life, continued
The Treaty War: Why It Happened. Brendan Clifford
Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Travellers And The Herd Instinct; Inflation Economics)
Edward Horgan And Dan Dowling Acquitted. Report
Biteback: Sex Change Propaganda On Public Transport: Letter from Malachi Lawless with a Comment by Bill McCamley
Launch Of Ireland's National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy, 2019-2021
Labour Comment, edited by Pat Maloney: 1917 Sinn Fein Split? James Connolly
Organised Labour: 1923: First Year Of 'Liberty'. O'Rahilly, Alfred (Alfie); Sean Cronin

March 2023

America's War In The Ukraine. Editorial
Wallace Asking The Right Questions In Brussels. Dave Alvey
Ukraine: From Special Military Operation To For For The World. Pat Walsh
Readers' Letters: Britain And Its Friends.
The Rimmel Report. Herbert Remme: How The West Robbed Russia Blind.
Report of President Putin Speech
Conway Hall Cancels Galloway Event. Report
The O'Connor Column (Aspects of the War: Romania and Western liberalism;)
Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (Sean O Faolain And Canon Formation, Part 11)
Remembering Fergus O Rahallaigh. Malachi Lawless; Dave Alvey; Wilson John Haire; Fergus's Last Political Message
The Brian Murphy osb Archive, No. 2, Part 3: From Peter Hart's The IRA and its Enemies to RTE's Hidden History film on Coolacree
Chance Or Design? Haughey And John Healy.
John Martin
Biteback: De Valera And Irish Neutrality. Jack Lane (Unpublished Letter to 'Irish Times')
Letter To The Russian Ambassador. Donal Kennedy
Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Disrupting The Catholic Church)
News In Brief: Aid To Ukraine; Nordstream Answers?; German Petition; Craig Murray
Labour Comment: Turf Development Board Dispute. Donal Kennedy
Organised Labour: Mark Langhammer Address To Trade Union Rally, Derry

April 2023

The Decline And Fall Of The Empire. Editorial
No Leak From Wuhan Institute Of Virology, Says BBC. David Morrison
Of War And Peace. Editorial
Readers' Letters: Potato Famine? Christopher Fogarty
Ukrainians Escaping? Nick Folley.
Khrushchev. Peter Brooke
The O'Connor Column (Feargus O Rahallaigh A Tribute)
Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (Sean O Faolain And Canon Formation, Part 11, Final)
The Brian Murphy osb Archive, No. 3, Part 3: Poisoning the well or Publishing the truth, Part Three. From Peter Hart's The IRA and its Enemies to RTE's Hidden History film on Coolacree, continued
The Morrison Report. David Morrison (Message From The White House To The World: International Criminal Court)
Policing the Pronoun. Jack Lane (on the Enoch Burke affair)
Remembering The Shipyards. Wilson John Haire
The Protests In Israel Ignore The Palestinians Democratic Deficit. David Morrison
The Strange Case Of Enoch Burke! Nick Folley
Professor Kenny And The 'Treaty'. Brendan Clifford
Biteback: The Church Of Ireland And Abuse Cover-Up. Niall Meehan
West Cork History Festival. Pat Muldowney (Aubane Historical Society), Books Ireland, March-April 2023
Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Cheltenham)
Sean Moylan: The Play! Jack Lane
Labour Comment: The REAL Taoiseach:

Bloody Sunday Organised Labour: State Benefits; Retail Workers; The Banks; Michael McGrath

April 2023

Biden's Visit. Editorial
The Democratic High Horse. Editorial
A Confluence Of Interests. Pat Walsh
"Appeasement Has Failed..." Varadkar. Eamon Dyas (Report)
Readers' Letters: Ukraine: Some Considerations. Willis Walshe
Expansionism? Philip O'Connor. Some Numbers! John Martin
The Afghan Example. Nick Folley
Power And Politics. Robert Kennedy Jr. speech (Extract)
The O'Connor Column (The Momentum Of War; Macron And The Ways Of The West; Fintan's Misplaced "Coffin Ship" Outrage; "Eurasia" And Ireland; Why Ireland's FDI "bonanza" Is Like Norwegian Oil; Ireland: Friendly Management Takeover?)
A New Direction In Revisionism? Dave Alvey
Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (Books, Culture And History)
Turf Development Board Limited: Dispute With Engineering Staff, 1936. Donal Kennedy (Part Two)
The Brian Murphy osb Archive, No. 3, Part 3 continued: Poisoning The Well or Publishing The Truth?
From Peter Hart's The IRA And Its Enemies To RTE's Hidden History film on The Pearsons Of Coolacree, continued
The Rimmel Report. Herbert Rimmel (Energy! Splits In The Left Party; A Memory: Ami Go Home!
Sino/Soviet Relations: A Look At The Past. Wilson John Haire
The Colonial Mindset. Wilson John Haire (Poem)
More On The Moylan Play. Jack Lane

May 2023

Biden's Visit. Editorial
The Democratic High Horse. Editorial
A Confluence Of Interests. Pat Walsh
"Appeasement Has Failed..." Varadkar. Eamon Dyas (Report)
Readers' Letters: Ukraine: Some Considerations. Willis Walshe
Expansionism? Philip O'Connor. Some Numbers! John Martin
The Afghan Example. Nick Folley
Power And Politics. Robert Kennedy Jr. speech (Extract)
The O'Connor Column (The Momentum Of War; Macron And The Ways Of The West; Fintan's Misplaced "Coffin Ship" Outrage; "Eurasia" And Ireland; Why Ireland's FDI "bonanza" Is Like Norwegian Oil; Ireland: Friendly Management Takeover?)
A New Direction In Revisionism? Dave Alvey
Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (Books, Culture And History)
Turf Development Board Limited: Dispute With Engineering Staff, 1936. Donal Kennedy (Part Two)
The Brian Murphy osb Archive, No. 3, Part 3 continued:
Poisoning The Well or Publishing The Truth?
From Peter Hart's The IRA And Its Enemies To RTE's Hidden History film on The Pearsons Of Coolacree, continued

The Rimmel Report. Herbert Rimmel (Energy! Splits In The Left Party; A Memory: Ami Go Home! Sino/Soviet Relations: A Look At The Past. Wilson John Haire)
The Colonial Mindset. Wilson John Haire (Poem)
More On The Moylan Play. Jack Lane
Further Comments On Professor Kenny's Books On The 'Treaty'. Brendan Clifford
Armenia v Azerbaijan: Separatists And The West. Pat Walsh
"Whole World Hates America". Suleiman Soyulu (Turkish Foreign Minister: report)
Roger Casement Summer School: Details and Press Statement. Rental Health. Catherine Winch
Biteback: Famine/Holocaust. Unpublished Letter to 'Irish Times',
Chris Fogarty. India's Dual Connectivity Project, Andrew Korybko
Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Solar Weather; Ezekiel)
Labour Comment: Labour Sets Sail! Organised Labour: A Thought For May Day; Your Health! More Health; Water Strike!

June 2023

European Values. Editorial
The 'West': Bungling Around The World! Editorial
The Housing Crisis. John Martin
Readers' Letters: Strategy And Ordnance. Pat Walsh
Was Casement Right To Be Pro-German In 1916? Address by Philip O'Connor to the Roger Casement Summer School
Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (Books, Culture And History)
The Brian Murphy osb Archive, No. 3, Part 3: Poisoning The Well or Publishing The Truth, Protestant Voices That Reveal an alternative Hidden History to that of RTE and Peter Hart Number Three, Part Three
Biteback (1): Irish Times Coverage Of Protestant Abuse: small step forward and two backward! Unpublished Letter to 'Irish Times'
Ukraine: Origins! Editorial.
2023 Northern Ireland Local Government Elections: results. David Morrison
Michael Portillo And The Irish Times. Dave Alvey
The Morrison Report. Ursula Von Der Leyen's Panegyric To Israel. David Morrison
Who Started The Civil War? Brendan Clifford
Inglis The Perfidious! Paul R. Hyde
Gaza Stills. Wilson John Haire (Poem)
A Correction! Donal Kennedy
Biteback: Too Many Of You, Not Enough Space For Me! Chris Fogarty
Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Housing; Water and Other Services; Land Zoning; Health Services)
Labour Comment: Murder Of Noel Lemass (Irish Independent, 24.10.1923)
Organised Labour: Workplace Relations Committee Report, Pay Deal To Match Inflation

July 2023

Russian Military Manoeuvres: The Comic Opera. Editorial
"A Thundering Disgrace!" Editorial
The Consultative Forum On International Security: A Report. Dave Alvey
Readers' Letters: Security Forum Chair Prof.

Louise Richardson On Bobby Sands And The 1981 Maze Hunger-Strikers. Anthony Coughlan
 Tubridy v. McGuinness. Donal Kennedy
 Is China A Super-Power? Editorial
 Proposed Colonisation Of Ireland With Chinese. Contributed by Eamon Dyas
 The O'Connor Column (A Professor Of Literature; A Succinct View Of Charles J. Haughey; A Weakened State; Europe's Fascist Problem; Neutral Paragons?)
 News From Germany: Foreign Skilled Workers First Aid For The German Economy? Herbert Rimmel
 The Hunger: The Story Of The Irish 'Famine'. Wilson John Haire (Review)
 Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (Professor Stockley on Canon Sheehan And His People)
 The Brian Murphy osb Archive, Number 4: Speech At Arbour Hill, 20 April 2008
 The Housing Crisis: Some Further Considerations. Dave Alvey
 The Morrison Report. David Morrison (Neutrality Bill; Saudi/Iran Deal; Dam Busting)
 Perspectives On Irish Neutrality. Dave Alvey reply to Des Derwin
 Tax Cuts Or Social Spending? John Martin
 The Problem Of Germany. Brendan Clifford
 Biteback: Perspectives On Irish Neutrality, The Non-Aligned Movement: Irish Political Review Group Letter to 'Irish Times' from Dave Alvey
 Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Information Technology)
 Organised Labour: Pensions; Tax Cuts 'Inappropriate' And 'Irresponsible'!
 Labour Comment, The More & The Beam {Britain Sinks The French Fleet, 1940

August 2023

RTE: What's The Point? Editorial
 Pro-Neutrality: Dublin Meeting. Dave Alvey
 NATO's Counter-offensive In Ukraine. Pat Walsh
 Readers' Letters: The Fatal Danger Of Propaganda Is That Its Creators Start Believing It! Eamon Dyas
 Chairman RTE. Donal Kennedy
 The O'Connor Column (Reflections On The Prigozhin Affair)
 Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (Culture And History: Lucey Park)
 Ukraine: Words, Words, Words. Jack Lane
 The Brian Murphy osb Archive, No.5: The Planned State Commemoration Of The RIC
 What Is History? Brendan Clifford
 What Is Democracy? John Martin
 The Morrison Report. David Morrison (Ashkenazi vs Mizrahi ?)
 Housing: Response To Criticism. John Martin
 Looking Back At The Korean War. Ben Cosin
 German Perspectives: Re-Armament. Herbert Rimmel
 De Valera, The Irish Times, Hitler, Fine Gael, David Gray, Eduard Hempel, the Varadkarish Irish Times,..And Leo Varadkar. Donal Kennedy
 More On The Turf Board! Donal Kennedy
 Correction To Last Issue, IPR

Biteback: Schools Abuse Inquiry: Unpublished Letter to 'Irish Times', Niall Meehan
 Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Minister Ryan, Green Party, And Climate Change; Wild Fires; Concrete Jungle!; Concrete Jungle! Policing)
 Ukraine Jumble (Poem). Wilson John Haire
 Labour Comment, edited by Pat Maloney: Irish Trade Union Congress James Connolly: 15 April 1916
 Organised Labour: 'BigTech' Workers Organise?

September 2023

Democracy: A Deplorable Choice! Editorial
 Irish Times Sniping Against President Higgins Over Neutrality. Dave Alvey
 Income And Wealth. John Martin
 Readers' Letters: Jamestown Foundation Reveals Where Half Of Ukraine's Population Has Gone. @Slavyangrad
 Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (Books, Culture And History)
 The Brian Murphy osb Archive, No. 2, Part 3: The Context And Significance Of The Centenary Of The Limerick Borough Council Election of 15 January 1920. A Changing Church.
 The Morrison Report. David Morrison (Israel's 'War Between The Wars' Against Iran)
 German Perspectives. Herbert Rimmel "Are We Up To War?"
 German Guilt? Wilson John Haire, John Martin
 2023 Roger Casement Wreath Laying. Dave Alvey
 Professor Laffan On History Brendan Clifford
 Twists And Turns In The South Caucasus. Pat Walsh
 The Mystery Of The All-For-Ireland League. Jack Lane
 1923 General Election. Donal Kennedy
 Biteback: Big Brother? Eamon Dyas
 Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Housing, Water & Waste Services, Land Zoning, Health Services, The Government)
 FBI And Claims Made By Government Of Ukraine. (Report)
 Labour Comment: "A Cautionary Tale Of Humiliation And Moral Collapse"
 Organised Labour: The UK National Minimum Wage (Gregor Gall)

October 2023

The Meaning Of Armed Neutrality. Dave Alvey
 Northern Ireland: War And Peace! Editorial
 Irish Neutrality And The Irish Times. John Martin
 Readers' Letters: What Was 'The Long Acre'? Pat Muldowney
 Es Ahora. Julianne Herlihy (Books, Culture and History)
 The Brian Murphy osb Archive, No. 7: Our Lady Of Limerick (Part One)
 The Irish Times And Fascism. Jack Lane What Fintan O'Grundy Says.
 Editorial The Nazi Green Policy Was Ahead Of Its Time. Jack Lane
 The Morrison Report: Saudi Arabia: Just Easing The Life Of Palestinians? David Morrison

German Perspectives: Germany Back To Being The Sick Man? Herbert Rimmel
 A Northern Ireland Novel! Wilson John Haire (Review Of Tara West's Fodder)
 Readers' Letters: C. Desmond Greaves. Anthony Coughlan. Reply: Brendan Clifford
 Nagorno Karabakh Goes Into The Dustbin Of History! Pat Walsh
 Biteback: Crimes Of The Intelligence Services: Letter To Leo Varadkar Christopher Fogarty
 Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (Civil Service Pay Rise; Concrete Cancer)
 Labour Comment, edited by Pat Maloney: The Thoughts Of Barry Desmond
 Organised Labour: Childcare Provision Profits; Firefighters' Deal; ESB & Contract Workers; Autoworkers & Railwaymen in USA

November 2023

Budget 24. Editorial
 The Disaster That Is Ursula Von Der Leyen, And Why! Jack Lane
 Misunderstanding Islam, Misunderstanding Al-Aqsa. Dave Alvey
 Readers' Letters: Gaza Ceasefire Motion: United Nations Vote. Eamon Dyas, with comment by Philip O'Connor
 Britain And Israel. Editorial
 A Greater Israel! The Hidden Agenda. Wilson John Haire
 Daly And Wallace Making Waves In Brussels. Dave Alvey
 The Brian Murphy osb Archive, No. 7, Part 2: Our Lady Of Limerick: Bishop Terence Albert O'Brien of Cappamore, County Limerick
 German Perspectives. Herbert Rimmel. A China Strategy!
 Irish Neutrality In WW2. John Martin (Robert Cole: Propaganda, Censorship and Irish Neutrality)
 Professor O'Halpin: Defending Ireland? Brendan Clifford
 Politics And Economics. John Martin
 Who Was The Most Influential Person In The Last 50 Years? Donal Kennedy
 The Real Economy. John Martin
 Biteback: Meddling With The Triple Locke. Dominic Carroll on the Forum
 The 'Western Front Association' & The Great War. Jack Lane (Report)
 Great War Factsheets
 The Morrison Report: The Security Council Resolutions Contravened By Israel. David Morrison
 Biteback: Ireland's Call = National Anthem? Malachi Lawless
 Gaza: If This Is Peace, What Can War Be Like! Wilson John Haire
 Does It Stack Up? Michael Stack (National Identity; Farming)
 Labour Comment, edited by Pat Maloney: Balfour's Israel
 Organised Labour: Self-Employed; Trade Unionists

Power Played Out!

Samantha Power recently tweeted:

“Two months ago, Azerbaijan’s military operation in Nagorno-Karabakh forced more than 100k people to leave their homes & move into neighboring Armenia. The U.S. continues to stand with the ethnic Armenians from NK. Today, the U.S. is announcing an additional \$4 million to help these displaced people. We’re grateful for the Armenian Government’s generous reception of the displaced & will continue to support them in getting people the help they need. With this new funding, USAID partners WFP, ifrc & PeopleInNeedInc are providing urgently needed humanitarian aid like food assistance, humanitarian protection & emergency shelter to >70k people. US humanitarian assistance for the NK response now totals \$28M since 2020. On my recent visit to Armenia, I got to hear directly from many of the displaced people from NK about the tremendous hardship, and heartbreak, of having to flee their homes. We will continue to do all we can to support them and those generously hosting them in Armenia.”

US concern for the Armenians—who left peacefully of their own volition, the region that was illegally occupied for 30 years—contrasts strongly with the lack of concern for the people in Gaza, whose hospitals, schools, ambulances, and places of worship have been mercilessly bombed for 6 weeks, resulting in the deaths of 13,000 people, including 4,500 children.

While there were constant calls for ceasefires and denunciations of “*Azeri military aggression*” from the US on behalf of the Armenian lobby the Palestinians were not even deserving of a call for a ceasefire, lest Israel’s “*right of defence*” was impeded by a break in the slaughter of civilians, whose places of habitation were apparently the bases of Hamas. And, while there has been little evidence of any restraint on the part of Israel’s military forces in killing anyone that existed, the Azerbaijani Army took great care in directing its fire solely on the military forces of the enemy.

But people like Samantha Power keep up the barrage of propaganda on behalf of the Christian Armenians while remaining silent on other events, which really do qualify for the term of “*humanitarian catastrophe*”.

What does the World outside of the West make of this?

Forbes magazine described Power as someone who—

“is considered to be the moral compass of American diplomacy. Already widely known for her 2003 Pulitzer Prize-winning book, ‘A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide,’ she has been a powerful crusader for U.S. foreign policy as well as human rights and democracy.”

Power, who has made a career out of humanitarian causes, is part of the administration of the President the Irish now call “*Genocide Joe*”.

Previously she served in the Obama Administration: on the National Security Council, which decided to destroy Qaddafi’s Government in Libya. The UN Security Council Resolution authorised the taking of “*all necessary measures*” to “*protect*” Libyan civilians when Qaddafi was faced with a jihadi insurrection. This resolution was never meant to authorise the destruction of the Libyan State. But a Western coalition, with US backing, decided to do so, creating a decade-long humanitarian disaster that has opened Europe to tens of thousands of refugees and migrants and brought the slave market to Libya.

This same administration, containing Ms Power, provoked the insurgency in Syria, which destroyed the State there too. Power was in favour of a strong US military response to the crossing of Obama’s red line of the use of chemical weapons—weapons which conveniently made an appearance just after the President drew his red line! But Obama, for whatever reason, decided not to act on his red line upon hearing that the Syrian Government had crossed it. And Power was terribly let down by her President reneging, and Syria letting in of the Russians.

In a recent autobiographical book Samantha Power absolved herself and the Obama administration of what happened after the Western bombing intervention in Libya:

“We could hardly expect to have a crystal ball when it came to accurately predicting outcomes in places where the culture was not our own.”

The image of Nero, fiddling while Rome burnt, springs to mind. In the immortal words of Hilary Clinton (who Power called a “monster” in an unguarded moment): “We came we saw, he died”—and we destroyed.

Armenian military units drove 750,000 people from their homes in Karabakh and

surrounding districts between 1991 and 1994, and killed thousands of Azerbaijani civilians, including over 600 in one day at Khojaly in 1992. When Azerbaijani forces recently undid this conquest, defeating the Armenian Army in swift order, the number of civilian casualties did not amount to 100. There were more civilian deaths on the Azerbaijani side in 2020 after the launching of Russian-supplied ballistic missiles by the Armenians at towns far away from the battlefield.

Of course 95 per cent of the 55,000 or so Armenians (not 100k as Power suggests) decided to leave Karabakh, despite their security and rights being guaranteed by the Baku Government as full citizens of Azerbaijan. Could the events of the past have influenced their decision?

As a result of the complete liberation of Azerbaijan’s territory and full implementation of international law in the 24 hour military operation in September, James O’Brien, US Assistant Secretary of State, announced on the 15th November a suspension in normal relations between Washington and Baku. The US Senate then passed the Armenia Protection Act, banning all military aid to Azerbaijan, while the French have entered into a substantial arms deal to rebuild the Armenian military—replacing Russia.

The Armenians have suggested that Anthony Blinken warned President Aliyev not to complete the final liberation of Karabakh in a phone call just prior to the operation. However, the operation had been already cleared by President Erdogan with President Putin at Sochi, and it went ahead, humiliating Washington—which could hardly complain on the basis of ‘International Law’, so it played the ‘ethnic cleansing’ card against Azerbaijan. In response, Baku has cancelled scheduled meetings with US officials and has begun to clamp down on agents of US influence in Baku.

Samantha Power, for all her hatred of the Turk, is undoubtedly the most despised supporter of the Armenian cause among the Armenian diaspora. While Yerevan is happy to take the money she brings, Armenians consider her to be a careerist bluffer, who has made a reputation on words and failed entirely in deeds! It is very rare that Armenia detests a Western supporter, but she is an exception. The Armenian view of Power is, apparently, also quite widely shared in Washington circles.

Samantha Power is of Irish origin: though she is a US citizen now—to the full! One wonders whether she would consider it ethnic cleansing if there was a great outflow of Ulster Protestants from the North of

Ireland in the event of a United Ireland? Some Unionist leaders have said, like Armenians, that they could not tolerate the rule of those they do not consider their equal.

If a Palestinian or Arab or Muslim army ever defeated the Israeli Defence Forces, and there was a great migration of Jews from Israel to the West in response, for fear of reprisals, would this be 'ethnic cleansing'? You can bet your bottom Dollar it would be described as such in the West.

It seems that accusations of Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide are only appropriate for some places and people, and not for others!

The hypocrisy exposed by events in Palestine since October has shattered the West's 'right' to accuse anyone of practically anything in the future. International Law has been exposed as a fraud and the famous "Rules Based Order" is a Humpty Dumpty not likely to be put back together again. This is bad for Kyiv and the begging bowl of the man in fatigues. But there is likely to be much more work for Samantha Power and decent recompense.

Pat Walsh

ORGANISED LABOUR

continued from page 29

sector, based on need, not on the size of someone's bank account.

"Nowhere is this more obvious than with housing."

He said the future we face is one of increasing uncertainties, including climate change and technological disruption through artificial intelligence, and the rise of the far right.

"Mr Cunningham said today too many workers are "locked out" of participation in the enterprises they work in. (Irish Independent-18.12.2023)

German Model

In late April this year—

"A two-year German public sector wage deal that involves €3,000 in tax-free inflation compensation, a €200 flat rate monthly pay increase plus 5.5% could provide a model to progress talks between the Government and Irish unions in the coming months, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions president has said." (Irish Times-3.7.2023)

Kevin Callinan points to the deal agreed recently between German public authori-

Nakbas: Ireland And Palestine

"The whole world thinks Ireland is pro-Palestine: So are we a neutral country or not?"

"Why, in such a complex, long-running, and intractable dispute happening more than 4,000km away, do so many people in Ireland see one side as good, and the other as bad?"

So asks John Dolan (*Echo*, Nov 11 2023).

A country is invaded by people of different ethnicity, language and religion.

It undergoes slaughter, mass expropriation, and ethnic cleansing amounting to genocide.

This was Ireland subjected to the extermination wars of Elizabeth I, James I, and Oliver Cromwell. The "solution" was complete, total and seemingly final.

But some of the indigenous people were spared because of the need for hewers of wood, drawers of water, and payers of rent.

Catastrophes (*Nakbas*) continued throughout the 18th and 19th centuries and millions more died or fled.

Miraculously, the survivors regained their country in the course of the 20th century.

So while a single Palestinian lives there is hope.

Pat Maloney

Labour Comment

Cork

Letters, Cork Evening Echo, 24.11.2023

ties and Verdi, a union representing 2.5 million workers as having an "interesting" combination of elements "worthy of consideration here".

The German union had sought pay increases of 10.5% at the outset of a process that included a number of high-profile strikes, including some that caused disruption at German airports. In the end, they agreed a deal, recently endorsed by the membership, that involves the payment of €3,000 in "inflation compensation" with almost half of it in June and the rest to come in monthly instalments until next February, after which there will be a flat rate pay increase of €200 per month plus the 5.5%.

The one-off nature of the "compensation" element is intended to counter the argument that the payments would be inflationary while the €200 element is intended to particularly help lower-paid workers. The minimum increase will, it is envisaged, be €340 a month compared to the €500 initially sought. Inflation in

Germany has been running at over 9%.

"But what I'm saying is, if you could get the combination right, you shouldn't rule out that being some element of it, concluded PSC Chairman, Kevin Callinan" (Irish Times-3.7.2023)

27.11.2023: Arriving at the talks, the General Secretary of the Fórsa trade union Kevin Callinan said the ball is in the Government's court as to whether or not there will a long-term pay deal.

"We have made it clear that if the emergency legislation still remains in place, we are very much focused on a short-term deal," Mr Callinan said.

"Arriving at the pay talks, Antoinette Cunningham, General Secretary of the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors (AGSI) said the negotiations will be difficult. (RTE 6.01 News-27.11.2023)

The present writer was totally unaware that the AGSI are now an affiliate of the I.C.T.U.

Much the same might be said of the pretended wonderful and mysterious results to be attained under Socialism—results too wonderful to be realised.

In Socialism there is nothing so abnormal that its realisation could exceed in strangeness things we see around us every day, and composedly accept with the greatest equanimity.

In the proposition that the community can so arrange the work of production and distribution that plenty can be provided for every human being, there is nothing, in view of present-day machinery, half so extraordinary as the fact that, if a gentleman sitting down to dinner in Dublin sends a telegram to a friend in Australia, that friend will have received said telegram before his Dublin correspondent could have finished the final course of his repast.

The fact that people in Ireland were reading accounts of battles in South Africa, 7,000 miles off, while those battles were still in progress, is far more intrinsically wonderful than a system of society in which labour enjoys the product of its toil, and neither hereditary tyrants nor capitalist exploiters are tolerated.

If these stranger developments have been accepted whilst Socialism is still rejected, it is because the personal economic interests of the classes controlling the educative and governing forces of the world are in line with such developments, while the same personal economic interests of those classes are as directly opposed to Socialism.

But the workers are in the majority, and their interests are in line with Socialism, which may, therefore, be realised as soon as they desire, and are resolute enough to put their desires into practice.

“According to [UK] Labour, if you don’t believe in a million genders you’re Right wing”

(Nigel Kennedy, Musician
The Daily Telegraph, 3.11.2023)

ORGANISED LABOUR

THE current pay deal, Building Momentum, is due to expire at the end of the year and talks between unions and the government on a new pay agreement began of November 27, 2023.

“Kevin Callinan, General Secretary of the Fórsa union, said that “the window is getting very tight” to reach a deal ahead of December 31 when the current agreement expires. (Business Post-29.10.2023)

“He called for an “affordable, sustainable, and future-looking” pay deal for the public sector but is concerned by what he described as “a lack of urgency” on the government’s part.

Public Sector workers got an overall wage rise of 9.5% under the outgoing three-year pay deal, with the final 1.5% pay paid in October. A 5% pay rise would cost at least €1.25 billion over the year, bringing the public sector wage bill up from around €22 billion now to €23.5 billion.” (Business Post-29.10.2023)

The government has already set aside €2.7 billion in the forthcoming budget to pay for the new public sector deal, increased pensions for an ageing population and an increase in infrastructure spending in the National Development Plan (NDP).

The budgeted increase for the NDP is €900 million, leaving at least €1.8 billion for unions seeking pay increases to negotiate over.

These are difficult negotiations with the government seriously overspending in various departments. It is not just the ordinary punter remarking that by the time Sinn Fein gain government office, the kitty will be bare!

Without referring to Sinn Fein, Irish Times Financial writer Cliff Taylor expressed similar thoughts a couple of months ago!

Nineteen public service unions affiliated to Irish Congress of Trade Unions

(I.C.T.U.) represent 340,000 public servants including nurses, doctors, Gardaí and teachers.

before the Workplace Relations Commission.

“Kevin Callinan, Chair of the Public Services Committee and Fórsa General Secretary, said the priority is to secure appropriate pay measures in response to continuing cost-of-living pressures on working families at the talks.” (Irish Independent-18.12.2023)

In a letter to Minister Donohoe, the Chairman states a multi-year agreement would not be possible while outstanding pieces of emergency legislation remain in place.

“Specifically, we would like an assurance that the government will take all necessary steps to restore industrial relations in the public service to the position which applied prior to the enactment of the 2009 emergency legislation,” it said. “ (Irish Independent-18.12.2023) This followed the financial ‘Crash’ of 2008.

Speaking on the first day of S.I.P.T.U.’s biennial conference in Galway, (14.11.2023) General Secretary Joe Cunningham, told delegates that when the cost of living crisis is over and inflation returns to normal, we will still be in a cost of living crisis.” (Irish Independent-14.11.2023)

“We have the highest living costs in the EU and they continue to rise,” he said.

He said the government has taken small positive steps to reduce costs by introducing free school books, reducing public transport fares and freezing childcare fees.

“We can reduce living costs by expanding public services that people can access for free or at affordable cost,” he said. “And that means essential services should not be provided for profit. Essential services should be delivered through the public



LABOUR

Comment

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James Connolly: *Difficulties Of Socialism*

(*Workers' Republic*, 3 June, 1900)

In every discussion on the aims and objects of a Socialist Party some one is sure to bring up the objection that, even if the Socialist Party were to conquer their opponents, and make an effort to establish their ideal as a political and social edifice, the difficulties which would arise out of the inability of the common people to understand the complexity of the social system they were called upon to administer, would infallibly produce the downfall of the new order.

This objection is, it seems to us, rather far-fetched in view of the circumstance that the majority of those who at the present day are entrusted with the work of organising and administering the capitalist system are completely ignorant of every development of the system outside of their own particular sphere of employment.

It is not at all necessary that everyone, or even a very large number, of those engaged in labour should be able to give an intelligent account of the multifarious processes of production, nor yet that they should be qualified even to trace the passage of the commodities upon which they are employed through all their stages, from the crudity of the raw material up to the perfection of the finished product as it eventually reaches the hands of the purchaser.

It is only necessary that each worker should perform with due skill and scrupulousness his own allotted task; to the few required as organisers of industry may be left the work of adjusting and interlocking the parts.

Even this latter function—formidable as it may look when thus baldly stated—may be reduced to a mere automatic function, to be executed as a part of the routine work of a clerical staff.

Any person, reflecting upon the mechanism of the capitalist system, can readily perceive how little its most important arteries of commerce are dependent upon international organisation, and how much upon the reciprocal action of the economic interests involved at first hand.

Where the international organisation of Socialism will indeed come into play, it will come to smooth over and simplify many of the difficulties which are constantly arising under Capitalism as a result of the clashing of personal interests.

Hence the Socialist organisation of industry will preserve the effectiveness due to the development of Capitalism whilst entirely obviating the friction and disputes capitalist competition entails.

It is well also to remember the multitude of things which in civilised society we are all compelled to take upon trust at the word of others. It is safe to say that what is called 'progress', or civilisation, would be impossible were each individual in the community, or even a majority, to insist upon acquiring a complete theoretical and technical mastery of, say, each new application of Science to the needs of life before consenting to allow its use.

There are few persons nowadays who would shrink from trusting themselves to railway trains, even although in all but complete ignorance of the mechanism of the steam engine, signal-boxes, points, and brakes; we have had gas in our houses, shops, and public buildings for several generations, but to this day the number of those who really understand the processes of gas production, storage, and distribution are extraordinarily few, yet that does not prevent us using it, despite its well-known poisonous and explosive nature.

And so we might go on, enumerating many things in daily use—the use of which involves risk to life—which are accepted and freely utilised by people at large without stopping to acquire a perfect knowledge of their active principle.

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continued on page 29