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Editorial

The Ukraine And 'International Law'

The European Union—in other words Germany—is committed in principle to war with Russia in order to compel it to return the Crimea to the Ukrainian Government installed by *coup d'etat*. It did not get itself into this position voluntarily. It does nothing voluntarily these days, except punish Greece "to encourage the others"—as Voltaire said of the execution of Admiral Byng on his own ship. It hopes that the intransigently principled stand it has taken on the illusion of International Law will not lead to war, but the decision on whether it does or does not will not lie with itself, any more than the *coup d'etat* in which it participated was its own act.

The EU has reduced itself to the status of a pawn in international affairs.

When an ultra-nationalist mob in Kiev, actively supported by Obama, put the Government under siege, the EU had to play along—with simpletons like our own Pat Cox leading the way with genuine enthusiasm. The issue was that the elected Government of the Ukraine decided to do an economic deal with Russia that would preserve its industries by preserving their market, in preference to a deal with the EU that would wipe them out.

As the tension between the fortress in Maidan Square and the Government intensified, the EU tried to take the heat out of it by mediating between the Government and the Maidan bastion. But Obama said "Fuck the EU", and he gave the green light for overthrowing the Government.

The *coup* was entirely anti-Russian in character, and it immediately announced measures for de-Russifying the Ukraine. Moscow refused to recognise the *coup* Government as legitimate, and it encouraged a secessionist movement in the Ukraine. Washington immediately imposed sanctions on Russia, as did the EU. Angela Merkel said that for the sanctions to be lifted Moscow would have to recognise the *coup d'etat* in Kiev as a legitimate means of deposing an elected Government.

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Thoughts On The Greek Crisis

It would be a cliché of clichés to say that the EU and Eurozone will never be the same again after the Greece Crisis. It was a crisis that made it absolutely clear that the Euro is a political project and if it's not treated as such it is nothing. It was created after German unification to ensure a European Germany—not a German Europe—and has been maintained by political means since. But now we very clearly have a German Eurozone in economic terms but that happened in the absence of a corresponding political union. Nothing necessarily wrong with this situation if Germany has the political ability to build the corresponding political union. But the omens are not good if its methodology for that task is similar to that shown in this financial crisis. With timelines, deadlines, procedures and actual laws laid down for Greece on how the new bailout is to be distributed a fiscal colony has been created within the Eurozone. And colonies of any sort can be troublesome entities—to put it mildly.

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Banking Inquiry

McCreevy And Cowen Correct The Record

The narrative set out by the *Irish Times*, the Governor of the Central Bank and others over the last seven years has taken something of a hit over the last few weeks. Not that you would know it from reading the *Irish Times* of course, but the performances from former Finance Ministers/Taoisigh McCreevy, Cowen and Ahern before the Banking Inquiry were solid, sometimes even bravura examples of their

type, that showed up some of the very shallow criticism they have received over the years.

First up was Charlie McCreevy on 1st July, who noted that the accusation of Santa Claus profligacy levelled at him in the post-crash period contrasted with the "Scrooge-like parsimony" he was accused of in his time as Minister. He noted also

that the apparently wildly irresponsible statement attributed to him, "when you have it you spend it", was first reported in the *Indo* in November 2001 in an article which followed the previous day's publication of his Department's estimates. The title of the article was "McCreevy takes the axe to public spending" and the full quotation from him later in the article was "If you have it you spend it. The mistake is to try and spend it when you haven't got it."

Regarding the actual figures for Government spending:

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Labour Comment, edited by **Pat Maloney:**
An Article On Shaming

Seán Ó Riain

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Then the Crimea seceded from the Ukraine by popular vote and without the use of force, and voted itself back into the Russian state. And that was condemned by the EU, echoing Washington, as an act of aggression that would not be allowed to stand. But there is only one way that it can be prevented from standing, and that is by war.

A year ago the wise men who explain the world to us on the media were certain that the world was sufficiently interconnected in a world market controlled by Washington to enable the President to destroy Russia by punitive economic measures. (It should now be clear that Free Trade in a globalising market is nothing but an instrument of Superpower dominance.)

A year later things look different. Russia is busily constructing an alliance against the Washington system that is intent on destroying it. And Washington is trying to do a deal with the lynch-pin of the Axis of Evil, Iran, in order to prevent it from gravitating towards the rival alliance.

A law-book has just been published, stating the case against Russia: *Aggression Against Ukraine: Territory, Responsibility*

And International Law. It is by Thomas D. Grant of the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law, Cambridge University. The blurb tells us that:

"Since 1945 it had been understood that the borders of States must not be the object of forcible change by other States. However, Russia has now revived long-buried historical claims—and prosecutes them by dint of arms... Thomas D. Grant contends that the annexation of Crimea in March 2014 and the subsequent armed incursions in eastern Ukraine under color of separatist movements in Donetsk and Lubansk challenge not just one State's territorial integrity, but jeopardise the general settlement on which international law for almost three generations has rested. This is the settlement which enabled human rights and modern institutions of international law to flourish. Russia's domestic rejection of human rights and its new geopolitics of territorial seizure in this light should be seen not in isolation but as connected developments—and as a challenge to international law and global public order at large."

The essential thing about international law is its non-existence. It is a fancy notion that was deliberately left without substance by those who dreamed it up. The 1945 arrangement of Europe was a

military stand off between the major force which defeated Nazi Germany and a lesser force, but one with a monopoly of nuclear weapons, which clambered onto Europe at the eleventh hour in order to seize ground from a German Army which had had the guts torn out of it in the Eastern Front. The line of division between the Soviet Army that wrecked the German Army, and the Anglo-American Armies that got in for the kill, ran through Germany. And the German State, that was constructed in the Western Occupation Zones, did not recognise the German State constructed in the Soviet Zone as legitimate.

The stability of the Soviet system obliged a West German Government to recognise East Germany about forty years later. But, when the Soviet system broke down in 1989, West Germany treated the personnel of the East German State as criminals, and prosecuted them.

When Moscow quickly developed nuclear weapons after 1945, Ameranglia had no choice but to accept the de facto situation as being beyond its power to alter by force, but its recognition of the East European States as legitimate had nothing to do with International Law. Legal recognition was accompanied from the start by active subversion. And subversion often meant association with elements that had been allied with Nazism, and that experienced the Soviet liberation from Nazism as conquest by an oppressive force.

The Yanukovich Government in Kiev was overthrown by a force which made no secret of its affinity with the movement which had experienced the Nazi invasion of Russia as liberation.

Washington had no problem with this—it had taken many top Nazis into its service straight away in 1945—except that it did not look good to West Europeans who were living an ideological fantasy about the 2nd World War. It used its influence to persuade the new Kiev Government to tone down the expression of its opinions, and censored the broadcasting of them in the West. But, while the publicity given to spontaneous ant-Russianism could be curbed, the reality on the ground could not be conjured away.

Obama decided who should be in the *Coup* Government. The Right Sector was not satisfied with its representation in it. It kept itself in being as guardian of the spirit of the *coup*, raised its own Army, and made war on the Russians in the East with a vigour that was lacking in the Army of the milk-and-watery *Coup* Government

appointed by Obama.

Russia Today publicised these developments in the Ukraine, which the BBC concealed. But, in late July, the BBC's *Newsnight* carried a brief report which confirmed *Russia Today's* contention that the Right Sector is a powerful state within the state, and that it is getting restless because Obama's Kiev Government is not carrying out the purpose for which Yanukovich was overthrown.

As to Putin's "*geo-political*" assault on the sacred settlement of 1945: what it has consisted of so far is protection of the Russian Black Sea fleet based in the Crimea.

The USA has a base in Cuba. Moscow has a base in the Crimea. When the Cuban population shrugged off US overlordship, in which at the start was a national-democratic revolution, Washington tried to destroy the new Cuban regime by economic sanctions, and later by invasion. When the Soviet Union undertook to enhance Cuban defence against the USA, Washington threatened World War. That was the meaning of the 1963 Missile Crisis. President Kennedy wasn't going to have Guantanamo reduced to an alien enclave within a strongly armed enemy state.

Is there any doubt that, if Obama's Kiev Coup had been let run on, the Russian base in the Crimea would soon have come under pressure from NATO forces?

Obama boasted last year that the US, unlike Russia, can make other countries do what it wants without invading them. Has he really forgotten the Bay of Pigs and the threat to burn up the world, rather than let Cuba have what is now the only adequate means of defence?

And why didn't Kennedy, instead of threatening nuclear war, do in Cuba what Putin did in the Crimea?

About the Lauterpacht scholar: what he has constructed is the case for the prosecution in a system of law which has no Court to hear it, no Judge to judge it, and no Executive to put a judgment into effect.

There is a World Court, set up as part of the United Nations system. Nicaragua took a case to it against the USA for breach of neutrality. Amazingly the Court found against the USA. Then the judgment went to the Security Council for enforcement, and the US vetoed it. And that was the end of the one plausible element of international law in the UN system.

International Law was supposed to have been established in 1919 by the League of

Shareholding And Workers' Control

I heard the tail-end of an interesting exchange between Hilary Wainwright (of *Red Pepper*) and David Aaronovitch on 24th July on the BBC's *'Today'* programme. The discussion was about Jeremy Corbyn's campaign to be elected Labour leader but, in the course of it, Aaronovitch taunted Wainwright with the irresponsibility of the Trade Union movement in the last days of the Keynesian consensus (my term not his). Among other things, he said that employee representation had been a possibility but was turned down by the Left and TU movement as not radical enough. He said this occurred in the 1980s (whereas in fact it was the 1970s). Wainwright tried to suggest that it was business opposition that scuppered the Bullock proposals.

Aaronovitch of course was right and the supporters of Corbyn must come to terms with the responsibility of the Left for the failures of the 1970s if there's to be any prospect of doing better this time round.

A major part of the argument of the Bullock Report was that there was a need for employee representation because of the superficiality of the supposed responsible power in industry, the shareholders. This interest promoted a self-interested and irresponsible management class (who also become major shareholders, serving the interest of their caste, in other enterprises).

These are British problems which a proper Labour Party should have been concentrating on in the past 10 years. Instead, shareholder irresponsibility has reached new highs, and threatens the viability of many enterprises, as the following report shows:

"The Bank of England's chief economist has expressed concern that shareholder power is leading to slower growth. Andy Haldane told BBC *Newsnight* that business investment had been lower than was "desirable" for years.

One reason was that a high proportion of corporate profits was being paid out to shareholders rather than reinvested in the company.

He said that in 1970, £10 out of each £100 of profits were typically paid to shareholders through dividends.

Today, however, that figure was between £60 and £70. Mr Haldane argued that left far less cash available for growth-boosting investment and that firms risked "*eating themselves*".

Corporate short-termism—a focus on immediate gains rather than long-term prospects—was a rising problem for companies and pre-dated the financial crisis, he said.

Mr Haldane believes that one possible major cause of this short-termism is the nature of UK company law, which gives most decision making power to shareholders.

Less long-term interest

The nature of shareholding has changed over time. In 1945 the average investor held a share for an average of six years, but that has now fallen to just six months.

These lower holding periods mean that the people ultimately charged with making decisions may have less interest in the long-term health of the companies they invest in.

He welcomed the Government's productivity plan to boost UK growth, but noted that increasing investment was a major part of that policy and argued that an examination of UK company law may be needed.

While the UK and US systems give a prime position to shareholders in the governance of companies, other models are available. Mr Haldane noted that other systems of corporate law give greater weight to other stakeholders—such as employees and customers—than the UK system.

He argued that the model of the shareholder-dominated firm had been very successful over the past 150 years, but also said it was possible to "*have too much of a good thing*". With business investment low and productivity growth weak, it may be the time to look again at the model, Mr Haldane added." (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-33660426>)

Peter Brooke

Nations. Britain sidelined the League by giving absolute priority to the British Empire in international affairs. When it decided in 1939 to have another World War, it acted as an Empire, not as a member of the League. Then, having declared war on Germany, it stood idly by and tried to go to war against Russia in Finland, returning to the League only to get it to expel

Russia. While trying to get into a war relationship with Russia, it let its declaration of war on Germany lie on the table. Germany responded in May 1940, while Britain was messing about in Scandinavia. After that, Britain's hope of being on the winning side in the war it had started depended on there being a German/Russian War in which Russia would do

what Britain and France had failed to do.

Therefore, when the United Nations was set up, Russia had to be guaranteed that it would not be treated by the UN as it had been treated by the League. The arrangement that was made was that Russia, the USA, France, the UK and China would all be exempt from such law as existed within the UN system.

It was said at the time of the Nuremberg Trials that they were establishing a system of law before which the individual soldier would be responsible for his actions, regardless of orders given to him on the authority of his national State. A British soldier about ten years ago tried to base a defence of disobeying an order on that principle. The Court said it recognised no such principle. So much for Lauterpacht.

But Lauterpacht, though he was an expert in 'international law', does not seem to have been entirely certain that it existed. He was an Austrian Jew who emigrated to England after Britain broke up the Austrian Empire, subjecting the Jews to underdeveloped and hostile nationalisms. He became a naturalised Englishman, lectured in international law at the LSE, took part in 1945 in the prosecution of William Joyce, and was on the British team at the Nuremberg Trials.

Were the Germans tried under a system of law that existed beforehand, or was it made up after the event for the purpose of criminalising them?—

"*Creation of law.* To say that international law in its entirety is created by the will of States, as distinct from a source external to them, is to deny an essential element in the legal structure of international law. But there are many who maintain that authoritative creation of the law is by no means essential. Some point to primitive law, which is made by custom; others deny that law must be a command and assert that, being a law of 'coordination' it may consist exclusively of promises. These views cannot be accepted. It will be shown, in connection with the sources of international law, that in actual practice States are bound, and regard themselves as bound, by rules of law existing independently of their express or even tacit acquiescence. But the external character of the source of obligation is largely confined to the existing customary rules of international law and to general principles of law inherent in the fact that States form a legal community. As to the express creation of new rules of international law the fact is that, apart from exceptional cases of minor importance, no State can be bound without its own consent. International legislation, in its ordinary and proper meaning, is non-existent. To that extent international law lacks an

important element that is essential for the development and, in the long run, for the very existence of law" (*International Law*, Vol.1, p196).

He denied that individuals were subject to international law: "*As a matter of moral principle, individuals have no independent position in international law*". Adding, "*However that principle is not absolute*" and there are "*numerous exceptions*" (p141). The major exception was, of course, the Germans. Individual Germans were held to have broken "*the law of war*", and therefore to bear individual responsibility.

If individuals were held to be subject to international law, rather than to the authority of their states, that would obviously be a recipe for anarchy, and Lauterpacht, a servant of the British State, could not go along with it. So he maintains that individual were prosecuted at Nuremberg only for breaches of "*the law of war*". It can therefore be inferred that what was not prosecuted at Nuremberg was OK. That includes the deliberate wiping out, by aerial bombing, of the working class areas of undefended cities. It's a funny old thing, the law of war.

In a book about international law under the League of Nations, *The Function of Law In The international Community* (1933), Lauterpacht took up the incompatibility of an autonomous right of self-defence with the declared object of the League to prevent war. If the right of self defence was not subject to "*judicial determination*", it would be a recipe for war.

If there was an autonomous right of self-defence—

"the result would be to deprive it [the Versailles Treaty] of legal value as a means of preventing war, and reduce its legal effect to a mere theoretical change, to be registered in text-books... If that was so, the treaty would stamp as unlawful such wars only as the belligerents might openly declare to be undertaken with the intention of aggression. It could not be described as rendering unlawful wars which States, fully conscious of the moral and political implications and risks of their activity honestly declared to be undertaken in repelling a danger, actual or threatened, to their vital interests" (p180).

The USA and Britain habitually make war on a plea of defence of vital interests, not subject to "*judicial determination*". The only semblance of a judicial body in this matter is the Security Council of the UN. The Iraqi state was invaded and destroyed by unilateral Ameranglian

action, on a plea of self-defence, when it became clear that the Security Council would not authorise it.

But the decision of the Crimean population to transfer the region to the Russian state without a shot being fired, after an anti-Russian *coup* in Kiev, engineered by the USA (no doubt as a measure of self-defence) is declared by the Lauterpacht Fellow to be a naked act of aggression in which there was no justification of self-defence.

The Greek Crisis

continued

The Eurozone leaders initially would not deign to admit that they were dealing with a political issue in their negotiations with Greece. It was a pure and simple matter of Greece paying its debts by an austerity programme. After all, it worked in Ireland so why not in Greece? Suddenly we allegedly had a homogenised European *Demos* that nobody had noticed before. Greece, Ireland, Germany were interchangeable as entities in Europe. All were clones of each other.

All could and should behave in similar ways, with similar values and political behaviour, despite the fact that it was quite clear that Greece was not a functioning State by comparison with others. That was accepted as a fact—and a fact that was discounted as a fact at the same time because it was portrayed as a very easy matter to rectify in order to get debts paid. Syriza was expected to know what to do and how to do it within five months. This displayed utter contempt for Greece which was epitomised in smug, pig-ignorant fashion by Irish Finance Minister Noonan when he said that all Greece had to offer the world was feta cheese. And the call from Lagarde at the IMF that they should act like adults.

Another fact made obvious is that Washington quite clearly can and blatantly does intervene in Eurozone affairs. The IMF, which formed part of the Troika in Ireland, broke ranks and did so quite deliberately just before the Referendum in Greece, and again just before Greece voted on the deal. Under American pressure, it encouraged a rejection of the proposed deal with its interventions. Such behaviour was showing utter contempt for the Eurozone leaders. Washington intervened for geopolitical reasons and Poland was its agent. *THE* issue for America is the containing, and if possible destroying, of Russia's growing influence. It saw Greece being offered on a plate to

Russian influence. Washington has a use for Greece—which was more than could be said for Eurozone leaders during the negotiations. For these Greece is nothing but a problem.

We had a comment from Governor of the European Central Bank Draghi, regarding possible Russian aid to Greece: "*That doesn't seem a real risk to me. They [the Russians] don't have money either.*" Could anyone be so naive? Russia would find the money double quick if it could help buy Greece into its sphere of influence. There are more important things than money. Russia knows that, as does the US, but not Draghi, apparently. Nor the rest of the Eurozone leaders. To paraphrase Francis Bacon (aka Shakespeare) *there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in their philosophy.*

When WWI was imminent the Governor of the Bank of England appealed passionately to Lord Grey to stop it, as there was a run on the Stock Exchange and it would ruin the Bank and the economy. Grey listened and asked him if he was seriously suggesting that England should tell the world it could not afford to go to war in what it considered its interest? If they did, what message would that send to their enemies? England would have lost the war before it began and would never again be taken seriously.

There are more important things than money and economies when it comes to geopolitical interests, which is as true today as it was in WWI. But economic determinism has paralysed Europe and the European mind. The leaders should remember that Palestinian chap who said that man does not live by bread alone.

The Eurozone has also lost an essential element of its credibility, a crucial element for any currency—certainty of membership. Reversal of membership is now a possibility. Not only that but, more crucially, reversal has become a possibility for a member who does not want reversal—as Greece has made abundantly clear. Membership is now conditional. This has the Eurosceptics gloating.

There is no legal means for doing this and it has never been contemplated before. But suddenly Mr. Juncker, the President of the Commission, had a "*detailed plan*" for Greece exiting the Euro. This plan should be made public. It must entail massive changes in the rules of the ECB and the European Treaties. Did he clear it with the legal authorities in Brussels? It's a most important document. Other member states would surely like to know what's in it. But it's left hanging there in the ether.

To indicate its existence while not disclosing its contents is a most irresponsible way to behave and adds to the demise of the Commission as a credible institution.

Mr. Juncker was proclaiming the need for a European army a few months ago. His actual plans for this would also be very interesting, but those plans are also left hanging in the air. He's like a magician who says there is a rabbit in his hat but does not show us the rabbit.

When Germany put a Grexit on the agenda France and others realised the dangers and ensured a deal was done.

Another extraordinary event was the allegation by Lagarde in the *Financial Times* that she was threatened by violence when she referred to the need to tax Greek oligarchs more effectively, an aim shared with Syriza Surely the follow-up should have been for the 'international community', with the Eurozone in the lead, to focus on this issue and work alongside the Greek Government in helping to enforce better tax collection from these guys—who no doubt have plenty of their taxable income in member states of the Eurozone and the 'international community'. This would be a win-win situation in helping to create a properly functioning state and create a positive relationship between Greece and other Eurozone states.

Over two years ago Lagarde told the world and the then Greek Government that a list of these Greek tax dodgers with Swiss bank accounts had been found, the 'Lagarde list'. But there was no serious effort to do anything about this list by the IMF, nor the 'international community', nor the then Greek Government—until Syriza set up a Task Force in the Ministry of Finance to pursue it with the Swiss authorities. I did not notice that there were any plans to reinforce this Task Force in the agreed proposals.

The most important lesson of all is the need for political coherence and rapid integration of the Eurozone into a State if it is to survive. Currencies can't exist forever without a State and the coherence that that brings. That means a choice between the EU and the Eurozone, but that does not seem to be something that either ever contemplated.

If the EU leaders keep pandering to the UK, the EU will be simply a *network*, which is what Cameron called his vision of the EU in his reportback on the last Council meeting.

A currency cannot survive if its political base is a *network*. It is not such a casual matter as this crisis has shown. The Fiscal

Treaty was supposed to be basis for this integration process in the Eurozone—but who mentions it today even though there is much talk about the need for a new architecture?

But there once *was* an architecture, it was called the Commission and it was designed to initiate and facilitate all integrative developments and to avoid the situation of one State versus another—which was central to the recent negotiations in the form of Berlin versus Athens. It is a blatant failure of the European project at this point that such a situation should dominate any negotiations. But the Commission's authority was destroyed some years ago by our very own Pat Cox and his colleagues on spurious corruption allegations against Jacques Santer. The Commission never recovered and is now a shadow of its former self, taking second place to Members States' objectives. Mr. Kissinger still does not know whom he would call in Europe if he needed to.

The reality of the difference between the two entities of the EU and the Eurozone was involuntarily made clear on 12th July when a planned EU-wide meeting to finalise a deal with Greece was cancelled in favour of a meeting of the 19 Eurozone leaders. It would be very interesting to know why the EU meeting was planned and then cancelled. Eurozone leaders' meetings like this should have been happening for years. If that had happened, this would have helped mitigate the Greece crisis, preventing it from developing to the stage it did.

When the financial crisis emerged, Sarkozy realised there had never been a meeting of the head of the Eurozone states! If there had been such meetings held regularly since then, we would probably have a European Monetary Fund by now and not have to involve the IMF. It was left instead to the Eurogroup, which is an informal grouping of Finance Ministers with yet another President (there were at least 6 at the last count). But the mantra was that these fiscal and financial issues were not significant enough to merit proper political attention and direction. There were much more important things to do, such as facilitating a *coup* to destroy a nearby functioning democratic state and help real live fascists into power there. And no bailout problems for their debts! Also, there were years of displacement activity about a Constitution that became a Treaty and could only be appreciated fully by lawyers. And, despite Himalayas of print and talk, nothing was included that could have helped in this crisis.

Christianity was built on the *love and fear* of its God. On the face of it that is a very curious combination of allegiances, but it worked for Christianity and the combination is also the basic allegiance that creates and maintains states. The Eurozone has dispensed enough *fear* for the moment and should provide some evidence of what people could *love* in it, corny old love, as it is a declining commodity for the European project generally but ultimately just as important as the fear.

After all, Mr. Juncker's army will need volunteers to fight and die for love of the Europe that the EU and the Eurozone creates.

Jack Lane

McCreevy And Cowen

continued

"As a percentage of GNP, in 1997 it was 35.2%, and that relates to a previous Government of Fine Gael and Labour. In 1998, for me, it was 31.7%; in 1999, it was 30.4%; in 2000, it was 28.1%; in 2001, it was 29.5%; in 2002, it was 30% even; in 2003, it was 29.8%; and in 2004, it was 29.8%. No matter how these figures are interpreted, it is quite clear that there was no splurge over the period."

Yet despite this prudence there was considerable extra spending on health, education, pensions, child benefit and massive catch-up capital expenditure. Substantial fiscal surpluses were also achieved in all but one of those years and the National Pensions Reserve Fund was also established.

Regarding surpluses:

"Since the recent financial downturn, critics are suggesting that we should not have spent all of this money. So if we had spent less, it would have meant larger budget surpluses and some have gone on to say we should have built up further rainy day funds, apart from the pension reserve. Now, are these people for real? In a political democracy, it is especially difficult to run any kind of a budget surplus and many were even against the idea of the pension reserve fund."

When there are widespread unmet social needs:

"Not alone would it be politically unacceptable *{to run a surplus, S.O.}* but I suggest it would be morally wrong also."

Finally, regarding tax incentives for buying property, he pointed out that they started as far back as the 1959 Finance Act, many were initiated under non-FF Governments and he proposed ending

them in 2004 before he left for Europe.

When asked by Michael McGrath of Fianna Fail if he had any regrets regarding his tenure of the office, he replied essentially '*no*'. Much of the analysis of the run up to the crisis states that, despite the appearance of health in the public finances during McCreevy's time, there were significant imbalances emerging relating to productivity etc. McCreevy pointed out that this was a result of full employment resulting in higher wages—and full employment and higher wages are rather difficult propositions to argue against.

There is much merit also in his attitude towards economic and other types of forecasting:

"To illustrate, again, the futility of forecasting, I would draw attention to the 2000 report from the long-term issues group of the Department of Finance. It predicted a total population of 4.1 million in 2056. It's about 4.6 million today. And that the Exchequer debt would be wiped out entirely by 2012."

Brian Cowen's first appearance was on 2nd July and covered his period as Finance Minister from 2004 to 2007. Although he began, in some preliminary remarks, by apologising for the fact that "*the policies we felt necessary to put in place in responding to the financial crisis brought with it hardship and distress to many people*". Nevertheless:

"This exercise, however, is not just about expressing regret or sorrow but to indicate that I will be approaching all questions in as objective and non-defensive a manner as possible. To do otherwise would not serve the interests of this inquiry or future generations. I hope also to dispel some of the assertions which have been pushed sometimes for personal or party political reasons."

He came out fighting in other words and quoting, perhaps surprisingly, Patrick Honohan:

"I agree with Professor Honohan when he says in his report that the primary responsibility for this crisis rests with the banks themselves. It's important to recognise that, in the pre-crisis period, there was what turned out to be reckless lending by individual banks, made worse by a bonus culture incentivising short-term gains. I also accept that the Irish and European regulatory systems failed completely to recognise the extent of the risks that could materialise and to stop the over-dependence of Irish banks on overseas wholesale funding."

Ah, the banks. This is indeed a Banking Inquiry. Enda Kenny managed to get through his opening statement to the Inquiry on 23rd July mentioning the banks

only once in passing. The crisis was entirely made in Ireland by Fianna Fail who slew the Celtic Tiger produced by John Bruton's Ministry of All the Talents, of which Enda was part, between 1994 and 1997.

Sorry Enda. The Banking Crisis was a son of many fathers, and the character of the Banking Crisis in Ireland may have owed much of its severity to the economic context in which it occurred, but Governments worldwide over the previous ten years had begun dismantling the structures that had previously and with some success kept bankers from ruining everyone through their greed. Newly 'independent' Central Banks and Regulators were in reality in the service of the high-flying entities they were supposed to be regulating.

In the first of his two sessions of evidence Cowen dealt with his time as Minister of Finance. On macroeconomic policy:

"...the budgets that I presented were built on what appeared to be conservative economic projections, targeting very modest deficits and an ongoing decline in the national debt burden. At the time, many of those assumptions proved to be overly conservative with the actual fiscal outturn being better than that projected on budget day in a number of instances."

He naturally suffered from some of the same problems as McCreevy:

"While the rate of growth in public expenditure was, with the benefit of hindsight, high, I do not recall any other public representative ever arguing in the Dáil or Seanad that I was providing too much for the old age pension, for welfare payments, for child care supports or improved services. In fact, there were demands for greater spending coming from every interest in the State, much of which could not be met."

Regarding the risks building up in the property sector:

"But contrary to what some are now trying to suggest, I was concerned about the potential vulnerabilities and risks arising from the rapid escalation in property prices which was a recurring theme in risk assessments."

"It has since been alleged that no action was taken by our Government to deal with those risks. This seems to be based on a view in some quarters, it seems to me, that I was in some way beholden to property market interests, and that is simply not true."

Four actions were taken to address the vulnerabilities in the property markets **before** any signs of crisis emerged:

"The four actions were: the decision in December 2005 to abolish a wide range of property-based tax incentives; secondly, the refusal by the Government

to abolish or dramatically reduce stamp duty; thirdly, the decision of the Financial Regulator in early 2007 to increase the capital requirements on banks for speculative property lending from 100% to 150%; and fourthly, the decision by Government to continue to allocate 1% of GNP every year into the National Pensions Reserve Fund."

Property tax incentives were and continue to be a particular issue. Even though Cowen abolished many of them, he continues to receive the blame for them having been there in the first place. In fact they had accrued over many years under Governments of various stripes and Charlie McCreevy gave a very robust defence of them. Cowen seems to have been the first to tie the provision of such incentives into a cost/benefit analysis with appropriate review procedures.

In view of rising property prices and buoyant tax revenues, there were strident calls for a reduction in Stamp Duties, which he resisted:

"It's hardly surprising today that the cheerleaders for the abolition of stamp duty, or its radical reduction, are now silent on what would have been the impact on property prices or the resultant impact on the scale of the banking crisis had I heeded their calls."

The increase in capital requirements for speculative lending should, he says, have been introduced when such lending started to take off but, realistically, dangerous trends take time to emerge and become established. It is only after they do that they can be addressed. It was still, he notes, a significant initiative and resulted in Ireland having one of the highest levels of capital requirements for such lending in the developed world.

The final point concerned the 1% of GNP allocation into the Pension Reserve Fund was introduced by his predecessor and clearly demonstrates an awareness of the need for prudence. There were of course calls for the money simply to be spent from those who now criticise the supposed profligacy of the times.

He goes on to admit failings in a number of significant areas:

"There was a failure to adapt policy to reflect the realities of membership of the euro. With monetary policy conditions set with regard to euro area conditions as a whole and the exchange rate no longer available as a macroeconomic adjustment tool, fiscal and other policies, for example incomes policy, needed to play a greater role in macroeconomic stabilisation and adjustment."

This is a crucial linkage and the need for an incomes policy naturally goes hand

in hand with the question of Social Partnership about which he had a good deal to say during questioning later on. Mere technocratic and administrative or legislative solutions are never going to be adequate to solving the problem of Ireland's membership in a currency union. There is a clear case still for Social Partnership, but if it is to be worthwhile it will take account of new conditions. One of these is that Finance Capitalism, having caused such damage, has to some extent, and entirely by default, been brought to heel in Ireland, as the State has acquired ownership of the greater part of the banking sector. A new iteration of Social Partnership would ideally use this leverage to bind the sector, in consideration for its licences to operate, into a constructive relationship with its partners.

In relation to the Banking Guarantee,

"I believe it was the most decisive step that the Government could take on that night to deal with the problem. It was clear that we were on our own *{this had been made clear by the ECB, S.O.}*. We had one shot at it. If we did not get it right, Ireland, we were told, would be set back 25 years. We had to go with the best information available to us at the time."

A huge fuss has been whipped up over the last six months by Patrick Honohan's assertion in January that Cowen overruled Brian Lenihan on the night of the Guarantee on the question of whether to include Anglo and Irish Nationwide in the Guarantee or to nationalise them. Cowen's account of the night indicates that he left the meeting for a long discussion with Lenihan on this matter, as a result of which a common policy in favour of a Guarantee was agreed.

According to Brian Lenihan's brother, Conor, a TD and Minister of State at the time, speaking on RTE after Cowen's evidence:

"There was a difference of opinion about nationalisation versus the broad guarantee that was given in relation to Anglo, but I don't believe that it was a serious dispute... of opinion, it was just a difference of emphasis between Brian and the Taoiseach, Brian Cowen."

And:

"Professor Honohan introduced the idea of my brother Brian being overruled by the Taoiseach, but I think the discussions between ministers are often a great deal more subtle than a simple case of one person overruling another. In fact I would say there were far more robust debates around the continuation of the Croke Park agreement and the minimum wage than on this issue, so I think Brian Cowen is correct..."

This initial disagreement seems to reflect a split between the Department of Finance and the Central Bank on the same issue, with the Bank being in favour of a Guarantee and Finance, in particular Department Secretary Kevin Cardiff, who was advising Lenihan on the night, in favour of nationalisation. Cardiff himself admitted in his own evidence to the Inquiry that he was not at all sure that nationalisation would have been a better option. Possibly it was advocated at the time because the Department had quite a detailed plan for carrying it out, down indeed to a list of replacement Chairmen for Irish Nationwide's Michael Fingleton, should one become necessary later in the week.

It has generally been overlooked that, far from being 'asleep at the wheel' and far from being taken by surprise by the Lehman collapse in September 08, the Department of Finance, the Central Bank and the Regulator had all been working, quite feverishly it seems, on bank liquidity and resolution issues ever since the Northern Rock collapse and subsequent nationalisation in September 07. There were a range of measures in place, but they had not, it is true, planned for the event of a system-wide collapse, hence the discussion on the night of 29th September.

Cardiff gives one example of an issue that might arise in the event of nationalisation:

"You can't just nationalise because bond covenants have change of... change of control clauses—some of them. And if you change control, you might create a default on a particular bond. And if one bond default ... defaults, they all default. That's just one example..."

Cowen gives other reasons for going against the nationalisation option at that particular time (but he was open to it later if necessary):

"I did not find the nationalisation option attractive as a first response. I had a number of reasons for thinking like that. First of all, I did not see it as a confidence-building measure at that stage given the volatility in the markets. For example, would it create an expectation that other nationalisations were to follow? *{An expectation that would have proved entirely correct, S.O.}* Secondly, nationalising a bank meant taking all of the assets and liabilities onto the State's books there and then, immediately. The nationalisation option was, in effect, an open-ended guarantee. The guarantee option looked like a safer option if it was time-limited."

Nationalisation is not just a rescue, it is also a change of ownership. According to all available analysis at the time, whether later proved erroneous or not, all of the banks were solvent. As has been previously mentioned in the *Irish Political Review*, the issue of compensation for expropriated bank shareholders would therefore very likely have arisen in the event of nationalisation, further muddying the waters.

There has been a bit of to-ing and fro-ing over the issue of liquidity and solvency for banks. All banks are more or less in a permanent state of insolvency, or potentially so. This is because deposits, which can be called at any time, are a multiple of the reserves which the banks carry to meet such calls. This is relieved on a continuous basis by constant flows of liquidity from new deposits and other borrowings, such as bond issuance which stave off actual insolvency. A real live insolvency can of course be caused if too many depositors remove their money all at once however, and that is what was happening at Anglo.

Accounting sleight of hand enables banks to be classified as solvent (even though they never really are) by measuring the values of the total assets (including loans) and liabilities on their books and there are industry-wide standards and norms for doing so. By all these measures the Irish banks were solvent or could be described as such on the night of the Guarantee.

They were still described as solvent six weeks later after Merrill Lynch had completed an initial review of their loan books. They later became insolvent, not because the Guarantee failed, but because the value of the loans on their books collapsed due to the severe global recession which followed in the wake of the banking crash. The problem seems not to have been so much residential loans, despite this being the most painful aspect felt by the population at large. Commercial real estate loans were the most impaired sector, with expensively purchased development land becoming worthless and completed developments falling or remaining empty etc.

And it was not just a problem for Irish banks in Ireland. They had 'diversified' into the UK and elsewhere. The UK had been cutting interest rates to combat the downturn since December 07 however, while at the same time the ECB was actually increasing them. This caused Sterling to fall by almost a third against the Euro between January and December 2008. Any assets denominated in Sterling were reduced in value accordingly, in

addition to any nominal drop in property values as a result of the recession.

The immediate necessity on the night of 29th September was for a return of liquidity to the banking system, whatever other options might have to be employed later. The Central Bank Governor, John Hurley, had stated at the start of the meeting that around €2bn in deposits had flowed out of Anglo that day. They had very little money left and would not be able to open the next day. Representatives from Allied Irish and BoI joined the meeting briefly and argued for nationalisation for the other banks, particularly Anglo and Irish Nationwide Building Society and a Guarantee for themselves.

According to Cowen:

"They felt there was an adverse reputational impact being imposed on them as things stood at that time. I did not comment on the presentations made by the banks. We would consider their views but they were not going to be participants in any decisions. They then left the meeting. It was clear that all the banks were running out of cash and, depending on the run rate, it could be days rather than weeks. This reaffirmed my view that something comprehensive would have to be done. I was also under no illusions that they were putting themselves forward as safer bets than other banks and what concerned me was that they were looking for a guarantee for themselves while telling us to take what they saw as problem institutions onto the State books immediately."

The essential problem was an immediate liquidity:

"Eventually, I put it to the table that it seemed to me that a full guarantee option provided the best prospects of addressing the urgent liquidity problem and of sending a clear message that Ireland was standing behind the financial system—which would be understood by the markets—and for a limited time.... It is my recollection that I then asked everyone could we run with a guarantee-only approach in principle. There was agreement on that and further details would now have to be worked out."

The further details included what to do with both Senior and Junior Bondholders:

"...we decided that, given the uncertainty that was in the market, it might be best to include junior bondholders on balance as they were a very small percentage of the total securities that were being covered and we wanted to maintain maximum market access ... for the Irish financial system from outside. I have made the point before that the great portion of this subordinated debt did not mature during the two years of the guarantee in any event and 80% to 90%

was not paid back because these junior bondholders were excluded from the eligible liabilities guarantee which was ... we adopted, I think, in November 2009. And that ... the maturity of those bonds came up after the September 2010 two-year deadline when the first guarantee had expired. This meant that there were substantial haircuts when it matured for payment after 2010. It represented just 3% of the total liabilities covered. At some point, I was notified that the TARP (*the Troubled Asset Relief Programme—a bailout for the US banking system, S.O.*) proposal had been voted down by the US Congress when this was going on as well and I immediately said to myself, "If there were problems on money markets today, what's it going to be like tomorrow?"

There is a widespread belief that the junior bondholders were being handsomely compensated for holding such 'riskier' debt. In fact the interest rate premiums for junior debt over senior debt were of the order of 0.25 and 0.3% according to Patrick Honohan. Burning such bondholders completely at the time of the Guarantee, as advocated by Honohan (*and latterly Joan Burton, whose evidence to the Committee has just finished at the time of writing. She was asked by Michael McGrath what she would have done differently to FF in the matter of Junior Bondholders, and after almost comedic levels of time-wasting waffle and several interventions by the chair to compel her to answer, she finally uttered burn them or something like it, S.O.*) would have saved in the end something of the order of €1.4bn overall, but would have ensured market exclusion for the Irish banking system. It would have led to an even more rapid deterioration in the finances of the State as it moved to shore up the system and the Troika would likely have made a much earlier appearance.

Sean Owens

Endnote:

Enda Kenny and Joan Burton made their appearances before the Committee just as we were going to press. Despite the oathbound, quasi judicial, non-party political nature of the Inquiry both decided to take advantage of the occasion for party political grandstanding. In the course of this the Taoiseach, preferring not to address the difficult issue of the Banking Crisis, unexpectedly launched an attack on social partnership while the Tánaiste somewhat embarrassed herself on the matter of bondholders. Their contributions and that of Bertie Ahern will be considered further in the September issue. ■

Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

THE GREEK ECONOMY

The Long Fellow always felt that the Syriza experiment would end badly. Opposition to "austerity" means, in effect that the rest of the Euro zone should pay for Greek mismanagement. The Greek Government thought that with the intellectual support of Nobel Prize winning economists, such as Paul Krugman and Joseph Stiglitz, it could convince the rest of Europe that what Greece needed was an economic stimulus.

As readers of this magazine will know John Maynard Keynes advocated in his classic work—*The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*—a stimulus of aggregate demand to generate employment. But Keynes did not consider the possibility of an economy whose consumption consistently exceeded its level of production. He was concerned with the opposite problem: economies, which saved too much, resulting in a downward spiral of investment, income and employment.

There are two problems with an economy living beyond its means. The most obvious is accumulating debt which has to be repaid at some time in the future. But secondly, the economy becomes distorted. In Ireland, for example, the availability of foreign credit resulted in bloated construction and retail sectors, as well as high salaries in the public sector. (In Greece similar distortions occurred although it apparently did not have a property boom because her banks were not as irresponsible as her Irish counterparts.) The productive sector of the economy is therefore starved of resources while the consumption sector is serviced. The last thing such an economy needs is a stimulus to aggregate demand.

GREECE AND IRELAND: THE ECONOMY

When the World Economic Crisis broke in 2008, Ireland attempted to make the necessary fiscal adjustments while Greece carried on regardless with the active support of Paul Krugman. When both countries entered the Troika Bailout programme in 2010 much of the ground-work had already been done by Ireland, which enabled her to exit the programme in December 2013.

After much foot-dragging and prevarication the Greek Government, led by the right-wing "New Democracy", was beginning to obtain some control of the finances by 2014. The State budget was actually showing a primary budget surplus (i.e. the balance before interest costs). This is actually more than Ireland achieved. Unfortunately, the Greek State was making slow progress in reducing its Debt to GDP ratio because national income was continuing to decline. The reason for this appears to have been that the reforms implemented were "parametric". They involved reducing public expenditure but not introducing measures that would have increased productivity or national income. The latter types of reforms are often the most difficult since they involve taking on vested interests.

Nevertheless, there were signs that the economy was on the verge of a recovery in 2014. There was growth in the first two quarters and in the third quarter of that year it had the fastest rate of growth in the Euro zone, even outpacing the Irish economy (see Alan Ahearne, *The Irish Times*, 4.7.15). The IMF was projecting growth rates of nearly 3% for 2015. According to Ahearne many reputable Greek economists considered this projection conservative.

It is usually the case that there is a time lag between improved economic data and an improvement in the economic circumstances of the mass of the people. In the 2015 election the outgoing Government had a hard sell, particularly since, unlike in Ireland, the burden of adjustment was falling disproportionately on the poorer sections of society.

Syriza, on the other hand, was offering the fantasy of a painless end to austerity.

GREECE AND IRELAND: THE STATE

In the Long Fellow's opinion Syriza was irresponsible. It has been said in its defence that that's how political parties behave during elections. Well, that is not how the Irish political parties behaved in the 2011 Election. The Strategy of Fine Gael and Labour—as outlined in a series of articles by Garret FitzGerald in *The Irish Times*—was to facilitate the Fianna Fáil/Green coalition in implementing unpopular measures to restore the finances so as to mitigate the political damage that would accrue to the incoming Government.

The "FitzGerald" strategy almost reached comical proportions on the eve of the 2011 Election when it was clear that the Green Party wanted to leave Government. Tremendous pressure was exerted on that party from the Opposition to ensure that

the outgoing Government—the worst Government in the history of the State according to parliamentary rhetoric—was able to implement a final draconian budget before it collapsed.

At present the Labour Party has been suffering in the opinion polls because it over promised in 2011. Gilmore's "*Labour's way, not Frankfurt's way*" has haunted the Party. But, in fairness to Gilmore, before the election he said that he would not commit to reversing any of the expenditure cuts or tax increases that had been implemented by Fianna Fáil.

Unlike in Greece, the Irish political parties realised that the humbug of normal democratic politics was not sustainable in the midst of the severe economic crisis.

A second difference between Greece and Ireland was the incoming Irish Government believed that the State was bound by agreements entered into by the previous Government. Governments come and go but there must be continuity within the State. The current Irish Government was happy to blame the previous Government and the Troika for unpopular policies that it was implementing but it did not question the necessity of implementing the overall objectives agreed with the Troika. Syriza on the other hand believed that a democratic mandate could release the State from such obligations. Of course, a new Government is perfectly entitled to opt for a rupture with the character of the existing State, but that was not what Syriza was proposing. It wished to remain both within the Euro and the EU.

A third difference was the diagnosis of the problem. In Ireland, although there was criticism of foreigners such as Jean Claude Trichet and the ECB, the crisis was considered to be a result of a political failure or a failure by the State. Since Irish people are not alienated from the State they felt that they bore some responsibility for the crisis.

The Greeks, by contrast, believed—and continue to believe—that the crisis was caused by foreigners. If the Greek State had anything to do with the crisis, that had nothing to do with the Greek people. The Greek people have no sense of ownership of the Greek State. In short the Greeks believe that austerity is imposed from outside themselves as a result of circumstances for which they bear no responsibility.

Some on the left contrast unfavourably the "*passivity*" of the Irish with the activism of the Greeks. But another way of looking at things is that the contrasting political responses to the crisis reflect the difference

between a functioning and dysfunctional State.

SYRIZA IN POWER

The accession to power of Syriza gave the impression of a radical new development. But in many respects it was a continuation of an old policy. The Greek political class believed that the other countries of the Euro zone could not impose fiscal discipline on Greece since there was no mechanism to expel a member from the Euro. The costs of Grexit for the Euro zone as a whole would exceed the costs of tolerating Greece breaking the rules. The "New Democracy" Government appeared to believe that the old policy had run its course. But Syriza thought that it could revive it and give it a new international dimension.

And so we had the "rock star economist"; the support of Nobel Prize winning economists; the mobilisation of the European Left; the support of eurosceptics of all political hues; the backing of the United States; and the implied threat of an increase in Russian influence. The policy has turned out to be a disaster because Syriza completely overplayed its hand.

Chris Cook, in an article on the BBC website (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/33507250>), described the assumptions of the Greeks, which underpinned their negotiation strategy. They assumed:

- 1) A Greek exit would cause contagion throughout the Euro zone beginning with Spain and Portugal and then extending to Italy and others.
- 2) The fact that Greece had been generating a primary surplus would enable her to survive without the need for extra credit.
- 3) The ECB would continue to supply emergency liquidity assistance (ELA) to Greek banks ensuring they would remain open.

All three assumptions proved to be false. International investors had already decided that Greece was an exception and had factored that into their arithmetic. As the Greek crisis reached a *denouement*, there was hardly any movement in the value of the Euro or in European shares. The Greek economy nose-dived under Syriza, eliminating the primary surplus. And, finally, the ECB placed a ceiling on ELA when the Greek people continued to withdraw money from the banking system, necessitating the closure of the banks.

By the middle of July all their cards had been played and they were at the mercy of the other members of the Euro.

ALEXIS TSIPRAS

If there is one thing that can be salvaged from the last six months it is the behaviour of Alexis Tsipras. He was dignified at the European Parliament in response to provocation. He has not pretended that the deal is to his liking, but has managed to convince his parliamentary colleagues that it is the best available. Unlike Varoufakis he has not walked away from the battlefield. He has managed to keep the bulk of the Syriza party together. He may be the man to lead the Greeks out of this crisis. The Director of the influential Jacques Delors Institute, Yves Bertoncini, thinks that Tsipras has transformed himself from being the leader of a left party to being a national leader.

THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT

But Tsipras must recognise the position of other Euro zone members. If the Euro zone is to survive with Greece, the latter must accept that financial support for her cannot continue indefinitely.

The figures are stark. Ireland and Greece have roughly the same Gross Domestic

Product (185 billion and 179 billion respectively). Ireland's bailout amounted to 85 billion (18 billion of which was financed from the State's own resources through the National Pension Reserve). The three bailouts for Greece will amount—at a conservative estimate—to 328 billion.

While other countries availing of assistance are expecting growth this year (Spain 2.5%, Portugal 1.5%, Ireland 4%) there are no such prospects for Greece.

100 billion (more than 50% of GDP) of Greek debt was already written off in 2012. When it is considered that, at the much vaunted 1953 debt conference, Germany only received a write off equivalent to 10% of GDP the scale of Greece's problems can be understood. Even after the write off, Greece's debt is now approaching double its GDP.

No one disputes that some form of debt relief will have to be given to Greece, but the other Euro zone countries are entitled to make arrangements limiting their exposure to Greece's problems.

Men Of No Consequence

In South Kerry the mountains compete for space. The views they present are seen by only the most intrepid climbers. The coastline is irregular. It divides into peninsulas. These are separated by deep bays. More divisions occur as lesser peninsulas spread their fingers erratically like a child's crayon wandering across a canvas. The beaches, especially after rain or high-time, turn darkly purple, reflecting the local seams of red sandstone. To the North is a greater regularity. The ground rises more gently. The land is arable. The coastline is formed by more softly curving beaches. The sand is white and powdered. It pales when the tide recedes or when the rain abates. To the north of Tralee there is a chain of small villages running east-west. Oddly, hurling is played here. A number of millionaires, too, from the building game, post-War, came from the locality. As you approach the coast, you can hear the boom-boom of the sea, as the peaches are pounded. Banna, Barrow, Ballyheigue, Ballyunion, suck in the ocean. Lesser beaches adjoin. Near Ballyunion are the Caves of Clashmealcon. This would be the scene of a horrific enactment. Cruelty would win the day.

Here, the incoming sea crashes off the cliffs. Spume ascends vertically like a plume. The rocks are engulfed, exposed,

engulfed. The cliffs are holed with caves, like a mouthful of rotten teeth long neglected. These caves give some succour, though the entrances are penetrated by the sea, as wave after wave comes pummeling, cresting and exploding and running out of energy. In the aftermath of a boomer, there would be some hesitancy. The lesser waves would dither. Changing colours. Blues, greens, whites. Receding momentarily, to be surprised by the next big one. Being sent landward again. Unstoppable. Incapable of mortal resistance. But it was needs must. Here would occur an attempt at escape. Here you would come an awful end. Humanity, for the moment, would be suspended.

But on and on the sea would come crashing, as if its witness to cruelty had an unbearable relentlessness. As if the winds plead: Please, please! But there would be no mercy. The blood was up, one might say in mitigation. Save that this was not a moment of angry reaction. It would continue, in a second instalment that may be an attribution, though no explanation. This was Civil War, or, more accurately Uncivil War. And always the sea. Sucking, gasping, splashing into a crescendo.

The Dublin Guard was a Regiment of the Free State Army. It was constituted of

former members of the ASU (Active Service Unit), Dublin, and of the Squad. These were at the core of Michael Collins' endeavours during the War of Independence. Low-level attacks on British operatives—especially Intelligence personnel and members of the RIC—were central. Assassinations were a large part of this war, fought out on the streets of Dublin. Neither side showed any mercy. Shadowy figures were discernible. Especially in retrospection. There are many inexplicable aspects. Strange associations can be perceived, though not wholly explained. Though one thing is undoubted. It was a dirty war. To stay alive was to be dirty. There are no clean wars, they say. This was not one.

Dublin was the main area of conflict. Here would flourish the ASU and the Squad. The Republic of Munster, also would figure heavily. But Collins' writ ran mainly in the capital. His immense personality prevailed there. Under his direction, "*Collins's men*" had it out, tit-for-tat, with the British. Daring operations were conducted. Some aspects were inexplicable, though this is, it appears, the norm.

De Valera had spent too long in America, fund-raising. This is considered to have been so, at least by some. In his absence, Collins had obtained dominance. De Valera—not a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood—had been superseded. Here the old enmity between them both surfaced again.

De Valera had begun to formulate war policies. Large-scale operations were his tactic. Low-scale operations were Collins'. The Attack on the Customs House resulted in the implantation of the De Valera scenario. It failed for certain tactical errors. But strategically it succeeded. It seems it was instrumental in the British realpolitik which resulted. The Truce would follow. Then 'The Treaty'. Then 'The Civil War'. And so to Clashmealcon, where came the crashing Atlantic rollers. Where rocky cliffs stood in defiance.

The Dublin Guard had Kerry as its last objective. This was the last Republican redoubt. Sea-landings had been made in Kenmare and Fenit. Free State forces took the main towns and villages. The Kingdom could not stand alone. Only West Cork still figured in the resistance too. Collins met his end there at Béal na Bláth. Now the Dublin Guard had only the last of the resisters. Now they would turn really nasty. Man's inhumanity to man would be displayed. It would speak for itself. *An Ríocht* would be torn apart. Republicans were there for the breaking.

Ballymult Barracks stands at the south

eastern access road to Tralee. It was long a British military barracks. Early in the 'Civil War it fell to Free State Forces. Now the Dublin Guard was in occupation. They were the main component of the Free State occupying force. Kerry Command was under a General Murphy. The Commander in Tralee was Brigadier-General Paddy Daly. He resided in Inchicore in Dublin in his latter life. Down the years—before he'd shed his mortal coil—many's a Kerryman glanced in the Inchicore direction with a certain look.

In Ballymullen Barracks the hammer was put to use with frequency, to extract information. Incapacitated hands, around Tralee, were a sure indication of questioning. The high grey walls of Ballymullen Barracks bore witness to great brutality. Much of it is unspeakable. Maybe even unimaginable. Cries of pain oozed out its gates. Many were brought in, in handcuffs. They came out in hastily-constructed long-boxes of unripened wood. To be opened by waiting female relatives, making identifications of mutilated bodies, carelessly disbursed, like 'left-overs' or broken biscuits at a clearing-out sale. These were the bodies of the Men of No Consequence. They were without influence, lucky to have a priest to pour Holy Water upon their graves.

Their names were:

Tralee—Clifford, Conway, Daly, Drummond, FitzGerald, Fleming, Flynn, Flynn, Foley, Hannafin, Harrington, Hawley, Healy, Hoffman, Moriarty, Myles, Nagle, O'Connor, O'Sullivan, Reidy, Ryle, Sinnott, Walsh.

Castlegregory and Dingle—Ashe, Casey, Cronin, Fitzgerald, Greeney, Kennedy, McCarthy, McKenna, Moriarty, O'Sullivan, Houlihan, Lawlor, Lyons, Maguire, McCarthy, McEneaney, McGrath, Noland, O'Driscoll, O'Shea, O'Shea, Twomey.

Listowel and Ballylongford—Carmody, Dalton, Galvin, Hartnett, Lawlor, Linnane, Lyons, McElligott, Scanlon, Sheehan, Walsh.

Castleisland—Brognon, Buckley, Daly, Fleming, Kenny, Murphy, Murphy, O'Connell, O'Connor, O'Leary, Prendiville, Savage, Shanahan, Walsh.

Ballynacelligott—Bailey, Broderick, Brosnan, Browne, Browne, Flynn, Herlihy, Laide, Lean, McMahan, Reidy, Reidy.

East Kerry—O'Connor, Murphy, Kennelly, Allman, O'Leary, O'Sullivan, O'Brien, Hickey, McCarthy, Moynihan, Tuohy, Looney, O'Sullivan, Daly, Sweeney, Donoghue, Buckley, Murphy, Kevins, Casey.

South Kerry—Céitinn, O Colaighe, Táilliúra Ó Murchadhe, Ó Gealbháin, Ó

Suilleabháin, Táilliúra, Céitinn, Ó Gráda, Ó Seaghda, Ó Ríoghghardáin, Ó Sionchfhradha, Ó Duibhir, Ó Curnáin, Ó Conchúbhair, de Nóglá, Ó Seaghde, Ó Neill.

Died Elsewhere—Ashe, Daly, Enright, O'Sullivan, Foren, Hanlon, Hickey, Kerins, Mulvihill, O'Rahilly, Russell, Shortis, Stack.

Fenit is the outer part of Tralee. It has a pier. It lies 6-7 miles from the County town. In August 1922 Free State forces landed at Fenit. The Dublin Guard was to the fore. They would make for Tralee. Republicans made a vain stand at Sammy's Rock, but had to concede access. They made for the hills. They would utilise safe houses and dug-outs. They would conduct harassment. But Tralee would fall.

The Staters made their way down Pembroke Street and entered Rock Street. A firefight ensued. But the Staters took the town. Ballymullen Barracks was in their hands. Terror would now show its sharp fangs. Guerilla warfare followed, as Republican forces utilised their columns to ambush and booby-trap the probes of the Staters. Mercy became a scarce commodity. The Dublin Guards would resort to cruelty heretofore unimagined.

There were three Brigade areas in the Kingdom operated by the Republicans. They were centred in Tralee, Killarney and Cahersiveen. Murder became the *modus operandi* of the Free State. A massacre would be staged in each area. A brutal hand would administer its punishment. Kerry, it was said, would be "*finished*" by the end of the year. The days passed. The resistance continued. Republicans remained outside the Pale. Three similar atrocities awaited. The first was at Ballyseedy, three miles outside Tralee, on the road to Castleisland. This is in the rural Kerry countryside, dotted with farmsteads.

Back in Ballymullen, evil reigned. Prisoners were being held there. Many of them being heavily punished. Sick minds plotted and schemed. They selected nine victims. They would be used under the pretext of removing Republican mines. (In recent days a booby-trapped Republican mine had, as intended, wreaked havoc upon a Stater raiding party, killing several.) The mood was black in Ballymullen. Anger's red face was becoming uglier. Soldiers there were becoming beyond restraint. Sick men would grow more sick. Licence went unrestrained. The nine innocents awaited. Several were seriously injured in recent beatings. The night was moonlit, clear and cold. The prisoners were put aboard lorries. They were driven to Ballyseedy. They were

brought to a gateway. They were tied together by ropes and placed in a circle about a log at the gate. Their end was nigh. They called out "*goodbyes*". At the gate, the mine exploded. In the farms about, people heard the explosion. They could not intervene in the face of the Dublin Guard. Then there came the sound of lesser explosions. Grenades were being thrown by the Staters at the victims. Then gun-fire was opened up. Mutilated bodies were further riddled. For days afterwards the crows feasted upon the flesh covering the tree branches. It was at an end. But was it?

Stephen Fuller, one of the nine prisoners, had been blown clear. A man of great strength, somehow he'd survived. He crawled away. Eventually he saw a light. He sought and received succour. He was brought to another safe house. He was medically attended. For months he stayed under cover. He could not be discovered. His discovery would reveal all. The Staters had believed he'd perished too. They filled nine coffins with body pieces. One of these coffins bore the name, Stephen Fuller. (He would become a Fianna Fáil TD in after years.) As his strength returned slowly, so his resolve grew. The truth would come from his lips.

Meanwhile, the Staters later said that the nine prisoners had been killed while removing a Republican mine. But the cat was among the pigeons. Stephen Fuller was alive. He could tell the true story. But shame is no stop to the shameless. Their policy would continue. The same, again, at Countess Bridge, Killarney, where five prisoners were subjected to the same treatment. Again, miraculously, one was thrown clear. Four died. But the truth was shouting out. Still the Staters continued.

The same once more. Bahaghs, Caherciveen too would be witness to this blood lust. Five prisoners were blown to smithereens near the workhouse. This time there were no survivors. But a Free State officer, in disgust, spoke out. In the modern vernacular, these were three Own Goals: Ballyseedy, Countess Bridge, Bahaghs. Even the names, in their euphemy, become a reproof.

But Kerry would continue to bleed. Three Kerry men would be executed in far-off Donegal: Daly, Enright, O'Sullivan were to die in Drumboe before another firing squad. But April was still to come. The caves of Clashmealcon would be witness to more atrocious deeds. The legend of Aero Lyons would further grow. "*The aeroplane*", people would say, "Aero Lyons. He was here, but he's

gone, again."

Aero Lyons (Timothy) led a Flying Column in North Kerry. He was lightly built, with a supple, flexible body. He had the facility to be at one point at a certain time, and be elsewhere, unexpectedly, at another moment. He hailed from Kilflynn. He was of a small-farm background. He knew no fear. His daring was legendary. He reached cult status in the Tan War. In the Civil War he added to his reputation.

He shared his name, strangely, with a Free State Captain, to whom he was not connected. This Free State Captain operated in Kerry too, but his name has not similarly entered into folklore, save for reasons which contradict. Fame or infamy? Perhaps the cause is the determinant.

In mid-April, Free State troops were searching for the enemy. They had come to Causeway in North Kerry, near Kerry Head. About here can be heard the roar of the breakers Wave after wave comes screaming in, to burst upon the Cliffs in ear-splitting, clattering foam. Above the gulls are blown about like newspaper scraps, rising and dipping without any measured rhythm, seemingly in surrender to the howling winds. Throughout the day an IRA column, under Aero Lyons, fought and frustrated the Staters. Ten men constituted the column. Nightfall brought some escape.

The following day, activity was increased. Reinforcements for the Free Staters came from Ballyheigue. Search parties were entering local houses. The Hue and Cry had been raised. Lyons' column sought shelter in Dumfort's Cave. Meanwhile in Tralee a prisoner had wilted under torture. Free State reinforcements had now come from Tralee. Now they had more Intelligence. Aero Lyons and five of his column were sheltering in the caves. They were known to be there now. Soldiers came down the rocks to search. Two were shot, one falling into the raging sea, his body disappearing to be swallowed up.

Free State officers believed they were on to something big. They'd come to believe that De Valera and Humphrey Murphy were in the caves. They tried to burn out the Republicans with lighted hay and saturated turf sods. They poured oil upon the fires. Flames raged. But the wind turned. The fires were blown out to sea. In Kerry it was the time of "*scorching*", when the cold Spring winds come and rain comes in torrents. Nightfall came. So did the "*scorching*". Further Stater efforts diminished with the onset of darkness. A calm ensued.

The Republicans, in the dark, tried to

climb the rocks to seek escape. Two tried to exit further but they became lost amidst the outcrops of rock. In the night they could not find a way out of this maze. The breakers were coming in incessantly. There was no relief. They could not maintain their grip. Their hands slipped off the jagged rocks. The crashing waves still came in. They were sucked out to sea. This was their end. Tommy McGrath and Patrick O'Shea had drowned. Lost at sea.

The Staters were reinforcing come the morrow. They came in lorryloads from Tralee, armed to the teeth. A machine gun was put in place to cover the cave. An armoured car was put in position. All day, machine gun fire was directed upon these Men of No Consequence. Mines and grenades were exploded upon them. Houses nearby were shaking. Relatives and acquaintances were in fear. No answer from the Republicans. Inevitably, darkness fell again.

Next a searchlight scoped the cliff-face. Tar-barrels came burning down. The fires raged. The sea screamed. The night was bedlam. But, seemingly, there was no reaction from those in the cave. But, behind the silence, what was the reality? This eerie silence bathed the cliff-face.

At dawn the Staters were at some loss. They, too, were mystified. But, at the cliff's edge, they were observing. Then came their triumphant whoop. Lyons had come out to the rocks and put up his hands. His men had been starved. They had been engulfed by the waves. They were parched with thirst. They were weak. The cold had penetrated. They were near collapse. Above the soldiers were screaming with hate. Lyons was calling up to them. He was seeking surrender terms.

At midday a rope was lowered to Lyons. He gripped it. He began to climb. As he neared the top, the rope snapped and he fell on to the rocks below. Some say the rope was cut. Some say it just snapped. In any event, he lay upon the rocks and the soldiers fired down upon him, maybe a hundred feet below. He was riddled. His companions—Greaney, McEnery and Hathaway—came out to help. But he was dead. They pulled his body into the cave. Too late.

Then the others were brought up. The soldiers seemed sated. Their anger seemingly had subsided. Vengeance had somehow evaporated. The soldiers had some kindness. They were giving out tea, as did the local women who'd gathered. Gradually sense returned. The hours passed further.

Then an officer entered. He was small, with a smiling, white face. He recognised Rudge Hathaway. Reginald Stephen Hathaway was English. He had been a British soldier. During the Tan War, he went over to the Republican side. When the Civil War erupted, he remained with the Republicans.

This small officer ordered them back to the caves. The indications are that he was English too. Hathaway had been removed. He had been beaten. He was bleeding. Darkness fell. Another day. Three cars came up to the farm-house. A big officer strode in. It seems his name was Hancock. The soldiers saluted. "At last", he said, when he saw Hathaway. Rudge had continued bleeding. Greaney had been flung on the floor. He was moaning.

Later they were taken away. They were incarcerated in Ballymullen. McEnery's brother, a priest, came from England. He pleaded on the prisoners' behalf. General Daly told him they would be executed. At dawn on April 25th they were shot. Aero Lyons was killed on the 18th. On May 5th his body came up from the sea. the bodies of the other drowned men (McGrath and O'Shea) are still held by the sea.

The caves too retain their secrets forever. There had been treachery. Cruelty was at large. In Kerry they say, "If there's only", "If there's any life in the dead".

These young men were fighting for freedom. But the forces of reaction had finally done them in. There would be little more time. The lights were fading. Resistance was being diluted. Soon it was time to turn off the tap. They would lay up their arms. It was over. When, and if they could, they would all go home.

But the people all speak of Aeroplane Lyons. He was a blithe spirit. He liked to laugh. They laugh when they recall his humour and his mischievousness. Stories about him are still related. Most of all, his bravery is spoken of. His adventurousness and flouting of the authoritarian.. He had become a legend.

John Morgan (Lt. Col., retd.)

PS

Reginald Stephen (Rudge) Hathaway came from 28 King Edward Street, Slough, Buckinghamshire. His confined body must have been brought by truck to the railway station in Tralee and sent to Kingsbridge (Heuston) Station by rail. Then by boat to Liverpool or Holyhead. Down through Crewe by rail to Slough. A lonely journey.

What relatives did he have? Did they attend his burial? Was there any book, bell or Bible? Is his grave marked? His end was a lonely one.. This unknown Englishman fought for his objectives. He

was loyal to his comrades. His story is the most poignant of all. A sad, sad tale.

"Come friendly bombs and rain on Slough,
It is not fit for man or plough"
(John Betjeman)

Could not the National Graves Association now mark the grave of Rudge Hathaway? At the time of celebration of the Easter Rising, could not some representative of the Irish Nation attend at this graveside and pay some honour? At long last, could not this English soldier be

acknowledged? We've had a lot about the British Legion. We're being gagged in Khaki. British Army Memorials (BAWMI) are chocking us. These are only for the shapers and the movers. What about the Men of No Consequence? What of the English soldier who'd fought and died for Ireland's freedom. And still the Atlantic comes in discordant, to crash on Kerry Head. Let someone, somewhere, remember.

"A lone sea-gull screams
Above the bay"

Patrick Pearse

Catalan Government Honours Terence MacSwiney In Cork

On June 10th the Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia organised a Conference in Cork City Hall, commemorating Catalunya's solidarity in 1920 with the martyred Lord Mayor of Cork, Terence MacSwiney. I myself had previously referred to that solidarity—see www.indymedia.ie/article/76009—when speaking on behalf of the International Brigade Memorial Trust in Figueres, Catalunya, on Easter Sunday, 2006. This was a month before the death of my brigadista father Micheal O'Riordan who, on the commencement of the Spanish Civil War's battle of the Ebro in July 1938, had been among the volunteers from each company in the British Battalion, 15th International Brigade, to carry the flag of Catalunya across the River Ebro at Asco. A year later, our family scattered a third of my father's ashes in the River Ebro at Asco—see www.irelandscw.com/ibvol-MoR07.htm—where I sang my adaptation of a poem by Louis Aragon (journalist with the French Communist Party newspaper "L'Humanite" and Editor of its evening paper "*Ce Soir*"). The poem that had been inspired by the music of the Catalan national hymn "*Santa Espina*", to which the Catalan national sardana is danced.

I had not been in Cork City Hall since September 2001, when my father had addressed a Labour Party Conference—see www.irelandscw.com/ibvol-MoR-ILP.htm—on the Spanish War. The Conference this June 10th was preceded by a joint wreath-laying ceremony, at the City Hall monument to MacSwiney, by Cork Deputy Lord Mayor Ken O'Flynn and Josep Suarez, Head of the Delegation of the Government of Catalonia to the UK and Ireland. If there was one outstanding Catalan hero to emerge from that conference, who was of parallel stature to MacSwiney, it was the Catalan Nationalist politician, Manuel Carrasco—see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manuel_Carrasco

_Formiguera—who would be executed by Franco on 7th April 1938. It was none other than that same Manuel Carrasco who, on 1st November 1920, had proposed that Barcelona City Council pass a vote of sympathy with Lady Mayoress Muriel MacSwiney, following the death during a Hunger Strike of her husband Terence on October 25th.

During the course of his address, Manuel Carrasco stated that it would be most appropriate for the city of Barcelona to pay this homage to the Mayor of Cork, and also, at the same time, a homage of admiration and respect to his widow. The heroism of this special woman, he said, was little known, and only comparable to that of the strong women mentioned in the Bible. She had decided to devote herself to the knowledge of the Irish language because of her patriotic sentiments. It was in one of these language schools that she met her future husband. She felt admiration and enthusiasm for him and, as they studied the mother tongue of Ireland, these two souls came together in a union of love and patriotism which only the Mayor's death would break. They faced difficulties in marrying, but this sublime woman maintained her strength of will and overcame all the obstacles to eventually marry her love, although she had to wait until the laws of her country allowed the union to take place. (By which he meant British laws; Muriel and Terence MacSwiney were married during Terence's post-1916 imprisonment—MOR.) After seeing how her husband was persecuted, she and her husband swore never to abandon each other. When the Mayor was imprisoned, he said he would either be free within a month or he would die in prison. His wife stayed by his side whenever she was allowed to. This was an example to all those who believed that patriotic ideals should save society and lead the nation to progress. That

is why, Councillor Carrasco concluded, he had formulated this motion, trusting that all the groups on the Council would be able to approve it, and that, in imitating this example, they would always be willing to make such sacrifices for their homeland.

Manuel Carrasco's own sacrifice and martyrdom would come at the hands of Spanish Fascism. Captured by Francoist forces in December 1936, he was sentenced to death in a summary trial in August 1937 for opposing Franco's revolt against the democratically elected Government, and he was executed on 9th April 1938. Carrasco walked towards his place of execution carrying in one hand a crucifix with a plenary indulgence for the hour of death, and in the other, a woollen shoe of his baby daughter Rosa Maria, not yet two years of age. As soon as he was finally placed in position he gave the little shoe to Father Ignacio and they embraced. Carrasco, who had declined a bandage over his eyes, declared: *"The motto that has been mine for my whole life and which I carry in my heart, I now wish to shout aloud at this transcendental moment, Visca Catalunya lliure! (Long Live free Catalonia!). He still had time to add 'Jesus, Jesus!' as the officer shouted 'Fire!' He fell backwards, shot in the head. A coup de grâce was not needed.*

It was therefore a particularly moving moment for Mac Swiney's grandson, Cathal Mac Swiney Brugha, to be able to welcome to the Cork City Hall conference that self-same Rosa Maria Carrasco. For, as Cathal pointed out, his own mother, Maire MacSwiney, had received, when two years of age, as a gesture of solidarity on the death of her father, the gift of a doll in Catalan folk costume, which he afterwards displayed to the Catalan delegation at Cork Museum. And, as for 79 year old Rosa Maria Carrasco herself, her wheelchair was defied by the strength of her voice, as she made several interventions during the course of the conference, calling for a Barcelona street to be named in honour of MacSwiney, as her father had first proposed in 1920.

In my own intervention at the Conference I referred back to my address in Figueres on Easter Sunday, 2006; how I had quoted from the Catalan poem written by Ventura Gassol on the death of Mac Swiney, and how my father had carried the flag of Catalunya at the commencement of the Battle of the Ebro in July 1938. I further referred to the fact that, as an Anti-Fascist activist in both 1930s Germany and France, Muriel MacSwiney had championed the Spanish Republic, and how, in my schoolboy years of the 1960s, I had been privileged to both meet and

correspond with Muriel. Following the visit to Cork Museum, we then travelled to St Finbarr's Cemetery, where Cathal gave a further address at the grave of Terence Mac Swiney. We then moved to the grave of my father's parents, Julia and Micheal O'Riordan Senior, where I had also placed a portion of my father's ashes in 2007. I related how my father had been wounded in action in August 1938, how he had sent his mother a telegram to reassure her that he would pull through, and how the postman delivering the telegram had thrown it at my grandmother, snarling *"It's dead he should be, for fighting against Christ!"* He was, of course, doing no such thing, and I proceeded to sing once again my arrangement of that inspirational poem by the French Communist Louis Aragon, *"Santa Espina"*:

I remember a tune that we used to hear in Spain
And it made the heart beat faster and all of us
knew

Each time as our blood was kindled once again
Just why Catalunya's sky above us was so blue.

I remember a tune like the voice of open sea
Like the cry of migrant birds, that tune in
silence stores

After its notes a stifled sob
Revenge of the salt seas on their conquerors.

I remember a tune that was whistled late at
night

In a sunless time, an age with no wandering
knight.

While children wept for bombs, huddled
deep in catacombs
A noble people dreamt of the tyrant's
doom.

In that tune's name – Santa Espina – was
borne the sacred thorn

That pierced the brow of a god, as on his
cross he died.

And all who heard those notes, they felt
that song in the flesh

Like the wound in Jesus' side, as his
sorrows were revived.

O Catalans, you hummed that tune, but its
words you did not sing.

Before Christ's name you bowed no more
and yet this I do know:

As Franco ravaged Spain, all in the name
of Christ the King

Santa Espina was your hope and your
month of Sundays O.

How in vain do I still seek that proud yet
poignant melody

But this hard earth on which we live now
has but operatic tears.

And the sound of murmuring waters has
been lost to memory:

That call of stream to stream, in these
unhearing years.

O Holy Thorn, Santa Espina, let me hear

your notes again

Where we fought with pride, yet often
cried with your defiance and your pain.
But no one is left now to intone your proud
refrain.

The woods are so silent and the singers
dead in Spain.

And yet I hope and do believe that such
music still

Lives in the hearts of that proud people,
being hummed now underground.

Yes, the dumb will yet sing, and the
paralytics will

March in triumph one fine day to
Catalunya's noble sound!

And that piercing crown of blood, so full
of anguish and sorrow

Will fall from the brow of the Son of Man
that hour!

And man will sing proudly in that new
tomorrow

Of Catalunya, Santa Espina, and the
hawthorn tree in flower!

Yes, man will sing loudly in that sweet
tomorrow

Of the beauty of life and the hawthorn tree
in flower!

See my Facebook Timeline on June 15 at www.facebook.com/manus.oriordan.1 for videos from both the MacSwiney and O'Riordan graveside ceremonies. Cathal then went on to speak further of Muriel's radical politics and to pay tribute to her second partner—see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_Kaan—as a heroic French Resistance leader. Pierre Kaan was the father of Muriel MacSwiney's second daughter, Alix Blakelock, for whom a death notice was published in the October 2009 issue of *Irish Political Review*. Pierre Kaan had been a deputy to the Resistance leader Jean Moulin, but betrayed by a close collaborator, Kaan was arrested by the Gestapo in Paris on 29th December 1944, tortured and then deported to the Nazi German Concentration Camp of Buchenwald. Later deported again to Gleina, he was liberated by Czech Anti-Fascist fighters. Suffering from both typhus and tuberculosis, however, Pierre Kaan was already close to death, and passed away on 18th May 1945. At the Republican plot in St Finbarr's cemetery Cathal MacSwiney Brugha had paid fitting tribute to the trinity of martyred Irish heroes buried there—Tomas MacCurtain, Terence MacSwiney and Dennis Barry. But it was particularly fitting on June 10 that he should also include his grandfather in a trinity of martyred international heroes—Terence MacSwiney, Manuel Carrasco and Pierre Kaan.

Manus O'Riordan

Transmission of Savings to Investment

Perhaps at this stage a definition of savings and investment should be given. Savings is the decision to abstain from consumption. A portion of a person's income is not consumed: this is called Savings. Investment is spending on an asset which will bring a future benefit. Keynes says in Chapter Six that investment is the "*addition to capital equipment*". But in other contexts he seems to suggest investment includes working capital, such as inventory (i.e. stocks of raw material or finished goods), which are consumed in a future period. Again in Chapter Six he says:

"...the amount of savings is an outcome of the collective behaviour of individual consumers and the amount of investment of the collective behaviour of entrepreneurs..."

Possibly a better word than "*collective*" would be "*aggregate*" since "*collective*" implies a joint decision. Keynes is not always precise in his definitions, but this reviewer's interpretation is that investment must involve spending on a real asset, while saving is spending on a financial asset.

So, putting money in a bank account, buying a bond or a share is savings. On the other hand, purchasing capital equipment or investing in inventory is investment.

A remarkable feature of Keynes' work is his complete lack of interest in the quality of investment. While he accepts that investment is a key element in national income, he does not, unlike Marx, consider that some investments might be productive while others might be wasteful. This is all the more surprising given that in his opening chapter he agrees with the classical theory that the marginal productivity of labour is a key determinant of employment.

In Part Three of this series it was suggested that Keynes' famous remark on burying treasury notes in coal-mines indicated that he believed that the productivity of capital didn't really matter. This memorable story was no mere rhetorical flourish. In Chapter Sixteen he says the following:

"It is much preferable to speak of capital as having a yield over the course of its life in excess of its original cost, than as being *productive*. For the only reason why an asset offers a prospect of yielding during its life services having an aggregate

value greater than its initial supply price is because it is *scarce*; it is kept scarce because of the competition of the rate of interest on money. If capital becomes less scarce, the excess yield will diminish, without its having become less productive—at least in the physical sense" (emphasis as in the original).

He then says that he has some sympathy with the "*pre-classical*" economists who believed that everything was "*produced*" by Labour. However, while it is true that Marx, for example, believed that all value has its source in Labour, he was also very aware of the role capital played in raising the productivity of Labour. Indeed the tendency for concentration of capital is one of the main themes of his classic work *Das Kapital*.

So, does Keynes deny the significance of the tendency for the concentration of capital to raise the productivity of Labour? The following quotation suggests that he comes very close to this position:

"It is true that some lengthy or round-about processes are physically efficient. But so are some short processes. Lengthy processes are not physically efficient because they are long. Some, probably most, lengthy processes would be physically very inefficient, for there are such things as spoiling or wasting with time."

For Keynes scarcity, rather than capital's tendency to increase the productivity of labour, is the key determinant of the return on capital employed.

It is tempting to conclude from a Keynesian point of view that the destruction of capital through war is the best means of ensuring full employment. What better way of ensuring that there is a return on capital?

Notwithstanding this shortcoming in his analysis, Keynes has some interesting observations on the motives of investors, which resonate in our time. A characteristic of capitalism is that the saver is not the same person who invests. Also an investor is not necessarily the same person who runs and manages a commercial enterprise. This is not necessarily a weakness of the system. Those who save or have surplus funds are not always the most dynamic elements within society. The division between savings and investment (the system of credit) enables idle surplus funds to be transmitted to productive uses. But,

by analogy, just as the splitting of the atom can release great power, it also entails great risks.

If an entrepreneur invests his own funds he is incurring an "*entrepreneurial risk*". There is a risk that there will be no return on the capital employed. On the other hand, if he borrows, there are two risks involved. As well as the entrepreneurial risk, the lender has to trust the borrower ("*lender risk*"), since his knowledge of the investment is usually quite limited. Both of these risks are taken into account in assessing the return that is required on the savings that are invested. In other words, a higher return needs to be achieved to compensate for the risk.

The banking system and the stock market are the means by which savings are transmitted to the real economy in the form of investment. If that connection is broken by a collapse in the banking system, there are grave dangers for the economy. The complete lack of knowledge of the savers on the one hand and the imperfect knowledge of the investors on the other can be bridged by the banks (financial intermediaries) or the stock market.

In the case of banks, credit managers are employed to assess the credit risk. However, in most cases these managers don't have any real understanding of business loans.

In Ireland, for example, there is still, despite all that has happened, a prejudice in favour of lending for property. Credit Managers prefer "*asset backed*" loans. For a business it is easier to obtain a loan for a top of the range Mercedes than plant and equipment because, in the event of default, an expensive motor car has some realisable value. An economic argument in favour of the banking system is that, by dispersing the savings that it has accumulated from society's savers to a wide variety of borrowers, the credit risk is spread. The theory goes that a bank can absorb losses of some of its loans because of the profits it makes out of others. But, of course, if the loans are skewed towards property, the risk incurred by the banks is not spread at all.

Keynes could see the benefits and dangers of the Stock Market. Long term investments are made possible by the trading of shares. Very few people would be prepared to commit their savings to a company without any real possibility of being able to cash their shares in after a modest period of time. The Stock Market makes investments "*liquid*" for the investor by allowing him to trade in his shares.

Some of Keynes' criticisms of the Stock Market are extremely topical. He thought

that the Stock Market resembled a casino and as such it should be made inaccessible and expensive to play. For this reason, writing a half a century before the "big bang" in London, he thought the elitism of Threadneedle Street (the London Stock Exchange) was preferable to the populism of Wall Street.

In this respect he distinguished between two types of investors: enterprise and speculative.

An enterprise investor assesses the company in which he is investing and what its return will be. He is primarily interested in obtaining a steady stream of modest dividend income over a long period of time.

A speculative investor, on the other hand, is more interested in the psychology of the market. His main concern is with what the "market" thinks. He is not interested in whether the company he is investing in is profitable or not because his investment is for the short term. He is less interested in dividend income. His main concern is to make a substantial capital gain in the short term. There can be wild fluctuations in share prices in very short periods of time based on market sentiment or, as Keynes sometimes said: "the animal spirits". The largest profits (and losses) can be made by anticipating the "market", rather than analysing the individual companies in which it is proposed to invest.

As the speculative element to the Stock Market predominates, the Stock Market begins to resemble a casino, which is disconnected from companies operating in the real economy. The enormous level of funds available to the Stock Market are not necessarily directed in the best interests of the economy. Companies with long-term growth potential are starved of funds, which are diverted to companies, which have the prospect of giving quick capital gains. Keynes also remarked that the best brains were often drawn to speculative activity, which has no real social benefit.

Keynes had some very modern ideas to solve this problem. One suggestion is that there should be a Transactions Tax, which would reduce the volume of transactions and thereby discourage speculative activity, an idea which was echoed decades later by the Nobel Prize winning economist James Tobin (of Tobin Tax fame). This, of course, would adversely affect liquidity in the Stock Market, which might discourage Stock Market investment. But would that be such a bad thing?

An even bigger problem, as far as Keynes was concerned, was that the

volume of investment was not sufficient to reach full employment. The problem was that the individual's instinct to save was greater than his instinct to invest. As has been discussed in the previous article, savings always equal investment, but savings don't determine investment. Savings (or abstention from consumption) could lead to a build up of finished goods rather than an increase in capital goods (plant and machinery etc). The reduction in demand leads to a decline in investment and a downward spiral of income and employment (the paradox of thrift).

So, what are the reasons for saving? Keynes lists the following items:

- 1) Precaution
The urge to provide against contingencies: a "rainy day fund".
- 2) Foresight
To provide for an anticipated future relation between income and the needs of the individual or his family that is different to what it costs at present.
- 3) Calculation
To enjoy the interest and capital appreciation
- 4) Improvement
Aspire to a gradual improvement in standard of living
- 5) Independence
To be independent of the need to work.
- 6) Enterprise
Have the ability to carry out speculative or business projects
- 7) Pride
To be able to bequeath a fortune to your descendants.
- 8) Avarice or Miserliness

Of the above motives to save, only one (item 6) involves investment.

At first sight it might seem strange that buying a financial asset (i.e. saving), which has no intrinsic value and is merely a legal contract between lender and borrower, involves less of a risk than buying a real asset such as machinery in a company. In the case of a deposit or a bond the lender has a reasonable expectation (even in a financial crisis) of receiving the principal and interest back. Owning a share involves more risk, but the ability to trade or cash in the share gives some liquidity to the transaction.

Investments in the real economy tend to be illiquid. Once a machine is bought that is a "sunk cost". The money spent on it is largely gone. While there is a market for second hand machines, the cost of disassembling the machine, transporting

it and commissioning it in the premises of the buyer might mean that the net realisable value of the machine is barely above zero. Indeed, since technology doesn't stand still, the machine may be obsolete and therefore only have scrap value.

So, why would an entrepreneur buy a machine in the first place? He is hoping that the machine will increase the output of his company and that the increased output will be sold. The increased revenue generated will thereby enable him to pay back the cost of the machine. The discounted cash flow (cash flow which takes into account that the future value of money is less than its present value) should exceed the initial outlay.

Part of the entrepreneur's calculations will involve the interest rate, which will be examined in the next part of this series, but a more important factor is the entrepreneur's expectations. The entrepreneur must be persuaded that there is a market for his product: that the increased volumes will be sold and at a price that covers his costs. In short, he must have an optimistic view of the future, but the future by its nature is uncertain.

What are the determinants of his view of the future? Since we are dealing with human psychology, the entrepreneur's view has a rational and an irrational element. On the rational side he first of all looks at the present and forms an opinion on the future. But it is often the case that information about the present is unclear. It might very well be that his decision concerning the future is based on information gleaned from the past.

If his decision is based on an optimistic view of the future there will be a double benefit in terms of employment. He will first of all have to increase employment by investing in capital equipment so as to cater for the new higher level of demand. This will be a temporary increase, but there will also be a more long-term increase in employment (assuming stable levels of productivity), even after the capital has been invested to cater for the new level of demand.

On the other hand, there will be a double disadvantage for the economy if the entrepreneur perceives that demand in the future will decline. He will produce at an even lower level than the new lower level of demand in order to sell off inventory built up before the new level of expectation had been established.

Keynes doubts that investment decisions are made on the basis of a mathematical model. Just as purchasing shares has a lot to do with the "animal spirits",

investments have the same element. Indeed Keynes doubts whether enterprise is possible without this irrational—and sometimes destructive—element.

Perhaps a greater insight into human beings' irrational view of the future can be obtained from the world of literature than that of economics. In F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel, *The Great Gatsby*, towards the end of the book, the narrator reflects on the character of the fabulously wealthy Gatsby:

"...I thought of Gatsby's wonder when he first picked out the green light at the end of Daisy's dock. He had come a long way to this blue lawn, and his dream must have seemed so close he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him, somewhere back in that vast obscurity beyond the city, where the dark fields of the republic rolled on under the night. Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgiastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter—tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms

farther... and one fine morning...

"So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past."

In Keynes' view there were perfectly rational reasons why the tendency to save was stronger than the tendency to invest. The act of saving or abstaining from consumption is likely to give a more secure return to the individual in the future than a decision to invest. But saving on its own is of no benefit to the economy. Indeed, it will only depress the economy causing a drop in income and employment. In other words, what was in the interests of the individual was in conflict with the interests of the economy. Keynes concluded that this was one of the reasons why the market, if left to its own devices, could not be relied upon to reach a state of full employment. And no amount of Gatsby-like optimism could counteract this!

John Martin

Next Month: Interest and Money

Agreement as it was working out was caused primarily by the Power-Sharing element or the all-Ireland element but, in discussion of what the Strike was about, the actual Strike demand should surely have been given a moment's thought.

It might be that the UWC really wanted to bring down the whole Sunningdale scheme, but that is not what it demanded. If its demand had been addressed, and one of its alternatives conceded, the wind would have been taken out of its sails. But its actual demand was not addressed by those in power at the time, any more than by those reminiscing about it forty years later.

The Strike could have been averted, and the Power-Sharing Executive preserved, if the SDLP had decided to defer the establishment of the Parliamentary tier of the Council of Ireland for the time being. Its purpose as a party in power should have been to get over the immediate crisis posed by the system within which it was in power, giving itself three years to consolidate its position in the North by delaying the establishment of the superficial All-Ireland element of Sunningdale.

The UWC demand was not that the Council of Ireland provision should be struck out of the Sunningdale Agreement, but that it should not be proceeded with for the time being.

Workers' Weekly (a precursor of the *Irish Political Review*) wrote an urgent letter to Paddy Devlin (SDLP Minister for Labour in the Sunningdale Government) in March 1974, recommending this course of action to him in order to preserve the Executive. He replied that the Executive was not in danger, that the SDLP had the situation well in hand, and that if it was in difficulty the last place it would turn to for advice was *Workers' Weekly* and BICO.

Devlin was one of the more realistic leaders of the SDLP, and the one who should have had a sense of what was going on in the Protestant community. He and Gerry Fitt (later Lord Fitt) were the urban working-class element of the SDLP and they were often heard to complain about the restrictions placed on them as socialists by the nationalism of the countrymen in the Party, meaning John Hume. But that was in private. In public there was a seamless unity of the two.

We approached Devlin in March 1974, because the duplicity in the signing of the Sunningdale Agreement had been brought to light by an action in the High Court in Dublin. That duplicity was noticed and publicised by Unionist opponents of the Agreement.

1974 Strike 40 Years On

An all-day Conference to mark the 40th Anniversary of the General Strike that led to an end of the Sunningdale system of devolved government in Northern Ireland was held at the Queen's University, Belfast on 19th May 2014. It was organised by Conal Parr and Gareth Mulvenna of QUB PISP (School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy at Queen's University, Belfast).

A recording of the Conference can be heard on: <http://sluggerotoole.com/2014/05/22/ulster-workers-council-strike-the-strike-which-brought-down-sunningdale/>

The platform speakers included Glenn Barr, Kenneth Bloomfield, Maurice Hayes, Austin Currie and Tommy Mc Kearney.

A curious thing about the Conference was that the actual demands of the Strike were not mentioned, and when I tried to drag them in towards the end of the Conference, they were regarded as irrelevant.

I decided to attend because two senior Northern Ireland civil servants were advertised as conducting one session: Kenneth Bloomfield and Maurice Hayes. They discussed whether the Strike was against Power-Sharing or against the Council of Ireland. Hayes thought it was against Power-Sharing and Bloomfield thought it was against the Council of Ireland.

The demand of the Ulster Workers' Council was made very clear at the time.

The UWC was a Shop Stewards group in what was then a well-organised industrial working class, predominantly Protestant in composition. Its Strike demand was clear, reasonable and limited. For that reason, and because it was backed by Trade Union power, the Strike generated widespread support in the Protestant community. (It was carried through by trade union power at shop steward level, but opposed by the distant top leadership in London.)

The demand was that *either* the Council of Ireland Parliamentary tier, provided for by the Sunningdale Agreement, should be deferred for the time being, *or* there should be new elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly, to show if there was still majority support for the devolved Government, in the light of political developments since the Agreement began to be put into effect on 1st January 1974.

Deferral of the full establishment of the Council of Ireland would have left the Power-Sharing Government—called an Executive—in place, while an election won by the Power-Sharing parties would allow the whole Sunningdale scheme to go ahead.

One might speculate about whether Protestant discontent with the Sunningdale

The understanding among Unionists was that, by signing the Agreement, the Dublin Government had repealed the Southern sovereignty claim over the Six Counties and recognised Northern Ireland as being legitimately part of the UK state. And that is how the matter was presented in propaganda supporting the Agreement—but presented by suggestion rather than explicit statement.

Kevin Boland brought a legal action against the Dublin Government on a charge of acting in breach of the Constitution. Since the Irish Constitution was a carefully written document, adopted by referendum, there could really be no serious argument on the issue. If the Dublin Government had recognised Northern Ireland as a constitutionally legitimate part of the UK, it would have acted in breach of the Constitution. Its defence pleading was that it had not broken the Constitution by recognising Northern Ireland as legitimate: it had only indicated that it was not its policy, as a Government in Office for a few years, to enforce the Constitutional assertion of national sovereignty over the Six Counties. And it made it explicit that its signature of the Sunningdale Agreement left the Constitutional assertion of *de jure* national sovereignty over the Six Counties intact for any future Government to act on. It had given nothing away.

Then it came to light that there were two different documents called the *Sunningdale Agreement*, and that Dublin had signed the one whose phrasing did not carry the necessary implication of Dublin recognition of the legitimacy of Northern Ireland. (The difference, as far as I recall, was produced by an apparently slight change of grammar that was easily overlooked.)

In March a striking advert appeared in the Belfast Unionist papers. It was, as I recall, a whole page ad. with the relevant paragraph of the Dublin Government Court pleading in the middle of the page, and nothing else. What else was needed?

Unionist demonstrations against the Agreement during the first month or six weeks of 1974 were small-scale affairs, and were reassuring to the new sub-Government. The Unionist leader, Brian Faulkner, lost control of the Ulster Unionist Party but he quickly formed a new party of members dedicated to the Agreement. By this time the UUP was no longer the all-embracing party of Six County Protestants that it used to be, and Faulkner's party did not seem at all predestined to failure.

But opposition to Sunningdale grew, as the SDLP boasted that it was gaining by subterfuge what the IRA failed to get by

force. And an opportunity to give sensational expression to this opposition arose in mid-February with a British General Election.

British General Elections are not contested in Northern Ireland by the political parties of the British state—the parties through which the British state functions—Tory and Labour. The victor in the British Election legislates for the state as a whole, including Northern Ireland, but the Northern Ireland electorate plays no part in deciding which party is to govern the state.

It would be reasonable if these British elections were only held in Britain, leaving Northern Ireland in peace during them, but that would be inappropriate ideologically as it would give the game away about Northern Ireland being an integral part of British democracy. So the Northern Ireland electorate has to vote in the state elections, even though the state-parties do not present them with candidates. And that means that there is a sense in which the British elections don't matter in this part of Britain. In the good old days it used to be said that, if the UUP nominated a monkey as candidate in a British elections, there would be no question but that he would be elected.

In the British election of February 1974 the anti-Sunningdale "Treble U C: won all of the Protestant seats in a protest vote. (The Treble was an alliance of the UUP, Paisley Unionists, and William Craig's Unionists.) This did not alter in any way the composition of the Stormont Assembly, which was sealed off from the election system of the state. But it should have been treated by the SDLP as an alarm warning. It wasn't.

And then the Dublin Court action in March consolidated the February turn of events.

Another effect of that British election was that it changed the British Government, and therefore the representative of the State who governed Northern Ireland.

In the good old days the representative of the State was the Governor-General, who was merely a ceremonial figure. In 1972, when the Tories abolished the old Stormont system, the Governor was abolished and a Secretary of State put in his place. The Secretary of State was the head of the Whitehall Department of State responsible for Northern Ireland. If there was no sub-Government in place, he was a kind of regional Prime Minister, rather like the Irish Chief Secretary during the century of the Union, governing with an array of Ministers elected in Britain. If

there was a sub-Government in place, his business was to act as its shepherd.

The sub-Government of January-May 1974 functioned in a system put together with immense skill and exhaustive patience by Tory Secretary of State, William Whitelaw. Whitelaw was a member of the old aristocratic ruling class—the one that made the Empire—for which government was a practical matter of handling the elements of power in particular situations to the advantage of the state, rather than the implementation of ideology. He was replaced by an incoherent socialist ideologue, Merlyn Rees; with a virtual member of the SDLP, Stanley Orme, as his deputy.

That combination of the Dublin Government's Court pleading, the British Election, and the arrival of a Secretary of State who gave the SDLP the feeling of being complicit in the power of the State, and not just the minor partner in a subordinate local government, brought about the situation in which a General Strike was called and was put into effect by the group of Unionist shop stewards.

Those were the great days of unofficial shop stewards in the Trade Union movement, when the Trade Unions were an officially recognised political power in the state.

There was then a substantial industrial workforce in the North. It was predominantly Protestant and it was highly organised in Trade Union terms. The Communist Party held positions of influence at the top of the official Trade Union structure. It had gained those positions through diligent and competent attendance to Trade Union activity, but had got to be increasingly out of joint ideologically with the general Trade Union membership, being Anti-Partitionist in orientation. The motions which it sponsored in the Trades Council and other official bodies were not representative of grass-roots feeling but were tolerated as being of little consequence, until the North went into flux in 1969. After that, misrepresentation of the mass of Trade Unionists as being in accord with the Anti-Partition orientation of the CP was no longer tolerated. The apparent hegemony of the Party—its holding of official positions which conveyed to outsiders the idea that its opinions were more or less the opinions of the made of Trade Union members—was quickly overthrown.

The first striking expression of this was the appearance of the Ulster Defence Association in a mass demonstration on

the streets of Belfast in 1971 or 1972. It was the most impressive demonstration of orderly mass power I have ever seen. It was put to me that this was not the organised working class but the lumpen proletariat, the rabble that is always an element in city life. But it didn't look like a rabble to me, either in conduct or in quantity.

Of course the UDA still exists, and it might be that it is today what it was described as being then. But that was over forty years ago, and the class from which it emerged then has long since disappeared, destroyed by one thing and another.

Within the sphere of what the UDA was then, a Shop Stewards group got together and, after the Dublin Court hearing, constructed a demand focussed on the Council of Ireland, and, in adverts in the papers, said that if the demand was not met by mid-May there would be a General Strike. (The term used was *Constitutional Stoppage*, to indicate that the issue was not wages or conditions but was political.)

No heed was taken of that strike notice. It was expected that the thing would pass off with a bit of disorderly conduct.

Len Murray, General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress, came to Belfast to lead the workers to work across the picket lines. They didn't follow him.

I assume that he was invited over by the Communist Party, which did not understand the extent to which the general Trade Union membership had rejected it on what was called "*the Constitutional question*".

It was said that the Strike was not even a proper strike because its object was not to improve wages or conditions. Workers had no business to go on strike over what was a political issue. The Deputy Prime Minister, Gerry Fitt, took up that theme. He said that a strike on a political issue against an elected Government was a Fascist insurrection. He compared it to the situation to Germany in 1933 and declared that this time Fascism would be crushed.

Bringing over the leader of the TUC to break the Strike was not only a failure but a further political aggravation, because the TUC was not the central Trade Union body for Northern Ireland—that was the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. (All concerned knew in their guts, if not in their heads, that the official all-Ireland structure of Trade Unionism was out of joint with the reality of Trade Unionism on the ground in the North, and so the ICTU was sensibly left out of it.)

Although there was by May undoubtedly extensive Unionist opposition to the Sunningdale operation because of the tricky Council of Ireland element, I thought the Constitutional Stoppage might be no more than a few days of disorderly conduct, like the Vanguard Strikes called by William Craig. Although the Strike demand was realistic and was as democratic as anything could be in the undemocratic Northern Ireland structure, Unionist events had a way of becoming disorderly. And, in this instance, it was very much in the Government's interest that it should become disorderly and justify the Deputy Prime Minister's characterisation of it as Fascist.

There was at that time an organisation within the Unionist movement which I regarded as fascist. It was William Craig's *Vanguard* movement, launched in response to the abolition of the Stormont system by the Tory Government in 1972.

Craig asserted that Westminster had acted unlawfully in striking down the Northern Ireland system established in 1921. Northern Ireland, he claimed, was a sovereign political body existing in a kind of federal relationship with Britain. This was an idea that had been floated by an influential group of Unionist lawyers in the 1950s. They reasoned that, while the 1920 *Government of Ireland Act*, which was generally called the Northern Ireland *Constitution*, had established Northern Ireland as a subordinate body subject to the continuing sovereign authority of Westminster, the usage of three decades had led to a degree of sovereignty accruing to the Stormont system. While the Act gave Westminster the right to over-rule Stormont legislation, or to legislate directly on matters transferred to the Stormont Parliament, it had never done either of these things, and therefore the unused overriding authority of Westminster should be regarded as having lapsed.

Westminster and Whitehall, as far as I know, did not bother their heads with these legalistic constitutional arguments. They knew that Parliament is sovereign within the UK and as far as the organs of the British State can reach in the world, that it is incapable of alienating its sovereignty constitutionally, and that there was no British constitutional authority beyond the predominant opinion of Parliament at any particular moment. London ignored the Ulsterish Constitutional illusions being spun in Belfast and, when it came to see the Stormont system as a nuisance, it declared it abolished, and it was abolished by that simple declaration.

Brian Faulkner was Prime Minister at

the time, and was trying to reform the system to make it functional. Robert Ramsay, a civil servant close to him who published his memoirs some years ago, says that Faulkner felt betrayed as Whitehall had given him a private guarantee that it would see him through the crisis of 1972.

There was a moment, immediately following abolition of Stormont, when it seemed possible that the Unionist political movement might try to act on the debating point of the lawyers. A mass meeting was held in the grounds of Stormont, addressed by Faulkner, Craig and Paisley, but no assertion of Northern Ireland independence came of it. It seemed to me at the time that this was because of the mass influence exerted by the Orange Order under the leadership of William Molyneux and the Rev. Martin Smythe, who reminded people that, after all, the Unionist movement existed to keep Ireland British, and that bringing it under the immediate administration of Whitehall Ministers could hardly be regarded as excluding it from the British state.

The situation was defused. Faulkner began negotiating for a restoration of devolution, while hinting that permanent Whitehall government might be acceptable. Paisley also briefly adopted an "*integration*" or "*direct rule*" policy without spelling out the details. And Craig launched the Ulster nationalist Vanguard movement, which had all the trappings one associates with a fascist movement and the slogan "*Ulster a Nation*". He held a great rally in Ormeau Park (Belfast) and promised mass action. But he failed to sweep the Protestant community in general into his movement as Carson had done and, by 1974, he had to settle for being part of the Treble U C (United Ulster Unionist Council).

The Tartan Gangs were an intimidating presence in some parts of Belfast in that period, much as I suppose the Brownshirts were in parts of Germany in 1932. They have been neglected by historians, possibly because 1933 did not happen in Ulster.

(I was editing *Workers' Weekly* then. I took to writing editorials in a cafe in Great Victoria Street, in what was then the centre of Belfast. A Catholic waitress used to warn me when there was a Tartan Gang in the vicinity. She never asked me what I was writing. She just took it for granted that it would not be good for me to be seen writing if the Tartan Gangs were near.)

That was the situation in which the Ulster Workers' Council emerged, formulated a coherent and realistic Strike demand,

and organised an authentic strike in support of it. It was an entirely unexpected development.

I say the UWC emerged, but actually it didn't. It acted discreetly behind the scenes, made its arrangements, announced its terms, and when its terms were ignored it did what it said it would do. And then it disappeared.

I published the *Workers' Weekly* daily during the Strike, and sometimes twice a day. I directed it in the first instance towards the SDLP, trying to persuade it to negotiate on the Council of Ireland in order to preserve Power-Sharing. When I saw that the Government was intent on provoking disorder in order to be able to use strong-arm methods to crush the Strike, and absolutely refused to negotiate, and that the Strike was being competently led, I directed the *Weekly* towards the strikers, explaining the Government's tactics and emphasising the reasonableness of the Strike demand. The *Weekly* Strike Bulletins circulated in thousands every day during the Strike.

I did this without ever meeting the UWC. I could see, by what was happening, what they were about and I did what I could to help them.

(Those *Strike Bulletins* have been attributed to the UWC by some academics. Academia becomes ever more slipshod in its methods. Every issue made it clear who the publisher was. They have also been attributed to Dr. Boyd Black of Queen's University, but they were entirely written by me and published by the *Workers' Association For The Democratic Settlement Of The National Conflict In Ireland*. Boyd helped with the physical production and distribution at the start. He later parted political company with me, becoming increasingly Unionist, and those *Bulletins* could not have been written from a Unionist viewpoint.)

Academic accounts of the Strike that I have looked at bear little resemblance to the actual event. It was treated as a paramilitary event but its distinguishing characteristic was that it was not the work of the paramilitary bodies, or of the Unionist Parties, but was organised by Shop Stewards using Trade Union skills.

It could be said that it was done within a political culture in which there was a very extensive paramilitary presence. It might even be that its organisers were members of paramilitary bodies. But, in formulating the Strike demand, they acted very much outside the culture of paramilitarism. And, when Unionist political leaders, after it was clear that the Strike

was effective, came along to offer their support and perhaps something more, they were treated with respect but kept at a distance.

The UWC stuck to its specific and limited demand right to the end. It never went beyond it, even when the world press came courting it. The moderation of the demand ensured the success of the Strike. The refusal of the SDLP to agree to a deferral of the Council of Ireland led to the collapse of Faulkner's Unionist support and he resigned. The Secretary of State then abolished the Sunningdale system. But that was a gratuitous act on his part.

The two senior civil servants, forty years later, ignoring the very moderate Strike demand, wondered what it was *really* about. What it was about was what it said it was about—deferral of the Council of Ireland because of the reassertion of the Southern sovereignty claim by the Government that had signed the Agreement in one of its two incompatible forms. What it was *really* about was what it was actually about.

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One thing was made clear by the course of the Strike: the Northern Ireland Government was not the Government of a Northern Ireland state. No Government that was the Government of a state would have behaved as the Northern Ireland Government did in May 1974.

I went to the 40th anniversary event only because two senior Northern Ireland civil servants of the time were to speak at it. I was interested to see if they had any sense that what they were senior civil servants of was not the Government of a State. They didn't seem to have. What I tried to ask them, they didn't seem to know what I was talking about. Maybe my question wasn't clear enough, or was too clear, but, if they didn't understand, neither had they any interest in trying to find out what I was getting at. I suppose a civil servant must be dedicated to the institution in which he makes his career and not be inclined to see it in a devaluing context.

Lord Bew began to advance his career by writing about about "*the Northern Ireland State*" shortly after 1974. It was established in 1921, destroyed in 1972, set up again in January 1974, destroyed again in May 1974 etc.

When a State is destroyed every citizen knows it. The ordinary life made possible by a State becomes impossible if the State is destroyed. The ordinary life made possible by the structures of a State was unaffected by any of the destructions of

the Northern Ireland 'State'. All that had to do with the State just carried on as if nothing had happened. Taxes were gathered, mail was delivered, the dole was paid. Obviously, then, what was destroyed was not the State.

The Secretary of State was bewildered by it all. He came from the most durable system of democracy in the world, moved from what was supposed to be one region of it to another, and found himself adrift in an alien world.

He was highly adapted to the political life of the state, but found that what worked in the political life of the state did not work here. He did not know why it didn't work. Who was there to explain it to him? Not the civil servants of the illusory Northern Ireland 'state'. Not his colleagues in the Labour Party—who had long made a virtue of not understanding what Northern Ireland was. And not the Whitehall servants—the ones who knew—because, if they knew, they also knew that Northern Ireland had been established for some purpose beyond itself, and that purpose was not to be interfered with.

So Merlyn Rees floundered. He threshed about—he must be given credit for that. At least he threshed about. He tried to cantonise Northern Ireland—and the clever Frank Cooper, his civil servant, allowed him to thresh about a bit while ensuring that it would all come to nothing—But, if Northern Ireland was a state, and its population behaved as it did, despite the fact that it was not a state, would extensive cantonisation not have been a likely mode of stabilisation? (It was known that Rees and Cooper had been in the RAF together, and it was assumed that Cooper had been the senior. In fact, Rees had been the senior. But, in Northern Ireland, Cooper, the Whitehall civil servant, was the mater, the shepherd, of the Secretary of State.)

When the Strike came, it was not like any other Strike Rees had ever known. If he was acquainted with British Labour history—and I assume that he was, if only through the prism of Aneurin Bevan—Bevan, in what I think was his only book, described the confrontation between the Triple Alliance and the Prime Minister in 1919, as told to him by the Miners' leader of the time, Robert Smillie. The Triple Alliance of Miners, Transport and Railway workers made demands which the private employers would not meet and the Government could not compel them to. Lloyd George invited the Union leaders to Downing St. and told them that he did not command the power to defeat them. The Army had insisted on rapid demobilisation after the unprecedented War effort and

was unreliable for use domestically. The Triple Alliance was a combination of force within the state that was greater than the force available to the State. If it was insistent on its demands, the only thing for it to do was to assume State authority. Were they ready to do that? If they were not, the only alternative was that they, the stronger power, should submit voluntarily to the weaker power of the State. In that instant, Smillie said, they knew they were beaten. They realised they had been bluffing. Their power was useless to them.

The situation confronting Merlyn Rees in May 1974 was similar in certain ways, but was different in essentials. Taking on the power of State to reshape society in the working class interest is an immensely complex business. Trade Union leaders, habituated to exerting pressure on the capitalist State on the practical assumption that its power was limitless, and for whom Socialism was an imprecise ideal which they had never envisaged in practical terms, were taken away beyond their depth by Lloyd George's challenge.

The UWC demand, on the other hand, was a bourgeois-democratic demand made by a section of the organised working class. And the UWC showed itself willing to confront the power of the State on the issue, daring the State to do its worst. And I did what I could to help it.

Another difference, of course, is that Smillie backed away from a project that would have brought down the State, while I knew that the Northern Ireland Government was not the Government of the state, and that if it was destroyed the State would continue without a ripple of disturbance with regard to its ordinary functions.

If it had been the existence of the State that was at issue, the matter would have required a bit more thought.

Austin Currie, a senior SDLP figure at the time, addressed a session of the 40th Anniversary event, but he did not address the Strike demand, and he did not explain how the SDLP characterised the Strike at the time. I reminded the meeting that the SDLP Leader, Gerry Fitt, said that the Strike was a Fascist rising and must be smashed down. The Chair looked to Currie to respond to this but Glenn Barr, who was also on the platform at the time, relieved Currie by nipping in with a distraction. Glenn Barr was the Loyalist paramilitary who had the closest involvement with the UWC, and he appeared to have established an amicable relationship with Currie on the basis of a nostalgia only slightly connected with the actuality of the event.

The only interesting platform speech was that of Tommy McKearney, who I don't remember as being involved at the time. He is a Provo dissident, but a very different kind of one from Anthony McIntyre. He took issue with Currie's standard description of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement as *Sunningdale for Slow Learners*. (Did the SDLP itself, apart from John Hume, learn anything from the Sunningdale experience? The fiasco of its handling of the implementation of the 1998 Agreement suggests that it didn't.)

Kenneth Bloomfield would not, at the Anniversary event, apply his mind to the complication, in the handling of the Strike, of there being two Governments in the Six Counties—the unelected real Government run by the Secretary of State and the elected but unreal, and disposable, sub-government. But there is some discussion in his memoirs of the relation between the two. *A Tragedy Of Errors: The Government And Misgovernment Of Northern Ireland* (2007) says:

"The Canada Act... could be repealed in the same way as any other UK statute; but in practice there could be no question of Britain attempting to reassert executive or legislative authority in Canada. However Northern Ireland was certainly not a dominion but a part of the UK.

"The executive power, the power to govern, was coterminous with the power to legislate of the clearly subordinate Parliament. Did it follow, then, that a Cabinet of Ministers in Belfast... was a subordinate Government? Here I drew a clear distinction between a client Government and a subordinate Government. Any Government unable to fund its expenditure from locally raised taxation and money borrowed upon its credit, or reliant in the last resort upon external forces to secure peace and order, has some of the characteristics of a client Government... The utter dependence of Northern Ireland upon Treasury goodwill became more and more apparent, and long before the more recent troubles, soldiers of the British Army had been used to buttress the local police in coping with... sectarian riots...

"Yet the Northern Ireland Government was not subordinate in the sense of having to respond to lawful orders of the British Government... Nor was, say, the local Ministry of Education a sort of branch office of its Whitehall equivalent. Parliament could, of course, at any time impose some such constraints upon the Northern Ireland Government, but had not chosen to do so. In the last resort, however, the British Government... was in a position to exert a powerful influence or even pressure behind the scenes...

"The fundamental fact was that the UK Government... lacked both the will and the capacity to monitor and understand what was happening within this part of the nation, and where it might lead. Westminster, paralysed for years by endless Irish debate and obstructionism, showed little enthusiasm to be involved again 'over there'... Perversely the UK Government was arguably less well informed about developments in this patch of its own territory than it was about the more remote dominions and even many foreign countries...

"There were, of course, "imperial" civil servants in Northern Ireland, dealing with matters in areas withheld from the Northern Ireland Government, such as income tax, customs or the civilian support of the armed services, but none of these... had a reporting role..." (p11-13).

How, and for what purpose, did this very, very odd governing arrangement for the Six Counties of the UK come about?

All that Bloomfield says on that score is that—

"It was a very strange anomaly in the outcome that Home Rule was, however reluctantly, accepted by that community within Ulster which had traditionally opposed it, and that, when finally offered it, that community in the rest of Ireland which had sought it for so long was no longer ready to accept it. Because the new powers of government and administration had to be both offered and accepted, the Act of 1920 was never to operate as those who framed it had hoped or intended" (p5).

This is the sort of thing that gives paradox a bad name.

The Home Rule against which Protestant Ulster raised an illegal Army was not the Home Rule which it agreed to operate. And the nationalist Ireland had only supported Home Rule as the bet they could hope for under comprehensive Imperial dominance. When something more became possible, they went for it. Then, with the establishment of the Irish state and Partition, the great bulk of the "obstructionist" Irish were removed from Westminster. The 80 seats held by Irish nationalists shrank to a handful in the 6 Counties. The problem of the Irish holding the balance-of-power disappeared.

The part of Ireland remaining within the UK was predominantly British and became governable as an integral part of Britain. And that was when Westminster brought in a Home Rule Act for the Six Counties which effectively excluded them from British political life. This was done in the guise of a Home Rule Act under which Ireland would have two Home Rule

Governments. But that Act was drawn up in the certainty that it would be rejected by the 26 Counties.

The Six Counties were isolated from British political life at the moment when their detachment from the rest of Ireland would have enabled the Six Counties to have slotted into British political life. The (British) Unionist Party was becoming the Tory Party, and Joe Devlin's AOH was part of the groundwork of the welfare state through the Insurance Act and was out of joint with the agricultural and urban petty bourgeois character that was predominant in the 26 Counties.

Nationalist Ireland refused to take part in Tory/Whig politics under the Union, and in 1886 nationalist pressure caused the Tory/Whig politics of the Protestant population to be merged into Unionism. The natural tendency after Partition would have been for a development of Tory/Labour politics in the Six Counties. But a development on these lines was prevented by the imposition of "*home Rule*" on the Six Counties and the boycotting of the 'Ulster Home Rule' system by the British political parties—both for Northern Ireland elections and for Westminster elections. And it was the British Unionist Party that set up this system, and then became the Tory Party (the Tory/reform Liberal alliance of the 1890s having led to a complete merger of the two), leaving the Ulster Unionist Party high and dry to operate the impossible Northern Ireland system.

(Lord Londonderry was the only leading British Unionist who assumed that the British Party would be engaged in operating the Northern Ireland system it had established, and he became a Minister in the first 'Ulster' Government. His cousin, Winston Churchill, regarded him as being soft in the head for doing this. He soon returned to Westminster and became a senior Cabinet Minister.)

The Ulster Unionist policy in the 1918 Election was that separate arrangements would be made for the 26 Counties and the 6 Counties should then become simply a part of the British political system. But James Craig, who had been a Junior Minister at Whitehall, was persuaded to agree to operate 'Ulster Home Rule' in order to help Lloyd George with the handling of Sinn Féin. That was Ulster's "*supreme sacrifice*" for the Empire.

As Prime Minister, Craig insisted on actual social welfare parity being financed by Whitehall, or else he would hand the NI system back to Westminster. And he understood, as did his successor, Brookeborough, that Northern Ireland was a

constitutional artifice, without a political dynamic, in which there could be no 'normal politics'. The only choice allowed by the situation was between remaining part of the UK state, while being excluded from its political life, and transferring to the Irish state.

In the early 1940s Jack Beattie was elected to Westminster by West Belfast in order to become part of the British Labour Party. Labour refused to admit him to membership. Beattie voted with Labour in the post-War welfare-state divisions, though refused the whip—while the Ulster Unionists voted with the Tories. He was also a Stormont MP and looked forward to doing battle at Stormont with the Unionists as Tories. But at Stormont the Unionist Party became Socialist and repeated all the legislation it had opposed at Westminster. That was as Craig had arranged things. Ulster was to be part of the British welfare state at British expense, and the rest was shadow boxing.

This caused no end of confusion in the minds of reformers or radicals hoping for a change. The slogans of the Civil Rights radicals in 1968-9 was "*Tories Out, North and South!*" Leaving aside the matter of whether Fianna Fail was Tory, Ulster Unionism certainly was not—on social policy it was whatever was in power at Westminster.

Bloomfield drifts around on the superficialities of *ersatz* politics generated by Northern Ireland, without ever applying his mind to the basic question of what Northern Ireland was.

The memoirs of Maurice Hayes are much more interesting. *Minority Verdict* describes the rise of a Catholic in Local Government into the Stormont system after it went into crisis. Bloomfield was just a member of the middle class of the system. Hayes belonged to the middle class that was excluded from the system until Faulkner began looking for Catholics to include in the system in the hope of keeping it going.

Hayes was brought into "*Community Relations*", through which it was hoped to overcome the divisive consequences of the political system in a way that would enable the system to evolve. He suggests that he was sceptical of that project but felt obliged to take part in it when asked.

In 1968, when Northern Ireland's existential crisis was brewing, he attended a Housing and Planning Conference in Dublin and mixed with men in mohair suits who were active in TACA:

"I found it all very vulgar, and after a while we left and went to a convenient

pub to meet our own Irish. The final night of the conference included a reception in the state apartments of Dublin Castle, hosted by the then Minister of Local Government, Kevin Boland. While we were there, the castle gates were besieged by protesters from the Dublin Housing Action group, a front for the then Marxist rump of the IRA. Hearing them outside chanting:

What will we do with Mr. Boland
What will we do with Mr. Boland
Hang him up and burn the bastard...

in the splendours of the state apartments it was as if one were listening to the Paris mob howling outside the Tuilleries in the weeks before the French Revolution. In the end we were smuggled out through a back gate, leaving the field to the protesters. All of which led me later to give some credence to the theory that the emergence of the Provos in the North had been encouraged by some Dublin ministers in order to divert the energies of the IRA from agitation on social issues in the South" (p70).

This is a giant leap across an eventful year, and from one state to another which had an utterly different political and social make-up. And it takes off from a false assumption.

The Housing Action agitations in Dublin and Cork in 1968-9 certainly gave the complacent Southern bourgeoisie a fright. But the moving spirit in it was not "*the Marxist rump of the IRA*". It was the British & Irish Communist Organisation. It was masterminded by Dennis Dennehy, who minimised the influence of the Marxist IRA by making homelessness a condition of voting on the Executive. By this means he limited the issue to housing, and conducted a powerful agitation on that issue, which scared the bourgeoisie into doing something about it. Jack Lane led a vigorous Cork Branch of the movement and a Minister warned about his activities in the Dail.

Dennis was himself imprisoned for direct action on housing, went on hunger strike, and timed it so that the crisis in his Hunger Strike coincided with the 50th anniversary of the 1919 Declaration of Independence. The centre of Dublin was brought to a standstill by the agitation in support of the homeless man on hunger-strike in Mountjoy and the smug gathering at the Mansion House was shamed or scared into action. (Boland himself took up the housing issue without being scared.)

A strong whiff of revolutionism was added to the agitation by the most remarkable student movement ever seen in Ireland or in Western Europe, the Internationalists, which was allied with BICO

at the time, and whose members denounced their judges from the dock and promised them that they would be dealt with by revolutionary justice.

But the agitation was prevented from lapsing into mere revolutionism in support of some undefinable and unrealisable fantasy of the kind favoured by the "*Marxist rump of the IRA*", which became the Stickies within the next twelve months. However extreme it got, its purpose remained to frighten the Fianna Fail Establishment into dealing with the housing problem. Dennis ensured that the agitation never went wild. And, when the political Establishment got bewildered and didn't know what to do next, he facilitated the introduction of Jesuits and Quakers as intermediaries, and agreed to face-saving devices for the Government which enabled it to get off its high-horse and start dealing with the problem.

The event was an episode in the modernisation of Dublin political culture, with a reforming Communist group at its centre. Unfortunately the Lynch group in Fianna Fail did not understand what had happened. They only knew that they had felt the ground move beneath them and that Communists were responsible for it. And when that Dublin disturbance was settling down, and Dennis was released from Mountjoy Jail to occupy a caravan in Mountjoy Square as a Communist folk hero who was visited regularly by Important People, the great disturbance in Derry and Belfast erupted, and it seems that the newer elements in Fianna Fail—those without family roots in the War of Independence and Civil War, connected the two events and were disoriented.

BICO took part in the defence of the Falls in August 1969, and in September it urged the Dublin Establishment to revoke the sovereignty claim over the North asserted in Articles 2 & 3 of the Constitution, and acknowledge that Ulster Unionism had a distinct national character and was not a remnant of 17th century bigotry which would collapse if given a sharp shock. We saw that as a precondition of any actual negotiating relationship between Leinster House and Stormont. Lynch immediately rejected that proposal. He would have no truck with the "*two nations*" approach to the problem. He said that Partition was the problem and therefore the ending of Partition was a precondition of peace in the North. But how was Partition to be ended? He hadn't a clue. He phrasemongered. He liaised with the Citizens' Defence movement in the North for 8 or nine months before suddenly

charging the liaison intermediary with criminal conspiracy. He ordered his Army to prepare for incursions into the North before suddenly arresting Capt. Kelly for carrying out orders. He sacked senior Cabinet Ministers and effectively charged them with treason, and still held them guilty even though found not guilty in court for a complete lack of evidence. And he gave money to the "*Marxist rump of the IRA*". In other words, he behaved like a headless chicken.

It is odd that Kevin Boland is mentioned in Hayes' memoir only in connection with the Dublin Housing action campaign, as he played a crucial part in the sequence of events leading to the 1974 Strike against the Sunningdale Executive. Boland was old Fianna Fail. He was not one of those who were frightened out of their wits by the Housing agitation and *therefore* sought to open up the North as a safety-valve for the escape of Southern revolutionary energy. The North was a distinct issue for him—and it was a distinct issue for the Southern State to the extent that it took the Constitution in earnest. It was a matter of usurped sovereignty over part of the island. And, which was of greater and more immediate practical concern, the large nationalist minority there was oppressed by the Protestant communal regime of the Unionist community,—outside the democratic system of the state which authorised it.

When the Fine Gael/Labour Coalition apparently recognised the legitimacy of the Northern Ireland system in the Sunningdale Agreement, Boland brought about an action against it in the High Court for breach of the Constitution. Conor Cruise O'Brien and Garret FitzGerald were the Cabinet Ministers with special responsibility for Northern policy. Their Defence pleading against Boland's action was that they had not in fact recognised the Northern system as legitimate. All they had done in the Sunningdale Agreement was to say that it was not the policy of their Government to enforce the Southern claim of sovereignty over the North. They adopted this policy—which was in fact the policy of all preceding Dublin Governments since 1937—without prejudice to the constitutional right of any future Government to enforce the claim.

The UWC took the relevant paragraph of the Defence plea and published it as an advert in the Belfast Unionist papers. (None of this was mentioned at the anniversary event, or in any histories I have seen. But that is how it happened.)

BICO, which supported the Sunningdale Agreement, saw the Dublin plea as

undermining it and wrote to the SDLP warning it about what was in the offing and suggesting what might be done to save the Power-Sharing dimension of the Agreement. Our warning was dismissed as groundless. The SDLP slogan was that of John Redmond early in 1914: *Full Stead Ahead!*—onto the rocks.

The UWC, as I recall, gave two months' notice of the Strike. It said that, if on May 14th the devolved Assembly voted to activate the Council of Ireland dimension of Sunningdale, the "*Constitutional Stoppage*" would begin. That vote went ahead on May 14th. And the Assembly, despite the Strike Notice it had been given, was taken aback when the Strike followed.

Northern Ireland had two Governments at the time: that of the Secretary of State, and that of the devolved facade. Neither was sufficiently connected with the majority populace to know what was going on in it. And the whole Sunningdale operation was reduced to a confidence trick.

The system of party politics by means of which democratic states function ensures that Governments know what is happening on the ground, so that account can be taken of it. Exclusion of the Six Counties from that system was not only, or even chiefly, a moral injustice. It was a practical guarantee of disaster.

Brendan Clifford

BOOK LAUNCH

**"IRISH BULLETIN"
VOL. 3
(1ST September 1920 -
1ST January 1921)**

PEARSE HOUSE

27 Pearse St., Dublin 2

**Eamon Ó Cuiv TD
and**

**Professor Cathal Brugha
Thursday 26th November 2015,**

7.30

All welcome

Sniper

If you want any proof that partition in Ireland left both sections ignorant of each other but with the Southern section of the country even more ignorant of the North then this is the novel for you.

Johnny Donnelly, a native of Dundalk, is forced into vengeance by an incident that happened to his father when crossing the Irish border from the North to South. This causes him to join a sort of vague IRA, vague because no specific name is attached to it but maybe it is PIRA. He draws on the past to continue his fight. But what past? He has no experience of being a Catholic in the North and even the War of Independence doesn't figure in it. His past is mostly mythological. Cúchulainn is mentioned a lot. So is the 'freedom of Ireland', though he lives in the free part of it.

He wants the British Army out of the North but doesn't properly acknowledge that one million Protestants live there. But when he does they seem to be few and marching with the Orange Order. He tells his girlfriend many stories from Irish mythology, pausing throughout the novel for some awkward sex with a number of women. His girlfriend Cora, the love of his life, is killed early on in a road accident in Dundalk, leaving him to continue his liaisons with various women with a clear conscience. He decides to become a sniper when he thinks back to when he was a boy and how his family's car was stopped when returning from a visit to the North, with his father being humiliated by British soldiers, one of whom pushed the muzzle of his rifle into his father's mouth. He does his killings in between sex sessions, stories from Irish mythology, then crossing the border to kill yet another British soldier with his sniper's rifle, eight in all, plus two touts with a handgun.

Taking a break he takes us on a tour on Ireland and does the whole country North and South mostly on foot and with a tent. He even tents in the North, then under wartime conditions. He tents in loyalist areas though he doesn't seem aware of this, and no one there notices his Southern accent. Accents, how you look, how you walk, and how you use English, is the key to your identification there and part of your survival kit. He passes through West Cork without, as a so-called IRA volunteer, paying tribute to Tom Barry. You wouldn't be mistaken if you thought he was working for the Irish Tourist Board at this point.

The Civil War of the early 1920s down

Letter, *Irish Times*, 29th June

Grammar Of Anarchy

I should be, but am not, surprised that your reader, Sean McDonagh, believes that James Connolly and his comrades introduced violence into Ireland in 1916. Some professional commentators have peddled that false line for a generation.

The Belfast newspaper, "The Northern Whig" reported on June 4th 1913, some months before the foundation of the Irish Citizen Army and the Irish Volunteers -

"Almost everybody in Belfast knows that importation of arms into Belfast has been going on regularly for more than a year and a half. A good many thousand army rifles have been received and distributed during that period.....Rifles, and not only rifles, but machine guns and a large quantity of ammunition have reached Ulster from many sources and under various aliases"

Speaking of the Ulster Covenant on May 17th 1913 in Belfast Sir Edward Carson had said -

"The Covenant was a challenge to the Government and they dare not take it up. It was signed by great lawyers.....It was signed by soldiers in uniform and policemen in uniform, and men in the pay of the Government and they dare not touch them"

In 1918 a collection of statements by Carson and his parliamentary colleagues was published under the title "A Grammar of Anarchy" but was promptly banned by the British Government, of which Carson had been a member since 1915.

In recent years the pamphlet has been republished and has not been re-banned, so far.

I'd recommend it to anyone attempting to form a balanced view of the history of these islands this past century.

Donal Kennedy

The Grammar Of Anarchy: Force Or Law—Which? by *J.J. Horgan*. **Unionism, 1910-1914.** Introduction by *Brendan Clifford*. €6, £5 postfree in Ireland & Britain
<https://www.atholbooks-sales.org>

South has confused him as it has done to many of his countrymen and women. Like many authors and journalists he misuses the word schizophrenia when claiming that people in Ireland are split because of the civil war and the war up North. Schizophrenia has nothing to do with the divided self or psyche. This unlearned diagnosis was first put forward in the novel *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson in 1886 and we certainly have moved on since then. The British NHS gives the true description:

"It is a long-term mental health condition that causes a range of different psychological symptoms including hallucinations—hearing or seeing things that do not exist. Delusions—unusual beliefs that are not based on reality, and that often contradicts the evidence."

The physical explanation is that schizophrenia is a chemical imbalance in the brain which causes lack of communication between the various functions of the brain. Therefore the very random thoughts the brain produces is thought of as reality by the sufferer whereas in the normal person they are able to dismiss things consciously that have no existence in reality as fantasy.

To go on with the rest of the novel: One distasteful joke to his girlfriend Cora goes:

"I'm so hungry I could eat a small Protestant."

Whether it is a Northern one or a Southern one he doesn't say. But an outsider could think that a Catholic/Protestant conflict was also going on down South.

The author claims the novel was based on his brother, who was active as a Republican. In the novel he has a man shoot his own brother for being an informer. You get the feeling that every killing in the novel is cold-blooded for there is no real belief behind the killings. There is a tremendous emptiness in the major character without the history of his country, without any knowledge of the Northern struggle and the true reasons for it—the subjugation of the Catholic, cut off from any constitutional means of combating what is keeping them down. All in all the character of Johnny Donnelly is that of a psychopath. I felt this when I began to pity the British soldiers he was killing with his triumphant sighting of that 'pink spray' when the bullet finds its mark.

continued on page 26

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

GREECE, IRELAND AND GLOBAL CAPITALISM

There is no doubt in my mind that Ireland was and is still being subjected to what Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras called: "*financial terrorism*" by organisations outside the State. Ireland did vote NO in several referenda and Ireland was forced to vote YES by repeated doses of propaganda and outright lies. We now know that a "*bailout*" from the TROIKA was in fact a series of loans which have to be repaid with interest. And repaid by the Irish people—not by the Banks. We now know that the TROIKA lent us money to pay into the banks and that the banks in turn used the money to pay their London/German/USA creditors who in turn reinvested their monies into the capitalist system including the IMF, ECB etc. so that the monies went around in a circle. And so the Bondholders like Bill (Microsoft) Gates, George Soros and Peter Sutherland's Goldman Sachs friends, among many others, got their money back with interest. Right? Meditate on this . . . They got their money back. And the Irish taxpayers are going to have to pay back the IMF and ECB loans which have been funded by approximately the same set of capitalist investors and so they get their money back again the second time with interest. That is really something! Nothing productive happened. The computer-generated monies simply circulated and enriched the finance-capitalists as they circulated and gathered up interest from taxpayers and so impoverished the taxpayers. The taxpayers, and that is everybody, got poorer and the wealthy 1% got richer.

We in Ireland had the wool pulled over our eyes and we were conned. We were told it was all too complicated for us to understand—it was High Finance, we were told. But it was not and these were more lies. It was very simple, like any conjuring trick when it is explained. And it was Low Finance, not High Finance. The State should not have guaranteed the banks—the State should have guaranteed directly to the depositors to cover losses by depositors up to $\approx 100,000$ and the banks should have been allowed to look after themselves through the Companies Acts in the normal way.

Liquidators should have been appointed if needed. In Ireland, the Guarantee should have been applied to deposit accounts less than $\approx 100,000$ to protect the smaller more innocent depositors, and the larger and mostly millionaire bondholders should have been left to be dealt with by their very own capitalist system. This is what happened in Iceland which is now, as an economy, back on track. Ireland however will be spangled by repayments and interest payments for at least 40 or 50 years as a result of the political decisions made on 28th September 2008 and as a result of the political inactivity in the year preceding that time.

Easy regulation or no regulation at all was followed by a year of political inactivity and then a night of enormously wrong decisions. It all stacks up to where Ireland is now. The whole matter stinks of corruption and criminal conspiracy.

Greece does not want to end up like Ireland but Greece is now like a salmon struggling on a fisherman's hook. Caught but still not in the bag. Just in case we sympathise with the Greeks the US/UK propaganda machine tells us the Greeks are lazy people, they don't work, they have too many public servants and so on. On that last issue it is of course Ireland who leads the way with regards to our huge public servants numbers but more especially to their massive pay-grades and pensions which surpass any other European country by far. Only this week they—by way of Government order—have given themselves huge pension increases.

It is of course true to say that there is something—a little nugget of truth—in all the negative propaganda about Greece but then that is why precisely propaganda does work over and over again. We in Ireland should be well aware of propaganda, having been the victim of it for so long. Who can ever forget those telling phrases, the dirty Irish, the drunken Irish, the fighting Irish etc—all untrue but so strongly ingrained in our neighbour's culture/history that we almost believe it ourselves. But it is propaganda directed against us to keep us down.

We should be ever alert to it. It is not all in the past; it is happening now, today, and all the time. Look no further than the July/August 2015 *History Ireland*, Vol.23, No.4, front cover, where in the commemoration of his death (29th June 1915) Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa is represented by the reproduction of a racist cartoon from the New York magazine '*Puck*' c.1880's. in the fashion of the English magazine '*Punch*'. But on the back cover there is a

lavishly produced spread positively celebrating WW1 with a picture of a handsome smiling young soldier in uniform with a huge spray of shamrock poking out from the brim of his officer's cap. It is quite illustrative to compare the two and see how truly colonial propaganda has seeped in to every corner of Irish life especially as we—Irish—are the ones now doing it.

Anyone who has experience of Greece knows the awful grinding poverty there is as a result of the way Greece was foully treated in the two World Wars of the past century. Greece has a huge emigration problem. For example, Melbourne Australia has a huge Greek population to rival the Irish emigrants there. There is also a huge number of Greeks who emigrated to the USA. And, while there is not much talk about it in our media, the recent epidemic in suicides of both men and women and the terrible fallout from that, truly shows the terrible social costs that ordinary Greeks have had to pay for their eurozone experiment. And that latter was paved by none other than Goldman Sachs who, in order to get Greece eligible for admittance to the Euro, literally cooked their books and in so doing brought them to the situation they are now in today. And need we even ask: *Qui Bono?*

The French, German, London, and New York finance capitalists are experts and they knew exactly what they were doing, investing into Greece. Over the decades they have made a lot of profit out of Greece. The profit was not made by the ordinary Greek people. It was made by the Greek industrialists and shipping magnates who are all tax-exiles. People like Stavros Niarchos, Aristotle Onassis, and others did not build ships and buy shipbuilders in Japan and Korea out of their own money. They did not have that sort of money in their pockets. No! They borrowed the money. The money that ordinary Greeks are being asked to pay back now. This is a good trick if it can be pulled off. The original assets are safely offshore somewhere under the guidance of big international bankers and the Big Five Accounting Firms and no doubt Goldman Sachs are at the very apex.

You can be certain there is much manoeuvring going on behind the scenes shifting assets around so that, when the dust settles in Greece, as in Ireland, it will be difficult or impossible to track down the culprits and their wealth. Efforts will be made of course to prevent the dust settling too fast because finance capitalists, just like common burglars, need time to bury the loot where it can't be found. All

very simple really but certainly it is not High Finance.

VULTURE CAPITALISTS

The Vulture Capitalists have descended on Ireland in flocks. They are enabled to do so because of the manner in which NAMA and Mortgage bankers are enabled under Irish law to sell off loans. Why should the law allow lenders to sell loans when the borrower is not allowed to sell the liability? The borrower is not allowed to transfer liability for a loan without consent of the lender. Lenders are allowed by law to sell the loan, together with the mortgage agreement securing the loan. The lender can do this without consent of the borrower/mortgagee. Loans are being sold to Vulture Capitalists who apply for and are granted by the Central Bank a licence to operate in Ireland.

The Vultures then proceed to persecute the original borrower under the mortgage agreement. Methods used include raising the rate of interest, foreclosing if a repayment is delayed, refusing to reduce interest on a variable rate mortgage etc. The borrowers have no contact with the Vulture Capitalists but the law allows the Vulture Capitalists to stand in the place of the original lender with whom the borrower contracted. The borrower has no escape. This situation does not stack up at all.

Would it not be a good idea for a law to be enacted prohibiting the transfer of loans from one lender to another? Such a law, if enacted, would force lenders to renegotiate with borrowers if the lenders wished to alter the original lending agreement.

FINANCE CAPITALISM

It was reported in the media recently that the Banking System is recovering from the Recession. But Banks have changed radically in recent years. Bank of Ireland and AIB look like banks but they are very different from the banks they were ten years ago. Physically the bank buildings are being used as machine halls rather than banking halls. The rate of interest at which banks can borrow on the money markets is so low that banks no longer have any need for the small savers and pay a negligible rate of interest on deposit accounts. This is because Finance Capitalists are glutted with money. The poor are getting poorer because they are stripped of any surplus money and the money is going to the wealthy who must put it somewhere.

There is a huge surplus of money and a reducing number of safe places to put it and so the interest rate is low and there is no

reason to see it rise. That is unless there comes a huge wasting of assets such as a great war. A great war is always to the advantage of Finance Capitalists. They do not fight in wars, their wealth and themselves are safe because they get out of dangerous places. Every war wastes people and assets and increases the national debt of the warring nations. For example, the UK national debt is the highest per capita in the world. The US national debt is seventeen trillion dollars and rising. The national debts are funded by Finance Capitalists but only so long as the interest is being paid. There will inevitably come a time when the States cannot extort any more taxes from their populations to pay the interest. Inevitably, that time will come. And then what will Finance Capitalists do?

We have come along way from the world of William Cobbett when he said two hundred years ago about southern England's agricultural labourers:

Sniper

continued

The novel was published by an Australian company and was given a review by the *Sydney Morning Herald*, part of which reads:

"Even the Irish, never at a loss for colourful language, use bland euphemisms to describe the decades of murder and mayhem that have torn them apart. Some call the years of conflict The Great Irish Difficulty, while others call them The Troubles, which sounds like nothing more than a persistent bout of intestinal..."

I would have thought it was the British Government and its media that named the recent Northern War *The Troubles*, instead of admitting it was a War, as a way of criminalising the conflict and not recognising POWs. Never heard it called *The Great Irish Difficulty*.

Liam Neeson, from Ballymena, County Antrim, and a now a Hollywood major actor, has been dubbed an 'IRA Poster Boy' by Northern elements because he seems interested in taking part in the making of a film based on this book. As a Catholic coming from the epicentre of sectarianism, I hope he has read the book thoroughly and sees its poisoning purpose written by an ignoramus. Unless of course he wants to distance himself from the film *Michael Collins*, in which he played an excellent part as the IRA leader and which justified the War of Independence. In the film of this novel, he could be seen as a serial killer in the tradition of the Yorkshire Ripper and others of his cult. Is this what wants?

Wilson John Haire

"The clock was gone; the brass kettle was gone; the pewter dishes were gone; the warming pan was gone ... the feather bed was gone; the Sunday coat was gone! All was gone! How miserable, how deplorable, how changed that Labourer's dwelling which I, only twenty years before, had seen so neat and happy."

(William Cobbett, 'Rural Rides'.)

Many of us today live at a much higher standard than Cobbett's labourer but also there are now several billion people on the planet who live well below the poverty line and so they are not consumers. They do not contribute to Finance Capitalists. And those who can contribute are getting fewer . . . and so this trend also will squeeze Finance Capitalism. It is difficult to see where all this is heading but clearly something has to explode, somewhere . . . !

It does not stack up . . . yet!

Michael Stack ©

SHAMING! concluded

of the soul. Judges, Police officers and others of the elite are also suspected of being involved in organized child abuse on a large scale. The many myths Britain has developed about itself for decades lie in ruins.

Has anyone time to consider anymore? Time to contemplate! Media coverage is punctuated by tweets and texts which are then counted and collated. It is nothing but a collection of instant reactions or strategically placed favoured messages. We are all culpable but some are more culpable than others. Thanks again to John Ronson but we are only hearing the half of it!

Seán Ó Riain

MONDRAGON, Article 44 will continue in the September issue dealing with the Livery Companies.

ERRATA for July Irish Political Review

Page 5, top of column :

The Bible Kingdom of Israel stretched through what is now Syria, Iraq and Jordan into Egypt.

Page 7, column 1, para 3, line 5:

'money' should read 'many': "one amongst the many states formed by brute force"

SHAMING! continued

his friends, she decided to honour the bargain. When asked why she thought he choose that city she replied; "*Well he is not going looking at the classical architecture or churches*". The tabloids turned this into: "*Nolan pays son to buy cannabis in Amsterdam or maybe it was to visit a brothel*". She seemed to bear up to the pressure well and gave several impressive interviews.

This time the same level of ire did not arise. On the TV show the conversation turned to the much-hyped gay wedding cake scandal in Northern Ireland. Quite correctly, I thought Colleen expressed the view that, while unkindness may have been observed in the case, the public response was completely disproportionate. She pondered how would a court react if a supporter of Islamic terrorism went into the cake shop and asked to have *Victory to ISIS* written in icing.

So people have steeled themselves to the attitude of the press. For others it is far more difficult, especially when an ordinary member of the public can suddenly find themselves in the middle of a storm. Then there are the cases whereby serious wrongdoers are investigated but the sinner's family and loved ones feel the heat of hatred and the endless pursuit by cameras. And of course everybody has a camera on their phone now that can be uploaded on the web. There was a time when there was a level of restraint shown in the coverage of a murder in a rural location. Not anymore it seems. Even transnational TV stations can turn up and camp out at any location with a few hours' notice.

In Ronson's book there are also some very good explanations about how 'Google' and other search engines work and can be manipulated in a way which is understandable for the many of us who are non 'techies'. Some people can reduce the impact of a scandal or a *faux pas* by flooding the internet with good news stories and positive coverage. Of course all this can be done at a price.

In Northern Ireland recently, a young teenage male was tragically added to the suicide statistics. *The Irish News* on Thursday 11th June 2015, gave good coverage and analysis of the story. The young man was a promising sportsman and helpful and friendly to many at his school. We all have vulnerability and a great fear of being exposed. He became trapped inside an internet cage whereby he was contacted and manipulated into

sharing thoughts and photographs that only friends in the real sense should share. He was primed for persecution and he couldn't face it.

NET GOVERNANCE

Policing the net is difficult. How much governance do we want? Until recently 'Facebook' was censoring photos of breast feeding mothers. It took a big initiative of people power and pestering of the site and its administrators to change this. We don't want the NSA and other security agencies spying on all our cyber activity. We don't want them analysing our choices and patterns. Corporations are currently stealing some of our data and doing just that. They seek to programme us and to anticipate what they think should be our needs in the future.

Progressive Psychologists are already studying the impact of the internet and especially the phenomena of internet shaming in all its negative components. Part of it is the cyber bully who begins to distance himself from the humanity of the victim. Thus those that are sure that they are right reinforce their own subjectivity by only sharing with those agreeing with themselves and cutting out the ability to reach out and work on compromise with those who are different.

Of course much muddying of waters occurs by which people are disoriented from pursuing active useful group demands for reform and justice. Cyber space loves to play up to the most bizarre conspiracy theories and try to lump them in together with factual revelations. Aliens visiting the rose garden in the White House, the Bermuda Triangle, mediums and telekinetic powers, a continuous political plot going back to the days of the Knights Templar, killer bees, electronic brain control waves and the kidnapping of famous people.

What may have been rejected by libraries years ago can be relaunched and rehashed as the media seek to interview spokespeople who promote the above beliefs. Better still, if it comes to be endorsed by a celebrity. Many individuals seem to gain some sort of self-assurance given they believe they are privy to a great secret. Followers then flow to empty emblems, call signs, trite allusions and code words. Strangely there are people in the US who are close to real power and think of all geology and geomorphological breakthroughs since the 1780s have been a series of lies and deception. There are popular Churches with massive funding which are opening museums depicting dinosaurs and humans being alive at the

same time. So education is out to get us; science is all just guess work and liberals are creating a single new worldwide religion.

SPORT

There is a corollary of my earlier points regarding sport. There is so much broadcast and keyboard interactive themes now that it becomes suffocating. There are sites for football hooligans to plan their get togethers. There is endless trivia for men who don't have time to attend their own children's matches. Gambling twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week is now more accessible. For most are not betting on stocks and shares and don't have high flying brokers to hedge for them. Huge viewership of broadcast matches sees many watching their team on 'Sky' who can no longer afford to attend Premiership football in Britain despite the fact they are lifelong supporters. There has never been so much chatter on sport yet there never has been so many obese children.

GOLDEN CIRCLE

And there are those who feel no shame at all. Domestically, we have the likes of Sean Dunne, David Drumm and Michael Fingleton. Every failure is ascribed to someone else. The fact of their being insiders within a golden circle is explained away and they depict themselves as hapless risk-takers carried away on a wave of international instability and investor panic. Of course the Government of the people can always be brought to clean up the mess and fill the giant financial hole if necessary. The big boys plead poverty and persecution. Some of them are awarded with fresh consultancies or lucrative directorships. The sums of money chucked about have the tactile impression of monopoly kit notes. So a good philosophical investigation should look at how most of us are becoming helpless in the face of transgression.

In Britain, there is a great fall in faith linked to celebrity secular elites who ten years ago appeared to have been at a pinnacle of influence that would be preserved for generations. How brittle the foundations on which they stood is now easily viewed. Betrayal in the strongest sense of the word is what is being felt by a public which had come to embrace virtual representation, pretend reality and self created personality. The fallen idols are Max Hastings, Rolf Harris and many others. These ones may lack basic empathy but those who should have spoken up sooner can only face into a long dark night

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Comment

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An Article about Shaming

I wish to start by saying my observations here were inspired by Jon Ronson's book *So You've Been Publicly Shamed*; (Picador, 2015).

It is undeniable that new forms of communication with their anonymity and speed of application have led to a resurgence in shaming. In Ronson's book he compares the present to the 1700s and the times of stocks and public floggings. He also looks at several case studies of individuals who have been pursued or 'outed' in recent years. Each in a different context but each in a way where we can see the growth of the all-engulfing flame feeding on oxygen and with virtual pitchforks being wielded by the keyboard warriors.

The process is in parallel with that in journalism whereby the gap between reporting and opinion is almost negligible. Also the idea of the news being entertainment or fast moving : jumping from headline to headline fed by information peddlers; PR people; think tanks; sectoral axe grinding vested interests, and the specially prepared press release. All this interspersed with the Paparazzi and Sport.

The shaming zone by twitter, tumbler, U-tube etc. picks up disembodied mood swing and turns ire on an individual or small group. They become the hate figures of the day and with this the momentum rises and the theme is picked up by the established media. While the above comes complete with comments and mini manifestos they also give rise to specific sites and blogs which can go further and become unrestrained in major abuse and insipid denunciation.

CHAUVINISM AND CONSPIRACY

Sometimes the Government or the mainstream media can be the instigator, especially if it is a slow news day or if the bad guy happens to be from abroad and can be worked into a conspiracy theory or

a line of fear merchandising and creating chauvinism towards the source of worry: The worry coming from elsewhere to threaten the heartland.

I concur with Ron Johnson : that the problem is the fury builds up so quickly. The slightest public remark or connotation can be fixed upon. Commentators apply no filters. The sheer numbers clamber into a stampede to let built-up aggression off their chest. Context is skipped.

Irony is missed. The track record of a person over several years is forgotten. In the end, even when the figure of the week has been at fault or done something wrong, the target is not usually a suitable substantial objective if we use military logic. Some of the truly noxious influencers, both individuals and corporates, in society are largely insulated. Those with the backing of the media rarely suffer the most intense fire burns.

JOHN DELANEY

I am no particular fan of John Delaney, Chief Executive of the Football Association of Ireland, nor would I defend €300,000 of a salary that he receives .

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Despite this, I fear the personalising of an Internet campaign against him as immature and misplaced. For one thing, the Taoiseach of the day has no entitlement to interfere in the national soccer association. His words of scorn suggested a petty local mob anxious to catch a local witch, now that there are bands across the globe wishing to burn any figure connected to FIFA, the world governing body of Association soccer. The fans on the ditch of course are "up to high doh" with pious moralising and calling for heads.

I don't fully agree with President Putin that FBI arrests in New York are part of a plot to blacken Russia and break up a good informal series of linkages built up over many years. However, I do believe it may be a happy by-product for many senior figures in Washington. American sports channels and investors are anxious to protect returns on international tournaments and leagues in which they have invested and have targeted for two decades. Wherever significant revenues emerge in corners and sectors of the globe, the venture capitalists will follow. Do people really think that FIFA or indeed the International Olympic Committee were ever squeaky clean?

NOLAN SISTERS

The new piety of the prevailing narrative is a bit convenient. Another example to come to mind is Colleen Nolan. She is a former member of the 'Nolans' who generated a huge musical following in the seventies. Now she is part of an all-female panel that present the midday TV show 'Loose Women' on British television. Colleen has been caught twice. The first time, a few years ago, she was talking about her sixteen-year old son. She had promised him to fund a holiday if he studied hard and did well in his exams. Later he asked to go to Amsterdam with

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