Irish Foreign Affairs

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"Every nation, if it is to survive as a nation, must study its own history and have a foreign policy"
—C.J. O'Donnell, The Lordship of the World, 1924, p.145

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IS MICHAEL D. RIGHT ABOUT THE EU?

Jack Lane

> "I believe that the European Union will find it extraordinarily difficult to ever be a union in any sense again" (17.8.2025)

Michael D's statement about the EU must be considered a serious claim by any President of a Member State and one who happens to be about the most popular figure in public life in that state. He reflects a feeling that many have come to. Or at the very least a feeling or reflection that the EU has become something very different to what it was not very long ago. That the EU that was no longer exists. What has happened to it?

We are used to a very benign narrative of what the EU is. Clearly he was referring to Gaza, and sees that the behaviour of the EU under Ursula Von der Leyen is anything but benign to put it mildly. But there are other reasons besides Gaza for seeing the EU as anything but benign and they are as consequential for it as its support for genocide can only be seen as a total moral failing.

There is also as realpolitik narrative which gives the reason why the EU and its purpose have become problematic for its members and for the rest of the world. For example, it is committed to war with Russia which in its view is not a matter of if but when. This has become an existential necessity for it.

How has this come about? It was not part of the benign narrative. I think at this point it would be useful to recall Hegel's remark about the Goddess, Minerva, and her scared owl. Minerva was the Roman Goddess of wisdom and understanding and Hegel said that "the owl of Minerva begins its flight only with the falling of the dusk." The idea is that it's when historical events or epochs are ending and only then can it be understood as to what it was and what had occurred.

This is very true but not a sufficient conclusion from a political point of view as history never stands still and politicians are always and automatically faced with what to do next in any situation. So it's no use saying something is over, even if it is, as politicians have to decide what the consequences are of it being over.

What can be of some use is trying to find how something ended and why and how that may give a clue as to what is possible and feasible to do next. Academics will be fully satisfied and happy with telling us what happened but that is a luxury politicians cannot afford. History can stop for historians but not for politicians.

So how have we come to this and what is to be learned?

THE BENIGN STORY.

I think what we are witnessing is the "dusk" of the benign narrative of the EU, which is the standard narrative that we are all familiar with. That was that the leaders of Europe came to their senses and decided after WWII to avoid more wars between themselves and aimed to integrate the nations of Europe. And they created a supranational structure to achieve this, the Council of Ministers and the Commission. That this would avoid war and be a force for peace and the economic progress of Europe and be an independent third force in the world standing between the two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the US.

This is clearly no longer the case at a time when the EU is dedicated to a war against Russia which has become its raison d'être. This is a high risk strategy and if it happens then the dusk analogy can be extended to one that says night-time darkness is falling rather than dusk for Europe.

THE REALPOLITIK NARRATIVE

I suggest there is another narrative that is more accurate and helps explain why dusk is falling and night-time might be approaching.

We need to look at some very basic facts to appreciate this possibility.

After WWII two states dominated the world who were radically different in their ways of life; their conflict was the dominant element of world politics with each seeking to extend their power and influence. The US looked at Europe in this framework and were determined that it be on America's side. To do this the US insisted that European states stop their traditional wars and enmities in order to cope more effectively with its conflict with the Soviet Union. We should note that France wanted to continue the conflict with Germany by attempting to pastoralise and break it up as they had wanted to do after WWI.

The US put a stop to this as a highly irresponsible attitude in the circumstances and forced them to ally together and with the US and insisted they should copy the US and create a United States of Europe to cope with the expanding role of the Soviet Union in the world. The Dulles brothers were leaders in this and one of them actually published a pamphlet called the United States of Europe. There had been notions about such a thing before but now it had the backing of the US and what it wanted it got. Marshall Aid facilitated it further and then NATO was set up as a corollary of this project. Europe did what it was told and so the framework of the European project was set up and the US did it.

Europe became a cosseted part of the US 'Empire' similar to Taiwan and South Korea and was economically successful under the US umbrella.

The Europeans created the EEC and the Treaty of Rome to formalise the new situation with institutional structures of a Council of Ministers and a Commission to aim for the integration of their peoples. The latter was very successful in harmonising trade and economyic relations between the original states. That is, doing the necessary nitty gritty work and this was the one area in which the Commission had and still has its one sole competence hence it was called the European Economic Community – EEC, dedicated to trade.

Britain was excluded which showed that that generation having experienced two world wars launched by Britain following its traditional balance of power strategy towards Europe knew it was high time that Britain was excluded from Europe's affairs.

Britain opposed it vigorously and set up an alternative, the European Free Trade Area, EFTA. But in a decade or so it realised that the EEC was economically succeeding and decided to join on the basis that if you can't beat them then you had better join them despite de Gaulle's very prescient warning. Britain was a maritime nation and Europe was a land based entity. This admission of the UK was the most significant development in the evolution of the European project.

Britain of course never lost its attitude to Europe in that it was entitled to be an arbiter of European affairs. The first British leaders in the EU like Heath and Jenkins were indeed Europeans of a similar mind to the founders. But there was always the superior attitude in Britain that it was more than just another European state. It may be in Europe but it was not of it. It was more than that and Europe deferred to this attitude.

That attitude was well summed up by Harold Macmillan who was mainly responsible for changing the British attitude to the EEC. But he argued for it with the very clever and appealing argument to the British that it would be to Europe what Greece was to Rome. Britain would provide the brains and Europe the brawn. It gave solace for the ending of the Empire with another form of Empire.

And of course Europe did defer to Britain. A new generation had come to accept the Churchillian argument that Britain had saved Europe from fascism – that it had saved it from itself.

Germany being the most abject case. The strongest economic power accepted responsibility for two world wars and a Holocaust and looked on the British as saving it from itself more than any other nation. A nation afraid of itself is a sorry sight and is putty in the hands of a powerful adversary. (It was an attitude that permeated the Irish Free State). Germany became the paymaster of the EEC and that was regarded by all, including Germany, as in effect reparations for its admitted war guilt.

Now we realise that the other secret of Germany's economic success, apart from the US guardianship and largesse, was cheap Russian gas. So Germany was made what it was by American political overlordship and Russian energy.

THATCHER

The next development that affected the European project was the arrival of Thatcher. To use a fashionable word, she had a transactional attitude to Europe. It was acceptable as an economic entity and should abandon all protectionist attitudes and purely European approaches to economic development and become a globalist player. Butter mountains and wine lakes were ridiculed though they made sense to Europeans who had experienced famine and starvation. To her it should concentrate on expansion rather than focussing on further integration. Even Turkey should be welcomed as a member – she is still an applicant. Thatcher failed in one of her aims, that Germany should not be united, thanks to Haughey.

Due to European deference to Britain these new globalist and expansionist policies were accepted and became its new raison d'être. Its new purpose for existence.

But Britain itself drew a line at the development of an alternative currency with the Euro and the increasing political coherence and consequent encroachment on UK sovereignty especially in the legal field. It decided to leave.

VACUUM

This left a political vacuum or void at the heart of the EU because it had bought fully into the globalist and expansionist vision for Europe and its mentor had left. Its mentor abandoned them.

This created a panic amongst EU leaders and they began to scramble around trying to reorientate themselves and the EU.

TRUMP

This panic was added to by the arrival of Trump who upended the cosy relationship with the US. He no longer saw Russia as a threat and fully accepted that Russia was not the Soviet Union but a state behaving as states are expected to behave if independent and have to be respected. He has zero ideological hang-ups. So the relationship with Europe becomes another transactional matter. He accepts a multipolar world and each country or political entity looks out for itself and the US would be the most powerful amongst them.

ORPHANS

Suddenly the Europeans felt abandoned by Britain and the US, two pillars that had shaped it to be what it was. They were orphans. The Europeans having been taken care of by the US for over half century had forgotten what international relations actually were. They had suffered a lobotomy in this area and had to awaken from a sort of Rip van Winkle sleep of half a century. They had to wake up and "smell the coffee,"

They did not know what to do with the EU in this scenario and what its purpose now was. There was a scrambling around for a new purpose for the EU. Examples may be given from two of its leaders.

MACRON

On taking over the Presidency in 2022 Macron proposed a consultation across the EU about what its aims should be, and he concluded that it should be a European Political Community and introduced it as follows. This met a few weeks ago in Denmark with 47 states in attendance and a crucial need was for the UK to be back at the centre of European affairs.

He explained:

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"This new European organization would allow democratic European nations that subscribe to our shared core values to find a new space for political and security cooperation, cooperation in the energy sector, in transport, investments, infrastructures, the free movement of persons and in particular of our youth. Joining it would not prejudge future accession to the European Union necessarily, and it would not be closed to those who have left the EU.

It would bring our Europe together, respecting its true geography, on the basis of its democratic values, with the desire to preserve the unity of our continent and by preserving the strength and ambition of our integration." (9/5/22, EP)

In his introduction to the proposal he made a very revealing admission:

"In 1989, President François Mitterrand opened up this reflection when the Soviet Union collapsed, proposing the creation of a European confederation. His proposal did not bear fruit. It was most certainly ahead of its time. It included Russia in this confederation, which, of course, was swiftly deemed unacceptable for the States that had just freed themselves from the yoke of the Soviet Union. But it raised the right question and this question remains: how can we organize Europe from a political perspective and with a broader scope than that of the European Union? It is our historic obligation to respond to that question today and create what I would describe here before you as "a European Political Community".

Here he admits that a totally different relationship with Russia and Europe was possible but prevented by Eastern European states. The existing EU states were not up to coping with this possibility that could have been opened up with Russia who was ready for a new relationship with Europe and the West. Putin had even expressed an interest in joining NATO.

Here was an admission that Eastern European states had blackmailed Western Europe's attitude to Russia which has continued apace since and who now set the EU's agenda.

The following is a list of those attending the recent summit in Denmark and the anti Russia slant is pretty obvious.

- Albania
- Andorra
- Armenia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Belgium
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Georgia
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Italy
- Kosovo*
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Montenegro
- Netherlands
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- San Marino
- Serbia
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Türkiye
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom

DRAGHI

Next we can look at Mr Draghi. He is the nearest thing there is to a Mr Europe who put on his thinking cap and proposed "a "pragmatic federalism" that would include ditching national vetoes and could involve treaty change.

"We need a pragmatic federalism that encompasses all areas affected by ongoing transformations — from the economy to energy to security,"

Draghi told the European Parliament in his first speech to MEPs as Italian prime minister. "If this requires the start of a path that will lead to the revision of the Treaties, we should embrace it with courage and confidence."

In light of Russia's war on Ukraine, Draghi called on capitals to give Brussels more power on defence and to abandon unanimity, which is required for EU decisions on foreign policy and other areas.

"We must go beyond the principle of unanimity, which gives rise to an intergovernmental logic of clashing vetoes, and move towards decisions taken by qualified majority," he said, prompting applause from MEPs." (3/5/22)

In other words, in both cases, the EU as it exists must be ditched and a new structure put in its place based on unanimity and majority voting to solve Europe's problems. This is a standard view. But there is a fundamental flaw in this case. Majority voting must exist in a context that ensures the acceptability of majority voting and that is a European Demos. A Demos is a community that legitimates political power and control over its members in every aspect of their lives – even the most private. Only in a Demos will minorities accept majority voting. Otherwise such voting is considered dictatorial for the minorities. Every viable nation state is built on a Demos – intangible but the most essential element of a nation evolving over centuries and sometimes millennia. It depends on a consensus, not voting, and no nation state was ever voted into existence as we should know very well. We tried that in 1918 and saw what we had to do if serious about creating a state.

Without a Demos Europe is nothing more than the sum of its parts and that's what the EU now is. A Demos can only be built and developed on consensus basis which was the approach of the founders of the European project as they knew that would take some time and some unique achievements to have integration of states whose major relationship had been war for centuries.

The current leaders and men and women are in too great a hurry to adopt a consensus approach for creating a Union and they believe that democratic ideology will do the trick. They are trying to run before they can walk and this is not an admirable stance.

This reference to a Demos and majority voting may seem a bit esoteric but we have a very good example not far away where majority rule without a Demos can be seen in action and how disastrous it can be – Northern Ireland. There is no such thing as a NI Demos but there was plenty of majority voting for generations. But there are two Demoi alive and well within the entity, an Irish one and a British one. But 2 into 1 does not go and we have a unique structure created to cater for the minimum political interaction between the two Demoi. And it took a 25 year war to achieve that. And all accept that what exists is transitory and experimental. And the jury's out on its viability.

Will the 2 become one or will one be subsumed into the other? I won't hold my breath. One thing is certain: it will not be created by the mechanical act of counting votes.

Europe would have a similar but bigger problem to make majority rule work. 27 demoi to be made into one?

This proposed institutional and speculative remaking of the EU showed a political vacuum or even a void at the heart of the EU.

URSULA'S COUP

But along came Ursula von der Leyen who organised a very successful coup within the existing structure and changed it as she saw fit. While others proposed she acted. It was a remarkable achievement and can only be considered as a successful coup d'état of the EU institutions.

She became Commission President by default because the existing method of appointing that President broke down and she was the lowest common denominator among the candidates.

She drove a "coach and horses" though procedures and rules and is now the political leader of the EU. The existing political leaders in the Council could not prevent themselves being usurped by her and thereby proving their incompetence. She is the leader of the EU.

In lieu of all the above speculative plans, she has now developed a new clear vision for the EU and Europe and that is an inevitable war with Russia – not if but when.

WHY THIS IS RECKLESS FOR EUROPE

War is the most problematic and consequential action that any state can engage in. Nothing needs more clarity of purpose and action. It's a life and death issue. But here we have a planned war by Ursula with an entity that is not even a state and war on any state must be fought by another state or combination of states acting with the coherence of a state.

Does the EU under Ursula and the EU leaders qualify? It is clear they do not as the above example of its current leaders makes clear who want an alternative to the current EU and so do not agree under what political entity they should fight this war. The existing EU does not have the competence or the legal authority to wage war or even to create an army. Only states can have armies in any legitimate sense.

The Commission has granted itself incremental competences over the years by stealth and Ursula has done this in dramatic fashion but planning for war is qualitatively different from any other incremental increase in its power. An army cannot be created by stealth. She has created a Commissioner for Defence but has this been done openly and who demanded it? And of course as Trump has done it should be honestly called a Commissioner for War as the British once had a Ministry of war now named Ministry of Defence. It helps to call a spade a spade. Words should reflect reality rather than hide it.

Like many in the EU for Ursula Europe is an abstraction. She was born, reared and made in the Brussels EU bubble with its ideology about Europe. She is a test tube European. She thinks that the EU is already and automatically more than the sum of its parts because it exists to do certain things. But that does not necessarily happen. Politics and political power are an organic process not a mechanical or mathematical counting of numbers and votes.

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But like the case for majority voting there is something missing - there is not a European Demos and its history of centuries of wars between its states does not augur well for its creation very easily. And you certainly need a European Demos if you go to war representing Europe against Russia.

Von der Leyen is now trying to make this abstraction into a reality and create a Demos that will be something more than its 27 parts by a war with Russia. And her case for needing this war is presented like a medieval morality play with the requisite demon to hand in Moscow because of what he did in Ukraine.

There is no acknowledgement that the EU itself was crucially part of the reason for the SMO because of its helping launch the coup there in February 2014 that led to the 8 year war by the coup state against the Russians of Ukraine at a cost of at least 14,000 lives. After much diplomatic effort by Putin to avoid a war, efforts which were treated with contempt, the SMO was launched. So the justification for the planned war is inherently fraudulent at base. It is a contrived war by both the EU and the US.

So I think it is clear that Ursula and her colleagues do not appreciate what the EU and Europe itself is and is not.

But do Ursula and the EU elites understand their alleged enemy, Russia?

This is another crucial element in any war – know your enemy. Certainly as important as knowing oneself.

She suffers from the traditional European phobia and incomprehension about what Russia is. She confidently predicted that its economy would be destroyed by sanctions imposed after the SMO in Ukraine and it would therefore fail in that effort and fail as a state. Now she judges that Russia will take over Ukraine and will attempt to take over Europe. How can one brain hold such views simultaneously? But she is not alone in this double think - that Russia is very weak and very powerful at the same time.

The British propaganda machine gave us a illustration of this double thinking a few years ago. We are asked to believe that this demonically powerful state led by a former KGB man could not liquidate an ageing sitting duck in Salisbury.

She may even share the view that Russia is a state built on a gas station. Though an Anglophile she is more certain about Russia than Churchill who at one stage concluded that it is "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." Ursula sees no such mystery. And when it comes to war she might note Montgomery's considered advice on the most basic law of all war "Never march

on Moscow in the winter" and this was before Moscow became a nuclear power.

Or to get some real idea about Russia she might look again at the European states in the past who waged war on Russia and who were then the most powerful states in Europe and well experienced in war, Napoleon and Hitler. And the result was the end of France as a serious state and the destruction of Germany. Does she seriously hope the EU will do better? Who would the bookies bet on?

And she might note that Britain was on Russia's side in both cases and gained most from its victory against the European powers. Czarism or Communism were beside the point. Ursula should be careful that *Albion perfide* is not dead and gone. So these war plans are a high risk strategy, to put it mildly.

So in summary the EU under Ursula's leadership is planning a war with forces they do not have against an alleged enemy that they do not understand and on spurious grounds. It is built on fantasies and could be disastrous for Europe and to continue Hegel's analogy it could become night rather than dusk for Minerva's owl.

She and her colleagues suffer from a very dangerous syndrome when it comes to Russia – double thinking. Most dangerous of all in war. Single-mindedness is crucial

I suggest that we take note of something attributed to Rosa Luxembourg that "The most revolutionary thing one can do is always to proclaim loudly what is happening." People who do that today are the only people to be listened to, no matter what their origin is, as this is an issue beyond right left or centre.

Jack Lane

(Text of a talk at the Teachers' Club on Friday, October 17th for the Irish Political Review Group)

Arthur Bryant and the Unfinished Victory (Part 2)

Pat Walsh

Andrew Roberts, who can be exposed for his smearing character-assassination of Arthur Bryant, was himself exposed a few years ago by the late Manus O'Riordan as a signed-up propagandist for M16. Andrews wrote the "official history" of MI6 about a decade ago in which he smeared Jack Jones and others. As Manus revealed, Andrews in the introduction to that "history" admitted proudly that to write it he had to take the M16 Oath and become a member of it.

Roberts relates how Hugh Trevor-Roper, the famous English historian, (who later as Director of The Times was hoaxed by the Hitler Diaries fraud) was particularly outraged by Arthur Bryant's statement in Unfinished Victory about "the Cromwellian fervour of the SS." Roberts does not say that Trevor-Roper's indignation was probably the result of him being a strong anti-Catholic.

Bryant's Unfinished Victory was still occupying Trevor-Roper's mind 53 years after its publication. In 1993 he wrote, as Lord Dacre:

> "The title 'Unfinished Victory' has always seemed to me rather strange, if not sinister. What was the victory that was unfinished? Presumably the completion of the process of appeasement: Hitler's New Order in Europe. That book really determined my view of Bryant, whereas otherwise I only thought of him as a second-rate popular historian." (Eminent Churchillians, p.314)

Trevor-Roper was consulted by British Intelligence in 1940 about whether Arthur Bryant should be interned as an enemy of the state, for writing the unhelpful Unfinished Victory. He told them that Bryant would fall into line and such action would be unnecessary.

Trevor-Roper was a strong advocate of the view, contained in the Versailles Treaty War Guilt clause, that Germany was responsible for the First World War. He, therefore, was appalled by Unfinished Victory and he did his best to misrepresent it and demonise its author.

It was Hugh Trevor-Roper who destroyed the reputation of Arnold Toynbee, one of Britain's most illustrious historians (and wartime propagandist for Wellington House) in a long review of A Study of History. Trevor-Roper described Toynbee's most substantial work, of 12 volumes, as "untrue, illogical and dogmatic" which had been unfortunately considered "a masterpiece" by an ignorant public. He described Toynbee as an "illiberal" who detested Western civilization and wished it destroyed in his character assassination. Trevor-Roper made comparisons between Hitler and the "hateful" Toynbee.

During the Second World War Trevor-Roper worked for MI6/MI8 and was head of radio intelligence. After the War he worked for The Information Research Department (IRD) a secret Cold War propaganda department of the British Foreign Office, created by Ernest Bevin to publish anti-communist propaganda, including black propaganda, provide support and information to anti-communist politicians, academics, and writers, and to use weaponised information, disinformation and "fake news" to attack individual targets as well as certain socialists and anti-colonial movements.

His scathing attack on Toynbee was contained in the influential CIA front magazine, Encounter, published by Irving Kristol, the New York Jewish founder of the US Neoconservative movement. Toynbee's reputation never recovered from this attack.

Toynbee's cyclical history of civilization apparently threatened the Neoconservative movement's belief in "progress" i.e. progress to world liberal individualist capitalist democracy and "an end of history" as Fukuyama later put it. Toynbee saw history as uncertain and not having an end, or an ideal end as the Neoconservatives propagandised. There was the possibility of decline and fall for everything, including the Liberal Capitalist West.

However, it seems to be unacceptable to doubt that Good (West) will not triumph and it appears that Toynbee was to be destroyed, by Trevor-Roper, in the interests of "progress."

There is, of course, another reason why people like Trevor-Roper and Roberts were antagonistic to men like Toynbee and Bryant. Both Toynbee and Bryant were extremely popular with the general public and their work widely discussed in the popular press, radio and TV. They were the most fashionable historians of their day.

It is striking how court historians like Trevor-Roper and Roberts, employed by the intelligence services, never stop working for the interests of those services, are so given to producing disinformation, whilst at the same time proclaiming the professional objectivity of their studies. And we see the importance of that in the UK Parliament's commissioning of Roberts to write its official report for the record on the events of October 7th.

Despite the misinformation put out by the spook Trevor-Roper, Arthur Bryant was clear in his Introduction ("Historian's Testament") to Unfinished Victory why he had given his book that title. It was to do with the fact that he believed that wars, in order to be successful, meant the arranging of functional settlements in the aftermath that negated the chances of repetition. War Aims needed achieving in the Peace that followed, but,

> "Last time we failed to achieve them. The price of that failure is the blood now being shed…
>
> Because of that failure mankind has returned for a second time in a generation to the shambles… We were again at war with the same defeated enemy, and for the same ends. After the greatest victory of modern times our elders had lost the peace. This time a younger generation has to bear the brunt of the battle. And through their courage and endurance it may be for us to make the peace. Shall we be able to frame a better and more enduring one, and one worthy of their sacrifice? The last peace was not worthy of the men who died to win it. For it did not endure, and therefore robbed them of their victory." (pp.ix-xii)

After the effects of the British Blockade on the German people, Bryant, therefore, identified and explained in Unfinished Victory how it was the Peace Treaties themselves that squandered the hard-won victory over Germany and its allies won in the War of 1914.

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Although what was called an Armistice was signed in November 1918 Bryant noted that it had been quickly transformed into an unconditional German surrender. President Wilson's Fourteen Points had been used to disorganise German resistance and then, as the Germans conceded, and were defenceless, the noose was tightened around them, through the continuation of the starvation blockade, until they accepted a wholly different peace in 1919 to the one they had acquiesced to in November 1918.

Germany was not represented at the Peace Conference held in Versailles in 1919. Previous European wars had ended in negotiations between victors and vanquished. A little over a century earlier, at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, representatives of the defeated Power, France, played an active part in the Peace Conference, with the result that there was a period of enduring peace in Europe resulting from the Congress of Vienna. France had an influence on the redrawing of the map of Europe. Wellington and Castlereagh understood the foremost objective at peace conferences was to create conditions conducive to the peace and stability of Europe. And they realised that the defeated should be shown a degree of leniency, to prevent future grievance, and their cooperation sought, so that their interest could also be taken into account in any settlement.

But that was in the days of aristocratic wars fought for selfish state interest when parliamentary representation was the preserve of the upper classes. The Great War was a mass democratic war fought by the middle classes and their working-class cannon fodder for a high moral purpose. Such a war could not end with the evil having any say in the peace of the good, especially when the masses had been worked up about this to sacrifice themselves at the front.

And the few countries that remained neutral could also not be included in the restructuring of Europe. Morality lay entirely with the victors who were going to make sure no voices were going to dispute their moral judgement on the continent.

In 1919, therefore, the defeated states were excluded from the Peace Conference and were presented with humiliating treaties, subversive of good government and international order, which they were obliged to accept or suffer the consequences.

After the Great War of 1914 ultimatums were delivered to Germany from Versailles befitting a force of absolute evil. This, of course, was the logical outcome of what had happened. The Great War had been made into a highly moral war at the outset, as a concession to Liberal anti-war sentiment and its enthusiastic participation in warmongering, and it had been characterised by highly moralistic propaganda by the great and the good for 4 years. So the process of settlement naturally reflected a vanquishing of the forces of evil by the forces of good, rather than the previous settling of wars in the old-fashioned way.

The Kaiser was removed from the scene late in 1918, an event that destabilised the state and ushered in a period of chaos in Germany in which the Social Democrat leaders were saved by militarists of the old regime from the communist revolution they had prompted! That bizarre event, and the knowledge of it, would have great implications for the future of Germany because new political systems established in such ways are unlikely to be durable.

Another of the defeated states, Ottoman Turkey, would have gone the same way if the British had had their way with the Sultan. But Turkey/Turkiye effectively resisted the peace imposed upon it and metamorphosed into the highly effective and durable state it did through the efforts of Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) and a successful national liberation war that threw out British influence. A much more successful and functional peace settlement was afterwards achieved by equal parties at Lausanne in 1923. Its provisions endure to today - as opposed to what the Versailles Treaty imposed on Germany resulted in.

The Royal Navy blockade which was causing actual starvation in Germany was kept up by Britain into mid-1919 so that Germans in peacetime would understand the moral realities of power. In June 1919 the new German government at Weimar was made to sign a confession of collective War Guilt on behalf of the German people. Substantial territories were then cut out of Germany in both east and west. Britain and France, the masters of the Versailles Conference, therefore, humiliated and plundered Germany and placed substantial German minorities under the new national and pseudo national states that were established to the east of it. Germany's colonies were confiscated by those who decided they would govern the natives more wisely. What remained of the German state was disarmed and subjected to armies of foreign occupation.

What Bryant set out to do was explain how it could have happened that Germany was once again the object of a British World War 20 years after it had been defeated, occupied, dismembered, plundered, humiliated, disarmed and subjected to vast economic punishments intended to pay the victorious Allies for

the entire cost of fighting the First World War -a cost Germany could not afford to pay. Only 6 years before the writing of Unfinished Victory, in 1933, it still had little more than a token army under the Versailles restrictions. It was a state under strict supervision, according to the terms of the Versailles Treaty and the guarantors of the Treaty were the two most powerful states in the world, the British Empire and the French Empire. But by 1939, as if by a miracle Germany had become such a powerful state that Britain could only act against it on the scale of a World War. How was that possible without a squandered or Unfinished Victory?

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Of course, it was all connected to the British Balance of Power policy. As a result of the defeat of Germany, its exclusion from the Versailles negotiations and the fearsome economic reparations imposed upon it, as well as the dissolution of Austria-Hungary by the victors, France suddenly became by far the most powerful state on the continent. France wanted Germany punished, dismembered and disabled to the extent that it could no longer be a security threat to it. Three or four German states, however, would have been tantamount to conceding Europe to French hegemony.

France wanted to complete the work of disabling Germany as a state with a Rhine frontier and a Protectorate east of the Rhine. However, Britain vetoed French policy in the interest of Balance of Power, despite the fact that British war propaganda had indicated that the breaking up of Germany would be what was needed to neutralise "Prussianism" which it blamed for Germany's aggressions.

When France, in defiance of British opposition, attempted to press ahead with its own policy it was subjected to venomous British denunciation which was sometimes as extravagant as the denunciation of Germany had been during the war. This caused great consternation and confusion in France. France was being prevented by Britain from gathering the fruits of victory in a war which had cost it so very much more than it had cost Britain. Britain's first post-war concern, once its passions had abated, was to subvert the French dominance in Europe, which was the apparent outcome of the war. It did this by insisting that the main body of the pre-war German state, with some amendments in the West and border arrangements in the East that were bound to cause trouble, should form part of the post-War structure of Europe.

British Balance of Power attrition caused France, by the mid 1920s, to abandon its attempt by direct action in Germany to establish a kind of Rhineland Protectorate, which some Germans would have acquiesced to. And by the early 1930s France had all but given up on the attempt to conduct any kind of independent foreign policy and conceded to a foreign policy largely dependent on Britain. When the crisis came in the following years France could not act without Britain, so Britain largely determined the course of events from 1936 to 1940, despite France's earlier attempts to create a ring of states around Germany to contain it. The British facilitated the German break out of this ring under the Nazis.

British policy was effective in bringing on Weimar Germany as a Balance of Power counterweight to France. This re-established the ground for future Franco-German conflict which the French had believed they could eradicate through a settlement. Half a generation after the great victory of 1918 France therefore again had a growing German problem to its east. And Germany while increasing its strength, was rendered internally unstable by the ongoing influence of the Versailles penalties which gave rise to a strong political movement of national resentment and the seeking of revenge, particularly against France.

Bryant believed that if the French policy of disabling Germany was not prudent and sensible for Britain it was essential to remove any ground for a politics of national resentment developing in Germany, so that another conflict would not develop. Britain's policy, however, proved a deadly combination with the worst features of the two alternatives, by preventing the disabling of Germany, while maintaining the ground for a politics of German national resentment against France.

What Britain did concede to France was done so as to secure French agreement to British acquisitions elsewhere in the world. The British Empire added to itself most of the German colonies in Africa and the Pacific, Mesopotamia and Palestine, which it detached from French Syria by using the Zionist card. Persia and Egypt, including their raw material resources, were secured. The German merchant fleet was also secured to give Britain a monopoly of the world's carrying trade outside of the US, eliminating the main commercial competitor. German traders were expelled from China, Africa, the Middle East and all Allied territories.

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Both Britain and France had a problem in dealing with the interloper, President Wilson, at Versailles. The set of principles on which the US entered the war on Germany were profoundly different from the motivations from which Britain and France made war in 1914. As a result, the US refused to be termed an ally of the British and French and instead termed itself an "associated power" when it joined in the War in 1917.

Britain dealt with the US President more effectively than France and used his temporary weight on its side against the French. The United States took Wilson's 14 points in earnest and repudiated the notion that Versailles would be a meeting of conquerors to share the spoils and punish a defeated enemy. The combination of British moral humbug and American moral earnestness caused the Peace Conference to present itself to the world as the launching of a new international order of things which would operate in a medium of democracy, national rights, law, justice and self-determination etc. This was not believed by the French to be the case and they acted against it. However, the British used Wilson's presence and standing to block France's desired settlement and achieve one more in keeping with the Balance of Power. The US did not see its way to forcing the issue by taking command of Europe, so it withdrew back to its continent.

George Washington had insisted, as a fundamental of Foreign Policy, that the United States should never become involved in European entanglements. His policy was adhered to throughout the 19th Century. But it was abandoned by President Wilson in 1917. Britain, which had achieved American involvement in Europe, hoped that the US would do the difficult and expensive work in the contested areas of Britain's Imperial acquisitions, on Britain's behalf. And by being given the most difficult jobs in the world, perhaps America could be even worn down in the mire and cut down to size as an emerging Power in the process.

Frederic C. Howe was sent by President Wilson to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. Howe had admired the pre-War German accomplishment, but he was, like President Wilson, an Anglophile at heart, as his reminiscences of 1925, The Confessions of a Reformer, reveal. Howe's 1919 book, The Only Possible Peace, is a fierce denunciation of Germany, which the author believed to be intent on world conquest through its Baghdad-Berlin Railway. Until Howe encountered Britain in reality, in the peace-making process at Paris, he held

the idealist Anglophile notion of English civilization and benevolence. But that was all to change from the time of his experiences in peace-making with the British at Paris, particularly in relation to Lord Milner's Round Table set.

The behaviour of the Allies at Paris left Howe thoroughly disillusioned with the Peace Conference and the League of Nations, particularly as it became evident that the good intentions of the President, and America, were being used by Britain and the other Imperial Powers in the service of the same old Imperialism.

Lloyd George outmanoeuvred Wilson by repeatedly threatening the President with British withdrawal if he did not give way. And all the time the British Prime Minister had it in mind that England and France would go back to settling Imperialist business between themselves when Wilson had been seen off.

There was a crucial vote in the United States' Senate on 19th November 1919 which put up conditions before the League of Nations could be ratified. Lloyd George was urged to accept these conditions, which chiefly guarded against America being pulled into military conflicts against its choosing, by among others, Sir Edward Grey. Grey had been persuaded out of retirement to go to the US to try to secure limitations of American naval expenditure. But Grey, who was used to dominating the Great Powers in the pre-War days, found it a very dispiriting experience. When the Americans revealed that the relationship between the US and Britain had fundamentally changed he asked London if he could be recalled, saying he had not come out of retirement to accept such indignity.

Grey urged the Prime Minister to accept the Senate's reservations in order to pull the US into "world responsibilities" and he wrote a letter to The Times to make his position on this public. But Lloyd George did just the opposite. In Parliament, in December 1919, he stated that the League must be a League of "equal members," with no member, such as the US, having a right to have less responsibilities than any another. He then said that whilst Britain would support the League it would tend to its own specific interests in the world, without regard to it.

So the US steered clear of the "entangling alliances" of the Peace Conference and the League and determined to be nobody's pawn in the world rejecting Versailles and the Mandates in March 1920, after it began to see the behaviour of Britain and France in relation to them.

The failure of Britain to secure American assistance for the reordering and governing of the world after 1919 had profound consequences.

The League of Nations established by the Versailles Treaty could only work with British commitment to it. However, having tied up the league with numerous veto points that prevented activity within its structures, the British Prime Minister made it clear that the major international institution it would work within would be the Empire, rather than the League. The decisive point in this was when a word was had in Maurice Hankey's ear by Lord Esher to deter him wasting his efforts as General Secretary and instead continue as Cabinet Secretary, where he would have much greater influence on events.

With the predominant Power not prepared to utilise it and the rising Power, America, refusing to have anything to do with it, the League was left incapable of ameliorating powers that might facilitate a diplomatic transition toward a more just and functional settlement and order, once passions had abated.

The Treaty was unacceptable to Germans right across the political spectrum. Weimar governments pleaded for a revision of the humiliating provisions of the Versailles Treaty, but they were rebuffed. Hitler gave an undertaking to the German people that he would not do any pleading but would simply act in breach of Versailles and he proceeded to do so. Britain did not merely tolerate Hitler's breaches of the Versailles Treaty but actively negotiated breaches of it with him, both with regard to the internal structure of the German state and to the alienated Germans within the new Czechoslovak state. Bryant understood that the Versailles Treaty was unenforced and unenforceable in its economic provisions, which were, in fact, heavily modified. But it remained in being for all the damage it was capable of doing to the internal political life of the German Republic. What that damage culminated in was the coming of power of Hitler in 1933 and Hitler proceeded immediately to break the disarmament clauses openly. And Britain acquiesced in the breach.

This was effectively the policy of Appeasement that Bryant took part in. Bryant probably thought "better late than never". But the damage was done by that stage and the Appeasement compounded the problem of the early straitjacket of punitive restrictions placed on Germany which, as Bryant noted, the structures of the settlement were incapable of dealing with because of their design.

For around 6 years Britain cooperated with Hitler, facilitating his direct action in revising Versailles, having previously thwarted the efforts of Weimar governments to achieve reform by constitutional action. The culminating act of collaboration was the transfer of the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia to Germany in the Autumn of 1938, which deprived the Czechs of their natural frontier and provided Hitler with an advanced arms industry. Then Britain made another Balance of Power reversal, around March 1939, which set off the train of events that ultimately caught Bryant out and nearly saw his detention as an enemy of the state.

Arthur Bryant's account of Britain's behaviour between the two world wars was surely a deterrent to Ireland's participation in the second of these and great scepticism about the war propaganda that was aimed in its direction in 1939/40. The way that Bryant described things would have made a strong case for non-participation for anyone but those who were patriotically compelled to adjust their views of things – as Bryant did – when war kicked off in earnest in May 1940.

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ARTHUR BRYANT (1940) UNFINISHED VICTORY
CHAPTER 2
THE POUND OF FLESH

… The armistice terms asked of them were such as to place Germany at the absolute mercy of the Allies by land, sea and air. They included the handing over of 5,000 guns, 30,000 machine guns and 2000 aeroplanes, the surrender of the entire German battle fleet, the delivery in working order of 5,000 engines, 150,000 railway trucks and 5,000 motor lorries, and a retreat to the Rhine so rapid as to mean the virtual dissolution of the German Army.

These crushing conditions were accepted. It is hard to see how they could have been refused. For already Germany, strained beyond endurance by the blockade and overwhelmed by defeats on every front, was in open revolution. The fleet had mutinied, the Kaiser had abdicated and fled into Holland, a Social Democratic republic had been proclaimed and Workmen and Soldiers' Councils on the Russian model spontaneously set up in regiments and factories…

The representatives of the German High Command did not appear to consider further resistance practicable, for, after a brief but fruitless argument with their conquerors, they accepted terms as humiliating as any offered to a defeated army in the modern annals.

Yet the truth remains that, for all her unexpected collapse, Germany had sued for peace on the basis of President Wilson's Fourteen Points, and on these, subject to the Allies' two provisos, peace had been promised her. As certain of these terms were subsequently not honoured, she has since been able to contend that she was tricked into the armistice. The fact — ignored by modern German propagandists — that between the first peace overtures and the final surrender the military situation had been transformed by a complete breakdown of the Central Powers rendering them utterly defenceless, cannot wholly absolve the Allied statesmen from the blame of having failed to keep their promise…

On the day after the Armistice, Mr. Lloyd George declared that his country did not intend to take a yard of German soil. "No settlement", he said, "which contravenes the principles of eternal justice will be a permanent one. Let us be warned by the example of 1871. We must not allow any spirit of greed, any grasping desire, to override the fundamental principle of righteousness." There is no doubt that he meant what he said.

Yet what a democratic statesman intends and what he does are often different matters. For he is not his own master. Unlike the aristocrats who negotiated the more clement and enduring peace of 1815, Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues were subject to superior powers.

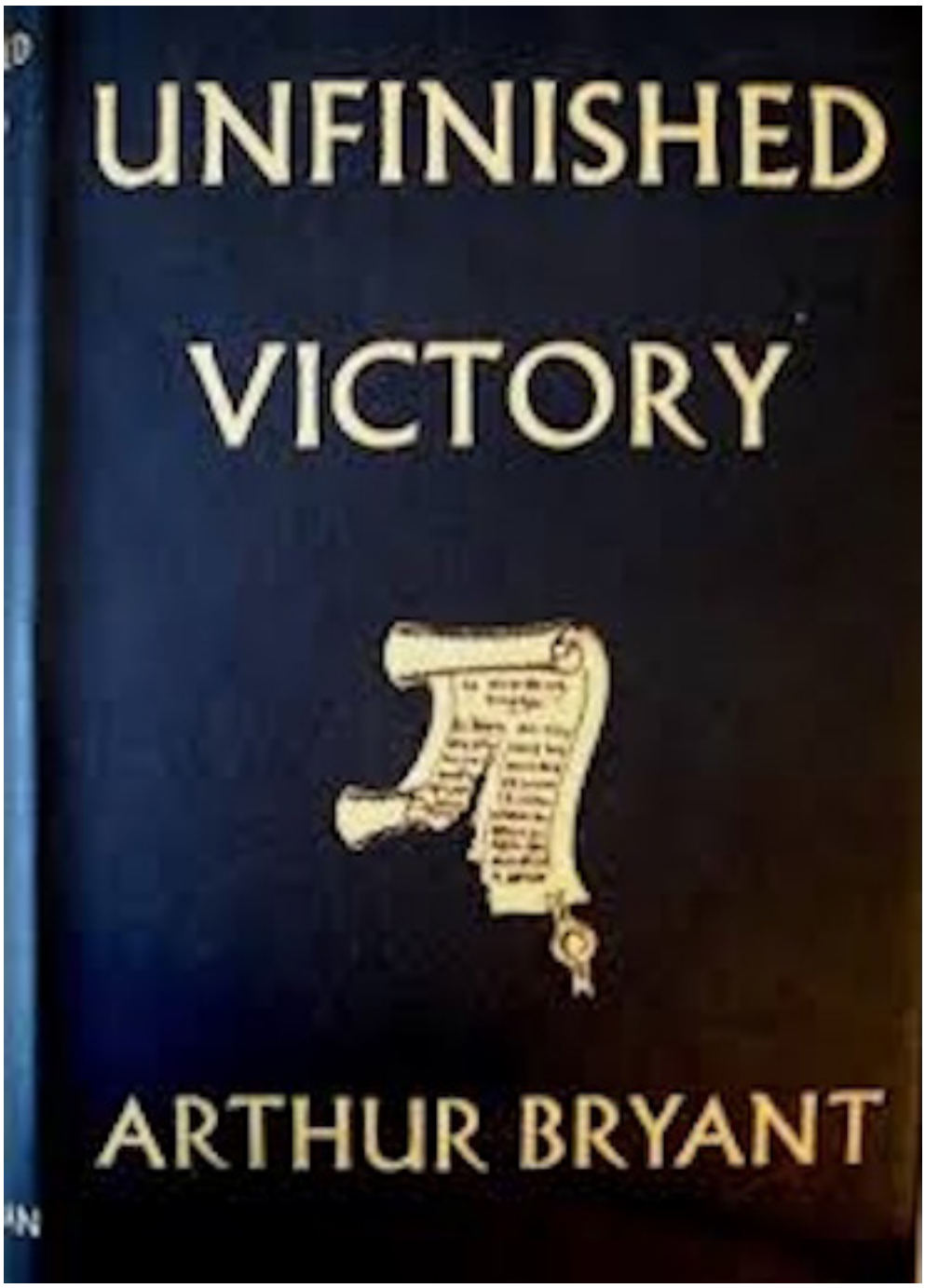
It was not long before those powers made themselves heard. Two weeks. after the Armistice the Coalition Government, which had hitherto lacked electoral sanction, went to the country to obtain a mandate for its continued existence. For the first time a British election was held on a basis of manhood suffrage. By the Representation of the People Act of 1918, which was founded on the proposition that if an uneducated man was fit to fight for his country he was fit to vote for it, the franchise was more than doubled. Four million men and nine million women were given the vote for the first time. It cannot be said that they made a very good use of it. For, urged by a cheap popular press and the untutored feelings of the hour, they proceeded to vote for precisely the kind of peace against which the Prime Minister had warned them. They gave their representatives a mandate to hang the Kaiser, ruin the enemy's trade and empty his pockets. 'It is not our business", wrote the Daily Mail, "to ask what Germany will think of the terms. Our duty is to dictate such terms as shall give a material guarantee for security, and let the Hun think what he likes about them."

It did not seem to occur to the Daily Mail, and it certainly did not to the man in the street who had never read the Fourteen Points and had forgotten them if he had, that "the Hun" had surrendered on the understanding that he was to be accorded certain conditions. Those conditions had been promised by the representatives of democracy. Democracy now chose to ignore them and to instruct its representatives to act as though they had not been made.

Those who were the ministers of King Demos did not dare to question his divine right to go back on his word. Before the end of the month that had begun with victory and high protestations, Mr. Lloyd George was talking of ''a relentlessly just peace and "terms not of vengeance but of prevention". On December 12th, in a speech at Bristol, he declared that "the loser pays". One of his lieutenants, going one better in the heat of the hustings, announced that he would "squeeze the lemon until the pips squeaked.' Twenty years later some of those who cheered that flamboyant utterance listened over the wireless to the brutal roar of Hitler's answer in oratory and the shouts of a defeated people demanding vengeance. The wish of that dazed Christmastide of 1918 had been granted. The pips were squeaking…

It is as foolish to blame the British electorate in the light of after events. The historian who wishes to be just must put himself in the position of those who voted, and in the mood of that hour. The common people of Britain, into whose hands absolute power had been suddenly and momentarily thrust, had just relaxed after more than four years of desperate and unrelenting struggle. They had made vast sacrifices, suffered terrible losses and supped so long on horrors that they had grown indifferent to tales of misery and injustice. For many months they had been subjected to an unceasing propaganda which inevitably accentuated and magnified every harsh and unworthy German act and concealed and misrepresented anything that might have been extenuating in the German case. They had been taught to believe that all Germans were unspeakable barbarians who murdered, robbed and raped those whom they conquered, maltreated their prisoners and, amid Satanic laughter, drowned defenceless women and children. Those who believed these tales, and were now called upon to signify the kind of peace they wanted, were for the most part working men and women with little education and little time for serious reading or reflection…

The other victorious democracies were no wiser. The French could naturally think of nothing but their own losses, their devastated towns and wasted fields, and the humiliations of those who had suffered the brutal arrogance of an invading conqueror. They wanted two things — revenge and security. In the exhausted and disillusioned mood of the moment, they supposed that the second


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could only be found in the first. A frugal and deeply wronged people tightened its lips as it surveyed the prostrate form of the hated Boche and resolved to make good its wasted savings out of his pockets. Nobody who had experienced the haunted horror of the battlefields or had seen the twisted, crazed ruins that had once been the cities and villages of France can blame them.

Italy, though her contribution to victory until the eleventh hour had been of a somewhat negative kind, was in a like mood… The dazzling prize of Italia Irredenta — the Liberal dream of a century — floated before her eyes. As a price for her abandonment of her pre-war allies, she had been promised much in 1915. The hour for cashing in had come. It was unlikely to come again. It was to her interest to grasp all she could get.

As for the great democracy of the West, for all her Professor-President's high-sounding moral platitudes, the future of Europe entered very little into her practical calculations. She is scarcely to be blamed for this, for in doing so she was merely being true to herself. Her intervention in the war had been a disturbing departure from her traditional policy of isolation. As its inconveniences became felt, an increasing number of her citizens began to think it had been a mistake. It was now over, and the sooner America could extricate herself from the witches' cauldron and leave the effete and dying nations of Europe to stew in their own juice, the better. The only thing about them that really concerned her was that they should pay for the munitions they had bought and, since they obviously could not do so in a single sum, that they should pay a good rate of interest on the principal until it was redeemed…

Thus it came about that, when the Allied statesmen assembled at Paris in January 1919, they were confronted with an insoluble dilemma. On the one hand they had promised their defeated enemy, through President Wilson, to negotiate a peace based on the wise and conciliatory principles of the Fourteen Points. On the other they were the responsible servants of injured and angry democracies which cared nothing for the Fourteen Points and were resolved to have their pound of flesh. And the place to which they had come to do their peacemaking was the capital of the nation which above all others had most cause to think of vengeance.

But one at least of the peace delegates seemed at first superior to such considerations. President Wilson… felt that myriad eyes looked up to him as a prophet arisen in the West; as to a man chosen by God to give to the whole world a new message and a more righteous order… Others did not share President Wilson's view of himself and the sanctity of his mission. Nor did he possess the talents with which to carry out his conceptions. He had no detailed plan, no elasticity in council, no agility of mind and little understanding of the mentality and feelings of others…

It was not the American President who provided the tune to which the Conference danced, but the seventy-eight-year-old Premier of France, Georges Clemenceau. In his black skullcap, his square-cut coat of honest broadcloth and his grey suede gloves, the implacable old radical patriot presided over the Conference and dominated the Council of Four. The dilemma. which confronted his companions mattered little to him. He was the most single-minded of the peacemakers, for, like the angry and resentful France he represented, he did not wish to make peace at all. He cared nothing for the Fourteen Points which in private he contemptuously nicknamed the Fourteen Commandments. He believed that nothing mattered in European politics but the safety of France, and that there was no way of dealing with Germany save by force and intimidation… Like a tiger he prepared to fasten on the wounded body of his country's hereditary foe.

Before he could do so, however, there was a game — a farce it seemed to the French Prime Minister — to be played out…

The tiresome American President… armed for the moment with the still unwasted might of the New World, was the self-chosen delegate of the Old World's fondest hope. He carried with him a mandate for a League of Nations — for an international order that should transcend the power politics of the past and banish forever the nightmare of war. It was a mandate in which he profoundly believed. Beside it, as 1918 succeeded to 1919, the settlement of the defeated enemy and even the Fourteen Points seemed of diminishing importance. For the foundation of the League would ultimately solve all problems and establish the reign of justice on earth.

The President was not alone in his belief. Long before the peace, men all over the world had set their hopes for the future of mankind on it. Even in militarist Germany, at one of the most critical moments of the war, a Foreign Office official could find time to write to Prince von Bülow: "We are engaged in drawing up suggestions for the League of Nations which will, it is hoped, be the best result of this war". It struck the old ex-Chancellor as a curious activity for a German at such a moment. Looking back on all that has happened since, it may to us seem an even stranger one

President Wilson held that the settlement of the League's constitution should take precedence over the peace treaties. When his colleagues demurred and, to side-track the matter, suggested a Commission, he put himself on it. Having to return temporarily to America in the middle of February, he drove the Commission forward at such speed that the draft Covenant of the League was ready for presentation to the Conference before he sailed. Lesser matters such as peace, the revictualling of starving central Europe and the delimitation of the broken and anarchic frontiers, had to wait. To the President's austere mind it seemed better that millions should hunger or live in harrowing uncertainty than that there should be any delay in completing the Covenant on which the future of mankind depended.

There were many others who had set their hopes on the League and who subsequently accepted the gross imperfections of the peace treaties in the belief that when passions had calmed the Covenant would provide a means of peaceful revision. ''There are territorial settlements'', General Smuts wrote when he signed the Treaty, "which will need revision. There are guarantees laid down which we all hope will soon be found out of harmony with the new peaceful temper and unarmed state of our former enemies. There are punishments foreshadowed over most of which a calmer mood may yet prefer to pass the sponge of oblivion. There are indemnities stipulated which cannot be enacted without grave injury to the industrial revival of Europe, and which it will be in the interests of all to render more tolerable and moderate… I am confident that the League of Nations will yet prove the path of escape for Europe out of the ruin brought about by this war."

Unhappily, as the future was to show, this was just what the League failed to be. For by a fatal error — due perhaps to the President's insistence on haste — the Covenant made no practical provision for changing those treaties with which it subsequently became linked. The lawyers who drafted it showed so little understanding of human nature and history, or were so much in the counsels of Clemenceau, that they left no adequate loophole for revision. While they stigmatised war and prescribed pious formalities for its avoiding, they offered no alternative.

"The assembly", ran Article 19, "may from time to time advise the reconsideration by Members of the League of Treaties which have become inapplicable, and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world". Yet the entire worth of this clause — the one remaining hope for the future once the Peace Treaties were signed — was rendered nugatory by an earlier clause in Article 5: "Except where otherwise expressly provided in this Covenant or by the terms of the present Treaty, decisions at any meeting of the Assembly or of the Council shall require the agreement of all the Members of the League represented at the meeting". The purpose of this was to preserve the sovereign rights of every contracting State. In practice it meant that the constitution of the League was rendered as ineffectual and self-destructive as that of 18th-century Poland where no important change could be carried through without unanimity. An unfair condition in the peace treaties as between France, and Germany or Poland and Germany was to be eternally unalterable so long as France or Poland could find a single supporter at the League table.

Linked with this fatal defect was another, contained in a still more disastrous clause. Under Article 10, the Members of the League undertook "to respect and preserve, as against external aggression, the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League". Though there was no practical alternative method, any forcible change in the status quo, however unjust or obsolete, was to be regarded as an act of aggression which it would become the duty of all Member States to resist by force.

Henceforward the almost inevitable result of any attempt to alter the map of Europe must be either a world war or a universal condonation of a breach of the Covenant.

Nothing more damaging to the future of international law could have been devised. The frontiers of 1919 were to be secured for all time by using the law to dam the course of history. The inevitable result was to discredit the law. When Germany in due time reoccupied her own demilitarised frontier, when she resumed control of her own rivers, when she achieved the long-opposed Anschluss with the German rump of Austria, she committed in each case an act of aggression which members of the League had either to condone or undo by another world war. No other means of achieving these revisions of the peace treaties was open to Germany save by obtaining the unanimous consent of every member of the League Assembly.

For in his enthusiasm for the League, the President, despite the protests of his weary and cynical colleagues, insisted on tying up the Covenant with the peace treaties. He staked the future of the world on a desperate improbability: that the territorial alterations of the past, dictated by changes in human population and ideals, would now cease for ever. Wilson's hope was that, by having a makeshift peace tied up with a just and eternal Covenant, he would inevitably compel an equitable revision of the former. He failed to realise that he was merely rendering the Covenant a high-sounding device for justifying and perpetuating injustice. All unwittingly he ensured that for those who suffered that injustice, the name of Geneva would become a synonym for hypocrisy.

While the President hurried forward the formalities for completing the Covenant and peace waited in the wings, the continent of Europe east of the Rhine was fast dissolving into anarchy. Bavaria had gone Bolshevist, Hungary was about to follow, the Austrian Empire had fallen into a formless void in which no man could be certain whom to obey or how to make plans for the future. As the spring returned, though nearly half a year had elapsed since the bugles had sounded cease-fire, battles were being fought on a score of wasted, shifting fronts. The new republic of Poland was at war with the Ukraine, three different kinds of White armies with the Reds in Russia, Romanians with Hungarians, Poles with Czechs, and Italian imperialists with Slav mountaineers. Pending a settlement in Paris, Allied military and political missions, ensconced in armoured trains, wended their way on ineffectual errands across a dissolving continent. "The greater part of Europe and Asia", wrote Mr. Churchill, "simply existed locally from day to day. Revolutions, disorders, the vengeance of peoples upon rulers who had led them to their ruin, partisan warfare, brigandage of all sorts and — over wide areas — actual famine, lapped the Baltic States, central and southern Europe, Asia Minor, Arabia and all Russia in indescribable confusion." The glitter of the French capital, celebrating amid a blaze of lights, only deepened the encircling gloom.

Nothing so explains the imperfections of the 1919 settlement as that steady and rapid drift towards European chaos. It almost justifies them. Throughout a third of the world civilisation itself had collapsed. The danger was that the whole of Europe would succumb to the Bolshevik Terror towering like a giant spectre over the glowing ashes of eastern Europe. The old order and the old beliefs had broken under the strain and horror of modern war. Something primitive and brutal in man had taken their place…

Those who preached the class war were provided with an attentive audience. A large part of a continent containing "the densest aggregation of population in the history of the world" was deprived of its livelihood by the dislocation of the economic organisation of society. Trade had almost ceased. Whole nations found their standard of living depressed to the level of savages. Mr. Hoover calculated that over fifteen million families were living on state subsidies based on the inflation of national currencies.

If the American President was able to disregard these danger signals, the statesmen of France, Italy and Britain who inhabited the same inflammable continent could not. They were confronted with ominous rumblings in their own strained and wearied lands. The gigantic armies they had commanded had already melted away; there would soon be no one to obey their orders. In February Mr. Lloyd George had had to hurry over to England to deal with a series of grave strikes and riots: more than once during the Peace negotiations troops were hastily assembled in the parks round Paris to prevent a Socialist rising. The peoples of the warring nations had been taught for so long to use arms against one another that they were now ready to turn them against the rulers who could do so little to help them in their miseries. "The spectre of Revolution haunted the Peace Conference like a nightmare." Even Colonel House noted in his diary that March that the assembled peacemakers were "sitting on a powder magazine". In such a mood there was small scope at Paris for idealism. What little had been left over after four years of warfare had already been drawn on by President Wilson for the Covenant. Nothing now remained but an all-prevailing materialism…

The peace which began to emerge under Clemenceau's guidance bore, therefore, no resemblance to that outlined by the Fourteen Points. It was based on no abstract or humanitarian principle: it was not even concerned with honour. A decimated France could not afford such luxuries. Her sole purpose was to secure 'guarantees' against future aggression by Germany and to outweigh her superior numbers, efficiency and resources by loading her with every possible handicap. In the prevailing depression and nightmare

fears of Paris, it never seemed to occur to the French Government that the inevitable consequences of such a policy must be to intensify hatred and the desire for revenge. The only logical means of carrying it out would have been the extermination of the German race. As this was impracticable, the French plan was irrational. It could only end as it has ended…

Mr. Lloyd George had already rendered himself impotent. He had promised his own people to hang the Kaiser and squeeze the lemon till the pips squeaked! Within a few days of penning this document Mr. Lloyd George received a telegram from 370 of his supporters in Parliament urging him to redeem his pledges and make Germany pay. It was what Clemenceau meant him to do.

There remained President Wilson. But the apostle of static righteousness had shot his bolt. Upon his return to his own country in February he had been made to realise the rising strength of opposition to his policy — the price he had to pay for his autocratic neglect of public opinion in the most democratic of all lands. At the Opera House in New York he let it be known that the Covenant of the League should be so linked with the peace treaties as not to be separable. The United States would thus be unable to support the one without the other. He forgot that his countrymen might respond by refusing to support either.

When the President resumed his residence at the Villa Murat, the triumphs of his first coming in December were not repeated. Confronted by the resolve of the Old World to patch up a treaty as quickly as it could and deprived of the support of the New, he seemed to falter and lose his nerve. Henceforward he was as clay in the hands of Clemenceau. One by one his Fourteen Points were sacrificed to the French view of security. All that now seemed needed to satisfy his formidable Presbyterian conscience was to trump up some ingenious formula of legal and moral casuistry that, by a parade of words, linked one or other of his flouted principles with the latest demand on the helpless enemy. Thus, as Maynard Keynes pointed out, "instead of saying that German-Austria is prohibited from uniting with Germany except by leave of France" — a plain but honest denial of the principle of self-determination — "the Treaty, with delicate draftsmanship, states that Germany acknowledges and will respect strictly the independence of Austria within the frontiers which may be fixed in a Treaty between that State and the Principal Allied and Associated Powers; he agrees that this independence shall be inalienable except with the consent of the Council of the League of Nations" Another part of the Treaty provides that for this purpose the Council must be unanimous. Instead of giving Danzig to Poland the Treaty establishes Danzig as a 'Free' City, but includes this 'Free' City within the Polish Customs frontier, entrusts to Poland the control of the river and railway system, and provides that "the Polish Government shall undertake the conduct of the foreign relations of the Free City of Danzig... In placing the river system of Germany under foreign control, the Treaty speaks of declaring international those river systems which naturally provide more than one State with access to the sea. . .. Such instances could be multiplied. The honest and intelligible purpose of French policy to limit the population of Germany and weaken her economic system is clothed for the President's sake, in the august language of freedom and international equality." (J. M. Keynes, Economic Consequences of the Peace, pp.47-8).

It has taken in the bulk of the British and American people ever since. It never took in their enemies, whose anger and contempt for what they regarded as a hypocritical and dishonest subterfuge has helped to lower the whole standard of international morality and assured the present rulers of Germany a popular backing even for their most cynical and brutal breaches of law.

The Germans were given no opportunity of arguing their case with the victors. Before the war their rulers by their peculiar — and apparently congenital— methods of diplomacy had spoken with such habitual noisiness that the world had grown utterly weary of hearing them. Their meeker successors were now not permitted to be heard at all. During the six months which elapsed between the Armistice and the publication of the first draft of the Treaty, no representative of the Central Powers was so much as consulted. Its terms were not negotiated between the parties but unilaterally imposed. There was no Peace Conference: only a prolonged discussion between judges prior to awarding sentence.

Instead of "open covenants of peace openly arrived at", the conquerors' terms were drawn up in secret and presented as an ultimatum, to be accepted or rejected in toto. In all the vital preliminaries of the treaty Germany was judged and sentenced unheard. This was the essence of Clemenceau's idea of peacemaking. It was one of his beliefs that "you must never negotiate with a German or conciliate him: you must dictate to him''. (J.M. Keynes, Economic Consequences of the Peace, p. 29.)

When the Armistice came there was no longer any need to dictate. The mighty had been humbled and cast down by the uncomplaining virtues of the simple and meek. In the middle of April 1919, the Germans were ordered to dispatch a delegation to Versailles, not to discuss but to receive the text of the peace preliminaries drawn up by the Allied and Associated Powers. When the delegates presented themselves at Versailles, they were treated not as the representatives of an independent Power but as prisoners. An area in the park was set apart for their exercise and ostentatiously enclosed with palisades, to protect them, they were told, from the just rage of the populace. Outside this they were not permitted to go. Journalists were forbidden to converse with them on pain of being charged with "communicating with the enemy". It was a curious prelude to a new era of international understanding and goodwill.

On May 7th, at the Trianon Palace Hotel, the delegates were confronted by the representatives of twenty-seven victorious States. Placed apart as though in the dock, they heard Clemenceau pronouncing sentence:

"Delegates of the German State! This is neither the time nor place for any superfluous words. You see before you the accredited representatives of great and smaller powers, united here to end this horrible war that was imposed on them. This is the hour of heavy reckoning! You have sued for peace and we are inclined to grant it you. Herewith we hand you the book in which our peace conditions are set forth. This second Peace of Versailles has been bought too dearly by the peoples whose assembled representatives are before you to allow them to bear alone the consequences of this war. I must add, to be perfectly frank with you, that this second Treaty of Versailles has been bought so dearly by my countrymen that they can only take the fullest resolution to demand every rightful guarantee…"

The delegates, pinched and starved-looking, were then presented with a large printed volume and were informed that they would have fifteen days in which to deliver their written observations. No oral communications were to be allowed.

Ill and deadly pale and still seated at the end of the horseshoe table, Count Brockdorff-Rantzau replied that he and his companions were now without illusions. "We are aware that the strength of Germany's arms has been crushed. We can feel all the power of the hate we must encounter in this assembly… It is

demanded of us that we admit ourselves to be the only ones guilty of the war. Such a confession in my mouth would be a lie. We are far from declining any responsibility for this great world war… but we deny that Germany and its people were alone guilty. The hundreds and thousands of non-combatants who have perished since the 11th November by reason of the blockade were killed with cold deliberation after our adversaries had conquered and victory had been assured to them. Think of that when you speak of guilt and punishment." (Manchester Guardian, May 8th, 1919.

He reminded his hearers that President Wilson's Fourteen Points were equally binding on both sides. He acknowledged his country's readiness to do all within her power to repair the damage done by war. But if the victors required compensation, they must not hound her into ruin and anarchy… But for all the good the protest did it might have been addressed to the trees in the park of the Trianon.

The principal territorial changes were not unjust. The return of Alsace-Lorraine to France and the re-creation of a greater Poland with access to the sea accorded with the spirit as well as the letter of the Fourteen Points and were in keeping with the laws of natural development and change. Yet even in giving a new birth of freedom to Poland, little regard was had to the interests and feelings of hundreds of thousands of Germans whose fate was inextricably bound up by history and neighbourhood with that of the Poles…On every hand neat cities and farmlands bore witness to the enduring influence of German capital, German integrity and German labour. Danzig at the mouth of the Polish Vistula was as German as Calais is French. Bromberg, Thorn, Kulm, Graudenz and Dirschau were partly German towns, though set in the midst of a Polish rural population. Even the great commercial highroad and historic river of Poland, the Vistula, had been bridged and rendered navigable by German money and skill. Germany like Russia and Austria had robbed Poland in the past. But, unlike Russia and Austria, she had also enriched her.

From Germany was taken and given to the new Poland by the first draft of the Treaty, 17,816 square miles and nearly four million subjects. The principle which the American President had enunciated that the Polish 'Corridor was "to be drawn irrespective of strategic or transportation considerations so as to embrace the smallest possible number of Germans", was, thanks to Lloyd George, on the whole honoured…

It was, of course, never possible to give Poland her promised access to the sea without injury to long established German rights. It was difficult to estimate precisely how great these were… The most accurate estimate seemed to be about 20 per cent, or perhaps half a million Germans. But the claims were necessarily confused and conflicting. The ebb and flow of racial history in this corner of Europe had made the problem one of baffling complexity…

By the cession of the Corridor — the new Poland's indispensable link with the sea — East Prussia, the dearest and most historic of all the North German lands, was divided from the rest of the German nation. It was almost as if Kent had been cut off from the rest of England by a French corridor. The shock to national and historic feelings and the injury to individual interests was bound to be great, however necessary such changes for the just and vital interests of a long-injured Poland. To soften it, the utmost tact and tenderness was called for. It was not shown. The Germans were treated as if the matter scarcely concerned them. They were not even consulted as to the future and protection of their own nationals. For in the unhappy mood of that hour they were still regarded as a race of pariahs.

Only the intervention of the British Prime Minister saved Danzig, a city of over 300,000 Germans and as big as Hull or Bradford, from incorporation in Poland. As a result of a hard struggle with Clemenceau and the Poles, he was able to secure its reservation as a Free City under the protection of the League of Nations, subject to Polish control of its harbour and foreign policy. In the same way the purely East Prussian city of Memel was taken from Germany and placed under League sovereignty. Both Danzig, the great port at the mouth of the Polish Vistula, and Memel were vitally necessary as free outlets for the trade of the Polish and Lithuanian interiors. Yet both were also German cities with a wealth of German history behind them. In the past the Poles had suffered much from the intolerance and indifference of the rulers of Germany to the rights and feelings of others. But those who were now deprived of their nationality and shorn of their property were not necessarily those who had inflicted such sufferings.

In all, Germany lost seven million nationals and 28,000 square miles of territory — a seventh of her pre-war area in Europe and rather more than half the size of England…

In addition, Germany's entire colonial empire, the third largest in the world, was taken from her with a derisory phrase about her being unfit to govern natives. A suggestion that its value — never a very high one — should be reckoned as part of reparations was, in the light of future events, not very wisely disregarded. For nine-tenths of the reparations demanded were never paid, and the confiscation of the German overseas empire was bound to constitute an unnecessary bone of contention in the future. It was divided, as League mandates, between the British Empire and the French, who already possessed between them nearly a third of the earth, a few minor pickings going to Belgium and Japan. Italy, despite earlier hopes, got none of it…

Behind the confiscation lay the theory that colonies should be regarded not as opportunities for imperialist and capitalist expansion, but as trusts for the benefit of the native populations to be administered under the supervision of the League. Germans… merely regarded it as a hypocritical mask for robbery. And they recalled what the British public had forgotten, that Britain had given her signature to the Berlin Convention of 1884 by which the European powers pledged themselves in the event of war to respect one another's African possessions.

The economic penalties of the Treaty were far more crushing than the political. Here the guiding principle of the peacemakers was not pacification but punishment. Three-quarters of Germany's iron ore, more than half her zinc ore and smelting, a quarter of her lead ore, nearly a third of her coal and a fifth of her iron and steel industry was taken from her. After Great Britain, Germany was the most heavily industrialised country in Europe, with nearly three-quarters of her people engaged in industry. Since 1870, her population had risen from forty-one to sixty-eight million. An agricultural and largely self-supporting state had been transformed, as England had been a century earlier, into "a vast and complicated industrial machine, dependent for its working on the equipoise of many factors outside Germany as well as within. Only by operating this machine continuously and at full blast, could she find occupation at home for her increasing population and the means of purchasing their subsistence from abroad."

As Clemenceau had intended, the Peace Treaty was so framed as to throw this delicate economic system out of gear. Had universal free trade been the goal, as was proposed by the Fourteen Points, the political dismemberment of Germany's frontier provinces would have had little economic effect. As it

was, it doomed her to unavoidable and recurrent bankruptcy. It is doubtful whether even today, after the lapse of twenty years and the territorial changes of the past fifteen months, Germany is yet a solvent economic unit. New frontiers surmounted by high tariff walls were set up dividing areas which had formerly been economic entities. One found iron ore on one side of a frontier and the coal, blast furnaces and labour to work it on the other. In parts of the new German-Polish border in Silesia the coal mines went to Poland while the pit-heads remained in Germany. Such a Gilbertian situation would have been laughable had it not been so tragic.

The evil went far beyond the confines of Germany. Before the war she had been the best customer of Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia, Holland, Norway, Belgium, Switzerland and all Scandinavia, and the second best of Great Britain, France and Belgium. German capital and organisation had helped to turn the wheels of industry in every country in central and eastern Europe. The economic dislocation of Germany meant, therefore, the economic dislocation of a whole continent.

So blinded were men by hatred after the suffering and destruction of four years' warfare that many otherwise sane leaders of industry and finance lent themselves to this suicidal policy. They thought that by doing so they would cripple an energetic and dangerous rival for ever. In a letter written in November 1917, Mr. F. S. Oliver, serving as secretary to a Cabinet Committee, described how the Foreign Office, the Board of Trade, the Treasury and the India and Colonial Offices were all thinking out "separate policies for doing-in the Hun in the matter of his exports of manufactures and imports of raw materials after the war". "I propose", said Sir Eric Geddes in his famous speech in the Khaki Election, "that every bit of German property, movable or immovable, in Allied and neutral countries should be surrendered to the Allies, and that Germany should pay her precious citizens in her precious paper money. No German should be allowed to own anything in this country. If Germany has got anything to buy with, she can pay that in indemnities. I propose that not only all the gold Germany has got, but all the silver and jewels she has got, shall be handed over. All her pictures and libraries and everything of that kind should be sold to the neutral and Allied world, and the proceeds given to paying the indemnity. I would strip Germany as she has stripped Belgium."

Crushing penal clauses were therefore imposed on German industry. For five years Germany was to accord most-favoured-nation treatment to the Allied and Associated States without reciprocity. All her trading privileges in other countries were abrogated. Her merchant fleet was taken from her. She had to hand over the best part of her rolling stock and 20 per cent of her inland navigate tonnage. Even the private property of her nationals outside her own post-Treaty frontiers was made liable to confiscation as a set-off against reparations— a measure that struck at the very roots of international law…

These measures were not directed against a rich and powerful nation operating under normal conditions, but against one exhausted by war and pauperised by prolonged blockade. Of the shrunk coal production remaining to Germany after the territorial changes, nearly half was assigned to France to compensate her for the cruel damage done to her own wrecked mines. Though the productivity of German soil and livestock had fallen by half and her people were starving, she was even compelled to hand over to the victors 140,000 of her milch cows.

In a note of May 13th, Count Brockdorff-Rantzau pointed out that the Treaty would make it impossible for Germany to import sufficient raw material from abroad to employ the fifteen million of her people who were dependent on foreign trade. "We do not know, and indeed we doubt whether the delegates of the Allied and Associated Powers realise the inevitable consequences which will take place if Germany, an industrial state, very thickly populated, closely bound up with the economic system of the world, and under the necessity of importing enormous quantities of raw material and food-stuffs suddenly finds herself pushed back to the phase of her development which corresponds to her economic condition and the numbers of her population as they were half a century ago. Those who sign this Treaty will sign the death sentence of millions of German men, women and children." (J. M. Keynes, Economic Consequences of the Peace, p. 215).

Having wrung the neck of the goose, the Allies endeavoured to obtain a regular supply of golden eggs. After the Franco-Prussian war, the French had been made to pay an indemnity of two hundred million pounds. The Great War having caused infinitely more destruction, it was felt that astronomical figures could alone measure the counter-indebtedness of Germany. It was all natural enough. France had her grisly stretches of devastated areas — of treeless, blackened countryside and shattered towns — to lend support to her claims. Britain, having lavished the accumulated treasures of generations, had now to meet a staggering bill for pensions to the bereaved and disabled. Income tax, which before the war stood at little more than a shilling in the pound, had risen to six shillings. America was owed billions by the half-ruined Allies for war material supplied to them in their hour of need. The Germans, it was supposed, could make all this good. "Search their pockets" was the popular cry of the hour.

To this end the British and French pre-Armistice rider that the evacuation of occupied territory should include compensation for damage to non-combatants and their property was stretched to include almost every kind of loss. At Lloyd George's request it was even made to cover war pensions and separation allowances. The most fantastic sums were named, not only by politicians and journalists, but by bankers and financial experts. Hatred and war propaganda had temporarily deprived the wisest of their senses. The Committee of the Imperial War Cabinet, after listening to evidence from the Governor of the Bank of England, reckoned that Germany could pay £20,000 millions, or well over a hundred times the 1871 indemnity. This, though described as ''a business man's estimate'', was tantamount to payment of over £4 300 by every living German man, woman and child, most of whom were already penniless and starving. The French brought in a bill for £3000 millions for reconstructing the devastated areas — a sum well in excess of the valuation of the entire house property of France! And though America asked for no reparations for herself, she showed no signs of any intention to forgo payment of the £1160 millions owed her by her associates. An economist's suggestion for cancelling Inter-Allied debts met with a very cold reception.

In all this, of course, the victors greatly overreached themselves. They wanted the moon, and the moon was not there. It — the astronomical sum they needed to make good their losses — had been blown sky-high in four years of the mutual suicide which is dignified by the name of war. A Committee of Treasury officials ascertained that the maximum sum that there was any reasonable chance of obtaining was £2,000 millions spread over thirty years. As this was incompatible with what had been promised the democracies by their leaders, the exact extent of reparations was left a little vague. A Reparation

Commission was set up with powers to make Germany pay whatever it should resolve proper. "The Commission", it was stated, "shall not be bound by any particular code or rules of law or by any particular rule of evidence or of procedure, but shall be guided by justice, equity and good faith… The measures which the Allied and Associated Powers shall have the right to make, in case of voluntary default by Germany, and which Germany agrees not to regard as acts of war, may include economic and financial prohibitions and reprisals and in general such other measures as the respective Governments may determine to be necessary in the circumstances."

These terms were accompanied by moral humiliations hard for a proud people to bear. The control of the chief German rivers was handed over to Commissions on which foreigners were in a majority. On land, sea and air Germany was to remain permanently disarmed. She was forbidden to possess a first-class battleship, a submarine, a tank, a military aeroplane, even an anti-aircraft gun. Had her enforced, and under the circumstances justifiable, disarmament been accompanied by that of her neighbours, as indicated in the Fourteen Points, the peacemakers of Versailles would have been remembered among the greatest benefactors of mankind. Instead, she was left helpless in a ring of heavily armed States. A country whose popular tradition of security had depended as much on her army as Britain's on her navy was only permitted an army smaller than that of Belgium. On her eastern and southern frontiers two new military powers arose in close alliance with France, disposing of large air forces operating within an hour's bombing range of her capital.

To complete her impotence, Germany was forbidden for all time to erect fortifications or maintain garrisons along her Rhineland frontier. Her western industrial cities were thus to remain permanently at the mercy of France. All this is only too intelligible when one recalls the pre-war might of the German military machine and the nightmare threat to the peace of mankind which it had constituted in the hands of German statesmen. Yet the exaggerated degree with which these precautionary measures were pressed and the victors' lack of moderation taught Germans anew the fatal lesson that only by military strength could they hope to be anything but miserable and helpless.

To secure payment of this an Allied Army was to continue in occupation of all Germany west of the Rhine and its bridgeheads for the next fifteen years. Should the guarantees against future aggression be then thought insufficient or the Reparations Commission remain unsatisfied, the occupation could be prolonged. If, however, the conditions of the Treaty were faithfully carried out, the Cologne district might be evacuated after five years and that of Coblenz after ten.

As a crowning humiliation, Germany was to sign an admission of her own guilt for the war. Her ex-Emperor was to be extradited from Holland and tried by his own accusers "for a supreme offence against international morality and the sanctity of Treaties". Her leading men, including most of her princes, all her army commanders and her chief national hero, Hindenburg, were to be punished as "war criminals". Had the Allies been defeated, presumably the members of the British Royal Family, Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Haig, Lord Jellicoe, Lord Beatty, Sir Roger Keyes, Lord Allenby, Lord Plumer and Colonel Lawrence would have been similarly branded! The absurdity of this clause was so great that it was never pressed home and was finally tacitly abandoned.

No concession was allowed over the war-guilt clause in the Treaty, which enabled the victors to justify Germany's outlawry from the comity of nations and deny her the protection of their new system of international law. This she was to sign on pain of a further spell of starvation. It has been contended that this clause was a mere technical verdict of "guilty" in order to legalise the exaction of reparations. But the Allied reply at the time to the German delegates, who, being restricted to written communications only, were not allowed to argue it with them, left the matter in little doubt.

Thus the principles contained in the Fourteen Points which had been promised to the Germans before their surrender were forgotten as and when they conflicted with the fears and needs of the hour… Mr. Harold Nicolson gave it as his considered opinion that of the twenty three conditions laid down in President Wilson's Fourteen Points and subsequent Addresses, only four could with any accuracy be said to have been incorporated in the treaties. That is why those who dictated the latter have always been on such dangerous ground in pleading moral right to maintain them in their integrity.

Germany, whatever her share of original guilt, had undoubtedly precipitated the war, and she had lost it. It was right that she should make such reparation as was possible — adequate reparation for the destruction of four years of war there could be none — and in the nature of things that she should be penalised by the victors. Yet as civilisation advances men are supposed to grow more humane towards each other, and the war had been won by nations with a long and noble tradition of humanity and culture. Their representatives at Versailles cannot be said to have displayed much of these virtues. Compared with their predecessors of a century before, they were tragically deficient in them. They forgot that nations cannot be judged and punished as individuals without inflicting untold suffering on the innocent. It was not German militarism — an abstraction — which suffered as a result of the righteous indignation of the peacemakers but the German people — sixty-five million men, women and children, few of whom had any part in the crimes that precipitated the war. They had already, like the peoples of other war-shattered lands, suffered enough without its being necessary for statesmen to punish them further.

There remained the task of coercing Germany into a signature. The delegates into whose hands the Treaty had been thrust at the Trianon Palace Hotel, Socialists and pacifists as many of them were, showed little disposition to accede to what they persisted in regarding as a breach of faith. "The German delegation", Brockdorff-Rantzau replied to Clemenceau on May 24th, "is unwilling to interpret your Excellency's remarks by the supposition that a pledged word given at that time by the Allied and Associated Powers meant no more than a strategic feint to weaken the German people's resistance, and that such a pledge is now to be withdrawn." In their counter proposals they offered to accept the clauses imposing disarmament on land, sea and air, and even go beyond them. But they demanded in return the right of admission to the League of Nations — "a genuine League of all the powers and one that shall include every people of goodwill, even the enemy today. This League must be inspired by a sense of responsibility towards mankind and must dispose of a force of sufficient strength to give protection to the frontiers of its members."…

Instead of the penal clauses she asked for a neutral commission of inquiry into the causes of the war. In their hour of adversity the vanquished were wiser than the victors in their triumph. Twenty years later the wheel of history has come full-circle and the position has been once more ironically and tragically reversed.

The Supreme Council of the Allies did not allow the text of these proposals

to be published. They were dismissed in the Press of the democracies as "impudence". The only reply made to them was an ultimatum with a five-days limit… Protest was useless. When the German delegates, refusing to sign themselves, carried the Allies' terms back to Germany, they were pelted in the streets of Versailles. The Republican Government resigned, sooner than accept the responsibility of endorsing its country's ruin. The National Assembly met at Weimar on June 22nd. But, though a month earlier its members had protested against the Treaty with only a single dissentient vote, they no longer dared face the consequences of refusal. To have done so would have meant a renewal of war and the disruption of their country. By 237 votes against 138 they agreed to sign the Treaty as a bitter necessity…

On June 28th the Treaty was signed in the Galerie des Glaces at Versailles, where, half a century before, the unity of Germany had been proclaimed in her own hour of transient victory and brutal triumph.

To this instrument, on which the future peace of mankind was staked, British statesmen put their hands. In doing so they unconsciously broke faith with the historical tradition of their country. They flouted the first principle of English justice by sentencing a wrongdoer unheard. They tarnished her ancient chivalry by making the weak and helpless suffer for the sins of the strong. They denied the honour which she had always paid to a brave enemy. For centuries it had been part of an Englishman's fighting code that, when he had beaten his foe, he neither feared him nor bore him malice but let him rise and offered his hand.

"England's duty", Castlereagh had written a century before, "is not to collect trophies but to bring Europe back to peaceful habits." For this all the accessions of African marsh, forest and mountain now collected were a poor exchange. For four years millions of simple Englishmen had made the honour of their country shine as brightly as at any moment in her splendid past. Now in as many months, in a Paris given over to cynical and dissolute pleasure seeking, others who had not known the sacrifice of the trenches failed both the heroic dead and the unborn future…

The British people received the Treaty without reading it. They had reverted to their traditional policy and for the moment had forgotten Europe…

Germany was not the only country to be crushed and humiliated as a preliminary to restoring peace in Europe. Her ill-advised allies, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey, had also to be punished. The multi-racial Austrian Empire had broken up before the peacemakers assembled in Paris. In the last despairing days of the war, Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Croats, Poles and Ruthenians had declared their independence of starving, ruined Vienna. A formless void in the centre of Europe had remained to be filled up. The grave of the dead past had to be dug and the earth stamped down…

In the end, for all the mountain of material gathered together by the Commissions and their busy, self-important experts, the questions at stake had to be settled by "the Big People in a hurry ". The elaborate schemes drawn up for them were cursorily examined and inadequately collated. Time was pressing, patience wearing thin and the flames of Bolshevism gaining on Europe from the east. A peace of some sort had to be made; even a bad settlement was better than none.

So a tiny group of tired political potentates issued their ukase. They wielded powers greater than those of any absolute monarch and against which there was no appeal. They were "able to decree the destruction of old and the creation of new States, to determine the fate of ancient dynasties, to convert at will monarchists into republicans and republicans into monarchists — in fact to do almost everything except change men into women and women into men." (Harbutt Dawson, Germany under the Treaty, p. 23.)

By the Treaty of St. Germain, which followed Versailles, the size of Austria was reduced to a fraction of its former self. Even of her purely German population she lost a third. The proud empire of the Hapsburgs became a poverty-stricken republic, and the last emperor died as a pauper in Madeira.

Austria's sister kingdom of Hungary fared almost as badly. By the Treaty of Trianon she lost Slovakia and the Carpathians to the newly formed Czechoslovakian republic, Croatia to Jugoslavia and Transylvania to Romania. Of her own nine million Magyars, a third passed under alien rule. Her most ancient and historical towns were taken from her and their names changed…

The youthful states of central and south-eastern Europe succeeded to the remains of the broken kingdoms of the past… The most revolutionary, and as the event was to show, perilous, changes of all took place in the north — in the lands running along the backbone of central Europe between the Erzgebirge and Böhmer Wald and the eastern Carpathians. Here a new composite State was created out of an artificial union between the Czechs of Bohemia and Moravia, the Slovaks of northern Hungary, and the Ruthenians of Galicia.

This unexpected and at first somewhat chaotic State had been recognised with shrewd satisfaction by Clemenceau. In it he saw a means of barring Germany from future expansion towards the rich lands of the east and south-east, and an invaluable military ally to France situated within a stone's throw — or a bomber's flight — of her enemy's heart. So long as Germany remained disarmed and the French Army could march across an unmilitarised Rhineland to its support, Czechoslovakia would be one of the chief military factors in Europe. It was also, in the form it took, to constitute one of the principal incentives to a war of revenge.

To strengthen its fighting power and ensure it the strategic protection of the ancient mountain frontiers of Bohemia, three and a half million Germans, former citizens of Austria, were incorporated in the new State, without regard either to their feelings or the principles expressed in the Fourteen Points. Their desire to join their fellow-Teutons in a 'western Austria' and, when this was denied them, in the German Republic, was sternly forbidden. The Teuton mountain fringe, they were told, could not be separated from the Czech plain. Their appeal to President Wilson for the right of self-determination was ignored. When they subsequently tried to take it for themselves, they were treated by the Czechs as rebellious citizens and placed under martial law. Appeals to a disarmed and impotent Germany were useless. In May 1919 the German Government was forced to beg the unfortunate Sudetens not to persist in a course which compromised its already hopeless position at the Peace Conference…

The truth is that the old Austrian Empire may have been a political monstrosity, but it was also, as a wise old journalist has pointed out, an economic masterpiece. For centuries it had provided an everyday working basis of life for millions of diverse races living in so many intermixed geographical pocket holes that there was no sorting them out without doing injustice and injury to somebody. For them, in terms of daily bread, economic union was more important than political self-determination. And as the old Austrian Empire had proved, it was easier obtain.

"The disruption of Austria-Hungary", wrote the last Hapsburg Emperor before his death, "from every point of view — geographical, ethnographical, economic,

social and cultural — has been a terrible blunder… The interdependence of the Danubian countries and the impossibility of organising them on strict national lines, made Austria-Hungary for centuries a European necessity. The ancient community has now gone and there is nothing to take its place. Such is the penalty for ignoring the influence which a great river system must inevitably exercise in the formation of States. The great fabric of finance and trade has been built up by the labour of years, in a complicated design into which the railways, canals, the telegraphs, the roads were fitted; and in which there was a careful adjustment between the manufacturing areas and the districts which produced raw materials. This fabric, so colossal and yet so delicate, has been roughly torn down for the sake of a theory — a hypothesis — and in its place are ruin and desolation."

The misery of Austria provided one of the most terrible spectacles of post-war Europe. Every visitor to Vienna brought back a tale of ruin and starvation, the more pitiable because its victims had been among the most highly cultured, kindly and charming people in the world. They were now reduced to a state of the most sordid and tragic want. For her wretched people the only future seemed to be to unite with their fellow Germans in the north who had achieved their union forty-eight years before. Just as the war of 1870 had helped to bring about that earlier amalgamation of the Teutonic States, so the companionship of the trenches between 1914 and 1918 had fostered hopes of a more complete one. The self-determination achieved by the other racial groups of the former Austrian Empire now seemed to make such a process inevitable. The first Step of the Austrian Socialist Government set up after the fall of the Hapsburgs was to declare itself a constituent part of the German Republic. The Allies refused to accept the act, and subsequently forbade the fusion of the two German States by the Treaty of Trianon. Even an economic Anschluss was interdicted except by the unanimous — and therefore unobtainable — leave of the League Assembly.

There was nothing left for Austrians but to starve. They were still doing so two years after the Armistice when a fund was opened in England to mitigate the misery in the famine areas of central Europe…

The Treaties… had completed the work of the war that preceded, and had destroyed the unity of Christendom. To a German Socialist, present at Versailles, the spirit of the Peace was symbolised in the old agnostic Clemenceau, uncomprehending and unforgiving — the authentic mouthpiece of the fear and hatred war had engendered. The consequences would be eternal and incalculable. Decade after decade would still bring no peace among the peoples. French hatred of Germany would engender German hatred of the French, hatred which till now had never been acute or real. And then, one day in the more or less distant future . . . an ultimate consequence would unloose this hate above our heads, nation would rise against nation, men — young men — would be sent to perish, houses would flame, factories be shot to ruin…

Arthur Bryant

Book Review by Paul Hyde.

Broken Archangel: The Tempestuous Lives of Roger Casement, by Roland Philipps

Roland Philipps' Casement biography blindfolds readers by suppressing vital evidence.

The front cover of Broken Archangel bears a photo of Casement with the original perspective manipulated to suggest a disturbed, fractured personality. Thus with his judgment of Casement posted on the front cover, Philipps effectively announces his lack of impartiality, his loyalty to the dishonest Inglis template and unwittingly reveals his motive for writing what turns out to be a nothing-new biography.

On the opening page, anxious to appear 'up-front', Philipps announces that when Casement went to Africa at age 20 he was unaware of being homosexual and confirms no-one else knew for the following thirty years. Philipps does not explain how he can know this when he admits Casement did not know. Better than mind reading or artificial intelligence – this is divine intelligence. Likewise when Philipps on page 281 and in a podcast overhears a private conversation between Casement and Dick Morten in the prison cell.

Philipps describes his study as "a modern look" at Casement but his portrait is identical in all respects to that invented by Inglis over fifty years ago. His Casement is a lonely misfit, emotionally unstable and impulsive, tortured by forbidden instincts, a damaged darer and idealist, lifelong victim of a dysfunctional childhood and subject to paranoia and depression.

Broken Archangel, acclaimed for the depth and accuracy of its research, compels readers to ask how the author got so much wrong. For example, on page 54 he states that Castlereagh was Prime Minister: in a podcast he asserts Pearse visited Casement in Germany: on page 127 he describes Eoin MacNeill as an archeologist and Chairman of the IRB. All these are false. He also claims absurdly that Casement planned to invade Ireland with the Irish Brigade and gives recruit numbers varying from fifteen to sixty. On page 306 he refers to a 'conclusive scientific analysis' but fails to name the Giles Report while his podcasts give the wrong date. He misnames John Quinn of New York as Joseph and alleges that Casement "never made friends" which is utterly false. He wrongly reports that Casement converted to Catholicism when he was reconciled to the church. Repeating these falsehoods in promotional podcasts indicates that his final draft was not impartially assessed by an expert before publication as is standard practice.

But in addition to factual blunders due to Philipps' shaky grasp of events, there are many serious falsehoods which illustrate how little he can be trusted. Falsehoods emerge when Philipps tackles the provenance of the trunks and diaries. With good reason, he refuses the official date of 25th April and the official version of luggage spontaneously delivered to Scotland Yard by a former landlord. In his Irish Examiner podcast Philipps claims that during the first interrogation on 23rd April a constable announced that the police had found the trunks in his former lodgings. According

to Philipps, Casement said there was nothing in the trunks "just a few diaries and things." He suggests that Casement had forgotten the scandalous contents or considered them unimportant.

Once again Philipps refers only to the 1903 diary whereas the police record states a notebook, three diaries and a cash ledger and moreover that record states the trunks were not found by the police in his former lodgings but were delivered to Scotland Yard on 25th April by a former landlord. The comment "just a few diaries and things" does not appear in the interrogation transcript because it is entirely Philipps' invention. Then in his RTE podcast and on pages 215 and 260 Philipps unambiguously repudiates this account by confirming what many others believe that the trunks were found and opened in December1914, not in 1916. But with this version there are major problems which Philipps cannot solve and which he wisely ignores. For example, he cannot explain why the police records are false nor can he explain why for over a year the police covered up their alleged discovery of the obscene diaries rather than exploit them at once.

When dealing with Casement's brief stay in Oslo, Philipps loses control and resorts to chicanery. Foreign Office documents relating to Casement in Oslo and the period following consist of extensive correspondence between Findlay and Nicolson in Whitehall. These letters which Philipps has read in The National Archives (cited as his sources FO 133/107, 337/107, KV 2/6) make very clear that no betrayal by Christensen happened and that Findlay was duped into issuing the bribe. Faithful to Inglis' duplicity because he has no choice, Philipps nonetheless makes a mess of it.

In a podcast he describes 42 year-old First Secretary Lindley, the Minister's right-hand man and soon to be ambassador, as a clerk, a junior official who sent a telegram to Whitehall with the first scandal allegation when in fact Lindley's four-page handwritten memo was sent by diplomatic bag. Philipps' RTE podcast falsely claims Lindley offered money to Christensen while on page 161 he cites from Lindley's memo that no money was sought or offered. He alleges that the FO reprimanded Findlay for offering a bribe of £5,000. False again – the FO documents show that Whitehall had authorized the bribe assuming Findlay would not be so dumb as to write it on legation notepaper for Christensen. When Casement publicized the bribe, Findlay was severely castigated for being duped all along.

Philipps often alleges Casement's parents were alcoholics citing his mother's death certificate reference to cirrhosis of the liver. He supports this slur by another slur suggesting her illegitimacy. Alcohol is only one of many causes of cirrhosis; others include hepatitis, diabetes, certain genetic conditions, fatty liver disease, obesity and cystic fibrosis. Philipps favours alcoholism in order to insinuate the family was dysfunctional which he says contributed to Casement's alleged emotional instability.

There is much that is missing in Philipps' narrative; there is no mention of US journalist Ben Allen's viewing of the mysterious rolled manuscript nor is journalist Singleton-Gates mentioned despite him receiving the typescripts from Thomson. Casement's genuine 1910 manuscript The Amazon Journal is ignored though listed in the bibliography. Nothing is said of Sullivan's detestation of Casement.

There are 326 pages of narrative, many thousands of words but one crucial word is missing. That crucial word appears in other Casement studies and it features in the Home Office files of the late1950s. It is a core word in Anatomy of a Lie. That Philipps avoids this word is of maximum significance since its total absence destroys any credibility in his book. The word is 'typescript'. Philipps simply ignores the existence of the police typescripts which were shown in 1916. This is effectively a denial of their existence and of the vital role they played in the defamatory campaign.

It is important to understand why Philipps avoids the typescripts. His suppression of the material fact of the typescripts is intentional; it opens the way for strategic deceit aimed at opposing the powerful evidence in Anatomy of a Lie by reasserting the alleged existence of the manuscript diaries in 1916. But what Philipps thought would pass unnoticed is here exposed as a fatal error. Here are some of the crucial lies he smuggled into his narrative after suppressing the typescripts:

1 – On page 281 he claims Sullivan was given the diaries but refused to read them. This is false. Sergeant Sullivan was given the police typescripts as verified by his junior Artemus Jones who did read them.

2 – On page 309 he claims the Reverend John Harris was shown photographs of diary extracts but this is false. HO 144/1636…3A confirms Harris was shown the typescripts by instruction of the Home Secretary.

3 – On page 280 Philipps asserts that 'Smith offered to enter the diaries into evidence.' This too is false. Attorney General Smith offered the police typescripts again as verified by Jones.

4 – On page 307 Philipps says the diaries were examined by two psychiatrists and this is untrue. They examined the 1911 typescript and ledger. This is confirmed by PRO HO 144/1636/311643/40 where Doctors Smith and Craig report "We have read and considered the copies of the diary dated 1st January to 31st December 1911 …" (emphasis added.)

5 – On page 311 Philipps claims Thomson showed 'the diary' to the US Ambassador and his source is Thomson's letter to Blackwell who described the diary as '…many pages of closely typed matter…'. Philipps does not tell his readers that the Ambassador was given two photographs of extracts from the 1911 typescript as verified by HO 144/23481.

6 – On page 279 Philipps asserts that photographs of pages torn from the 1903 diary were shown to journalists by Captain Hall. No other Casement author has ever made this claim and Philipps gives no source. Neither Philipps nor anyone else has ever reported seeing these photos; nonetheless Philipps is miraculously able to cite from the unseen photos which he claims report erotic encounters similar to those on the extant diary pages. If Philipps had a source for this claim, he would have cited it. He had no source and therefore his claim is a lie.

Several factors provide strong evidence that Broken Archangel was intended as a response to Anatomy of a Lie. While the falsehoods and deceit were necessary, the factual errors, incoherence and confusion might be explained by his use of artificial intelligence which is notoriously unreliable since it garbles information indiscriminately from diverse sources. But the very scant treatment of the diaries controversy and the total suppression of the police typescripts indicates that Philipps recognized the rigorous treatment in Anatomy of a Lie could not be challenged.

Moreover, it is a fact that each time authenticity was challenged in the past defensive action was taken. Soon after Maloney's 1936 book the Bigger plot threatened rumours of more diaries. MacColl's hostile study pre-empted Noyes' 1957 Justice for Casement and on its publication, The Sunday Times conjured from nowhere the

forged confessional poem The Nameless One – attributed to Casement. Mitchell's 1997 Amazon Journal with its forgery argument was simultaneously countered by Sawyer's Roger Casement's Diaries. And twelve months after reissue of Anatomy of a Lie, this nothing-new biography appeared.

There is no new information in Philipps' study, no new perception and nothing that was not already contained in the 1973 Inglis biography. It is fair to ask why it was commissioned and why it has received such intensive, costly promotion and saturation marketing. Every newspaper of repute in the UK and Ireland has reviewed it positively and there are at least six podcasts. It was launched at The Casement Summer School and promoted at the Irish Cultural Centre in London.

That it appeared exactly one year after the reissue of Anatomy of a Lie looks like cause and effect. Might that explain why Philipps claims somewhat improbably that he has never heard of the highly controversial Anatomy of a Lie? Is it probable that no-one in London or Dublin publishing mentioned it to him? Could it be that he never saw any of the Village articles?

Philipps ignored the evidence and arguments in Anatomy of a Lie and therefore had to rely on the fabricated portrait of the disturbed, unstable, impulsive homosexual, a portrait that would, however, perform as evidence of authenticity since only a fractured personality would write the diaries.

Despite the avalanche of publicity, Broken Archangel is profoundly cynical, evasive and deceitful. Abysmally researched, written in bad faith and burdened with false data, errors and demonstrable lies, it abuses the trust of uninformed readers. That the media has acclaimed this fraudulent book is a servile act of self-abasement.

Paul R Hyde, July 2025

Books available from http://www.atholbooks.org

The Great Fraud Of 1914-18

By Pat Walsh

Athol Books 2014

The Great War of 1914 was Britain's Great War. But it should also be called Britain's Great Fraud on Ireland and the world. When Britain encouraged and then entered the European war that was taking shape in August 1914 it made it into a Great War. It was Great Britain that put the Great in the Great War. That is to say that without Great Britain's participation in it there would have been no Great War. In entering the European war Britain stated its aims in grand universal terms that were idealistic in the extreme. These aims were not only idealistic and unachievable but they were fraudulent.

The objective of the Great Fraud was to show to the world that Britain was fighting a good war against an evil that had to be vanquished. The war was proclaimed as being for "civilisation against the Barbarian", for "democracy" against "Prussianism". And it was also supposedly a "war for small nations" for "poor little Belgium" or for "gallant Servia" and for a host of other long forgotten things.

But what it came down to was a pulverising of Germany and the taking of its trade and markets in what was a traditional Balance of Power war catastrophically invested with a great moral mission. The Fraud that was perpetrated on Ireland and the world, concerning the character of the war Britain proclaimed itself to be fighting, was produced in order to convince any doubters, at home and abroad, about the rightfulness of it.

Lord Hankey: How We Planned The Great War

By Pat Walsh

Atholbooks 2015

Lord Maurice Hankey gave unparalleled service to the State he served over more than three decades. He was much more than just an Imperial Senior Civil Servant. It would be no exaggeration to say that he kept the British State together over a generation. The Supreme Command (1961) by Hankey, though largely ignored today, is the most complete inside description of Britain's Great War on Germany. It contains details of the planning for that war by the person who oversaw it, coordinated it and put it into operation from August 1914.

Ireland's Great War On Turkey, 1914 - 24

Pat Walsh
Athol Books 2009

Ireland's Great War on Turkey is largely a forgotten event in Irish history. That is despite the fact that it was probably the most significant thing Ireland ever did in the world. That war lasted from 1914 until 1924, when the Irish Free State ratified the Treaty of Lausanne and finally, along with the rest of the British Empire, made peace with the Turks. It made the Middle East (including Palestine and Iraq) what it is today, and had the catastrophic effects on the Moslem world that persist to the present.

Ireland's part in the Great War on Turkey was an embarrassment to Republican Ireland and its historians and the details of the War became forgotten. The more recent historians of a revisionist disposition and the Remembrance commemorators have also refrained from remembering it, for other reasons.

This book, the first history of Ireland's War on Turkey, explains why the British Empire really made war on the Ottoman Empire and why Irishmen found themselves part of the invasion force it sent to Gallipoli. It describes the forgotten political and military assault launched on neutral Greece and the devastating effect this ultimately had on the Greek people across the Balkans and Asia Minor. It explains the reasons for the establishment of Palestine and Iraq and why the United States was repelled from the League of Nations by the behaviour of the British Empire in the conquered Ottoman territories after the War.

It concludes on a positive note, describing the great achievement of Ataturk in leading the Turkish nation to independence from the Imperialist Powers. This was an event that Republican Ireland could only marvel at, from the confines of the Treaty and the British Empire—an Empire whose demise Ataturk set in motion through the successful Turkish War of Independence.

When a Death in Brixton United the Irish and Chinese Revolutions

On Sunday 26 October this year 2025, the Irish community in London, together with friends, gathered outside Brixton Prison for the annual Terence MacSwiney Commemoration. This year's gathering marked 105 years since the death of the Lord Mayor of Cork, after 74 days on hunger-strike, and was once again organised by the Terence MacSwiney Committee [London].

Committee Chair Frank Glynn welcomed the approximately 60 people gathered outside the south London prison. The day's keynote speaker was Thomas Gould, Sinn Féin TD (member of the Irish parliament) for Cork North-Central, who delivered a powerful address that appealed to the solidarity and internationalism of those living in London to support the campaign to build a new and united Ireland.

Drawing inspiration from the example of Terence MacSwiney, Gould extended solidarity to the suffering people of Palestine amidst the ongoing occupation of their land and Israel's genocidal war. He appealed for class unity at this time, noting that the establishment and those in power are desperately seeking to turn poor people against one another. He equally paid tribute to those Irishmen and women who were forced to leave their country over the past decades, assuring them that their sacrifice is not forgotten back home.

The commemoration also heard from Pat Reynolds of the Irish in Britain Representation Group (IBRG); Pam Blakelock, who spoke about her husband's descendance from Muriel MacSwiney (Terence MacSwiney's widow); and the Palestinian activist, Samar Maquishi, who spoke about the unwavering support of the Irish people for the cause of Palestine. As Samar observed, "Even if the whole world was quiet, the Irish won't be silenced!"

Longstanding London-based Irish republican Denis Grace read the Proclamation of Easter Week 1916 on behalf of the Commemoration Committee. Music was provided by the stalwart London-Irish balladeer Seán Brady and Achill Island's own Tom Lynch on the Uilleann Pipes. Special mention was also made of the election of Catherine Connolly as the next President of Ireland. There was overwhelming support expressed for Ms Connolly, whose campaign was supported by a broad range of left-wing and progressive forces in Ireland, particularly as a candidate who placed voting rights for Irish citizens outside of the twenty-six-county state and the ongoing struggle for Irish reunification at the centre of her election platform.

(The above is an edited version of the press statement issued by the Terence MacSwiney Committee [London].)

McSwiney's 1920 death on hunger strike, during the 1919-1921 Irish war of independence, had a profound international impact, including on such leaders of the Indian freedom movement as Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi. A young Ho Chi Minh, who was working in London at the time, was profoundly moved, saying: "He died for his country. How courageous! How heroic ! A nation which has such citizens will never surrender."

But whilst Ho Chi Minh could see for himself the very public outpouring of grief on the part of London's Irish community, another young progressive, who was later to become an important Asian communist leader, was following the news from Japan, where he was studying at the time.

That student was Guo Moruo, who was to become a senior leader of the People's Republic of China and a close comrade of Mao Zedong. He served as Chairman of both the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles from their inception after liberation in 1949 to his death in 1978.

In a 2020 article written for Raidió Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ, the Irish broadcasting service), Francis Kane, a lecturer at Ulster University, explains:

"In 1920, China was in chaos, a divided country dominated by foreigners and warlords, its ancient empire having finally collapsed in 1911. In his idealistic youth, the poet Guo Moruo cannot have known that one day he would become a man of enormous power and prestige… He died not long after his comrade and friend Chairman Mao, whom he praised relentlessly."

Kane writes that Guo penned "an astonishing poem, an emotional 'in real time' commemoration of fellow writer MacSwiney in 1920, usually translated as 'Victorious in Death'."

He also commemorates IRA Volunteer Michael Fitzgerald, whose death in Cork Gaol on October 17, 1920, came after 67 days on hunger strike.

"In the middle of the poem, Guo compares MacSwiney and Fitzgerald to the legendary hunger protesters of ancient Chinese heritage, Bo Yi and Shu Qi:

Terence MacSwiney, Irish patriot!

Today is the 22nd of October! (Never has the calendar on the wall so fixed my attention!)

Are you still alive, locked in your prison cell?

Came a cable of the 17th from London: It was sixty-six days since your fast began, and yet you bear yourself as well as ever.

You talked for a while with your dear ones on the afternoon of the 17th, and your face was even more radiant than before.

Your strength was fading daily… and today is the 22nd of October.

Irish patriot, Terence MacSwiney! Can you still be counted among living creatures?

A cable of the 17th from your native Cork told that a Sinn Feiner, a comrade of yours, Fitzgerald, fasted for sixty-eight days in Cork City Gaol, and suddenly died at sundown on the 17th.

Cruel deaths there are in history, but few so tragic.

The Shouyang Mountain of Ireland! The Po-yi and Shu-chi of Ireland!

The next cable I dread to read…

Francis Kane comments: "Who were the Chinese brothers in Guo's poem? Bo Yi and Shu Qi lived at the time of the transition from the Shang dynasty to the Zhou, at the very beginning of Chinese recorded history (over 3,000 years ago). War against the Shang by the Zhou king, Zhou Wen Wang, was morally unacceptable to them and they refused to eat, dying on the Shouyang Mountain (首阳山, in Shanxi). They are commemorated in Chinese literary culture for their personal and moral virtue, loyalty, and pacifist idealism, occupying a longstanding cultural position as exemplars of high moral principles and integrity. For Guo to compare MacSwiney and Fitzgerald with Bo Yi and Shu Qi is praise of an interculturally profound order."

Guo's poem ends:

The mighty ocean is sobbing its sad lament, the boundless abyss of the sky is red with weeping, far, far away the sun has sunk in the west.

Brave, tragic death! Death in a blaze of glory! Triumphant death!

Victorious death! Impartial God of Death! I am grateful to you!

You have saved MacSwiney, for whom my love and reverence know no bounds!

MacSwiney, fighter for freedom,
you have shown how great can be the
power of the human will!
I am grateful to you!
I extol you!
Freedom can henceforth never die!
The night has closed down on us, but
how bright is the moon…

It is hard to over-estimate or over-state Guo Moruo's contribution to the cultural and intellectual life of 20th century China. He was a poet, a playwright, a historian, an archaeologist, and a cultural standard-bearer in the political arena.

His collection of poems, 'The Goddesses', of which 'Victorious in Death' forms a part, is considered the greatest produced by the intellectual ferment occasioned by the anti-imperialist May 4th Movement of 1919, in terms of both form and content.

The Chinese website iNews outlined the importance of his study of oracle bones to the understanding of early Chinese history:

"In addition to his halo as a poet, among Guo Moruo's many academic contributions, oracle bone research is undoubtedly the most glorious page in his academic career.

"In 1899, Wang Yirong, a scholar in the Qing Dynasty, accidentally discovered strange symbols engraved on these tortoise shells and animal bones when he was purchasing 'dragon bones' for use as medicine.

"Later, scholars such as Luo Zhenyu and Wang Guowei sorted out and confirmed that these symbols were divination records from the Shang Dynasty. This is one of the most important archaeological discoveries in Chinese history – the Yinxu oracle bone inscriptions.

"However, in the first few decades after the discovery of oracle bone inscriptions, research mainly focused on the interpretation of the characters. Scholars regarded them as a unique ancient script but paid less attention to the historical information they carried.

"In other words, oracle bone inscriptions were regarded as objects of 'philology' rather than materials of 'history'.

"This has caused the study of oracle bone inscriptions to remain at the level of examining individual glyphs and comparing the evolution of Chinese characters for a long time, without truly realising its value in historical research.

"The emergence of Guo Moruo completely changed this situation.

"His greatest breakthrough was that he did not simply study oracle bone inscriptions as a kind of 'ancient characters', but rather regarded them as a door to the history of the Shang Dynasty.

"He believed that oracle bone inscriptions are not just writing symbols, but also record the politics, military, economy, religion and even daily life of the Shang Dynasty society.

"He successfully sorted out the lineage of the Shang Dynasty kings through information such as the names of kings in oracle bone inscriptions, the ancestral sacrificial system, and divination records, and proved that the lineage of the Shang kings recorded in 'Records of the Grand Historian: The Basic Annals of Yin' was basically reliable.

"For example, he discovered that the 'Wu Ding' mentioned repeatedly in the oracle bone inscriptions was exactly the king who revived the Shang Dynasty recorded in 'Records of the Grand Historian'.

"This discovery made the history of the Shang Dynasty move from myth to reliable history and truly established the Shang Dynasty's status as a historical dynasty.

"Based on his research on oracle bone inscriptions, Guo Moruo further expanded it to the entire ancient Chinese writing system.

"He studied the evolutionary relationship between oracle bone inscriptions and bronze inscriptions and proposed that Chinese characters are a systematic writing system that gradually evolved from oracle bone inscriptions and bronze inscriptions, rather than symbols created out of thin air.

"His research results were widely cited by later philologists and became the foundation of ancient philology."

He was also known for his exchanges of poems with Mao Zedong, in which the two men made allegorical analysis of international events and in so doing coined phrases that entered widely into the revolutionary lexicon.

In a 1963 exchange, Guo wrote to Mao at a time of upheaval in the international communist movement:

When the seas are in turmoil
Heroes are on their mettle.
Six hundred million people,
Strong in unity,
Firm in principle,
Can shore up the falling heavens
And create order out of the reign of chaos.
The world hears the cock crowing
And day breaks in the east.
The sun rises,
The icebergs melt.
Gold is not pinchbeck
And can stand the proof of flames.
Four great volumes
Show us the way.
How absurd for Chieh's dog to bark at Yao;
The clay oxen plunge into the sea and vanish.
The red flag of revolution is unfurling in the east wind,
The universe is glowing red.

The Chairman replied:

On this tiny globe
A few flies dash themselves against the wall,
Humming without cease,
Sometimes shrilling,
Sometimes moaning.
Ants on the locust tree assume a great-nation swagger
And mayflies lightly plot to topple the giant tree.
The west wind scatters leaves over Changan,
And the arrows are flying, twanging.
So many deeds cry out to be done,
And always urgently;
The world rolls on,
Time presses.
Ten thousand years are too long,
Seize the day, seize the hour!
The Four Seas are rising, clouds and waters raging,
The Five Continents are rocking, wind and thunder roaring.
Our force is irresistible,
Away with all pests!

Beijing's Foreign Languages Press published his 'Selected Poems from the Goddesses' in 1958 and republished it in 1978. He also served as the Chairman of the China Peace Committee and was awarded the Stalin Peace Prize in 1951. The legendary African-American scholar and revolutionary Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois dedicated his poem I sing to China to Guo.

Guo Moruo joined the Communist Party of China in 1927. Delivering the eulogy at his memorial service on June 18, 1978, Deng Xiaoping described him as a "staunch revolutionary and outstanding proletarian cultural fighter who devoted his entire life to the cause of communism."

Guo's poem is a window on a liminal moment in world history.

Friends of Socialist China

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Blockading The Germans! With an Overview of 19th Century Maritime Law

The Evolution of Britain's Strategy During the First World War, Volume 1

By Eamon Dyas

Belfast Historical and Educational Society 2018

This is the first volume of a Trilogy examining overlooked aspects of the First World War and its aftermath from a European perspective. Comprehensively sourced with scholarly research, it explains how Britain used a continental blockade to force the capitulation of the Kaiser's Germany by targeting not just military, but also civilian, imports, particularly imported food supplies, upon which Germany had become dependent since its industrial revolution.

After joining the European War of August 1914—and elevating it into a World War—Britain cast aside the two maritime codes agreed by the world's maritime powers over the previous almost 60 years — the Declaration of Paris in 1856 and the Declaration of London in 1909. In defiance of these internationally agreed codes, Britain aggressively expanded its blockade with the object of disrupting not only the legitimate trade between neutral countries and Germany but trade between neutral countries themselves.

Britain's policy of civilian starvation during the First World War was unprecedented in history. Whereas it had used the weapon of starvation against civilians in the past, in such instances this was either through the exploitation of a natural disaster to bring about famine (Ireland and India) or the result of pre-conceived policy against a non-industrial society (France during the Revolutionary Wars). Its use against Germany was the first time in history where a policy of deliberate starvation was directed against the civilian population of an advanced industrial economy.

This volume traces the evolution of Britain's relationship with international naval blockade strategies from the Crimean War through the American Civil War and the Boer War culminating in its maturity during the Great War. It also draws out how the United States—the leading neutral country—was made complicit in Blockading The Germans during the war and brings the story up to America's entry into the War.

Eamon Dyas is a former head of The Times newspaper archive, was on the Executive Committee of the Business Archives Council in England for a number of years, and was Information Officer of the Newspaper Department of the British Library for many years.

Starving the Germans
The Evolution of Britain's Strategy During The First World War Volume 2

Eamon Dyas

Belfast Historical and Educational Society 2020

This is the second volume of a Trilogy that examines the manner in which the First World War was fought by Britain and its Allies against the civilians of Germany and the Central Powers and the way in which the outcome of that war distorted the prevailing trajectory of European history.

The first volume 'Blockading the Germans' explored the way in which Britain as the world's primary naval power shaped the use of the naval blockade as a weapon against civilians from the time of the Napoleonic Wars to the advent of the First World War. It also dealt with the way in which United States' actions as the main supplier of munitions and financial credits to the Allies compromised its neutrality and made the British pursuit of that war possible.

This current volume begins at the point when the United States formally joined the war in April 1917. It shows how, through the use of food embargoes on the northern neutral countries, the United States completed Britain's food strangulation of Germany and brought misery and death to the civilian populations of those countries in the process.

It explains the way in which the terms of the November 1918 Armistice were arbitrarily expanded by the Allies to ensure that Germany was made malleable to the British demand that it accept total responsibility for the war and at the same time hampered its chances of a post-war recovery.

It further explains the impact of the Armistice on the food supply mechanism that had been established in the United States to supply its own troops and the Allies during the war. In addition it reveals the way in which the post-Armistice attempts by Herbert Hoover and the American Food Administration to use the American food surplus to feed Europe were thwarted by obstacles placed in its path by France and Britain.

Finally, the volume reveals Britain's role in formulating the reparations demanded of Germany in the face of initial American opposition. The volume ends with an examination of the way in which the powers of the Reparations Commission undermined the incipient democratic institutions established in Weimar Germany.

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