

The European Union

**Democracy
or
Empire**

Edited by Roger Cole

POBLACHT NA H EIREANN.

THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

OF THE

IRISH REPUBLIC

TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN : In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment, and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory.

We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and government has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people. In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty; six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations.

The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.

Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishment of a permanent National Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women, the Provisional Government, hereby constituted, will administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust for the people.

We place the cause of the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose blessing we invoke upon our arms, and we pray that no one who serves that cause will dishonour it by cowardice, inhumanity, or rapine. In this supreme hour the Irish nation must, by its valour and discipline and by the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called.

Signed on Behalf of the Provisional Government,

THOMAS J. CLARKE.

SEAN Mac DIARMADA.

THOMAS MacDONAGH.

P. H. PEARSE.

EAMONN CEANNT.

JAMES CONNOLLY.

JOSEPH PLUNKETT.

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**THE GREAT
ONLY APPEAR
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BECAUSE WE
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KNEES.
LET US RISE**

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The Future of Europe

by Roger Cole

In a speech in Paris on the 26 September 2017 President Macron called for “genuine sovereignty” for the European Union. Genuine sovereignty means a European Union with its own Army committed to and created for future wars, “a military intervention force” outside its own borders. In short, he wants this to be able to do what the British Union, the British Empire, and all other empires down through the ages have done.

Sadly, there is nothing new about this. Macron is the latest in a long line of political leaders committed to the destruction of the national democracy and sovereignty of each of the individual member states of the EU, including Ireland as well as France. His goal is crystal clear. His mission statement makes Ireland’s 1916 Proclamation and everything it stands for — a sovereign, Independent and United Irish Republic - redundant. His mission is to destroy not just Irish democracy and Irish sovereignty, but the democracy and sovereignty of all 27 member states of the European Union. His mission is to create a European Empire.

Since our foundation in 1996 the Peace & Neutrality Alliance has sought to advocate an alternative vision of the future of the European Union. This vision is of an Irish Republic committed to having its own Independent Foreign Policy, with positive neutrality as its key component, pursued primarily through the United Nations, the only inclusive global institution that is charged with safeguarding global security. Our vision of the future of the EU is as a Partnership of independent democratic sovereign states without a military dimension.

The core demand since our first campaign against the Amsterdam Treaty in 1998 which came into force in 1999, was to ensure that the Protocol which Denmark has that excludes it from involvement with, or paying for, the process of the militarisation of the emerging European Empire, should also be applied to Ireland. This remained our key demand in all subsequent EU treaty. That demand was bitterly opposed by Fianna Fail and Fine Gael and other EU Empire Loyalist parties. Their commitment is to the total destruction of the values of the 1916 Proclamation and the return to the Home Rule values of John Redmond, except that this time their subservience is to an Army of the European Empire instead of to the forces of the British Empire. This was most recently expressed in the government’s nomination of the Irish Defence Forces Chief of Staff for the position of Chair of the EU Military

Committee and support of Operation Sophia which lays the foundation of a European Navy.

There is nothing new in our objective for of a Democratic Europe. It was first advocated by Roger Casement in his book, ‘The Crime Against Europe,’ a series of articles published before the horrific World War 1 in which he advocated a Congress of Europe. His vision was an inclusive Europe that would include all European States including Russia and Switzerland and the UK, and not just the current states of the EU; an inclusive partnership of sovereign states. Our allegiance is to the 1916 Proclamation and to the vision if its leaders and supporters.

The advocates of the European Empire offer nothing but the continuation of perpetual war. It is a stagnant and outmoded policy and one that refuses to learn from the tragic lessons of the past and accept reality. It is a policy that propagates the illusion of empire, an illusion that has been dragging down mankind for thousands of centuries. Now is the time to finally bring an end to that illusion. For PANA our objective is perpetual peace, a Europe that focuses on the urgent problems of global warming and ending global poverty.

Last but not least, I would like to say a special ‘thank you’ to all of those who took the time to contribute to this pamphlet. In the overall context our voice may be small, a candle blowing in the wind. But sometimes the light from such a candle can guide us through these days of uncertainty and onwards to an illuminated and brighter peaceful future.

Roger Cole
Chair
Peace & Neutrality Alliance
December 2017



EU Militarisation

by Lynn Boylan



In June the Commission launched the "Reflection Paper on the Future of European Defence" as well as announcing the European Defence Fund, The launch of an EU Common Defence Fund and this reflection paper mark a sufficient step in the militarisation of the EU as it outlines the Commissions commitment to pursuing

a military pillar as the future for EU integration and defence policy. The result of any such policy would mean a complete undermining of Irelands (already compromised) neutrality.

In the three possible scenarios outlined in the reflection paper the militarisation of the EU is presented as the only possible option. The question being asked by the Commission is not if there should be an EU level military integration but rather what shape the inevitable European militarisation will take.

Talk of an EU army has been a recurring theme in European politics which has always been dismissed as being overly sensationalist, suggestions that the launch of the EU's Joint Military Headquarters earlier this year, heralded the beginning of an EU army were quickly silenced once the limited remit (training missions in Africa) and relatively low budget of the facility was announced. Nevertheless we cannot ignore the significant developments which are taking place in relation to militarisation. While there has been little appetite for a military force under the political leadership of the EU, those who want greater military integration at the European level see Brexit and the as an opportunity to push ahead with their plans for militarisation without opposition from Britain who have continuously opposed greater military coordination at a European level.

There is also a threat posed by the increasing level of military spending and coordination throughout the EU which will create a more militaristic EU regardless of what command system is in place. The calls for increased military spending in Europe as part of the PESCO are in line with the NATO call for 2% of GDP to be spent on defence this will see more than a tripling of Irish military spending as currently we spend 0.6% of our GDP on defence. Such a huge increase in military spending while there are massive crises in housing and healthcare is unacceptable

In its reflection paper the commission has focused on the need for more cooperation in the research field, in the military capabilities development as well as in the EU military and civilian missions and operations. This effort to further develop the European military industrial complex as part of increased military spending will be of little benefit to ordinary Europeans who will suffer from greater insecurity. If the Irish government wants to consider any increase defence spending its priority should be addressing the prevalence of low pay in the defence forces, which has forced many members to rely on welfare payments such as family income supplement to survive

The Commissions efforts to push ahead with its pro militarisation policy is an attempt to ensure that the EU maintains a central role in European defence policy. In its three scenarios the Commission presents a choice between increased EU cooperation and increased cooperation between certain member states.

Increased military cooperation in Europe has become the reality despite the limited involvement of the EU. Germany in particular has been proactive in strengthening military cooperation with different European states, through a series of agreements with other states such as the Netherlands, Romania, Poland and the Czech Republic that have seen units from those countries incorporate into the German military. Now through the PESCO, this process of pooling military resources will have a European command structure in place.

Research and procurement cooperation has been highlighted by the Commission as another area where EU level coordination would improve efficiency and avoid costly duplication. Currently the EU member states cooperate on defence procurement programs such as the Typhoon jet or joint munitions purchases. The economic logic behind extending the existing bilateral military coordination to an EU level sees the creation of a 'single market for defence' as a means of reducing costs and increasing employment in military industries in the EU, ignores the destabilising effect a militarised EU will have on global security. In its reflection paper the Commission highlights the gap between the EU and the USA and China when it comes to military spending but says nothing about the correlation between the USA's high defence spending and its contribution to conflicts around the world.

To date EU missions have been characterised by what analysts have termed a reactive nature, that is to say that EU missions such as those in Kosovo, Mali, and



Somalia have been in response to events outside of the EUs control. The Commissions securocrat rationale is that a more coordinate EU defence policy will result in a better ability to exert influence in the global security arena.

This logic relies on a world view which sees military force as a stabilising force. The Commissions unwillingness to learn from the bloody consequences of western military adventurism which has largely contributed to current security challenges, and its fears of increased Russian military spending (69.2 billion USD in 2016 which is still dwarfed by France and Germanys combined military spending of 96.8 billion) have fuelled the securocrat policy of EU militarisation with no consideration given to the possibility of a non-militarised future.

We need to be clear that far from needing more military at the European level, European states need to reduce military spending and their involvement in NATO missions, and evaluate the effectiveness of existing security policies before investing large amounts of public funding into a military project that will fail to increase European security.

The current challenges that face Europe, such as the refugee crisis and the treat from terrorism will not be solved through increased EU militarisation. In fact the militarisation of the EUs response to the refugee crisis, in particular the EU's agreement with Libya has been condemned by Amnesty International for increase the risk of refugees suffering human rights abuses in Libya. The only way to achieve a lasting solution to the challenges of terrorism and the refugee crisis is to tackle the root causes of these problems, namely global inequality and western imperialism. Far from addressing these problems a militarised EU will only worsen the situation.

Denmark has an opt out from the EU militarization

by Lave Brock



Denmark is the only EU member state that has rejected support for EU militarisation. The reason for this is not a peace policy by the Danish government. It is because of the Danish people. In 1992 a majority of the Danes voted no to the Maastricht Treaty. After the Danish people's no to the Maastricht treaty Denmark got several opt outs from

the EU. One of the opt outs is a Danish no to participation in the EU's defense policy. It has been part of the EU treaties since the Maastricht Treaty entered into force.

The Danish defense opt out in the EU is not a simple declaration from Denmark like the Irish statements on neutrality that have no real content in relation to the EU.

Denmark is because of the opt out not a member of the EU Defense Agency - an agency that actively supports and cooperates with the EU weapon industry. Furthermore Denmark does not participate in the EU Battle Groups or in any other parts of EU's defense policy.

The Danish government would have liked Denmark to join the EU defense policy but it is only possible if the Danish people will support such a decision in a referendum. But after failing twice to get rid of two other opt outs in referendums (the Euro in 2000 and the supranational justice policy in 2015) as well as Brexit I doubt that the Danish government will dare to ask the people in the near future. However the increased effort to militarize the EU is also a challenge for Denmark because when military matters are moved to the EU budget there is a risk that Denmark will have to pay and also indirectly be responsible for the EU policies that we are not part of. Despite this I will recommend Ireland also to get an opt out from the EU defense policy. The German and French governments are working on making EU into a new military super power and our nations do not have an interest in being part of such a project. We need instead to work for the respect of international law and collective security in the world through the United Nations.

The Danish government and different pro EU parties are sometimes criticising the defense opt

out and claiming that it prevents Denmark from participating in EU peace missions for instance in removing land mines or fighting pirates in the sea close to Somalia. But their arguments are not very strong. It is only the EU missions that we are prevented from participating in. Denmark can participate in all the UN missions that we like and the UN wants us to help more. We can even join UN peace missions together with the EU or EU countries. But our soldiers cannot participate in EU missions and have EU flags on their uniforms. I think that is great. Just like our soldiers should not have a German, American or Chinese flag on their uniform.

So why does not the Danish government do more to help the UN in its peace missions? The only thing that is blocking that is themselves. Well I can only guess and one guess would be that some of our politicians have lost traditional Scandinavian values and want us to build a world order together with the EU and the US. Today most Danish political parties support military missions without a clear UN mandate. They think they are progressive. But they do not see the big problem in such a world order where the US, NATO and the EU start its own wars. Because they claim that there must be good reasons for such wars. But if that is what we will do then other big states like China, Russia, India or Brazil can also start wars with the same set of arguments. The world will and to some degree already is getting more dangerous for all of us due to illegal wars.

Of all the EU countries that have joined the EU battle groups only two countries seem to have had rules about only going to war when there is a UN mandate (or for defense). Those were Ireland and Finland. However Finland changed its law when it was joining the EU battle groups and it was clear that the reason for changing the law was that there could be situations where the EU will use military force with no UN mandate and then Finland must be able to participate in the EU military actions. This development is the total wrong way to go. We must strengthen the respect for the UN charter and international law. Not undermine it.

My vision for Denmark is that we must make a change back to what used to be a Nordic way of looking at security policy. Denmark could together with the other Nordic countries and likeminded nations like Ireland present a security policy built on the UN charter, international law and human rights. We must of course also be able to defend ourselves



Signing of the Maastricht Treaty

but we must never and shall never make the world more insecure.

The development in the EU is going the wrong way and the EU defense policy is also about supporting the weapon industry through for instance the EU defense agency. I cannot understand how a neutral state as Ireland can support this. Using tax money to support the weapon industry - that sells weapons to governments that have a record of violating human rights - does not seem to be a peace project.

What Ireland chooses to do must be up to the Irish people but I hope sincerely that the Irish people will make the decision with open eyes and after a serious public debate about the militarization of the EU, the EU support of the weapon industry and alternatives to that development.

*By Lave K. Broch,
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“Quite how Varadkar, Kehoe and the government can justify a leap of defence spending from the current €946 million budgeted for 2018 to something like €3 billion-plus by 2020 will be interesting to behold”

Phoenix 1/12/17

Europe: Empire or Partnership of Democratic States?

by Roger Cole



Wolfe Tone was founder of Irish Republicanism. Each year, two of the main parties in Ireland, Fianna Fail and Sinn Fein, still commemorate his birth as do many others. He was the first political leader to advocate Irish neutrality in 1790, a core value that became integral to the efforts to create a United Irish Republic in our long struggle

against the British Union & Empire. So when the Peace & Neutrality Alliance was founded in 1996 to advocate for the right of the Irish people to have their own independent Irish foreign policy with positive neutrality as its key component, we were not licking it off the stones, but were simply the continuation of a long and deeply rooted tradition.

The Peace & Neutrality Alliance (PANA) was established because it was clear to us that the Irish ruling parties (including virtually the entire corporate media) were totally committed to destroying Irish neutrality and to integrating all of Ireland (the six counties of Northern Ireland was part of NATO since its foundation in 1949) into the US/EU/NATO axis ensuring Ireland's full and active participation in its perpetual wars.

PANA's core contention is that that struggle for independence is not just a struggle against the British Union, but also against the emerging European Empire. The purpose of a number of key European leaders under the concept of the "Ever Closer Union" is to steadily destroy the sovereignty, not just of Ireland, but of all the democratic states in the European Union including the UK, by ensuring that they became little more than County Councils, with all real power centralised in the EU and its institutions: the EU Council of Ministers, the EU Commission, the EU Court of Justice, the EU Parliament and a raft of other EU institutions such as the EU Battle Groups, the EU Defence Agency, the EU Defence College, the European Institute for Security Studies, the EU Intelligence Agency, the EU Political & Security Committee, the EU Military Committee and very recently its EU Military HQ. The steps are only going one way, towards the creation of a European Empire with its own European Army. As Jean-Claude Juncker, EU President of the Commission, said in an interview with Welt am Sonntag (9/5/15): "We need an EU Army".

However, one of the consequences of our long (and as yet unfinished) struggle against British imperialism is that Ireland has a Constitution in which Article number 6 states that all power derives from the people. This means that every time the EU proposes a treaty taking power from the peoples of the different states to the EU, there has to be a referendum in Ireland.

The first such treaty PANA fought was the Amsterdam Treaty in 1998. (Incidentally, Irish CND had opposed the earlier Single European Act.) In 1992 the Danes had defeated the Maastricht Treaty and as a consequence gained a number of legally binding Protocols, including one that excludes Denmark from paying for, or involvement with the militarisation of the EU. The core of PANA's campaign in that and all other EU treaties has been that such a Protocol should also apply to Ireland. Since Denmark has remained a member of the EU with such a Protocol for a quarter of a century, the only reason why the Irish ruling parties do not also support it, is because they support Ireland's participation in war.

This is clearly the case with their decision to join NATO's PFP and also to transform Ireland into a US Aircraft carrier with well over 2.5 million US troops having landed in Shannon Airport since 2001: a decision opposed PANA which would also oppose the use of Shannon Airport by Russian or Chinese troops with equal determination. In fact PANA is not anti-American, it is not anti-Russian, it is not anti-Chinese. It simply advocates Irish neutrality, democracy and national independence.

The historic reason for the formation of the EU was the result of World War 2 where the world became dominated by the two victor states: the USA and the Soviet Union.

The other European Empires: British, Belgium, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, while they did try and hold on to some colonies - like the UK in Aden, or France in Indochina and Algeria - most of the ruling elites of the different European states realised that they could not reassert their global imperial domination as individual states, but needed to do so together as a European Union. The USA agreed and in the early period its secret service (the OSS) funded various "European Movements" and saw Europe not so much as a rival, but as a partner in NATO.

The recent decision to jointly impose sanctions on Russia after both the EU and NATO funded Ukrainian neo-Nazis groups to overthrow the democratically



PANA protesting outside the US Embassy

elected President shows that the link remains strong. The decision of the people of the Crimea to return to Russia as a consequence was no surprise, any more than it was not a surprise that Russia would not allow Sebastopol, a Russian naval base since the 1780s, become a NATO naval base. If President Putin had allowed that to happen he probably would no longer be President, and the leaders of the EU are very well aware of this reality. However, if the EU Leaders are to gain popular support for massive cuts in health, education etc, in order to build a European Army, they need an Enemy, and Russia is more convenient than Salafi terrorists.

Established in 2005, the main step towards the formation of a European Army has been the EU Battle Groups. These groups contain between 2-3,000 combat troops. One of these groups is The Nordic Battle Group made up of Sweden, Finland, Ireland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Norway (a state does not have to be in the EU to take part). Equipped to go to war anywhere in the world once agreed by the EU Council of Ministers, they do not need a UN mandate (except possibly Ireland). Since every combat soldier on the ground needs nine back up soldiers and there are two battle groups ready to go to war, means that the EU already has at its disposal a 50,000 European Army.

Up to now if a state took part in an EU Battle Group, it had to pay its own costs. However that has now been changed to ensure that all costs are now part of the overall EU military budget. This is a key decision on the way to building an EU Army. While the EU Battle

Groups have yet to be deployed, it also ensures that the senior officers are developing a degree of loyalty to the EU, rather than to the individual states from which they come.

As a consequence of PANA's victory in helping to win the first Nice Treaty, the elite were forced to bring in the "Triple Lock" meaning that Irish troops could not go to war without the agreement of the Dáil, the Government and the UN. However this was effectively terminated with the 2006 Defence Act which allows Irish troops to be deployed to go to war, but not participate without a UN mandate. But of course if they were attacked as part of the BG they would defend themselves, thus effectively destroying the "Triple Lock".

In July 2017, the Irish Government with a little over an hours debate in the Dail (the Irish Parliament) voted to terminate its role as purely humanitarian role saving refugees in the Mediterranean Sea, to become part of an EU Naval Force committed to a military role. While it has a mandate from the UN, as we know from the EU/US/NATO war that destroyed Libya, a UN mandate, once the EU becomes involved means nothing, and the escalation into a major military intervention which would include Irish troops into Libya is now a very real possibility in the drive to create an EU Navy.

Nevertheless EU Navy has yet to be created and the EU Battle Groups are relatively small military formations and not a real European Army.

However the Lisbon Treaty accelerated the move towards the creation of a European Empire with its



US-military-planes-at-Shannon-2

own Army. It gave the EU a distinct legal identity, separate from and superior to the individual member states of the Union. It created the post of EU President who presides over the elected leaders of the individual member states. It created the post of an EU Minister for Foreign Affairs with responsibility for an EU Foreign, Security and Defence policy with its own Ministry for Foreign, Security and Defence Department. EU defence policy was to be compatible with NATO policy, including its first strike nuclear policy. One of the purposes of the Lisbon treaty was also to ensure that: "a more assertive Union role in security and defence matters will contribute to the vitality of a renewed Atlantic Alliance". The treaty included article 28A (7) which stated that;

"If a member state is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Art. 51 of the UN Charter".

Article 28(A) has all the qualities of EU Common Defence pact so that the Western European Union, which had a common defence pact, was abolished with all its remaining assets transferred to the EU.

However given that EU Battle Groups are relatively small for a real European Army, the key article of the Lisbon Treaty was the one that allowed a group of EU member states via Structured Cooperation to create a real EU Army.

Article 28 A(6) states: "Those Member States whose military capabilities fulfill higher criteria and who have made more binding commitments to one another in this area with a view to the most demanding missions

shall establish permanent structured cooperation within the Union framework."

In other words they are to merge parts of their military, "in accordance with the principles of a single set of forces" which is the definition of an Army. Once established and the EU Council of Ministers agree to its deployment in a war, it would be operationally independent.

The parties that dominate Germany, the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats, have been long-standing advocates of a European Army. This year, under this provision of the Lisbon Treaty, the Czech Republic and Romania announced their intention of integrating sizable parts of their armies with those of Germany, under German Command. Holland had already agreed to integrate two of its military brigades into Germany's Rapid Response Force and Germany's 1st Armored Division. These will support the 10th Panzer Division. Sweden and Finland, once upon a time "neutral" countries that already take part in NATO military exercises and allow their territory to be used by NATO, are also considering joining this emerging German dominated EU Army. The German Defence Minister is very clear that these developments should be the basis of steadily building up a nucleus of a European Army and plans to have a multinational EU German led panzer division of 20,000 soldiers which would be in operation by 2021. This form of military cooperation is not unique, as for example, there is now collaboration between the Dutch and Belgian navies.

The EU is also allocating €1.5 billion to joint defence spending, setting aside €500 million from 2020 onwards on research and development of new military technologies, which is to be added to the €5 billion

already pledged for EU “joint defence capabilities”. The EU Commission is also seeking an extra €1 billion to purchase high tech weapons and more research. The EU Commission intends to pay for such military expansion by cutting expenditure on the EU environmental expenditure.

There are only two nuclear armed states in the EU, so the withdrawal of the UK is a major blow to the creation of a European Empire. After all, if a state does not have an Army of its own, it is not an Empire, and if it does not have its own nuclear weapons, it's not much of an Empire. It therefore comes as no surprise that some leading political figures in Poland, such as Jaroslav Kaczyrski, the chair of its ruling Party, Law and Justice, has called for an EU nuclear weapons policy. Historically many elements of the UK were opposed to the militarisation of the EU because they did not want the EU to become a European Empire, but as a consequence of the decision of the UK to leave the EU, the European Empire Loyalists are now embolden to accelerate their EU military plans.

Finally, PANA led a strong delegation to the recent No to NATO No to War and WPC conferences in Brussels. Since the focus was on opposing NATO, understandably there was little or no discussion on the militarisation of the EU and its ongoing transformation into a military Superstate. To PANA's knowledge, very few of the peace movements in the different states in the EU call for a Protocol similar to the Danish Protocol as PANA has done for over 20 years. We certainly would hope that all the peace groups in all the EU states would now call for such a Protocol, and at the very least seek to ensure that the individual states do not participate in the EU Battle Groups or the EU Defence Agency.

Over the decades, PANA was always inspired by Tony Benn, whose advocacy of democracy and opposition the emerging EU Empire was shared by PANA. The Labour Party's new Leader, Jeremy Corbyn, having defeated its Blairite wing and doing so well in the recent election, was a strong supporter of Tony Benn. So it was no surprise that the last time he came to the Republic of Ireland, he was a guest speaker at an international conference at Shannon organised by PANA. If after the next election Corbyn become Prime Minister, then maybe we can look forward to a Europe of Peace, not a Europe of War, an inclusive Europe which includes all European States, including those not in the EU such as Russia, Switzerland and the UK. A Europe without a military dimension that focuses its resources not on war, but the real enemies, the real threats to humanity, poverty and global warming. PANA believes the actual realists are not the warmongers, the believers in perpetual war. The realists are those who see the real threats to our survival are global poverty, global war and global climate change. A new Europe is Possible, a new World is possible, a world Beyond War.

Roger Cole
Chair
Peace & Neutrality Alliance
www.pana.ie
December 2017

The EU, Brexit and Irexit

The EU's Myth of Origin

by Anthony Coughlan



The myth of origin of the European Union is that it is fundamentally a peace project to prevent wars in Europe. Historically however the EU's origins lie in war preparations – at the start of the “Cold War” between the USA and the USSR which followed World War 2 and the possibility of that developing into a real “hot” war.

Fear of communism stalked Europe after 1945. “Europe must federate or perish,” said US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. The USA was the prime sponsor of the European Community, later the European Union. For years the CIA financed the European Movement, the principal lobby group for supranational integration in the different European countries.

In 1949 America wanted to rearm Germany inside NATO on that military alliance's foundation.

This greatly alarmed France, which had been conquered and occupied by Germany just five years before. Jean Monnet, who was America's man in the affair, came up with the solution. Monnet drafted the Schuman Declaration, called after the French Foreign Minister of the day, proposing to put the coal and steel industries of Germany, France and Benelux under a supranational High Authority as “the first step in the federation of Europe”. The US was delighted. This led to the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty of 1951, the first of what were to be the three foundational treaties of what is today the European Union. The other two were the 1957 European Economic Community (EEC) Treaty and the 1957 Atomic Energy Treaty.

A federation is a State, so the political aim of establishing a supranational EU State or quasi-superstate under Franco-German hegemony has been there from the start. The EU celebrates 9 May, the date of the Schuman Declaration, as “Europe Day” each year.

Thirty-five years after the three supranational Communities were established came another major shift in Franco-German power. This was Germany's reunification as a side-effect of the collapse of the USSR in 1991. This led France and Germany

to establish the single currency, the euro, which abolished the national currencies of 19 of the 28 EU Member States, now the Eurozone, and maintains a common exchange rate vis-a-vis the 160 other currencies in the world.

The increase in Germany's territory and population consequent on its reunification greatly alarmed France. But France possessed nuclear weapons, which Germany is prevented from having under its reunification treaties. The deal between the two of them, set out in the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, was EU Monetary Union for Political Union or, put crudely, the Deutschmark for the Euro-bomb.

Germany would abandon the Deutschmark, the symbol of its post-war economic achievement, and share the running of this supranational EU currency with France, while France agreed to work jointly with Germany towards a supranational EU political union, with a common foreign, security and defence policy and eventually a common European army.

This would give Germany a central role in running a potential EU world power, with its finger in time on a European nuclear trigger. France in turn hoped that the Euro would give it a political lock on Germany. A Franco-German army brigade with joint officers and a joint command was simultaneously established as symbol and prototype of the European army of the future. Belgium, Luxembourg and Spain have since joined this Eurocorps, with various other “associated” States. When the UK leaves the EU in 2019 the way will be clear to turn this into a proper EU army, as is now being openly talked about in EU policy-making circles.

Irish Citizens Of A Federal EU

A treaty giving the EU an explicit supranational Federal State Constitution was drawn up by a convention of EU Governments and Parliaments in 2004. When this “Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe” went round for ratification in 2005 it was rejected by French and Dutch voters in referendums. Left and Right combined to vote it down. The Member State Governments then repackaged 99% of this Constitution by means of the “Treaty of Lisbon” and put it through indirectly in the form of amendments to the existing treaties. Because of this way of doing it ordinary people found Lisbon impossible to understand unless they were lawyers.

The “Treaty of Lisbon” thus gave the EU a Federal Constitution, as had been aimed at since the 1950



Schuman Declaration. Post-Lisbon the EU Constitution consists of two treaties called the "Treaty on European Union" and the "Treaty on the Functioning of the EU". Only the Irish were allowed a vote on Lisbon and when they rejected it in 2008 the Irish Government re-ran the referendum to push it through unchanged in 2009.

The Lisbon Treaty abolished the existing supranational European Community and replaced it with a new European Union which had legal personality for the first time and could act like a State in all spheres of government. Formerly "intergovernmental" policy areas like crime and justice, foreign and security policy and fundamental human rights, in which Member State had up to then retained their sovereignty, were made supranational by Lisbon.

Lisbon gave all 500 million people of the EU a second citizenship, that of the EU, in addition to their national citizenship, with associated EU rights and duties. This is normal in Federal States in which sovereignty is divided between a federal level on one hand and a national or regional level on the other. Thus American citizens are also citizens of New York, California, Virginia etc. and citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany are citizens of Bavaria, Brandenburg and Baden. One can only be a citizen of a State. In case of conflict between the two citizenships Lisbon makes clear that the EU federal level has primacy.

In power-political terms the most important change made by the Lisbon Treaty was that it put voting for EU laws in the Council of Ministers on a population basis, just as in any State. An EU supranational law must have the support of 15 of the 28 Member States as long as that 15 contain 65% of the total EU population. This effectively was a power grab by the bigger EU States. As Germany is the most populous EU Member Lisbon doubled Germany's relative voting weight for making EU laws from its previous 8% of total votes to 16%. It increased the voting weight of France, Italy and the UK from 8% to 12% each and it halved Ireland's voting weight from 2% to 0.9%.

Things are seldom pushed to a vote on the Council of Ministers, but a process of "shadow voting" takes place all the time in which Ministers look around to see if there is qualified majority for a supranational law proposal or if a blocking minority exists. Consensus normally prevails in that when the big countries agree on something the smaller ones usually go along.

Supranationalism Versus Internationalism

Supranationalism is the essence of the European "project" – that project being to replace the national democracy and political independence and sovereignty of Europe's States and peoples by a supranational EU quasi-federation under Franco-German hegemony. Supranationalism, from Latin

“supra”, “above”, puts nations and democratic Nation States under the rule of non-elected committees, the Commission, Council of Ministers and Court of Justice of the EU, which impose supranational law from above. According to Eur-Lex there are now some 123,000 EU rules, international agreements and legal acts binding supranationally on EU Member States and their peoples. National Governments are subject to EU fines if they break a single one of them.

These institutions run the EU project in the interest of the Big States that dominate them as well as of Transnational High Finance and Big Capital that are simultaneously freed from public control of their private profit-making activities at national level. The EU treaties turn neo-liberalism and classical laissez-faire - free movement of goods, services, capital and labour - into constitutional principles which all EU Member States must obey. They constitute the first Constitution in history to be drawn up entirely in the interest of transnational Big Business, without the slightest democratic element.

Supranationalism is the opposite of internationalism, a word that comes from Latin “inter”, “between”. Internationalism implies the existence of nations and Nation States and cooperation between them on the basis of each State respecting the right of every

other to make its own laws and be responsible to its own people – in other words to maintain its State sovereignty.

Democracy and sovereignty are like two sides of one coin. Democracy means rule by the people, the “demos” in Greek. Every democratic Nation State consists of a people, a “demos”, who are willing to obey the Government they elect because it is the Government of “their” State with which they identify and have patriotic feelings for. That is why minorities in a democracy are willing to obey majority rule, because they see that as “their” majority.

But without a real people, a “demos”, characterized by this mutual identification and solidarity, which normally entails having a common language, culture and history as well, there is only “kratos”, power. That is why there is no democracy in the EU and why there cannot be, because there is no such thing as a European people, except in a statistical sense, any more than there is an African people, an Asian people or a Latin American people

And one cannot create a “demos” artificially from top down, although the Eurocrats do their best by copying at supranational level the institutions and symbols of national statehood, complete with flag, anthem, EU passport and so on. They foolishly hope that this will





make people look on Europe as one country, "our country", while at the same time subverting what is left of the democracy of Europe's Nation States.

The absence at EU level of any genuine democratic content is the fundamental problem for the supranationalists and Eurofederalists. It is why people all over Europe are turning against the EU these days as they discover that the integration project has undermined their democracy at national level, while it is impossible to replace that at supranational level. That is why the EU project is fundamentally misconceived and is historically doomed. It is a relic of the 1945-1990 Cold War when it provided the economic underpinning for NATO in Europe and is now well past its sell-by date.

Brexit and Irexit

There is no significant advantage for Ireland remaining in the EU when the UK leaves, although the Government insists that it is part of "Team EU". Since 2014 we have become net contributors to the EU Budget annually and will have to pay more if we remain when the UK leaves. We do most of our foreign trade with the English-speaking world outside the EU27 and if common sense prevails in the EU-UK negotiations free trade will continue between all the parties when these are concluded.

If we are so foolish as to try to stay in the EU when the UK leaves we will be adding new dimensions to the North-South Border within Ireland and making eventual Irish reunification impossible. By following the UK out we will get back our fishing waters, whose annual value is much greater than the money we have ever got from the EU. We will thereby also take back control of our currency, our borders, our taxation

and budget policy, our right to make our own laws and decide our own international relations, including maintaining a meaningful neutrality policy.

That is why it is in the best interests of the people of Ireland that Brexit should be accompanied by Irexit, even if that course is currently opposed by various self-interested Irish policy-makers whose career prospects and mental worlds are bound up with Euro-federalism.

Political and economic reality is likely to open the eyes of the Irish public to the good sense of Irexit in the period ahead, as the folly of the Government's irrational commitment to "Team EU" becomes ever more obvious.

(Anthony Coughlan is Associate Professor Emeritus in Social Policy at Trinity College Dublin and is a long-time critic of supranational EU integration on democratic and internationalist grounds)

Imperialism and Colonialism in European Union Economic and Monetary Policies

by Karen Devine



Imperialism, Colonialism and Empire

Imperialism is an ideology that motivates and legitimates the expansionary domination by one society over another, whether through military conquest or economic or fiscal dependency. It is a relationship of influence rather than

possession, by a variety of means, such as economic penetration or manipulation, clientship, political alliances, and intimidating performances of military muscle.

Old style colonialism involved the occupation of territory by foreign settlers, soldiers or administrators; i.e. material possession of people and property, and the cultivation of the land in the interests of settlers. Some argue imperialism differs from colonialism largely as a matter of scale: it is “the concept that comprises all forces and activities contributing to the construction and maintenance of transcolonial empires”. (In Dietler, 2010: 16) Nowadays, colonization takes the form of the imposition of political sovereignty over foreign territory and people.

Since its inception, the European Economic Community (EEC) has appropriated the natural resources of selected member-states for its benefit, through asymmetrical relations of power, e.g. the Common Fisheries Policy. In its new form of “European Union” (EU), the EU has imposed political and fiscal sovereignty over its member-states’ territories, resources and peoples, through a multi-strand approach using the legal means of Treaties and the political means of coercion, threats and bullying. In this article, I argue that the true character and nature of the European Union is one of a Neo-Imperialist Colonizer, using the cases of Ireland, Greece and Cyprus.

Ireland

Resistance to imperialism, colonization, and empires is a core value of Irish political leaders across centuries, including Theobald Wolfe Tone, Daniel O’Connell, Padraic Pearse and James Connolly. For example Daniel O’Connell promoted the values of anti-imperialism, anti-militarism, anti-racism, independence, and equality

in interdependence, respectively. A survivor of the 1916 rebellion, the War of Independence and the Civil War, Irish leader Eamon de Valera shared the same anti-imperialist orientation as his predecessors, and valued Ireland’s hard-won political independence. These values underpinned the choice of neutrality as Ireland’s foreign policy, which he advocated in 1939 in a debate on preparations for an impending World War - “What have we been fighting for? What have we been struggling for, but to get our sovereignty recognised over our territory?” (Dáil Éireann Vol. 73 Cols. 712-713)

De Valera was against Ireland joining the nascent European Economic Community and its pre-emptory European Defence Community, arguing, “we would not be wise as a nation in entering into a full-blooded political federation” that would involve a military alliance because of the significant likelihood that small states’ positions would be ignored. (Dáil Éireann Vol. 152: Cols. 549-551; Wylie 2006: 45) De Valera was open to international or regional cooperation to solve collective problems, but he was equally determined to set appropriate limits to the spheres of cooperation to ensure national ethical and social goals are achieved, saying “For certain items of the task international action is necessary, but the change of purpose – the deliberate shaping of economic activity to an ethical and social end is work which each can best advance in his own State. The conditions change from country to country. The problem in the highly industrialised States is very different from that in the States industrially underdeveloped” (23 September, 1932).

The surrender of economic and fiscal independence in the EU’s EMU

De Valera’s point is well-made in relation to the workings of the European Union’s Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), as Ireland and other peripheral small states’ economic and social situations are ignored by the Franco-German EU decision-making elite. More peripheral EU member-state economies have different industrial structures, different levels of unionisation in their labour markets, poor labour mobility, and different levels of productivity and competitiveness compared with the ‘core’. These member-states, including Ireland, suffer under the EU’s ‘one size fits all’ interest rate policy; the absence of a national exchange rate shock absorber; and more recently, control over national fiscal policy.



Eamon de Valera addressing the crowds after he became president

The responses of the EU to member-states breaking EMU's debt and deficit rules have been singularly regressive with respect to smaller member-states, whilst the larger member-states are left untouched and furthermore use their power to decimate smaller states' economies and budgets. The Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in Economic and Monetary Union (TSCG) ("The Fiscal Compact") signed by all EU countries except the Czech Republic and the UK in March 2012 is not about coordination and surveillance of EMU rules and national budgets, rather, the Treaty's 'excessive deficit procedure' amounts to coercion (automatic fines as sanctions in the "automatic correction mechanism" under Article 3(1)e) and control (article 5 "budgetary and economic partnership programme") over national budgets and structural economic reform of the state.

Although smaller states have the same trading rights as other larger EU member-states and EEA member states within the European Single Market, the balance of European Single Currency benefits go to German exporters. The German State bank KfW estimates the German economy would have grown by €50 - €60 billion less in 2009 and 2010 without the euro. Germany's aims of protecting the Euro and keeping the downward pressure on its value through continued membership of the EU's weaker states are riven with tension, and do not justify the EU's neo-imperialist interventions during the Eurozone crisis described in the following sections on Ireland, Greece and Cyprus.

Ireland

In contrast to the current generation of Irish politicians, Ireland's postcolonial revolutionary leaders would have effectively rejected and resisted the deleterious actions of the EU elite (1) to force the Irish government to 'guarantee' the bank debts on 30 September 2008 based on ECB head Jean Claude Trichet's 'no bank can

fail' policy (Commission, 2011: 78; Oireachtas, 2015: 782; RTE, 2015), and after a series of meetings in Brussels, the ECB and European Commission then pressured the Irish government (2) to accept an €85 billion loan (which it called a 'bailout') on 28 November 2010 in order to 'save the Euro' (Oireachtas, 2015: 789-790) and (3) at the behest of US Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner who led other G7 Finance Ministers in a teleconference the week of 30 November 2010, to prevent the government from burning unsecured bondholders (Beesley, 2011).

The imposed EU 'bailout-out' meant Ireland's debt-GDP ratio moved from 42 per cent in 2008 to 120 per cent of GDP in 2012, breaking the EU's own rules on debt-GDP ratios. EU-driven austerity measures involved (a) laying off people working in the public service, (b) pay cuts and freezes for those still employed, with (c) new income taxes and levies on salaries, (d) billions of Euros worth of cuts in public expenditure for health services, education, welfare and infrastructure, and (e) the privatisation and sale of state assets, such as water, forestry, land and energy.

Irish society was devastated: many people unable to receive healthcare died while on years-long waiting lists for treatment. Young people graduating college and those with young families emigrated to find employment in Canada and Australia at a rate of one thousand people a week. Almost 475,000 people left the country between 2008 and 2014, keeping unemployment to a peak of 15 per cent. 17.5 per cent of Irish-born people over the age of fifteen now live abroad—the highest proportion in the OECD.

The Irish Central Statistics Office suggests that the cumulative outcome of Irish fiscal adjustment, particularly the 2012 budget, has been regressive. According to the Survey on Income and Living Conditions, the bottom decile has seen net disposable income reduced by 25 per cent, whilst top decile



Greeks protesting outside their parliament in Athens

income increased by five per cent. Consistent deprivation levels have increased. So too has the percentage of those at risk of poverty, which has risen to 15.8 per cent - or 700,000 people, 220,000 of whom are children. Notably, the suicide rate rose to the highest levels in the history of the state; Ireland went on to hold the highest rates of youth male and youth female suicide in the developed world.

Greece

As mentioned above, Greece was also subjected to several tranches of so-called 'bailout outs' by the so-called 'Troika' (ECB, European Commission and IMF) because the then ECB President, Jean-Claude Trichet, led opposition to triggering Greek swaps. Multiple analysts say roughly 90 percent of the nation's bailout cash has been eaten up by financial institutions, e.g. €81.3 billion spent on maturing debt obligations and €48.2 billion spent on recapitalizing Greek banks. Jubilee economist Tim Jones calculated that Greece has spent more than €230 billion on expenditures like debt service and propping up Greek banks.

Greek society also buckled under EU-imposed 'austerity' measures similar to those mandated in Ireland, cutting employment and wages in the public sector and cutting budgets for health services, education, welfare, including the sell-off of state assets. Unemployment rates reached 24 per cent in Greece with over half of under-25s out of work. Reflecting similar trends in Ireland, severe cuts in the hospital sector and overall cuts in the health budget restricted access to care in Greece (the Troika demanded health expenditure to be lower than 6% of GDP) and the interaction of fiscal austerity with economic shocks and weak social protection escalated health and social crises (Karanikolos et al. 2013). In 2011 the Greek Health Minister announced a rise in the national suicide rate of 40% over the first semester of that year. Unsurprisingly, the public in Greece did not react well to the EU's

response either: anger over the cuts led to mass demonstrations, as between 250,000 to 500,000 people gathered on a daily basis to protest in front of the Greek parliament in June 2011.

Cyprus

The Greek sovereign debt restructuring saddled banks in Cyprus with losses. President Nicos Anastasiades was elected in February 2013 based on the promises to the Cypriot people to go after the errant banks and to leave people's savings untouched. He broke both promises (Bailed-Out Cyprus Banks Feel Good Now, Depositors Don't, The National Herald 3 July 2016) in agreeing to an EU so-called 'bail-in' that allowed banks to confiscate 47.5 percent of bank accounts over €100,000 in 2013. Hundreds of thousands of ordinary Cypriots lost their life savings, mainly the middle classes and small businesses, in return for shares in insolvent banks. Following from this EU action, including austerity measures of tax hikes and pay cuts, unemployment rose to an historical high of 20%, companies couldn't meet payroll demands, people's retirement plans were ruined, and tourism was hit hard as restaurants and hotels lost their capital.

ECB researchers Henri Maurer and Patrick Grussenmeyer estimated that from 2008 to 2013, Ireland spent 37.3% of GDP, followed by Greece at 24.8%, supporting their financial sectors. Most of the money was spent on bank recapitalisations and toxic assets with no return. (2015: 19, 28)

EU NeoImperialist Colonialism: Protecting Credit Default Swaps (CDS), not citizens.

The EU propaganda machine has ensured that it is not widely known that their actions were undertaken to ensure that selected US financial institutions didn't have to pay out on gambling debts known as Credit Default Swaps or "CDS". A naked CDS contract is typically a

bet taken by investment firms like hedge funds that the bond's issuer will end up in trouble. These swaps are not traded publicly on an exchange, like a stock, rather they are unregulated private deals between any two people with more than \$5 million i.e. by an investment bank, hedge fund, or commercial bank traders. There are \$5 trillion worth of bonds issued in the world, but the total amount wagered on those bonds is \$60 trillion. Such financial instruments have come under fire for building up systemic risk in the wider economy and giving speculators a way of profiting from downgrades of sovereign debt in the EU.

Professor of Economics Dr. Michael Hudson explains how CDS was the central issue in the decisions made in relation to Ireland and Greece by the so-called "Troika" comprised of the European Union's Commission, the ECB and the IMF: "Europe was coming to an agreement, and the IMF also, with Ireland to write down the debts until Tim Geithner called from the Treasury and said,

wait a minute, you can't write down the debts, because American banks have written credit default insurance, and American banks will take a bath because we've bet that Ireland will pay; so don't bail it out.

So Europe and Ireland both surrendered". The same happened with Greece. (*Escaping the Dollar, July 19, 2014*)

Despite the fact that none of the Commissions of Inquiry or official published reports on the causes of the Eurozone Banking-Turned-Sovereign Debt crisis have included CDS as a factor, many bailout states' populations know of the EU's role in protecting banks and financial institutions at the expense of ordinary citizens, which would have a major impact on people's willingness to identify with the EU and trust EU institutions.

Effects of EU Neo-Imperialist Colonization on ordinary people's identities

Geraldine Moane (2011: 86) outlines the disruptive effects of colonialism on people's identity in a system of domination that hampers experiencing anger directly, and obscures the real reasons for anger and real targets of anger. Eurobarometer survey data collected in 2015 reflect such changes in Greek and Cypriot peoples' identity in the wake of the EU's imperialist colonisation of their states through economic penetration and manipulation, clientship, and political alliances. The disparity between 'bailout/in states' and the others is clear: in Greece, 67% of people are not attached to the EU, and in Cyprus 77% are not attached to the EU, reflecting the lowest levels of attachment of all EU member-states' populations. Additionally, EU data shows that more than 4 in 5 Greek people do not trust the EU institutions, and just 4% do trust the institutions.

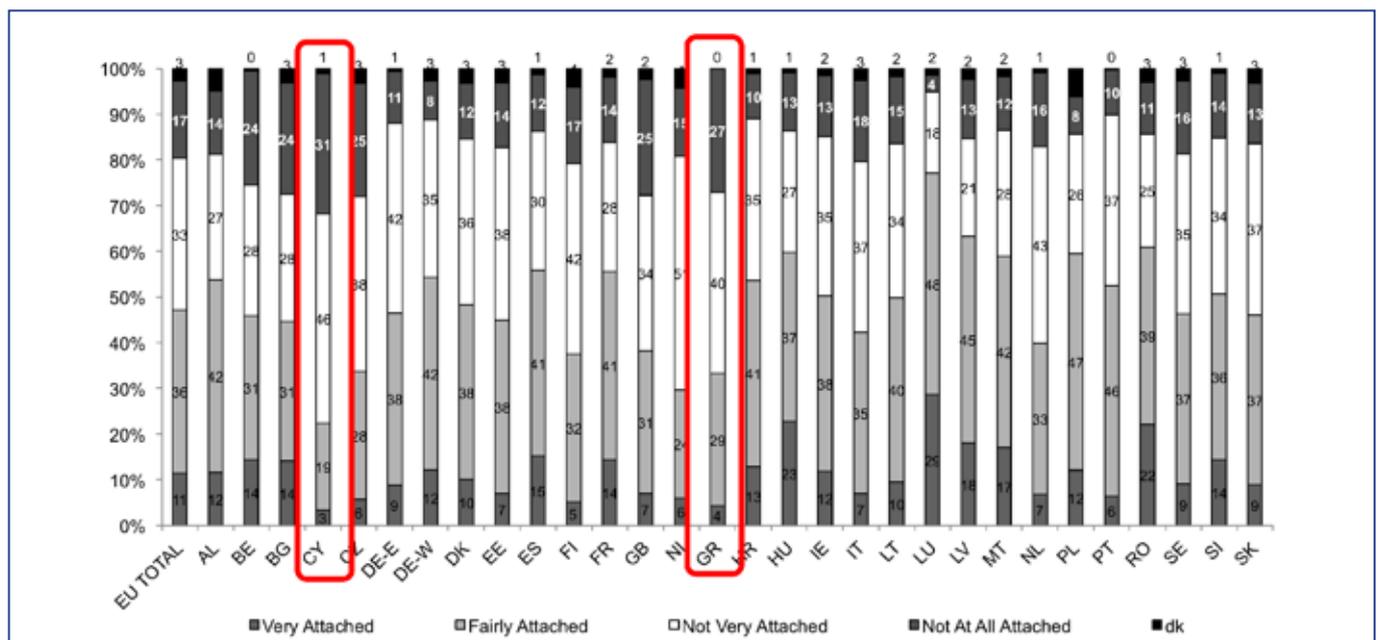


Figure 1: Attachment to the European Union, Eurobarometer 84.3 (2015)

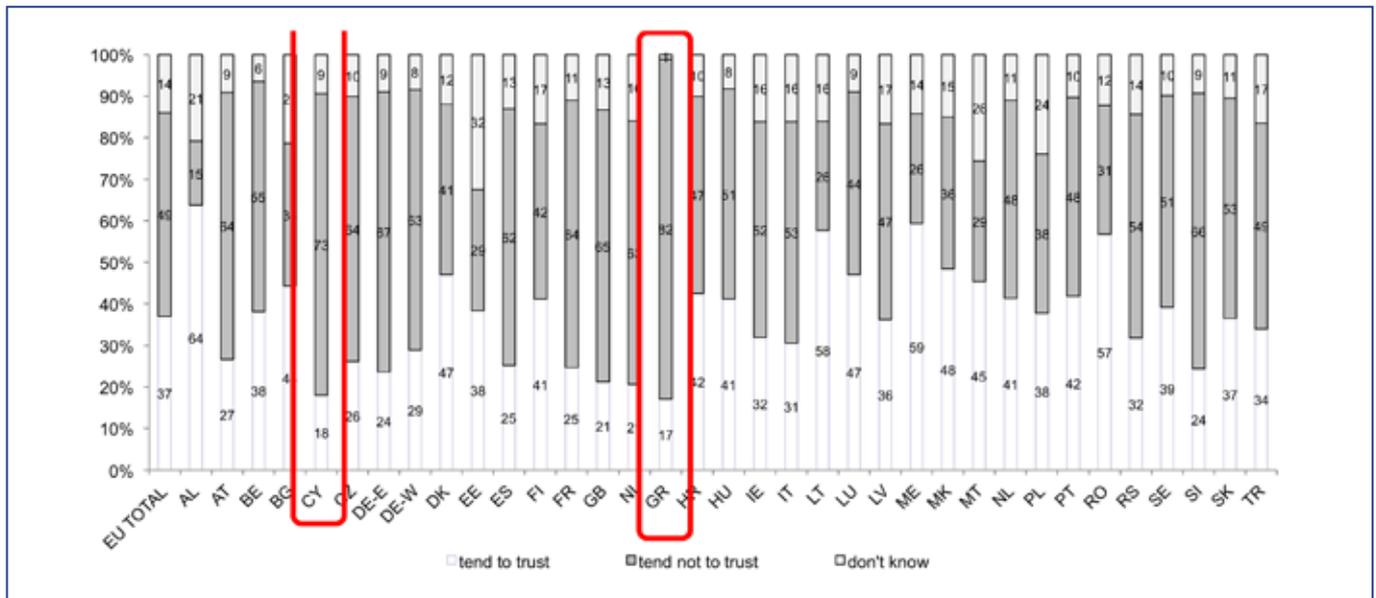


Figure 2 Trust in Institutions: The European Union, Eurobarometer 84.3 (2015)

In Cyprus, 72% do not trust EU institutions and less than 1 in 10 people do. Exemplified through the case of the United Kingdom, low levels of identification by people with the European Union is linked to a desire to leave the organisation. Ireland is an exception for a large number of reasons, including the effectiveness and strength of the EU propaganda regime, and the stranglehold of EU colonialist sympathisers on the reins of domestic power.

Conclusion: Does the EU Empire have a looming Expiration Date?

Edmund Burke’s description of the colonial penal law regime imposed on Ireland by the British - “a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance, as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man” - is an apt description of the European Union’s regimes of bail-outs, bail-ins, and austerity, in order to avoid triggering financial institutions’ CDS debts. Fulfilling the criteria of neoimperialist colonisation, the EU has misappropriated member-states’ assets through forced privatisations, indebted many with banks’ gambling misadventures worth multiples of the size of their economies, taken ordinary people’s savings, and decimated public services, which in turn has destroyed ordinary people’s quality of life through rampant youth unemployment, untreated mental and physical health difficulties, increased homelessness, and soaring rates of suicide, including youth suicide.

The former EU Commission Chief Jose Manuel Barroso declared, “Sometimes I like to compare the EU as a creation to the organisation of empire. We have the dimension of empire” (Barroso says EU is an ‘empire’, EUObserver 10 July 2007) The shift in trust in and attachment to the European Union amongst the Greek and Cypriot people to levels below those seen in the

United Kingdom’s population that voted to leave the EU in 2016 is perhaps an indication of their willingness to follow a similar path. Potential exits of three or more members would signal the beginning of the end of the EU, making it an imperialist transcolonial empire with one of the shortest life-cycles in modern human history.

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The Militarisation of the EU and the Threat to Peace

by Gerry Grainger



In November 2016 Jean-Claude Juncker, the President of the European Commission, demanded closer military and security cooperation between EU member states. In June 2017, within days of revealing a multi-billion-Euro plan to help fund European defence research, Juncker said it was time to integrate militaries and defence industries. In September 2017 he set out his plans for an

EU-wide army. However, these plans to explicitly create a European army follow a long strategy for the militarisation of the EU. The Workers' Party is concerned that militarisation of the economy, ideology and political life in the EU has been accepted by many as a fact of life.

The Single European Act (signed in 1986 and formally adopted in 1987), and which the Workers' Party opposed, ensured that European common foreign policy provisions became a part of European law. The Amsterdam Treaty in 1992 added defence policy provisions and in 1999 the EU established the Political and Security Policy and Security Committee and agreed to establish an EU military capability, including the creation of an EU "Rapid Reaction Force". In December 2001 the EU declared itself to be "militarily operational".

In 2003, at a Franco-British military summit it was suggested that smaller EU Battle Groups should be created and this was agreed by the EU at its London Summit later that year. These were established in 2004. The Lisbon Treaty reinforced the concept of the EU as a distinct legal entity, separate from and superior to the individual member states which were required to support the EU's foreign, defence and security policy. Increasingly, the EU, as an inter-state capitalist union, continued to play a greater role in the EU/US/NATO axis.

The Treaty on European Union (TEU) which was negotiated in Maastricht in 1991 and signed on 7 February 1992, and which our Party also opposed, established a European Union that incorporated the European Communities supplemented by "the policies and forms of cooperation established by the Treaty".¹ One of the stated objectives was to assert the identity of the European Union "on the international scene, in particular through the implementation of a common foreign and security policy which shall include the eventual framing of a common defence policy". According to Article J.2 the member states agreed to inform and consult each other on foreign and security matters to ensure their combined influence was exerted as effectively as possible "by means of concerted and convergent action".

By reason of the Treaty provisions the Council was permitted to define "Common Positions" and member states were required to ensure that their national policies conformed to the "common positions". Article J.3 permitted the adoption of "Joint Action" in foreign and security matters and J.4 declared that the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) "shall include all questions related to the security of the European Union, including the eventual framing of a common defence policy ...". It was clear, however, that what was envisaged was the intention not to have a policy which was incompatible with any policy established within the NATO framework or to interfere with collaboration with NATO and the WEU.

Article 42(3) of the TEU mandates member states to militarise and invest more funds into military spending: "Member States shall make civilian and military capabilities available to the Union for the implementation of the common security and defence policy, to contribute to the objectives defined by the Council ... Member States shall undertake progressively to improve their military capabilities."

In June 1992 the Lisbon European Council set out the objectives for joint actions and particular regions designated for joint actions were Central and Eastern Europe, including the former Soviet Union and the Balkans, the Mediterranean, the Maghreb and the Middle East. In 1993 the Permanent Council and the Secretariat-General of the WEU were transferred from London to Brussels with the declared objective of bringing it closer to NATO and the EU.

Subsequent to Maastricht, NATO permitted the WEU to utilise NATO resources through the Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs) and thereafter the Amsterdam Treaty, which made substantial changes to the Maastricht Treaty, and which entered into force in May 1999, copper-fastened the predominance of NATO in these arrangements.

In 1998 the Saint Malo Declaration, which constituted another step towards increasing European military capacity, stated that the EU: "must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so ...". This device was characterised as a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) which subsequently became known as the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) after the Lisbon Treaty.

From 2001 there were regular meetings between the EU and NATO. In 2001 the European Council announced the objective of fielding operational combat-ready troops by 2003. By 2006, the EU had engaged in numerous



EU Rapid Reaction Force

operations, frequently outside Europe. In 2002 the EU and NATO signed a formal declaration on ESDP. In a speech in Brussels in June 2001 George W Bush stated: "The US would welcome a capable European force properly integrated with NATO that provides new options for handling crises when NATO chooses not to lead".²

In 2003, Javier Solana, High Representative for the CFSP, (who had been Secretary-General of NATO – including at the time of NATO's murderous attacks on Yugoslavia) before being appointed Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union) presented a document on strategy to the European Council, diminishing the role of the United Nations, and emphasising the importance of NATO, the World Trade Organisation, the International Financial Institutions and European and non-European regional organisations in "strengthening the international order", stating that "a number of countries have placed themselves outside the bounds of international society" and "the need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid ... and robust intervention". He added: "As a Union of 25 Members, spending more than 160 billion Euros on defence, we should be able to sustain several operations simultaneously. We could add particular value by developing operations involving both military and civilian capabilities".³

In 2004 the European Defence Agency (EDA) was created to accelerate the ESDP, to identify military capabilities, propose multilateral projects, support "defence technology" and improve the effectiveness of "military expenditure". By 2011 the EDA had a budget of 30.5 million Euro.

WEU tasks and institutions were gradually transferred to the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) of the European Union. This process was completed in 2009 with the Treaty of Lisbon. The states which were party to the Modified Treaty of Brussels subsequently decided to terminate that treaty on 31 March 2010, with all the remaining WEU's activities to end within a specified

period. On 30 June 2011 the WEU was officially declared defunct.

The final ratification of the Lisbon Treaty by the EU in late 2009, after the passing of the second Lisbon Referendum by Ireland in October, marked a critical change in the relationship between individual member states and the EU as an power in its own right and the culmination of the second significant phase of the process of European integration of EU member states into an imperialist alliance.

Of 34 CSDP missions between 2003 and 2013, 10 have been explicitly military in nature. The European Union has taken part in the imperialist wars in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya together with the US and NATO, and has played a leading role in the intervention and threats against Syria and Iran. The cooperation between NATO and the EU together with the calls for a European army is designed to increase the capacity for military intervention. Many CSDP missions have been planned and conducted in collaboration with NATO. There is a massive expansion in EU funding of military research and development. "Horizon 2020" (2014–2020), an EU research programme with almost €80 billion funding available, has set aside large sums for such research. The EU is a major supporter of the arms trade and EU member states export vast quantities of arms.

The Workers Party which has participated in protests against the recent NATO summits in Warsaw and Brussels believes that the peoples of Europe are confronted with a serious danger. It is time this threat was confronted and opposed.

Gerry Grainger is a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Workers' Party with responsibility for international relations.

¹ TEU, Title I, Common Provisions, Article A

² *The Economist*, 14 June 2001

³ *European Security Strategy, Document proposed by Javier Solana and adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the European Council in Brussels on 12 December 2003.*

Growing Involvement of Ireland in European Militarisation - NEW GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL

by Seamus Healy



Ireland's involvement in a new EU defence framework, Permanent Structured Co-operation (Pesco) is the latest step towards integrating Ireland into an EU Military Command.

This process is taking place alongside the use of Shannon Airport as a port for US military Aircraft taking part in foreign military adventures.

These two processes have already seriously compromised Ireland's Neutrality and threaten to leave our citizens open to attacks by those retaliating against aggression by US and European military forces against their home countries.

The fulminations of US President, Donald Trump, have highlighted the danger of a nuclear holocaust. It is vital to understand that many of the powers with which Ireland is now aligning itself militarily are nuclear powers.

As Ed Horgan has pointed out: "Irish neutrality was ended with Ireland's facilitation of the US-led Afghan and Iraq wars. It's vital that the restoration of Irish neutrality should be positive or active neutrality. There is a false perception since the end of the Cold War that the threat of nuclear holocaust has diminished. Nuclear weapons have become far more sophisticated and powerful, and sub-nuclear weapons containing large amounts of depleted uranium have already been used by the US and Nato in the Balkans and the Middle East."

Irish Elite Attempting to FORMALLY End Neutrality

President Of the Institute for International and European Affairs, Brendan Halligan, has already advocated the ending of Irish Neutrality saying: "As the Franco-German axis reasserts its self, Irish neutrality and corporation tax policies will have to be revisited: the best strategy for Ireland is to be at the centre by adopting their agenda and adapting it to our own needs. And in view of Brexit, Ireland will

need to be at the centre to get maximum advantage from our membership. It not an easy proposition. "- *Irish Times: Thursday, July 27, 2017, 17:28*

But we won't be able to do that for much longer because the Franco-German alliance has undergone a renaissance with the arrival of President Macron and with the imminent re-election of Mrs Merkel. European defence is back on the agenda, not least because of the US retreat from global affairs and the re-emergence of a "truculent Russia." The IIEA with Halligan as President is funded by the EU and huge banks and financial institutions at home and abroad. The Institute is clearly involved in political lobbying but is not registered to do so.

Already Government, backed by Fianna Fáil, has transferred the Irish Navy into an integrated European Command in the Mediterranean. Up to recently, the Irish Navy was in a bi-lateral humanitarian operation, "Pontus," with the Italian Navy to rescue refugees and transfer them to Italy. Now Ireland is part of Operation Sophia — 25 EU states including UK, France, which are collaborating With Tripoli Government to return refugees to concentration camps in Libya ("Hell on Earth" - Refugees International)

In July 2016, Professor Ray Kinsella published a piece in Irish Independent entitled: The militarisation of Europe is a far greater threat than Brexit-

He pointed out :

"The most searching challenge that the EU faces is not the fallout from Brexit - it's from the militarisation of Europe and the US-led Nato encirclement of Russia, endorsed by the Nato Summit in Warsaw last weekend."

He went on:

" Militarisation will make it much more difficult to deal with the EU's migration crisis, itself largely a consequence of the catastrophic effects of Western military intervention. A conflagration between US-led Nato and Russia would increase the numbers of refugees in Europe by an order of magnitude. As for the impact of such a conflagration on the European and global economy — well, all bets are off. We could not begin to model the impact — but we can look at post-war Europe and Iraq and Syria



Permanent Structured Co-operation (PESCO): 23 European Union member states sign joint notification.

and Libya... Only what are euphemistically termed 'Defence' industries do (exceedingly) well out of war".

And

"Now, consider this recent statement by Nato: "Since 2014 Allies have implemented the biggest increase in collective defence since the Cold War... Four robust multinational battalions to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland ... a brigade in Romania ... further steps to improve cyber-defences, civil-preparedness and to defend against ballistic missile attack ... extend Nato's training mission in Iraq and to broaden (its) role in the Central Mediterranean ... deploy Nato's Awacs surveillance" aircraft to support the Global Coalition to counter Isis..."

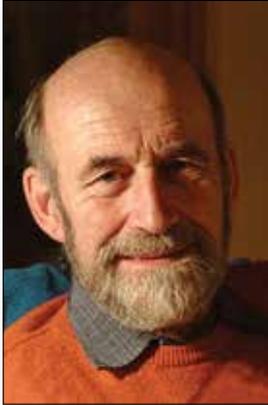
As far back as 2001, Prof John Maguire said:

"But surely the EU isn't NATO? If so, why do they now envisage identical tasks for their military forces? The (EU) Nice summit confirmed "a trusting . . . permanent and effective relationship" between the two bodies. They sometimes differ about teams and captains, but not about the game they're playing". - John Maguire *Irish Times Jun 1, 2001*

We call on the Irish People to urge their political Representatives to restore our military neutrality. The Rejection by Dáil deputies of Ireland's involvement in a new EU defence framework, Permanent Structured Co-operation (Pesco) , as being proposed by Government shortly would be a good beginning.

Forward to an EU Army!

by Frank Keoghan



'An EU Army is a project that would give additional weight to the EU foreign and security policy'

(EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker).

The EU's military capabilities are set to get a boost when joint defence plans are launched in autumn 2017. The

scope and depth of developments since November 2016, when considered in their totality, are scary and point only in one direction.

At a recent Summit in Brussels, EU leaders endorsed a Franco-German push to get governments to announce whether they will sign up to the new pan-EU defence scheme. French president Emmanuel Macron described the latest move as "historic", noting that both France and Germany are set "to go even further" than what had been agreed among all 28 EU states.

"For years and years there has not been any progress on defence, there has been one today," he said. German chancellor Angela Merkel echoed his views, noting that the proposal will make it possible

for participating EU states to carry out missions "throughout the world. In the next few weeks and months, we will look at possible projects, the criteria that will have to be met."

In November 2016, the EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence agreed to the Global EU Strategy on Security and Foreign Policy. This included new possibilities for the rapid deployment of EU Battlegroups with aerial support for civil and military operations in conflict zones outside Europe, "EU defence policy was supposed to start in 1954, we proposed it in 2014, it's happening now," said EU commission president Jean-Claude Juncker. EU council President Donald Tusk said the plans would allow much deeper integration on defence.

A report has also been voted through the EU Parliament which looks at the scope available through the Lisbon Treaty to push on with an EU Common Security and Defence Policy, which would force Ireland to increase national defence expenditure. MEP Lynn Boylan summed up the situation: "Despite its impressive sounding name, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) is completely misleading. The policy will improve neither security nor defence; rather, it is an outward looking offensive imperialistic military project.





Ireland and Denmark are not likely to join the 'EU Defence Union' or EU Army – at least for the moment. Taoiseach Leo Varadkar said that "Ireland's position on neutrality is longstanding" while Denmark is currently prevented from investing in EU security due to an opt-out from EU defence and security policies. However, a glance through the measures agreed during the last six months outlined below would lead one to question Varadkar's sincerity and what exactly that longstanding policy is!

There are a number of main areas which the EU has been pursuing in order to establish what it calls an 'EU Defence Union' or EU Army. Procurement policy, Finance, Battlegroups and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). Ireland has made commitments in a number of these areas of defence while still standing on a policy of 'Neutrality.'

At this point, if you're not into detail, the following paragraphs can be summarised as follows: We've signed up to everything except Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) – though we did give our approval for it to proceed. The latter – at the moment – seems to mean placing troops under common command as a number of Member States have already – under German command - and sharing existing military equipment.

This is a developing 'anchor army' with Bulgarian and Slovak units under German command and control as is almost two thirds of the Dutch army. The host nation agreement between the Nordic 'neutral' members of the EU – Sweden and Finland suggests that they are now prime candidates for absorption. So, under the bland label of the Framework Nations Concept, Germany has been at work on something ambitious — the creation of what is essentially a Bundeswehr - led EU Anchor Army and a fait accompli!

According to a recent article in The New York Times, an idea, once unthinkable, is gaining attention in European policy circles: a European Union nuclear weapons programme. Under such a plan, France's arsenal would be repurposed to cover the rest of the EU and would be put under a common EU command, funding plan, defense doctrine, or some combination of the three. This would amount to an unprecedented escalation in the EU's military power. In any event, there is a growing belief that Germany has quietly developed latent capabilities that are sometimes figuratively described as a "screwdriver's turn" away from a bomb.

Now, back to some detail on EU developments! Under Procurement Policy and Incentives, Ireland has agreed to grant more power to enforce EU-wide tendering in defence contracts. It has also granted an expanding remit for the EU over defence industrial strategy and joint-built assets and in the purchasing and use of joint-owned assets

Incentives for Irish defence – related companies to engage long-term with the developing EU-wide industrial strategy. While Ireland does not have defence industries per se, downstream secondary military use of many items of electronic hardware produced by transnational companies in Ireland has been documented.

The EDA and EU Commission have a benchmark of achieving 35% pan-EU equipment procurement. Ireland (through Minister Paul Kehoe) has also approved measures that allow the European Defence Agency to have a greater role in standardisation and certification. 'Neutral' Ireland is a member of the European Defence Agency Steering Board

The EU refers to EU defence industrial strategy as the European Defence Technology and Industrial Base

(EDTIB) and has more recently started using the term 'Single Market for Defence', with the objective of 'reducing duplication, the EU intends to integrate this market under coordinated joint projects and an EU-controlled policy environment'. The aim is for the resulting combined EU defence industrial strategy to serve the needs of the EU's 'new level of ambition' in a military context

This 'new level of ambition' demands increased spending and Ireland has agreed to the creation of the EU's first central military budget: the European Defence Fund which includes the use of European Investment Bank funds in which Ireland holds a €1.4bn share.

The Commission is putting aside €1.5 billion a year for joint defence spending. The EU will spend €500 million a year of its budget from 2020 onward on R&D of new military technologies, such as robotics or cyber defence. This is added to €5 billion a year already pledged to 'Joint defence capabilities.'

The government has also agreed to the creation of a Cooperative Financial Mechanism (CFM) to augment the European Defence Agency, the objective of which is to incentivise defence cooperation by 'overcoming the lack of budgetary synchronisation between Member States' and the problems that this causes for the launch of cooperative defence projects.

It would appear that we may have surrendered control of our defence budget when we agreed to the creation of a Coordinated Annual Review of

Defence (CARD), a mechanism which sees the EU offer financial incentives for adherence to EU planning over member state defence budgets. The CARD aims at facilitating Member States delivering on EU capability development priorities agreed within the framework of the Capability Development Plan (CDP) while allowing Defence Ministers to assess progress in cooperative capability development to date and share information on defence spending plans. Ireland seems to fully participate as a member of the European Defence Agency Steering Board.

The European Defence Fund will begin with a budget of only a few billion euros, but this money will be dangled in front of policy makers and defence companies to steer them towards joint activity and a policy environment that is under EU authority. Millions of euros have already been placed into an "unprecedented level of engagement" with defence companies including defence industry conferences financed by the EU Commission, which started in April 2017. Watch out for one in Ireland!

The EU's plan to subsidise research and procurement of high-end defence technologies also involves in 2018-9, redirecting €145 million that was originally allocated to the Connecting Europe Facility, a programme aimed at increasing energy security. Of that sum, €40 million was supposed to go to projects that contribute to "sustainable development and protection of the environment". Given that the US Army is the world's biggest polluter, might an EU Army be far behind?

"With Member States at the driving seat, the European Defence Fund will pool national and EU resources to encourage more efficient spending for joint cooperation on defence research and accelerate the development of new defence capabilities in Europe."

Vice President **Jyrki Katainen**



According to the EU Commission and EEAS, the Cooperative Financial Mechanism “will strengthen the European Defence Agency” and is designed to manage member states’ money in a joint budget and will be spent on EDA research projects and joint assets.

The EU Commission is changing the lending criteria of the European Investment Bank (EIB) to ensure it supports the European Defence Fund. The EIB is an instrument of the EU and operates in adherence to EU policy. There has been no confirmation of whether Ireland will withdraw from the EIB, but to remain a shareholder would mean a level of participation in EU military policy. The EIB has placed funds into infrastructure projects such as Luas Cross City, so our withdrawal is a bit unlikely.

When it comes to Battlegroups and Permanent Structured Cooperation, Ireland has agreed to an increased size, scope and infrastructure of the EU’s military intelligence agency as a central ‘hub’ and to drop objections to PESCO, (first version of permanent military unification) by willing member states. Ireland will not participate but its agreement was required in order for PESCO to proceed. The development of PESCO will be facilitated by the reordering of EU agencies to include ‘permanent planning’ of EU defence missions and a ‘coordinated military command chain’; the creation of a permanent military HQ with staff responsible for strategy and operations.

The EU Council, with Irish consent, has agreed to reorder the European External Action Service to “develop the necessary structures and capabilities for the permanent planning and conduct of CSDP missions and operations” with “distinct but coordinated civilian and military chains of command”. These will work under the political control, strategy and leadership of the EU Council’s Political and Security Committee.

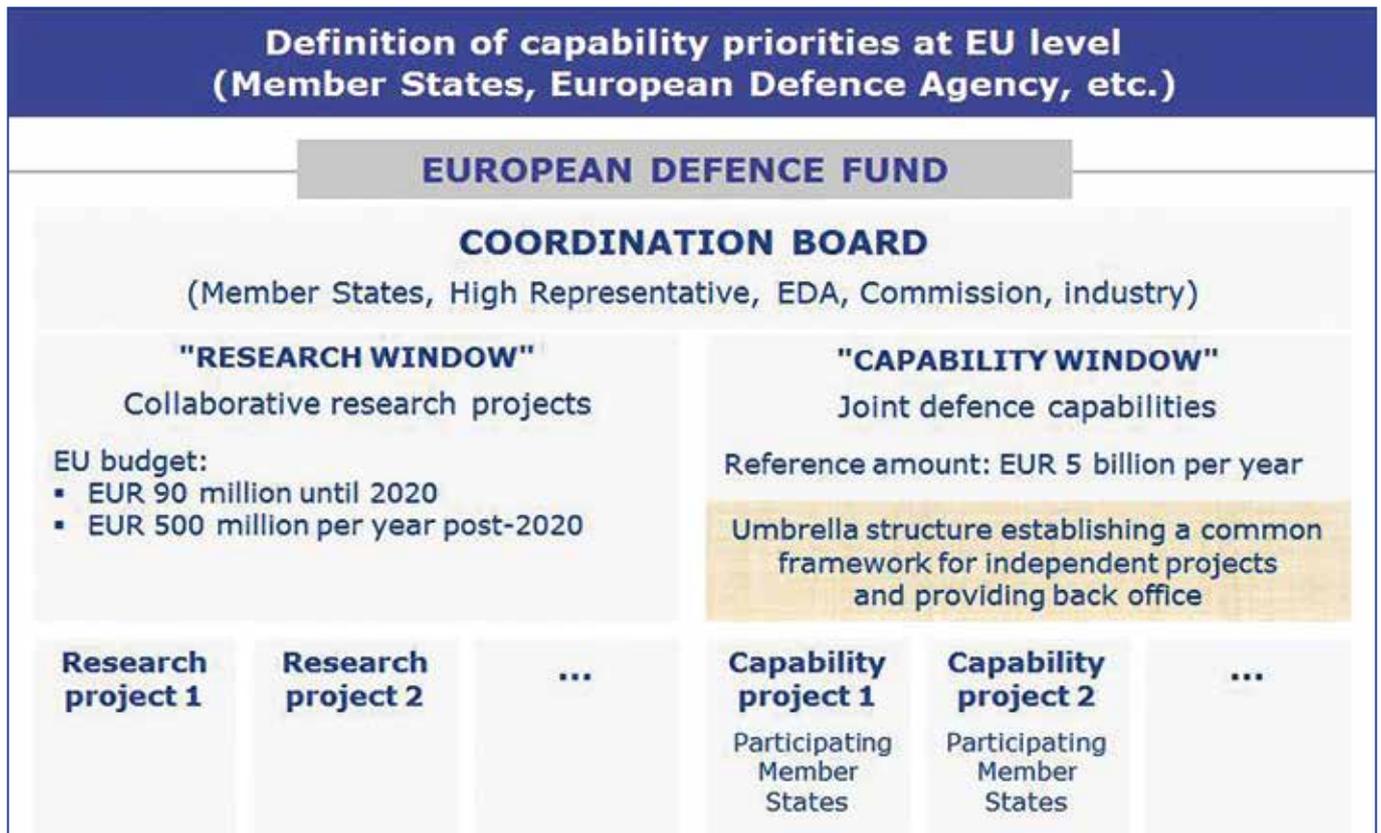
The plans include the creation of an operational HQ, the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC), as part of its plans for greater defense cooperation— just don’t call it an EU military HQ. The Military Planning and Conduct Capabilities (MPCC) unit would be responsible for the EU training missions in Somalia, Mali and Central African Republic, and EU countries have agreed on all the major outstanding issues.

Finally, we have agreed to participate in a 2019 EU Battlegroup under EU Council control.

The Commission and the EU Foreign Service added in a recent “reflection paper” that member states’ defence forces could one day “be pre-positioned and be made permanently available for rapid deployment on behalf of the Union”.

Jens Stoltenberg, the NATO head, welcomed the EU initiative. “Stronger European defence ... will strengthen the European pillar in NATO”, he said. The Commission proposals also won support from





mainstream groups in the European Parliament, who will need to sign off on the fund. Manfred Weber, a German MEP who chairs EPP Group in the EU Parliament - the largest Group - of which Fine Gael is a member and Enda Kenny currently a Vice - President, said: "This is, after the euro, the second major development for Europe. I believe that common defence is ... a must" – a view echoed by Guy Verhofstadt, leader of ALDE, of which Marian Harkin is a member.

All of these developments – admittedly dry reading - have gone largely unreported in an Ireland, where the last independent polls saw over 75% of the population favouring a policy of neutrality and where the government regularly proclaims its ardent support for neutrality or 'military neutrality'. While it is true that we do not participate in Structured Cooperation, we do participate in Battlegroups and in EU 'peace enforcement' missions through the Petersberg Tasks.

It is clear that Ireland has fully participated in decision – making and supported – with the exception of PESCO – the creation of facilities and mechanisms that will inevitably end in the creation of an EU Army. The latest extension of the mandate for Operation Sophie in the Mediterranean, involving destruction of people smugglers equipment on the Libyan coast is merely another incremental step on the road to Irish participation in that Army.

Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission,

arriving at a recent summit of defence ministers in Brussels said "I honestly see a determination on the part of the other 27 member states to make a European defence one of the key dossiers for the future of the EU" adding that, "if we are self-confident and we take the political courage to use the potential we have, we could be indeed the security provider for European regions, and more largely the world."

Those 27 also include Ireland, whose citizens, generally, haven't got a clue what's going on and what is being agreed to in their name. If they did, they would almost certainly reject it!

EU member states met in November in Brussels to sign a defense pact—Permanent Structure Co-operation, or PESCO—calling for a massive increase in military investment and paving the way for the deployment of EU military forces. As we go to press, Ireland is outside the pact for the moment but Varadkar has signalled his support for the project and the Department of Defence has proposed to Cabinet that Ireland should join PESCO before its formal launch at the December EU summit. The issue will then go before the Dáil. If accepted, we would be committed to "regularly increasing defence budgets in real terms".

PESCO, is a framework for resource-pooling and enhancing the effectiveness of member states' defence forces, particularly their interoperability and research programmes, to better equip them for missions under the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). It is clearly an EU Army in all but name.

Europe, the EU and Russia

by Ray Kinsella



"We must cast a sceptical eye on what we have learned never to question"

(Edward Luce, *Financial Times*, May 5 2017)

Introduction

Political, including military, relations between the EU and Russia are in a dangerous

state. The most recent expression of this is the November 2017 Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) Agreement – contributing further to the formalisation of a European Army. The Government are strongly minded for Ireland to join PESCO. We should have no part of it. A principled Oireachtas, protective of our neutrality, would offer a Referendum on so serious a step, with such grave implications for the country.

The EU began as a community of nations. It is metastasizing into a centralised Empire almost wholly detached from its Christian Democratic roots in Post-War Germany. In the post-Brexit Referendum era, the primary initiative by the EU's dominant powers Germany and France, and EU Commission President Mr Juncker, is an Army – notwithstanding the bleak and visible consequences of the EU's support for US military adventurism in Libya and Iraq, and the EU's own yawning 'democratic deficit'.

PESCO has all of the hallmarks of an initiative driven, not by a reflective analysis of what is in the best interests of Europe but, rather, by the military priorities of France and Germany, together with extraordinary pressure from the US. What PESCO actually does is to institutionalise the militarisation of Europe.

Considerations of security and defence, particularly in Eastern Europe, are legitimate matters for dialogue between the EU and Russia. But what is happening goes well beyond any such dialogue – what is unfolding is the biggest build-up of military manpower and weaponry (including nuclear weapons) in Europe since World War 11.

The question is, why. An answer can be sought at two levels. The first relates to self-interest and the power of the 'Conventional Wisdom'. The second relates to what is driving this process at an even deeper and darker level. It has to do with the Ideological colonisation of Europe by 'progressive liberalism' –

the kind that asserts that there is more than one way to look at Truth, that there is no difference at all, at all, between a man and a woman and that militarisation will create 'lots of jobs'.

The 'Conventional Wisdom'

The 'Conventional Wisdom' – pushed and 'spun' for all its worth in western MSM – is that militarisation is a response to 'Russian Aggression', especially in Crimea. It bears reflecting upon.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, including the tyranny of Marxist/Stalinism, impelled Russia to rebuild its economy and national infrastructure from 'ground zero'. It did so in the teeth of near-insurmountable difficulties including partial default and a devaluation of the currency. These, it should be said, were aggravated by the systemic damage wrought by 'oligarchs' in the privatisation process and in the criminal justice system. At the same time, Russia also had to 'reset' its relationships with neighbouring countries. This included redressing centuries-old ethnic and cultural ties which had been arbitrarily displaced, on an epic scale, within the Soviet Union.

In all of these circumstances, US involvement in the seismic shifts in Europe – for which the fall of the Berlin Wall was the catalyst – might have focussed on attempting to understand, and support, such stabilisation. It chose a different road.

Having 'won' the 'Cold War', it set about consolidating its global hegemony, empowered by the deeply flawed doctrine of US 'Exceptionalism'. It has done so essentially through a policy of 'encirclement' of Russia. 'EU Enlargement' served as a Trojan horse for NATO to do so. This progressively intensified under President Obama. Instability in Ukraine, in which the US did its fair share of 'meddling', provided the opportunity.

Russia's reclaiming of Crimea including Sebastopol, the Headquarters of its Black Sea fleet, provided the pretext for an intensification of US pressures, using the EU as 'proxy' theatre of war. The enabling factor here was 'EU Enlargement' to include Ukraine. This made no sense – the EU itself was already overstretched and, in any event, internal economic and political conditions in Ukraine precluded any meaningful progress towards Accession. Ukraine, like Russia, had its own problems.

It is axiomatic that there is no justification for military intervention in another sovereign state. This



emphatically applies to Russia just as it applies to the West, including the US whose propensity to intervene across the globe has had profound and tragic consequences. This latter factor, in itself, would not in any way have justified ab initio Russian intervention in neighbouring countries. Context is not, as sometimes suggested, 'everything'; but here it is enormously important. So, a key question is how EU and US policy makers and academics could have been unaware of the ethnic and cultural linkages between Russia and its neighbours, including Ukraine, extending deep into pre-Soviet history.

More specifically, given these linkages how they could have been unaware that EU Enlargement, encompassing NATO's expansion to its borders, could not fail to be interpreted as a provocation, directly threatening Russia and its vital strategic interests. The attempt by Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev – the same Khrushchev that arbitrarily handed over Crimea to Ukraine – to install Soviet missiles in Cuba, directly adjacent to the US, is a template for comprehending the existential threat to Russia of this strategy of 'Encirclement'.

The Politics of Lying

Two decades after the implosion of the Soviet Union, the US continues to treat with Russia as the 'enemy' threatening its global military and commercial hegemony. How so?

That wise and most insightful of American economists, J K. Galbraith¹, comes closest to resolving this question. In 'The Affluent Society' first published in 1958 and central to the narrative of 1960's America, Galbraith identified the 'Conventional Wisdom' as a set of stereotypical propositions underpinned by self-interest and closed, by that same self-interest, to any criticism. This paradigm is defended by the MIC, by 'Exceptionalism and by the 'deep state'.

It is, at the very least, an arguable proposition that the 'mainstream' narrative on Crimea, in which the EU establishment acquiesced, was primarily an excuse to impose economic sanctions to weaken Russia's domestic economy and, by extension, its national, including military, capability. The subtext of 'Russian aggression' was always about 'hobbling' Russia while simultaneously pursuing commercial interests at multiple levels including weaponry and energy. This is



the kind of *realpolitik* that very clever analysts come up with to assuage the establishment.

Still, the EU can hardly have really believed that it was feasible, much less in Russia's self-interest, to invade the EU. In military, political and economic terms such a hypothesis is nonsense. But in contemporary Western societies, fact and truth count for little. 'Reality' is what the state wants to believe – and what it seeks to compel its citizens to believe.

EU Militarisation on the scale that has been institutionalised makes no sense – except in that domain of 'Reality' where the bigger the lie, the greater the probability of its being believed. As the novelist Richard Thompson has pointed out in a different context:

"Power has always lied, but now it is not simply that it is lying about a particular issue. It is saying that the truth is of no consequence. And it is the corrosion of the idea of truth that is so terrifying. Because if there is no objective truth, all that remains is opinion, and the opinion of the most powerful is the one that will prevail".

Ideological Colonisation and Europe's Identity Crisis

The transition of Europe from a community of nations, bonded by recovering together from the seismically destructive World War II into a militarised Empire, may only be understood as a profound and much wider process of the subversion of the

foundational culture of European civilisation – a crisis of Reason and of Identity.

A recent critique by European intellectuals, "The Paris Statement: A Europe we can Believe In" makes this important point:

"Europe, in all its richness and greatness, is threatened by a false understanding of itself..." [The Patrons of the false Europe] ignore, even repudiate the Christian roots of Europe....Sunk in prejudice, superstition and ignorance, and blinded by vain, self-congratulating visions of a utopian future, the false Europe reflexively stifles dissent. This is done, of course, in the name of freedom and tolerance".

The Polish political philosopher Legutko's underscores this analysis.

"If we understand the word "culture" as denoting, primarily, a past heritage that continues to exert, directly or indirectly, its influence on human minds, then EU elites are clearly a de-cultured species. Not by education, social formation, or personal interests are they in any way attached to European culture; they have a rather vague idea about its content. They are almost entirely the products of recent decades, starting with the 1960s. When they define the EU as a community of values, they have trouble indicating what those values are.

Legutko continues:

"The term "European values" means for them a mixture of leftist ideologies, the essential function of which is to change the meaning of basic concepts. Democracy as a "European value" means that only the mainstream parties can win the elections; if the elections are won by a party from outside the mainstream, then "democracy is in danger." The same applies to other "European values" explicitly enumerated, such as "the rule of law," "human rights," and "equality." All of them take on a meaning different from their original one.²

Secular 'progressive liberalism' has captured and colonised the heart and bones and sinew of what it means to be European – its origins, values and legacy – as well as its laws and institutions.

It has done the same in the US – and across the West. It has metastasised. Democracy has, as US Presidential Elections in recent decades have demonstrated, been 'hollowed out'. The integrity of financial markets has been subverted every which way, generating seismic financial and welfare losses in the US and globally. The language of 'Rights' – but not Responsibility other than to 'Self' – has displaced an older and deeper understanding. 'Equality' has been transmuted into a slogan colonised by, in the words of Mark Lilla³ by what he dismisses as the 'pseudo politics of self-regard' – of 'identity' and 'gender' operating under the flag of secular liberalism". In reality, it's just another form of cultural Marxism. Writing in the New York Times in the immediate aftermath of the US Presidential Election, Lilla condemned the Democratic Party (of which he is a supporter) for " its moral panic about racial, gender and sexual identity that has distorted liberalism's message..". But the culture of War remains.

More generally, it is simply impossible to comprehend what has unfolded across the EU over the last two decades – from economic Austerity, for which the brutalisation of Greece is a metaphor, to ongoing militarisation – outside of the process of ideological colonisation: capture the language, and you control the culture and once you control the culture including the media you can do what you like.

Once again, Richard Thompson's prose graphically captures what is actually unfolding in the west.

"In this strange time, lies are presented as reality, truth is denied by other lies, and the

more implausible the lie the more likely people is to believe it. Behind this shroud of delirium is the growing horror we have neither the imagination nor moral clarity to fully grasp: growing injustice, permanent war, exodus of the dispossessed, ecological catastrophe. Yet we are told to believe in this delirium as reality, a term increasingly used to describe entertainments of television or politics"

Ideological Colonisation is truly terrifying. It happens, incrementally, below the radar. The attention of the public – and even rank and file politicians – is deflected by all kinds of distractions. To take just one example, control of the Irish economy slipped from an elected Government to a non-elected Troika with brutal suddenness in a matter of days, even as elected functionaries continued to bleat. Then dissent is stifled with a surgeon's precision.

Is there a Road back to Reason?

This takes us to an extraordinary paradox that is unfolding. Post-Soviet Russia is rebuilding what the tyranny of Marxist Leninism had displaced while the EU is building a secularised tyranny of cultural Marxism.

In less than a decade or so the quaint-seeming terminology of 'Russian meddling' has been elevated – or 'nudged' – into a rationale for scaling-up the militarisation of Europe to a level that poses an existential threat to Europe. This is part and parcel of a wider social and cultural re-engineering of Europe into an essentially Marxist construct – the toppling of Reason, the deconstruction of laws and institutions based on objective moral values and the 'privatisation' of God.

What a putative 'threat' of Russian military 'Aggression' towards the EU has done is to contrive a response from Russia – and counter response from the West – that has brought about a real and credible threat of conflict.

And what is unfolding in Europe is, above all, about a culture of war that is being institutionalised within the EU and which, in discarding the EU's own origins, is changing the very nature of the European Identity.

It is ironic that Ireland – the only EU member that is formally committed to military neutrality – has effectively abandoned this commitment at a time when it might have played a central diplomatic role



in affirming the dangers of the path on which the EU is now embarked. It is not a formal member of the PESCO – but that is a technicality, so interwoven has it become in the structures of NATO. In Ireland, ‘The Conventional Wisdom’ has long been that Neutrality is passé. Membership of PESCO would be a further indication that Ireland acquiesced in, rather than witnessed against, the militarization of Europe.

And so...

For the EU, the road back to Reason and geopolitical stability on the European sub-continent will be long and it will be problematic. The hope is, of course, that the EU and Russia will engage openly in order to deescalate militarisation and, in the process, ensure that the legitimate security interests of all countries are negotiated. But that is unlikely – the political – and commercial – momentum is towards war.

The first shoots of a return to Reason and Peace will not be seen in the Chancelleries which have been captured or in the Parliaments that have been colonised.

Nor will it come from Universities who have traded their responsibility to uphold Reason and Truth for a mess of pottage. Instead, it will come from committed and principled resistance by small groups in civic society across the EU, albeit under ever increasingly oppressive surveillance. It will come from churches that have not been ‘captured’ and which still resonate the calling ‘Blessed are the

Peacemakers’. Look to the bedraggled protester outside these same institutions by men and women, facing interrogation and ‘re-education’ – and to the small chapels across Europe and the US where their friends gather, perhaps fearfully, to pray for them.

Ray Kinsella received his PhD from Trinity College and worked as an economist in the Central Bank where he was nominated to the IMF Institute in Washington DC and received a Diploma in Financial Policy and Policy. He was seconded as an Economic Adviser to the then Department of Industry and Commerce before being appointed as Professor of Banking and Financial Services at the University of Ulster. He subsequently returned to the UCD Michael Smurfit School of Business. He has published and broadcast widely.

- 1 John Kenneth Galbraith “The Affluent Society” Houghton Mifflin Harcourt 1958, subsequent reprints (see, in particular, 1998 40th Anniversary Edition, 1998)
- 2 Ryszard Legutko “A Demon-Haunted Europe: Totalitarian Temptations in Free Societies”. I am greatly indebted to Professor Vincent Toomey for bringing this summary of Legutko’s authoritative analysis. Ryszard Legutko is a professor of philosophy at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland. He also is a member of the European Parliament and played a central role in Solidarity, the Trade Union which was the catalyst for Poland’s transition to freedom.
- 3 Mark Lilla “The once and future Liberal: After Identity Politics” Harper Collins 2017 Cited in Edward Luce’s excellent critique “The Democratic Deficit: is the US Model still Viable” Financial Times August 2 2017

A European Defence Budget in an Extralegal Space

by Sabine Lösing



by Sabine Lösing (DIE LINKE, MEP) and Jürgen Wagner (Informationsstelle Militarisation e.V.)

Currently, it is the prevalent perception in Brussels that if the EU wants to establish itself as a veritable global player within the group of major powers, the construction of a powerful military establishment

is inevitable. Great Britain has blocked such a development for many years. Hence, the then chair of the EU-Parliament's Committee of Foreign Policy, Elmar Brok, explained immediately after the British EU-Referendum: "The Brexit has upsides, too. The Britons have hold us back for many years. Now progress is finally being made."

Subsequently, the EU advanced indeed a series of initiatives under German-French leadership, which Great Britain had blocked until then. The crown jewel of this military package is supposed to be the first-time establishment of a multi-billion Euro EU defence budget, the European Defence Fund (EDF).

The following article will consider in particular the question whether the EDF is legal at all. This clarification ought to have top-priority in light of

the great scope of the undertaking, which even the Commission highlights: "the Commission is prepared to engage in defence measures to an unprecedented extent [...] It will exhaust the instruments available to the EU, including EU Funding and the full potential of the treaties, aiming to establish a defence union."

Global Strategic Framework

Only five days after the British referendum, the EU Council approved the Global Strategy, which has been the most important framework document for EU foreign and military policy since. It states that as a "global provider of security" the establishment of "autonomous" intervention capacities are required and that the "the member states [require] in consideration of the high-end military capabilities every important equipment in order to respond to external crises and maintain Europe's security. [...] A viable, innovative and competitive European defence industry is of essential importance for the strategic autonomy of Europe and the credible CFSP [Common Foreign and Security Policy]."

Already one day before the approval of the EU Global Strategy, the German and French foreign ministers of that time, Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Jean-Marc Ayrault, set out the agenda in the paper "A strong Europe in an uncertain world". The paper demanded that "Germany and France" should lead the way by "strengthening the efforts in the area of defence"





in order to “develop the EU step after step to an independent and global actor.” In September 2016, the defence ministers of both countries published a second German-French paper. Both papers demanded an “improved” funding of EU military policy. Claude Juncker adopted this idea and suggested the establishment of an EU defence budget in his “Speech on the State of the Union 2016”.

Billions for Armament

In November 2016, the Commission suggested to pledge an annual amount of 500 Mio. Euros from the EU budget from 2021 to 2027 to EU defence research and 5 Billion Euros annually to the acquisition of armaments - equating to a total of 38.5 Billion Euros. The Council approved this in the same year. In June 2017, the Commission stated that the fund shall already start 2019 and until the end of 2020, 2.59 Billion Euros shall be allocated. Thereafter, it shall stay at the said 5.5 Billion Euros annually, of which 1.5 Billion would come from the EU budget and the rest from the member states. The Parliament and the Council will most likely pass a corresponding regulation proposal from the commission as a priority project in the course of 2018. Hence, the way is cleared to bring the de facto defence budget on its way under the term: “European program for the industrial development of the defence sector for the purpose of the promotion of the competitiveness and the innovation the defence industry of the EU”.

This title clarifies that the core concerns of the EDF are the promotion of the competitiveness and export capabilities of the local arms industry. However, the predominant purpose is to improve the military capability of the EU. Firstly, this is supposed to be achieved by counteracting the alleged underfinancing of the defence sector through the EDF. Secondly, the EDF shall exclusively finance transnational defence

projects, which is supposed to trigger an increase in efficiency through the pooling of the defence sector (“consolidation”) and thus, lead to a higher military capacities.

If the savings potential of up to 100 Billion Euros annually, as predicted by the Commission, are even close to reality remains to be seen. Previous experiences with transnational EU defence projects - keyword Airbus A400M - raise significant doubts. The same applies to the aim of consolidating the EU defence sector through financial incentives: here, too, longstanding experiences from the United States point to the contrary direction.

What EU citizens expect is that the EU accepts the diverse self-inflicted crises inside and outside Europe. However, most citizens probably do not consider an expansion of the military establishment an appropriate measure. Moreover, it is downright dangerous to try to establish exactly this as a “new purpose” and meaningful “integration narrative” for Europe like the “German Institute for International and Security Affairs” does.

Legal or illegal? It doesn't matter!

The reason why the EU has not already got itself a defence budget can be found in Article 41(2) of the Lisbon Treaty, which clearly states that the EU budget is taboo for expenditures of foreign and security policies with military implications.

Therefore, the Commission uses a trick by choosing Article 173 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) as the legal basis. The article states that the EU budget may finance measures to promote the industry's competitiveness. Therefore, the Commission also assigned the leadership to the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE).

However, it is not the case that the Commission can arbitrarily use any legal basis. In 2016, the European Court of Justice emphasized that if a Union act has a twofold component, with a main and an incidental one, the measure must be based solely on the legal basis required by the main one: "If an examination of a European Union measure reveals that it pursues a twofold purpose or that it comprises two components and if one of these is identifiable as the main or predominant purpose or component, whereas the other is merely incidental, the act must be based on a single legal basis, namely that required by the main or predominant purpose or component."

In the regulation, the Commission clearly declares defence policy as its predominant focal point for action: "The European defence policy was identified as a key political priority in President Juncker's political guidelines of July 2014. [...] For Europe to take over more responsibility for its defence, it is crucial to improve competitiveness and enhance innovation across the Union defence industry." Obviously, the improvement of the competitiveness of the defence sector is seen by the Commission as a means to the end of acquiring "better" military capabilities.

Dubiously, the Commission is shooting itself in the foot with this wording. The matter gets even more bizarre under consideration of the tug war between AFET/SEDE and ITRE that ensued shortly after the release of the Commission's proposal. The Committee Chairs David McAllister (AFET) and Anna Fotyga (SEDE) legitimately argued that the undertaking aims to expand the military capacities of the EU, which clearly

falls within their competence. Therefore, Article 173 is not applicable as a legal basis and their Committees, not ITRE, should be assigned the leadership. In this case, however, Article 41(2) would have to apply and this would spell the end for the defence fund. At least, this legal opinion has been advocated by the UK for many years. The issue was finally "solved" by Cecilia Wikström, the Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, who judged that the ITRE Committee should maintain the lead over the proposal while simultaneously granting AFET (SEDE) a shared competence over the Draft Regulation.

Furthermore, a request by the left political group GUE/NGL to instruct the EU-Parliament's legal service to review the contentious legal basis of the draft regulation has been blocked by the Parliament's President Antonio Tajani, who according to the rules should have given his approval. Instead, he referred it to the responsible ITRE Committee. The Chair of the ITRE Committee Jerzy Buzek (EPP) rejected the request. There seems to be no interest in clarifying the controversial legal basis.

This conduct alone should urge caution in relation to further advancements aiming to confer critical competences and money onto an EU level, which handles issues of the division of powers and legality in such a way.

This is a slightly updated and translated version of an article that first appeared in the October issue of the German magazine "Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik" www.blaetter.de



The new push for militarisation

by Paul Murphy



“We have a lot to thank the Americans for... but they won't look after Europe's security for ever.... We have to do this ourselves, which is why we need a new approach to building a European security

union with the end goal of establishing a European army.”

Jean-Claude Juncker, EU Commission President (10 November 2016)

The new political environment created by Brexit is seen by EU hawks as an opportunity to forge ahead with the further militarisation of the EU. This open declaration of an “end goal” of a European army, quickly backed by the German government, is only the most blatant in a whole series of rhetorical and institutional initiatives in the last year.

An “EU source” was quoted in the EU Observer on 12 September stating that Brexit had created a “new situation” in terms of the militarisation of Europe and that “we are just at the beginning of the process.”

This new ‘opportunity’ arises because one of Britain’s roles inside the European process of capitalist integration has been to be an ally of US imperialism. On a political level, that has meant pushing for a wide, but shallow EU – essentially a glorified free trade agreement – without the capacity to rival the US politically on the world stage. On the military level, it has meant emphasising the integration of NATO and EU military forces, thereby ensuring US hegemony.

The impending British exit has created space for a debate to break out within the European political elites over what road to follow. That debate takes place within very limited parameters. All sides are agreed on increased military spending and increased integration of military forces – the only real question is whether it takes place fully under the aegis of NATO or with some degree of independence.



US troops at Shannon Airport. Their presence makes a mockery of the notion of Irish neutrality. *Photograph: Google Images*



A Permanent Military HQ?

The driving actors of these moves appear to be the German and French governments, together with the European Commission. The governments published a joint paper in September 2016, which proposed a medium-term objective of the creation of “a permanent HQ for the military and civilian missions and operations of the EU”, which the Commission also advocated. It also suggested the creation of “an authentically European esprit de corps” through joint training of military officers.

Its mechanism for doing this in the short term involves the further utilisation of the EU battlegroups (now formally renamed ‘tactical groups’ for obvious reasons!) and the utilisation of ‘permanent structured co-operation’ (made possible under the Lisbon treaty) of those states most in favour of further militarisation. This is a way to push ahead with the process, create facts on the ground of further EU militarisation, while in parallel, seeking to create the conditions to formally establish an EU military HQ and ultimately a fully European army.

Separately, in September, Italy also proposed the creation of a “permanent EU force.” As a step towards this, EU Foreign Affairs Ministers in November agreed a plan to create what was referred to as a “mini military HQ and to have joint rapid-reaction forces”. This represented a temporary compromise between those more NATO-oriented governments and those striving for an independent European army.

Destination: ‘European Security and Defence Union’

The road that the EU is travelling on is clear, however. Its next destination is what the European Commission refers to as a “European security and defence union” in a ‘reflection paper’ on “The Future of European Defence” published in June 2017. In it, they target to achieve this union by 2025. This is effectively the same as the German-French proposal – while paying lip service to NATO integration, its orientation is towards allowing “the EU27 to take charge of their own security to a greater extent.”

As always, the arms industry is central. A major element of the paper is in relation to the so-called “economic and technological drivers”. They point to the fact that the EU 28 ‘invests’ just under €28,000 per soldier compared to €108,000 per soldier in the US. Clearly, they want a levelling upwards.

This process is already underway, with a European Defence Fund launched in June worth €5 billion a year – designed to encourage EU governments to spend more money on weapons, and to promote integration of the European armaments industry, through common investment in research.

It is likely to speed up in the coming months, with Macron is due to put forward around 10 proposals for deeper European integration in different fields in the aftermath of the German election, with the



An EU Battle Group

military feature strongly undoubtedly. Juncker's 'State of the Union' address to the European Parliament will also push this forward.

Irish government supports militarisation

The response of the Irish government to these rapid developments has been unfortunately predictable. On the one hand, it pretends there is nothing to see here, saying in response to a written question that "There have been proposals around for some time, that the EU should establish a joint operational headquarters to support the planning and conduct of its civil and military operations."

On the other hand, it welcomes these new developments, in the same answer, saying that "a permanent joint civil-military operational headquarters, appropriately configured, could potentially deliver more effective and responsive CSDP operations in support of the UN and international peace and security, a position which Ireland supports."

So, in the name of "peace and security", and despite the formal 'neutrality' of Ireland, the government supports the establishment of an EU military headquarters! Its attitude to the European Defence Fund is equally nauseating. In the government's White Paper on Defence, they say they are committed "to improving the potential for Irish enterprise to compete for Defence contracts" – i.e. they want a cut of this peddling of death.

It is a deep irony that the notion of an EU Army was used to vilify the opponents to various EU Treaties in

the past – suggesting we were scaremongering about conscription to an imaginary EU army. The left opposition to Lisbon was not doing that, but it was pointing out the realities contained in Lisbon, such as the requirement to increase arms spending, the potential military usage of 'permanent structured opposition' and the mutual defence clauses. Our pointing out the direction that that pointed towards of an EU army flowed logically. Now it is the EU authorities themselves who admit it is their goal!

This military project is intrinsically linked to the project outlined in the European Commission's 'White Paper' on the future of the EU. As Leon Trotsky wrote, "foreign policy is everywhere and always a continuation of domestic policy, for it is conducted by the same ruling class and pursues the same historic goals." It is not an accident that this process towards increased militarisation in the EU is taking place while internally the tendency is towards a more and more openly authoritarian neo-liberalism, with power concentrated in the hands of undemocratic bodies like the European Commission and European Central Bank.

As different EU powers squabble over the exact nature of future European militarisation and its relationship to NATO, James Connolly's old slogan of 'Neither King nor Kaiser' is appropriate here - neither NATO nor independent EU militarisation! Instead, we have to fight against militarisation and for a very different Europe built on entirely different foundations – a socialist Europe for the millions instead of the millionaires, with peaceful co-operation, solidarity and democracy at its core.

The EU's relationship with Apartheid

Israel exposes its hypocrisy over human rights

by Kevin Squires



The European Union claims that “human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights” are elements “embedded” in its operation. Yet the EU’s cosy relationship with the apartheid state of Israel and its continued failure to come to the aid of the Palestinian people exposes the utterly hollow nature of this preposterous claim.

It is not the aim of this piece to detail Israel’s crimes against the Palestinian people, crimes that are meticulously documented in innumerable human rights reports, books and articles; suffice it to say that the state of Israel is responsible for the imposition of a brutal military occupation under a system of modern

apartheid, frequent war crimes, flagrant international law violations and severe human rights abuses.

Instead, the goal of this piece is to investigate the relationship between the EU and the state of Israel, and to make some recommendations as to what an ethical EU foreign policy should look like.

A member in all but name

“Israel, allow me to say, is a member of the European Union without being a member of the institution.” These words were spoken by then-EU Foreign Policy chief Javier Solana in 2009, and indicate the depth of the relationship between the two parties.

For Israel, this relationship has many clear and tangible benefits. For example, the EU is Israel’s largest trading partner, providing a market worth over €13 billion annually to the Israeli economy, from which taxes and revenues are used to fund its war machine, prison regime and colonial settlement projects.





EU states are some of the biggest clients for Israeli arms exports. In 2016, arms sales to EU countries were worth a record €5.6 billion. It is well known that Israel uses the occupation as giant weapons and tech testing zone, with the Palestinian people as the guinea pigs. One Israeli Military officer told the Israeli newspaper Haaretz that “when [foreign armies] come to Israel, they only care about three things: terrorism, borders and cyber”. So much for human rights and human dignity.

Israeli state institutions and private entities received huge amounts of grant funding from the EU under its various Framework Programs for research and development. The current Horizon 2020 Program will see Israeli entities scoop up at least €450m of EU taxpayer money over the five years the program will run. Among those Israeli companies are weapons manufactures Elbit and Israel Aerospace Industries, and the Technion university, all deeply implicated in the occupation of Palestine and Israeli military industry. The former two are due to appear on a UN ‘blacklist’ of companies that do business in or with Israel’s illegal colonial settlements in Palestine.

The EU grants Israel trading privileges through the EU-Israeli association agreement (sometimes referred to as the Euro-Med agreement). Article 2 of this agreement makes it clear that the “respect for human rights and democratic principles [constitute]

an essential element of this Agreement”, yet the EU has never moved to even discuss invoking this Article, let alone taken any action to suspend Israel due to its violations of international law. This despite the fact that EU Parliament voted on at least two occasions to do just that – exposing the democratic deficit that would seem to lie at the heart of the EU.

Despite nominally recognising the illegality of all of Israel’s colonial settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, the EU refuses to implement any kind of ban on goods produced – or any kind of sanction for multinational companies that profit from the occupation or settlement enterprise.

Finally, Israel and the EU cooperate on many projects including space exploration, technology and policing – with Israel seeking to become a full member of Europol, allowing it access to restricted data on millions of European citizens and residents.

An ethical foreign policy

The EU suspended its association agreement with Sri Lanka in 2010 and has applied restrictive measures on Russia with regards to its annexation of Ukrainian territory and a host of other states judged to have violated human rights and international law in recent years. The failure to apply similar measures to Israel is a double standard that amounts to support for Israel’s continued violations of international law.

There are many measures that the EU, and EU member states, could take to punish Israel. They include suspending Israel from the Euro-Med Agreement, placing an arms embargo on Israel, placing companies that profit from the occupation or war crimes on a blacklist with legal consequences, refusing to allow Israel to partake in future Framework Programs, and an end to joint initiatives between the EU and Israel, making Israel pay compensation for any EU-funded projects or structures that it has destroyed (estimated value around €65m since 2000).

At the very least, the EU should meet its legal obligations not to provide support to Israel's illegal Israeli settlements by banning all trade and economic relations with the settlements and companies that sustain them.

Sadly, thus far, the EU has failed to take any action that would indicate an end to the impunity that Israel enjoys. One ray of light may be the October 2017 demand for compensation from eight EU countries, including Ireland, for the destruction and theft of EU-funded humanitarian infrastructure in occupied Palestine.

Palestine should be a litmus test for any state or international institution that claims to be progressive, tolerant, just and the myriad other adjectives the EU likes to heap upon itself: either they stand with the Palestinian people as they struggle for freedom, justice and equality, or they support an apartheid regime that denies all these basic rights to people based on their ethnicity while colonising their land.

Until the EU takes the side of the oppressed and supports Palestinian freedom and self-determination, its claims to support human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights remain naught but hollow platitudes, deserving only of scorn and derision.

(Kevin Squires is National Coordinator of the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign. For more information about Palestine, Israel and the EU see www.ipsc.ie and www.eccpalestine.org)



Contributors

Lynn Boylan: In May 2014 Lynn Boylan was the first of four Sinn Féin MEPs elected to the European Parliament making the party the largest Irish group in Europe. Representing the constituency of Dublin she topped the poll with over 83,000 first preference votes.

Lynn has previously worked in Ballymun as a community programme coordinator with an environmental NGO. This work allowed her to combine her skills as an ecologist with her commitment to community activism.

Lave K. Broch is substitute member to the EU parliament for the People's Movement against the EU in Denmark, master of political science from Copenhagen University and officer of the reserve in the Danish Emergency Management Agency. He is also chairman of the committee for peace and conflict resolution for the Danish United Nations Association and social liberal.

Roger Cole: Roger is Chair of the Peace & Neutrality Alliance which was founded in 1996 to advocate the right of the Irish people to have their own independent foreign policy, with positive neutrality as its key component, pursued primarily through a reformed United Nations. He was Chief Steward and one of the main organisers of the over 100,000 march in Dublin on the 15th of February 2003 against the Iraq War. He campaigned actively against the Amsterdam, Nice and Lisbon treaties which have integrated this state into the EU/US/NATO military structures. He seeks to build a Europe, including Russia which is a Partnership of Sovereign States without a military dimension and to reaffirm the role of the United Nations as the only inclusive global institution with responsibility for peace and security.

Anthony Coughlan is Associate Professor Emeritus in Social Policy at Trinity College Dublin and is a long-time critic of supranational EU integration on democratic and internationalist grounds.

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Gerry Grainger is a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party with responsibility for international relations.

Seamus Healy TD: A founder of Workers and Unemployed Action Group, Seamus Healy stands with James Connolly for Irish Unity, independence and Socialism. He believes that Neutrality is an essential Component of Irish Sovereignty. Deputy Séamus Healy was first elected to the Dáil for Tipperary South in 2000. An independent candidate, having served as a Councillor on both Clonmel Borough Council

since 1985 and South Tipperary County Council, Séamus served as Mayor of Clonmel from 1994 to 1995.

He was elected as Deputy for the new all-Tipperary constituency in the last General Election.

Séamus is a longtime trade union and community activist. He served the IMPACT Trade Union at local and national level as branch Chairperson, member of the National Executive and Chairperson of the union's Health and Welfare Division.

He represented the Union on Clonmel Trades Council and served as President of the Council. As a community worker, Séamus is Treasurer of the Old Bridge Community Association, Director of Cuan Saor Women's Refuge and Director and Treasurer of the Elm Park Childcare Committee.

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Ray Kinsella received his PhD from Trinity College and worked as an economist in the Central Bank where he was nominated to the IMF Institute in Washington DC and received a Diploma in Financial Policy and Policy. He was seconded as an Economic Adviser to the then Department of Industry and Commerce before being appointed as Professor of Banking and Financial Services at the University of Ulster. He subsequently returned to the UCD Michael Smurfit School of Business. He has published and broadcast widely.

Sabine Lösing, DIE LINKE. / GUE/NGL: Since 2009 Member of the European Parliament in GUE/NGL group: Member and group-coordinator in the Committee on Foreign Affairs; Member, groupcoordinator and Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence; Substitute of Committee on Development; Member of the Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Strong involvement in peace movement, local civil society and refugees welcome movement. Founder and board member of the WASG (Labour and Social Justice – The Electoral Alternative).

Paul Murphy is a Solidarity TD for Dublin South West. He was a Member of the European Parliament for the Socialist Party from 2011 to 2014. He wrote Paul Murphy is a Solidarity TD for Dublin South West. He was a Member of the European Parliament for the Socialist Party from 2011 to 2014. He wrote 'Austerity Treaty explained: how it undermines democracy & institutionalises austerity' in 2012 to outline the reality of the 'Fiscal Treaty'. He has been an active and vocal opponent of EU militarisation – both in the European Parliament and in the Dail

Kevin Squires is National Coordinator of the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign, which since 2001 has campaigned for freedom, justice and equality for the Palestinian people. He is a regular contributor to print and online media outlets, and has been active in numerous domestic and international campaigns for social and economic justice. For more information about the work of the IPSC, see www.ipsc.ie



Peace and Neutrality Alliance Comhaontas Na Síochána is Neodrachta

Telephone: 01 235 1512 Web: www.pana.ie

OBJECTIVES

1. It is within the OSCE and a reformed United Nations, and not the EU, that Ireland should pursue its security concerns.
2. Ireland should pursue a positive neutrality and independent foreign policy and not join or form an association with any military alliance, such as NATO.
3. Ireland should seek to promote European and international security through a policy of disarmament and should therefore oppose the militarisation of the EU.
4. Ireland should refuse to cooperate with or condone in any way policies or military groupings which maintain nuclear weapons or any weapons of mass destruction.
5. Irish troops should only serve abroad as peacekeepers under the auspices of the UN.

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People's Movement

The People's Movement campaigns against any measures that further develop the EU into a federal super-state and works to defend and enhance popular sovereignty, democracy and social justice in Ireland.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/peoplesmovementireland

Website: www.people.ie Tel: 087-2308330



Irish Anti-War Movement

The Irish Anti-War Movement campaigns for peaceful solutions to war and conflict situations across the world, and for an end to the poverty, inequality and injustice that are the underlying causes and results of conflict.

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Afri

Afri's goal is the promotion of global justice and peace, and the reduction of poverty; this includes, but is not limited to, the progressive reduction of global militarisation, and responding to the threat of climate change, corporate control of resources and water, and interference with food sovereignty.

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Shannonwatch

Shannonwatch is a group of peace and human rights activists based in the mid-West of Ireland. Its objectives are to end the US military use of Shannon Airport and to hold Irish political leaders and authorities accountable for their complicity in human rights abuse. It campaigns against the integration of Ireland into US and other military structures.

Shannonwatch hold monthly protest vigils at Shannon Airport on the second Sunday of every month from 2 to 3pm.

They also do continuous monitoring of all military aircraft using the airport.

Contact: Shannonwatch, PO Box 476, Limerick DSU, Dock Road, Limerick, Ireland

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