

Ireland's Sinn Fein was founded on 'American System' of economy

by Paul Gallagher

No nation which has established its existence and national sovereignty in the past six centuries, has had to overcome, with no outside aid, a more overwhelming domination and oppression than did Ireland in 1921, when it forced the end of 750 years of British rule. It should not surprise us that the man most responsible for the founding of the Irish state is rarely mentioned in popular discussion of Ireland today. This identifies him as an opponent the British oligarchy hated for his achievements against them. He is Arthur Griffith (1872-1922), the journalist, printer, and student of universal history who founded the Sinn Fein movement in 1902, which founded the Irish Free State in 1921, with Griffith as its first President until his death a few months into 1922.

Sinn Fein, though battered by 70 years of political faction in Ireland and British-instigated civil war in Ulster, remains today at the center of British anger over President Clinton's initiative to bring peace and economic development to Ireland.

Griffith understood the geopolitics of the British elite of the 19th century—the geopolitics which today, 100 years later, is repeating the policies and events which led to two world wars. He understood British Prime Minister William Pitt, who reshaped British policy from 1785 until 1805 after the American Revolution, to keep the American republican idea from succeeding in Europe or Ibero-America. Griffith forecast the cause and course of World War I in a 1911 article in the Sinn Fein newspaper, *The United Irishman*:

This is Pitt—the ABCs of Pitt's Continental policy—"No one Continental Power must be permitted to dominate the Continent. Against any Power seeking the hegemony of the Continent combinations of other Continental Powers, supported by the English fleet, must be formed." Germany in the 20th century is to England as France in the 18th and 19th, and Spain in the 16th. [Germany] stands in the same relation to English policy as did Philip of Spain, Louis XIV, and Napoleon Bonaparte. One day the ring of steel will be drawn tight, and then war will happen . . . and Germany, in its turn, like France, must face a world in arms.

It needs no gift of prophecy to foresee so much. It is plain to the student of English policy. It may be in a few years, or it may not be for 20, but the world will

assuredly rock with a war . . . a war that Pitt's policy has made inevitable.

Griffith also understood Britain's mid-19th century "Heaven-sent Foreign Minister" Palmerston, master of the zoo of "Young Europe" insurrectionary movements which hamstringed or overthrew European governments for British policy purposes. From the same series of articles in *The United Irishman* in 1911:

From the day of Canning's death until the end of his own days [40 years] Palmerston dominated English foreign policy. . . . He slaughtered brown and yellow men for the benefit of British speculators and the opium trade, but these things were by-the-way. He bullied little Kingdoms . . . and supplied munitions of war from the government ordnance factories to insurgents in countries whose rulers were too weak to make England respect international law. But such things the commonplace English Foreign Minister can always do. . . . Palmerston added nothing to English foreign policy. But he enforced it as he had learned it from Pitt. . . .

France, refusing to fall in with Cobden's idea [of free trade] was discovered to be living in an intolerable state of tyranny. . . . It asserted itself and Palmerston replied by a French Revolution. The British Embassy in Paris, with admirable skill, utilized French discontent to the end of firing Louis Philippe off the Throne [in the 1848 Revolution]. . . . Young Ireland, with its dream that this regenerate France would unsheathe its sword for Ireland, hastened to Paris. . . . M. Lamartine bowed Young Ireland out, informing it, much to its astonishment, that the French Republic was on excellent terms with England. . . .

And as to the British sponsorship of the French Revolution of 1789:

By the end of the 17th century Spain's strength was broken. The 18th century witnessed England concentrating her power to break France. . . . The revolt of the American colonies gave France and Spain the opportunity of humbling England forever. . . . The En-



Sinn Fein leader Arthur Griffith.

English fleet was defeated, but owing to the gross mismanagement of the war by the Allies it was not conquered. England escaped destruction as a great naval power in 1778-82 by the blunders of her foemen.

Since the two steps necessary to Pitt in the policy were the overthrow of France and the subjection of Ireland . . . his support of the French Revolution for four years is explicable. The French Monarchy was the ancient enemy of England. Pitt made the Revolution in order to overthrow the Monarchy.

As to the two nations whose collaboration the British were determined to prevent, and are determined to prevent now: "Modern Germany and modern America—England's political rivals and commercial competitors—are the creation of [Friedrich] List and [Henry] Carey."

Sinn Fein and the American System

The Sinn Fein movement, widely described today merely as "the political arm of the Irish Republican Army (IRA)," built all the institutions of the sovereign and constitutional Irish state in the period 1904-21, finally forcing the British Crown to remove its armed forces and to recognize the Irish Free State. Sinn Fein was guided by Arthur Griffith's understanding of the "American System" of political-economy, or "physical economy." Beginning with Gottfried Leibniz's founding of the science of economy as a science of technological progress in the 17th century, the "American System" became known worldwide through the accomplishments of

Alexander Hamilton as treasury secretary of the young United States of America—defining its responsibility and means of government to build manufacturing and agricultural sufficiency and progress of a nation. Its leading combatants in the 19th century were Friedrich List and Henry Carey; the former, creator of German national economic strength, the latter Abraham Lincoln's economist.

From an article by Arthur Griffith in a 1911 number of *The United Irishman*:

[Pitt's] end was the commercial conquest of the world. In the early 18th century this aim had been freely avowed. But the subsequent misfortunes of England compelled her to wear a mask.

Adam Smith, Mr. Pitt's mentor, supplied the mask. His *Wealth of Nations* was, is, and will remain the best example of a subtle scheme for English world-conquest put forward under the guise of an essay on political economy, flavored with that love of man which hooks in the sentimentalists of all countries. . . .

The doctrines of Adam Smith were sedulously promoted on the Continent by England, while she kept her own ports closed to imports. The Secret Service money of England was lavished on Continental journalists and Continental theorists to influence them to advocate Free Trade and opening the Continental ports to English produces. . . . It was at this time a man appeared in Germany whose keen mind, intense patriotism and fearless character laid the foundation for the German power of today.

The man was Friedrich List. . . . Fearing his propaganda would displease England, his native Wurtemberg expelled him. Seeking refuge in other States of Germany, he was in turn by the same influence expelled from them. . . . He was cast into prison. On his release he retired to America. Here he fell under the influence of the two Irishmen Carey, whose ideas, incorporating with his own, formed the foundation of his doctrine of National Economy, on which modern Germany is built.

. . . Henry Carey is the author of the United States as England's commercial rival. List, his colleague, is the author of Germany as England's competition in sea power.

From Arthur Griffith's speech to the 1905 Sinn Fein national convention:

We in Ireland have been taught by our English Lords Lieutenant, our British Education Boards, and our Barrington Lecturers, that our destiny is to be the fruitful mother of flocks and herds—that it is not necessary for us to pay attention to our manufacturing arm. . . . The fallacy dissolves before reflection—but it is a fantasy which has passed for truth in Ireland. With List I reply:

A nation cannot further and promote its civilization, its prosperity and its social progress as well by exchanging agricultural products for manufactured goods as by establishing a manufacturing power of its own. A merely agricultural nation can never develop to any extent a home or a foreign commerce, with inland means of transport and foreign navigation, increase its population in due proportion to its well-being, or make notable progress in its moral, intellectual, social and political development: It will never acquire important political power, or be placed in a position to influence the cultivation and progress of less advanced nations. . . .

"My object," said List, "is at all costs to save Germany from the destruction which the commercial policy of England designs for her." Our object is, at all costs, to save Ireland. . . .

It is part of the Policy of the National Council [of Sinn Fein] to bring about that Unity of Material Interests which produces national strength.

I here again quote List against the charlatans who profess to see in a nation's language and traditions of culture, things of no economic value—"in every nation will the authority of a national language and national literature, the arts and the perfection of municipal institutions keep pace with the development of the manufacturing arm."

List was bitterly opposed in his own country, where Dr. Bowrins, paid by the British government, lectured to discredit him. . . .

Sinn Fein, from 1904 to 1921, used the colonial port and Harbor Boards and canal authorities of Ireland, the local colonial governments and cultural institutions *exactly as Franklin and Washington had used them in America*, to build up the institutions of national economy. Eventually, Sinn Fein built a nation, under the dumbfounded eyes of British prime ministers, of Winston Churchill and Austin Chamberlain, and of their more than 100,000 British-armed soldiers and military police in Ireland, whom they eventually had to withdraw. The first Irish (Cosgrove) government after Griffith's death, ended the civil war, quickly and successfully raised national loans, passed through a fundamental land reform establishing farmer ownership and prosperity, and carried out electrification centered on a new hydroelectric plant on the River Shannon.

Universal history and Sinn Fein

Arthur Griffith's excellent pamphlet, *The Resurrection of Hungary: An Example for Ireland*, was continuously and widely circulated throughout the years 1904-20 by the Sinn Fein movement. By it, Griffith lifted Irish nationalist leadership *above* the dead-end Irish-centrism of protest/insurrection, to its place in the history of nation-states. He showed that Hungary achieved independence from the Austrian Hapsburg Empire in 1867, and subsequent national prosperi-

ty, by a constitutional, nation-building resistance which Ireland could also build. He showed that the British feared this by the example of British diplomat Charles Boner:

Boner was not a fool. He was a shrewd Englishman, employed in the British Diplomatic Service. He wished for the defeat of the Hungarians, because he apprehended that if they succeeded in beating down Austria, Ireland would imitate the Hungarian tactics and paralyze England. "What I saw and heard," he wrote, "continually reminded me of Ireland. . . . Pitt saw that if matters were to mend, others besides Irishmen must legislate for Ireland."

And by the example of the London *Times* in August 1861:

"The Hungarian Diet has been invited to do at this time," wrote the London *Times*, "precisely what the Irish Parliament did at the end of the last century. . . . The Irish Parliament assented, after some vehement debating, to the Union" with Britain. . . .

But Hungary resisted. The *Times* of 1861 was very sad. It hoped Austria would have been freed to fight Prussia, for England's benefit, and the Hungarians spoiled the game of the English diplomats.

Further reading

For background on the historical topics addressed in this article, two earlier issues of *Executive Intelligence Review* are especially recommended:

Vol. 19, No. 1, Jan. 3, 1992: "200 Years Since Hamilton's 'Report on Manufactures.'" This thematic commemorative issue includes writings by Alexander Hamilton, Friedrich List, and Henry Carey as well as their opponents, Adam Smith and Thomas Malthus, and admirers of the American System of political-economy from Russia to Argentina to Japan.

Vol. 21, No. 16, April 15, 1994: "Lord Palmerston's Multicultural Zoo." Includes a 36-page package presenting research developed under the direction of Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., including articles on "Palmerston's London during the 1850s: a Tour of the Human, Multicultural Zoo"; "How the Venetian Virus Infected and Took Over England"; "The Bestial British Intelligence of Shelburne and Bentham"; and "Palmerston Launched Young Turks to Permanently Control Middle East," among others.

Griffith showed that the Hungarian national leadership of Ferencz Déak and Lajos Kossuth had also been guided by Friedrich List in economics. But Griffith referred the Irish national leadership to the example of Leibniz's great Irish collaborator, Jonathan Swift of the famous *Gulliver's Travels*:

Then came Swift. . . . By his giant genius he invited all Ireland, peer and peasant, Catholic, Protestant, and Dissenter, Normal, Cromwellian, and Gael in opposition to England, and when he had it united launched his thunderbolt in the famous "Fourth Letter" . . . that by the law of God, of nature, and of nations, the Irish people were as free as people as the people of England. . . . Swift died without seeing the independence of his country achieved, but his spirit lived.

[In the 1780s] The Irish Volunteers observed this [British free trade crushing Irish manufactures], came to understand that it was not France who was the enemy, and accordingly, drafted and adopted the famous "Non-Importation and Non-Consumption Agreement." . . . The whole nation had been drawn together by the "Non-Importation Agreement," and now demand its freedom. . . .

England renounced her claim to govern this country, awed by the bayonets of 200,000 Irish Volunteers, Catholic and Protestant. . . . This Renunciation Act—by it, England renounces forever all pretension to govern this country—remains inscribed on the British Statute Book. Under the Constitution [the Irish Constitution won in 1782] no power exists or has existed since the year 1783 in the British Parliament to legislate for this country.

In *The Resurrection of Hungary*, Griffith described the subsequent undermining of this Irish Constitutional movement (itself a reflection of the American Revolution) by Prime Minister Pitt's free trade pressures, backed by British introduction of more and more British troops, until Pitt bribed the Irish Parliament into the Act of Union (with Britain) in 1801. He showed that by declaring that "Union" lawless and invalid—as the Hungarian resistance had done with Austria, upholding Hungary's Constitution—and by the nation-building policies of the American System of physical economy, Ireland could gain its national sovereignty:

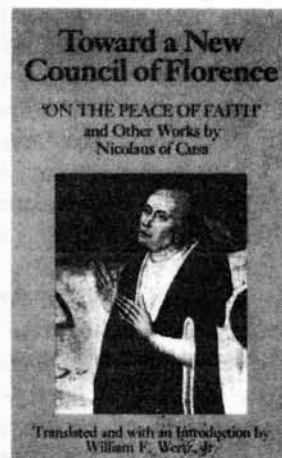
If it be necessary to suffer, the Nation will submit to suffering in order to preserve and hand down to future generations that Constitutional Liberty it has inherited from its forefathers. . . . For what might and power take away, time and favorable circumstances may restore, but the recovery of what a nation renounces of its own accord through fear of suffering, is a matter of difficulty and uncertainty.

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