

Joint Oireachtas Committee on Defence and National Security

Submission by Dr. Karen Devine

in reference to

General Scheme of the Defence (Amendment) Bill 2025

12 June 2025

Abstract

This submission examines why Irish neutrality is resilient in the current context of the government's proposed legislation to abolish a last, vital component of neutrality, the 'Triple Lock'. The premise within that question of the resilience of neutrality suggests the presence of agents in the political system that wish to eradicate Irish neutrality. These agents form a network comprised of certain politicians, academics, business interests, and think tanks in Ireland, as well as the European Union, and NATO. On the other 'side' of the struggle, are those who wish to retain the very clearly-defined and international law-based, active, positive neutrality: a majority of people in Ireland, a handful of independent and small party politicians, and numerous Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). This submission will analyse the reasons underpinning the various actors' positions, set within a 'Two Level Game' conceptual framework. A critique of the differences in propaganda employed by governments of so-called "post-neutral" states, NATO and the EU illuminates subtle but important points of conflict within actors' public policy preferences.

Bio

Dr. Karen Devine is a former Chevening, Government of Ireland and Fulbright Scholar and has published peer-reviewed journal articles on Irish neutrality, and more broadly, the foreign, security, and defence policies of small states within the European Union. Her research interests include neutrality, European Union militarisation, and the influence of gender dynamics, public opinion and NGOs in international relations. Dr. Devine lectures in Irish Foreign Policy, European Union politics and policy, Gender, Race, Class and Politics, and research methods at Dublin City University.

Disclaimer:

The views expressed in this submission are solely those of the author writing in an independent academic capacity and do not in any way represent the views of an employer, associates, national government or sponsor.

Introduction

There is rarely an opportunity arising from international events, that is not used by certain politicians and selected academics in Ireland, to claim that Irish neutrality needs to be ‘looked at’, ‘debated’ or simply abandoned. This elite discourse first started in the 1960s when the government applied for membership of the EEC and was told by the European Commission and government members and officials of EEC member-states to give up neutrality in favour of a European common defence and NATO membership. Unlike the governments of Sweden and Finland, who have used the 2022 war in Ukraine as the foundation of their attempts to divest the last shreds of neutrality and to formally join NATO, the Irish government has not yet followed that same path. This is because of a requirement for a referendum on a decision to join NATO, a referendum that the government is aware that it will not win given that only 13-14% of people in Ireland, according to the latest surveys, are in favour of NATO membership. However, the government’s intended destruction of the Triple Lock requirement for United Nations (UN) General Assembly approval or United Nations (UN) Security Council mandate for a mission involving Irish troop deployments overseas, would cement Ireland’s informal NATO membership by giving the government power to deploy substantial numbers of Irish Defence Forces personnel abroad to participate in high-intensity EU or NATO military missions using lethal force.

This present submission will not focus on the destruction of the Triple Lock and the consequences of this government decision, as that is the subject of the author’s presentation to the Committee on 12th June 2025.

Rather, this submission will provide extensive background and context to explain firstly, why forms of Irish neutrality persist and secondly, the reasons why the government are seeking to destroy the Triple Lock, as defined in Ireland’s National Declaration that was accepted by the other EU governments at the Seville European Council in 2002 as follows:

Ireland reiterates that the participation of contingents of the Irish Defence Forces in overseas operations, including those carried out under the European security and defence policy, requires (a) the authorisation of the operation by the Security Council or the General Assembly of the United Nations, (b) the agreement of the Irish Government and (c) the approval of Dáil Éireann in accordance with Irish law.

This submission explains the resilience of Irish neutrality and in doing so demands from the reader a high level of critical thinking and an ability to grasp very nuanced examples of the political dynamics explaining this resilience. I use Putman’s concept of a “two-level game” as a framework of understanding that plots the ‘players’ or agents on two clear sides of the struggle over Irish neutrality – majority public opinion, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), the President of Ireland and a handful of mainly independent parliamentarians who strongly support active, positive neutrality versus the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the Military Industrial Complex (MIC), and Irish Governments and all of their funded agents, including the corporate mainstream media, think tanks, and what are called “Jean Monnet” lecturers who occupy positions in universities in order to promote EU/NATO discourses, who together have campaigned in concert, relentlessly and aggressively, for decades, to eradicate every facet of active, positive neutrality.

Critical thinking is required to understand the use of words in the latter’s anti-neutrality discourses, in particular the difference in foreign policy agenda inherent in two diametrically opposed concepts of ‘active, positive neutrality’ and so-called ‘military neutrality’. That understanding requires a foundation of knowledge that I set out before the two level game analysis: 1) a brief sketch of the radical changes to neutrality wrought by successive Irish governments since EEC membership in January 1973 and EU membership since December 2009; 2) an explanation of the differences in the

public concept of ‘active, positive neutrality’ and the governments’ so-called ‘military neutrality’; 3) theoretical explanations of the behaviour of the EU, NATO, the MIC, its funded agents and successive governments; and 4) the presentation of data detailing the fundamental shift in public tolerance of war propaganda and increasing avoidance of the corporate mainstream media, including state broadcasters’ output of ‘news’ due to a lack of trust in these agents and their ability to be truthful. The paper ends with an account of the latest push by the EU/NATO/governments/think tanks/Jean Monnet university-based agents to secure official NATO membership for Ireland and the destruction of the Triple Lock as part of active neutrality so as to use the Irish Defence Forces for war-fighting, and the resistance from the other side by the general public, NGOs, Independent politicians and the President of Ireland.

Public Support for Active, Positive Neutrality

The main reason for the resilience of Irish neutrality is public support. Ireland purports to be a democratic polity - a social contract whereby the electorate vote for political representatives that will reflect and implement their policy preferences in the interests of the common good. To understand whether the government is fulfilling its democratic mandate, it is necessary to establish whether the government discourses and practices align with the public’s concept of neutrality and support for that concept. The next section provides data to address that relationship.

The results from every publicly-available, nationally-representative survey on neutrality undertaken in Ireland collectively demonstrate: a) the public concept of neutrality is very clear and very stable over time; b) public support for this concept of active neutrality is consistent over five decades of polls; c) the consistency of concept and attitudes is explained by an underlying structure of values and identity.

Public Concepts of Irish Neutrality

Members of the public responded to the question wording of “There has been a lot of discussion lately about Irish neutrality. I am interested in finding out what neutrality means. What does Irish neutrality mean to you?” in the face-to-face phase of the Irish Social and Political Attitudes Survey (ISPAS) 2001/2002. The same question wording was used in sample surveys in the 1980s and 1990s. Table 1 shows the rank order of the response categories and demonstrates reasonable stability in the range of elements comprising public concepts of Irish neutrality: the top three are ‘not getting involved in war’, ‘staying independent/independence’ and ‘not taking sides [in wars]/impartiality’ (MRBI April 1985; MRBI May 1992; MRBI June 1992, ISPAS November 2001).

Table 1: Public Concepts of Active, Positive Neutrality (1980s-2000s)

<i>Survey responses (Rank Order)</i>	<i>MRBI Apr-85</i>	<i>MRBI May-92</i>	<i>MRBI Jun-92</i>	<i>ISPAS Nov-01</i>
Don’t get involved in wars	2	1	1	1
Don’t know	1	2	2	2
Independence	4	3	3	3
Don’t take sides	3	5	4	6
<i>Survey responses (Percentage)</i>	<i>Apr-85</i>	<i>May-92</i>	<i>Jun-92</i>	<i>Nov-01</i>
Staying out of NATO/military alliances	5%	2%	2%	1%
Don’t know	31%	25%	21%	16%

The most prominent and frequently cited tenant of neutrality, “**don’t get involved in wars**”, correlates with the definition in international law in the Hague Conventions of 1907 setting out the rules of general application to meet the case where war has broken out and also with academic concepts of neutrality e.g. Jessup claims, “the primary objective of a neutrality policy should be to keep out of war” (Jessup, 1936: 156). For Goetschel, “being neutral means not taking part in military conflict” (Goetschel, 1999: 119). The second and third tenets – “**independence/staying as we are**” and “**not taking sides**” - methods to achieve the objective of staying out of wars and therefore constitute practices in support of neutrality, are reflected in articles 5 and 9 of The Hague Conventions of 18 October 1907 on the rights and duties of neutral powers in the case of war on land. The Hague Convention I of 1899 addresses the **pacific settlement of disputes** which is a constitutionally enshrined commitment of Ireland which the government is bound to - another strongly supported element of the public’s active, positive neutrality (“*Not taking sides in conflicts - seeking to resolve things by diplomacy*”).

The independence element reflects independent decisions with regard to war and foreign policy, having right to decide to go to war or not, not being compelled to get involved in a war or the foreign policy agenda of another state or states, or just falling into line with the mainstream, ‘**not supporting Big Powers**’. The people of Ireland very strongly support key ‘active’, positive’ neutrality elements, (illustrated using verbatim answers in quotations – see Devine, 2006: 93-116) of **peace-promotion** (“*It means standing up for peace and refusing to be brought into other countries conflicts*”/“*Not having to go to war/remaining peaceful*”), **being mediators** (“*Not going to war. Don’t take sides. We can act as mediator in conflict*”/“*Acting as a mediator between conflicting states*”), **non-aggression** (“*not have aggressive army compared to other countries*”/“*Not to engage in wars of aggression and to co-operate fully in peace-keeping operations*”), **not being in an ‘EU army’** (“*it means we should not have to join a European army*”), but also **not acquiescing in EU wars**, (“*The ability of the Irish Government not to go to war if the EU does*”/“*Can’t be forced to fight with superpowers*”) and limiting the foreign military activity of the Irish state and the Irish army to **peacekeeping** (“*Peace-keeping only. No other military commitment*”/“*It means we should keep Ireland and Irish forces as a peace-keeping force*”), with this activity carried out only **through the United Nations organisation (UN)** (“*Ireland only participating in UN operations*”).

Below (Table 2) is the summary table of the elements of the public concepts of active, positive neutrality, which will be used as a yardstick to compare the discourses and practices of the government over time.

Table 2: The Public’s Concept of Active, Positive Neutrality

Non-Involvement in War
Independence/resisting Big Power Pressure in decisions
Impartiality/not taking sides
Peace promotion/mediation
Non-aggression/non-aggressive army
Not join a European army’/not go to war if the EU does
Peace-keeping only. No other military commitment
Confinement of state military activity to UN operations
Not part of [EU] defence / military alliance
No NATO involvement/not in NATO

In contrast, successive governments of Ireland are irrational and inconsistent with respect to their definition on neutrality, changing it over time to mean the exact opposite of previously offered definitions, and being unable or unwilling to articulate those changes. Before examining the latter issue, the next set of data demonstrate the consistency of public attitudes towards neutrality over time.

Public Attitudes to Irish Neutrality – long-term consistency, due to values and identity

Table 3 below shows the results of seventeen opinion polls that asked about preferences on neutrality, military alliances and NATO from 1981 to 2023. Roughly four in five people in Ireland consistently support active neutrality over time. Just 13-15% are willing to join NATO or reject neutrality. The 1996 White Paper on Foreign Policy states, ‘the majority of the Irish people have always cherished Ireland’s military neutrality and recognise the positive values that inspire it’ (Ireland, 1996: 118) The White Paper also recognised “Ireland’s foreign policy is about much more than self-interest. For many of us it is a statement of the kind of people we are” (Ireland, 1996: 7). Stability in concepts of neutrality and attitudes to neutrality is expected because of the stability of the values and identity of the mass public from which their attitudes are derived. (Devine, 2006, 2008) Research shows identity is one of two structural dimensions driving public support for Irish neutrality, i.e. the prouder an individual is to be Irish, the more that individual supports Irish neutrality. Independence is the second dimension, i.e. the more an individual wishes Ireland to be independent, particularly standing apart from European security and defence integration, the more that individual supports Irish neutrality. These results fit with the theoretical expectations of critical social constructivism (Devine 2008), meaning public attitudes to neutrality are ‘rationally’ structured along two complementary dimensions of independence and patriotism.

Prior to academic application of more sophisticated modelling and theoretical advances, characterisations of public opinion as inconsistent and incoherent were used to diminish the role of the public in the policy-making process. (Wittkopf, 1990: 13) The fact that public opinion on Irish neutrality is rational and structured mandates government support of active neutrality. The 1937 Constitution of Ireland gives the right to the people of Ireland to decide all questions of national policy, according to the requirements of the common good. (Article 6) Re-affirmed through the Crotty Case judgment of the Irish Supreme Court in 1986, the government was obliged to hold referendums on every new EEC/EC/EU Treaty. Research into public voting behaviour on the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties in the 1990s and the Nice Treaty in June 2001 and October 2002 has shown that a significant number of Irish citizens have repeatedly voted to reject the Treaties due to the erosion of the core tenets of active Irish neutrality. Despite the Taoiseach Micheál Martin telling the European Parliament in Strasbourg: “We don’t need a referendum to join Nato. That’s a policy decision of government”, it is a decision for the people through a free and fair referendum (a government party parliamentarian “Speaking privately... suggested Mr Martin may have “got carried away by the EU adulation” in Strasbourg” (Horgan-Jones and O’Leary, 8 June 2022)). This veto card held by the people animates the “two-level game” struggle over Irish neutrality – outlined in the next section - and is a contributory factor explaining the resilience of Irish neutrality.

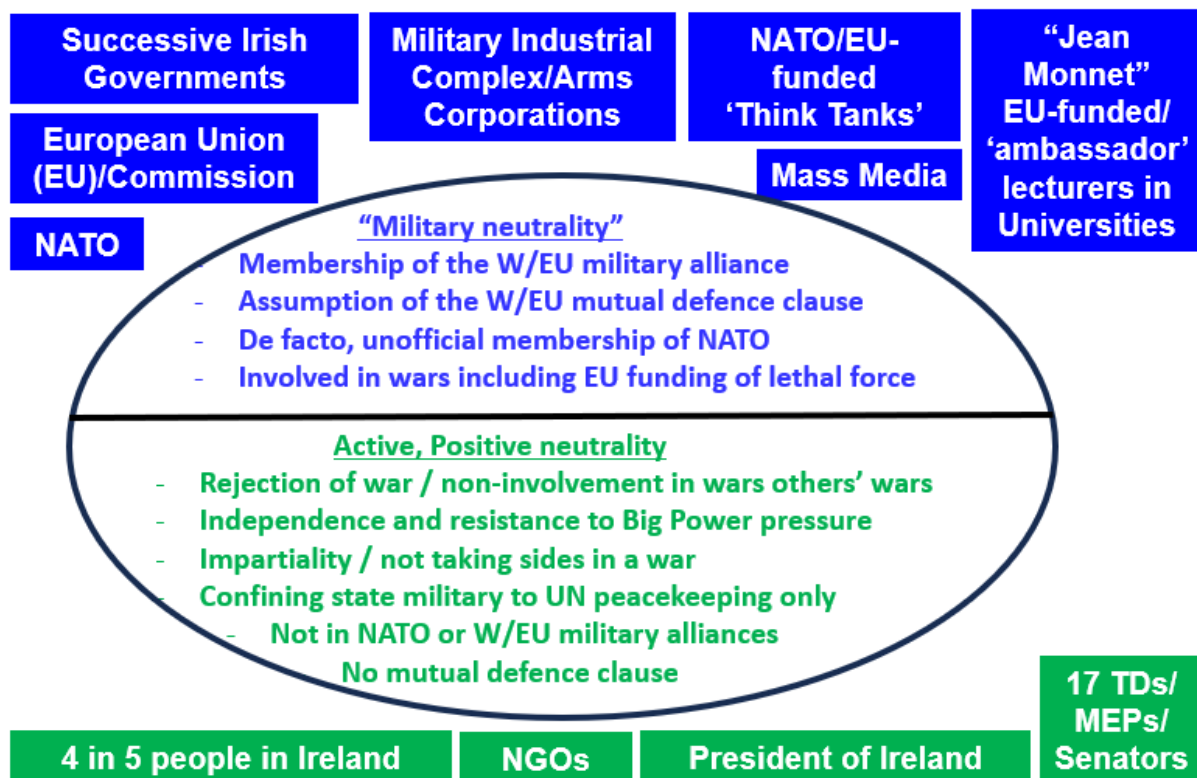
TABLE 3: ATTITUDE TO NEUTRALITY AND ‘MILITARY NEUTRALITY’ (%), 1981-2023

Year	MRBI March 1981	MRBI April 1985	NUIM 1988/ 1989	MRBI Jan 1991	IMS Feb 1991	MRBI April 1991	LMR May 1992	MRBI June 1992	MRBI Sept 1996	MRBI June 2001	ISPAS 2001/ 2002	EOS Jan 2003	RedC Aug 2013	Amarach Feb 2022	IPSOS April 2022	B&A April 2022	IPSOS June 2023
Alliance-against EU Military Alliance – against joining		64															68
Neutrality-against dropping				64		65											71
Neutrality-remain							59										
Neutrality-maintain	76								69	72							
Neutrality-retain			84					55			80		78				
Neutral status-hold on to Current model of ‘military neutrality – support														76			
															66		61
Gulf I - neutral				69	71												
Gulf II - military interv. unjustified												81					
Alliance-prepared to consider joining		25															
Neutrality-change									20								
Neutrality-reject											20		15	15			
NATO-join									13						15		14
EC Defence-join				25			28	19									18

The Two-Level Game Framework of the Struggle over Irish Neutrality

Robert Putnam (1988) portrayed political leaders as positioned between two tables of (1) international negotiation and (2) domestic political forces. Putnam’s “two level game” concept provides a framework of understanding for the political agents involved in the struggle over Irish neutrality. In the framework, governments take decisions at the supranational level of the Council of Ministers of the EU (“level I”) to legislate for, fund, and implement measures that eradicate all tenants of neutrality in the pursuit of a common defence and an EU army, whilst those same governments face political pressures at the ‘domestic’ level (Level II) from the population and NGOs to stop the eradication of neutrality. Figure 1 shows the two sides of the ‘game’, on one side, the European Union (EU), NATO, the military industrial complex, that together seek to eradicate Irish neutrality, militarise the EU and project power through military force, alongside the university agents, think tanks and mass media promoting these same interests and goals (herein referred to in shorthand as the ‘militarists’), and on the other side, the majority of people in Ireland, NGOs, the President of Ireland and a number of independent politicians that support active neutrality (the ‘neutralists’). Each side have distinctly different concepts of neutrality and discourses that will be explained next, followed by a brief explanation of the role of each actor including examples.

Figure 1: Opposing sides and their concepts of neutrality in the “two-level game”



Changes to Government Concepts of 'Military Neutrality'

Due to word count restraints, it is not possible to explain in detail of the vast changes made by successive Irish governments under the radar of public opinion but in summary they include: 1) the reformulation and redefinition of neutrality, including its disassociation from peace policy; policy reversals including 2) extension of EU political cooperation to military affairs; 3) agreeing to the WEU-EU merger; 4) WEU membership via the WEU-EU merger in 2009, and assumption of its mutual defence clause and in doing so 5) changing the meaning of the concept of 'Military Neutrality' to the opposite of the original set out in the 1996 White Paper on Foreign Policy (but failing to inform the public of that fact); 6) adopting so-called 'sharp end of peacekeeping' WEU Petersberg Tasks & NATO-led missions and 7) joining the EU's Permanent Cooperation in Defence (PESCO) and adoption of NATO military goals, and major changes in practice by 8) supporting wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Ukraine, 9) moving from a commitment to the UN itself to merely a commitment to the principles of its Charter, and all instigated under 10) a regime of meaningful silence on neutrality, whilst substituting neutrality with a new foreign policy cornerstone of EU 'solidarity'. (Devine, 2008, 2009, 2011) The same changes were carried out by successive governments to Swedish and Finnish discourses and practices. (Devine, 2011) With respect to (4) and (5), Ireland, Sweden, Finland and Austria formed a coalition in an attempt to avoid the inclusion of the WEU's mutual defence clause in the Treaty on European Union. They proposed alternative wording to try to retain the last vestige of their own definition of 'military neutrality' (Cowen, 5 December 2003). The 'Big Three' (E3) of France, Germany and the UK rejected this, and came up with a new wording, but because it "differs only slightly in wording but not in substance from the Presidency proposal, which was based on article 5 of WEU, Finland, Sweden and Ireland [] made it clear that it cannot be accepted as proposed." (Tuomioja, 2003) The Austrian foreign minister defected and the E3's wording was ratified as Article 42 (7) TEU: "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...”.

Figure 2: Changing concepts of ‘military’ neutrality during Mutual Defence Clause negotiations



Elite silences on the mutual defence clause in the Lisbon Treaty's CSDP in Sweden (Christiansson, 2010: 32) and Ireland (Devine, 2010: 15) are meaningful: the European Commission's Lisbon Treaty booklet distributed to the Irish public during the two referendums in Ireland on the Lisbon Treaty was misleading in omitting any reference to the Article 42.7 mutual defence clause – a remarkable silence given that the European Commission singled out the mutual defence clause as one of the most significant aspects of the Lisbon Treaty after it had been signed in December 2007, because it would 'allow the emergence of a true common European defence. It will introduce a mutual defence clause and a solidarity clause ...' (Barroso, 2007). The EU's silence on the mutual defence clause is seen in the lack of awareness among the publics of member-states. The Eurobarometer 85.1 of 2016 shows only 12% of European citizens claim to be aware of the mutual defence clause and to know what it is, driven by more males (17%) than females (9%).

The Lisbon Treaty's Article 42(7) allows the transfer of "the WEU collective defence element in Article 5 Modified Brussels Treaty to the EU" (Trybus 2005: 337). Patrick Keatinge wrote that a WEU-EU merger, through the transfer of the functions of the WEU to the EU, would effectively constitute full membership of the WEU and "there would be no doubt...this certainly means the end of the policy of military neutrality" (Keatinge 1996: 173) - yet Patrick Keatinge and Ben Tonra claimed *otherwise in public discourses* and especially vis-à-vis articles in the *Irish Times* in November and December 2008. These EU-funded think tankers label the fact that WEU-EU merger effectively constitutes a new EU military alliance – which they themselves previously wrote and published as fact - as '*startling*', somehow trying to insinuate this is shocking i.e. untrue. A major tension exists between the elites' need to keep silent about the mutual defence clause and their desire to openly exploit it. For example, EU funded university-based spokesmen from the Irish militarist actor side of the 'game' have declared,

Even if neutrality is defined by some political leaders in Ireland as simply meaning an aversion to military alliances, Ireland's commitment to the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy renders such a definition obsolete....the EU is now a *military* [as well as a political and economic] *alliance*. A new government needs to explain why this is a good thing." (Burke, 2011, emphasis added)

Yet the continued line in public from those same university-based EU spokespersons, along with their governments, is that Ireland is not a member of a military alliance. These facts limit the militarists' definition of 'military neutrality' to non-membership of a military alliance *meaning NATO*. This explains the stark contrasts in definitions of active neutrality and 'military neutrality' held by opposing sides in the 'game'. Table 4 compares the public elements of active neutrality to the government's current concept of 'military neutrality'.

Table 4: Public Concept of Active Neutrality vs Government Concept of 'Military Neutrality'

Public Concept Active Neutrality	Government Concept "Military Neutrality"
Non-Involvement in War	
Independence/resisting Big Power Pressure in decisions	
Impartiality/not taking sides	
Peace promotion/mediation	
Non-aggression/non-aggressive army	
Not join a European army'/not go to war if the EU does	
Peace-keeping only. No other military commitment	
Not part of [EU] defence / military alliance	
No NATO involvement/not in NATO	not [officially] in NATO

The difference between the public's and governments' permissible activities in relation to the Ukraine War under the umbrella of neutrality is illustrated by the then Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney in 2022 (15 April): "Ireland is a militarily neutral country"; "That means we are not part of any military alliance but we're not neutral in this war and we haven't been since the start"; "And so we are contributing to an EU fund of 1.5 billion euros to support the Ukrainian military..." The government concept of military neutrality means involvement in war, involvement in other countries' wars, and non-independence through acquiescing to EU demands. A month later, Coveney reiterated, "Neutrality means Ireland decides when we get involved and when we don't". In this war, however, "Ireland is not neutral."

Why do people in neutral states not wish to join NATO?

Looking from the perspective of the other side of the 'game', the neutrality supporters, there are several reasons why they reject membership of NATO and by corollary, the aforementioned WEU-EU merged military alliance, seen as the 'European arm' of NATO:

1) the absence of control over the use force – for example, the then Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister) rejected membership because of "a fear that **joining a military alliance would mean automatic involvement in wars, without having a say or control over such decisions**" (Dáil Éireann, Vol.152: Col. 549–551) and in the 1990s Swedish Foreign Minister Mrs. Anna Lindh, and Defence Minister, Mr. Bjorn von Sydow shared the same fear that "Sweden would lack political influence over decisions, rendering Sweden subject to decisions in the U.S. Congress" (von Sydow and Lindh, *veckobrev* 4, 2000 in Eliasson, 2004) and

- 2) being automatically involved in war;
- 3) NATO's resort to illegal use of force, without a UN mandate (e.g. Kosovo, Serbia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, etc);
- 4) commission of war crimes;
- 5) failure to cooperate with investigations or cases brought in relation to war crimes;
- 6) allies refusal to be held accountable for NATO actions, for example, regarding the NATO bombing in Serbia, the Final Report to the Prosecutor by the Committee Established to Review the NATO Bombing Campaign Against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia at the United Nations, which was asked to, but admittedly failed to, address the charges that "as the resort to force was illegal, all NATO actions were illegal", instead claiming "the ICTY does not have jurisdiction over crimes against peace", and uncritically accepted NATO's post-hoc rationalising claims to legitimacy of targets (that were unsupported by evidence). Similarly, a case brought to the European Court of Human Rights to hold NATO accountable for war crimes committed in Serbia **saw** NATO member-state governments claim the case should not be heard by the Court, because they "considered the application inadmissible without any need to address the facts of the case" with the additional claim that "the bombardment was not imputable to the respondent States but to NATO, an organisation with an international legal personality separate from that of the respondent States" (ECHR, 52207/99) - leaving the International Committee of the Red Cross to ask "Is France's argument that the bombing attacks were attributable to NATO, not the member States (which carried them out), tenable as regards human rights? As regards IHL?" (ICRC [no date]);
- 7) escalation of military activities despite public mass opposition and disapproval, for example, Kreps surmises (2010: 197), "Leaders have not responded to the public's foreign policy preferences by withdrawing troops. Rather, they have done just the opposite and increased support for NATO-led operations in Afghanistan";
- 8) NATO's decades long campaign to coerce states to drop neutrality and join NATO, for example, EU High Representative for Foreign And Security Policy, Javier Solana, left his position of head of NATO on 6 October 1999 to take up the role on 18 October 1999 (including Secretary General of the Western European Union, the European arm of NATO), and he announced shortly afterwards that neutrality was a 'concept of the past' and a state wishing to be neutral could not expect solidarity from the EU (Kirk, 17 and 19 January 2001).
- 9) NATO's lead members (the 'P3' of the United States, France and the United Kingdom) undermining the financial and operational bases for UN peacekeeping – the P3 (USA, UK and France) liable dues account for 40% of the funding for UN peacekeeping (Williams 2020: 482-3) but the US in particular withholds those funds. "By not paying its assessed contributions in full and on time, the US is undermining UN peacekeeping in several ways" (Williams, 23 October 2018). Many NATO countries have long disregarded UN command and control mechanisms, and have deployed very few uniformed peacekeepers to UN missions during the twenty-first century. (Bellamy and Williams, 2009) Yet UN peacekeeping amounts to significantly less than 0.5 per cent of annual global military expenditure, and it is much cheaper than unilateral western and/or NATO or EU deployments. (Williams, 2020: 492);
- 10) NATO's opposition to disarmament and demands for increased spending on arms procurement, in the context of its continued existence and expansion eastwards despite promises not to, etc.;

11) Ireland is a leading protagonist in the creation and ratification of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017, as part of a neutral's nuclear free zone parameters. This is fundamentally incompatible with NATO membership. (NATO, 11 July 2023) In a statement issued on 20 September 2017, the North Atlantic Council made it clear that the Alliance does not support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. NATO had pressured member-states not to sign the treaty whilst the European Union failed to adopt a position on the treaty. (Devine, 2020);

12) The USA creates the instability NATO claims as a foundation for its continued existence by funding regime change in mobilising for mass demonstrations to overthrow "dictatorships" in "colour revolutions", "a form of destabilization aimed primarily at countries that were allied with Moscow or Beijing" (Tunander, 2021). Neutrals also continue to ask, why, when the Cold War ended, the USSR dissolved, along with the Warsaw Pact, did NATO fail to disband? Strobe Talbott, US deputy secretary of state, explained, "Many Russians see Nato as a vestige of the cold war, inherently directed against their country. They point out that they have disbanded the Warsaw Pact, *their* military alliance, and ask why the west should not do the same." Neither the Clinton administration that started NATO's eastward expansion, nor its successors provided even a remotely convincing answer. The answer lies, partly, in the vested interests of the military industrial complex (MIC) – from that MIC point of view, war is profitable, whereas neutrality and peace are not.

Why do elites in neutral states want to join NATO and promote EU militarism and warfare?

The recurring theme of the analysis of the players in the two-level game relates to corruption, both legal and illegal. Examples of links between the various players of the EU, NATO, the military industrial complex, media, university-based agents, etc. illustrate in real terms those connections. On the 17th January, 1961, the outgoing 34th President of the United States of America, Dwight Eisenhower, referred to the then recent creation of "a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions", stressing "we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications", specifically, "unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex". Eisenhower identified the bulwark to this: "Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals...".

Andrew Feinstein, Paul Holden and Barnaby Pace explain in *Corruption and the arms trade: sins of commission* that the arms industry is the most corrupt sector of trade in the world – "trade in weapons constitutes a mere fraction of total world trade, according to one estimate it accounts for a remarkable 40 per cent of corruption" (2011: 14) Corruption in the arms business is closely connected to the pursuit and practice of political power at both the buyer's and seller's ends: the vested interests in preserving corruption are systemic and are tied to long-standing institutions of state power and politics rather than just the greed of individuals. Arms corruption, therefore, exists systematically between government and arms dealers. Tufts University hosts a compendium of arms trade corruption cases as part of the World Peace Foundation's research (Tufts, 2023). Often over-looked, this systemic basis incorporates all of the aforementioned militarist agents.

Militarising the European Union: member-state governments

The three protagonists pushing the Lisbon Treaty's finalisation of the WEU-EU merger, incorporating a re-named European Defence Agency for arms procurement and the modified WEU mutual defence

clause into the TEU, as well as the Permanent Structured Cooperation in Defence (PESCO) and plans for an EU military force (now realised through the 'Rapid Deployment Capacity') – Angela Merkel Chancellor of Germany, Nicholas Sarkozy, President of France, and Jose Manuel Barroso, [formerly President of Portugal], President of the European Commission, were all implicated in the biggest arms corruption scandals of their time.

Transparency International (TI) provides a rigorous definition of corruption as 'the abuse of entrusted power for private gains'. The relationships between government and arms industry corruption and government incentives for launching invasions and wars, including proxy wars, are commonsensical for most people. Foreign bribery payments were legal until Germany implemented the OECD's Bribery Convention in February 1999. Bypassing German Political Contributions Law, the CDU spendenaffäre was part of a broader pattern of secret political finance arrangements that had supported Chancellor Helmut Kohl's 16 years in office. Wolfgang Thierse, the President of the Bundestag, fined the CDU a record sum of DM 41 million on 15 February 2000, due to faulty reports and party financing violations. Having been forced to admit to personally taking a 100,000 marks donation in his Bonn office from weapons lobbyist Karl-Heinz Schreiber on 22 September 1994, Wolfgang Schäuble resigned from his post as CDU chairman. Just six months after taking that particular arms bribe, Schäuble went to Dublin to announce that the four neutral countries in the European Union – Ireland, Austria, Finland and Sweden – would have to join NATO eventually, saying the EU would only have a real security policy when it became the European arm of NATO. (Irish Times, 10 March 1995) Angela Merkel who was party secretary throughout this time, was elected new chairperson of the CDU on 10 April 2000. Later, as Chancellor of Germany from 2005 to 2021, Merkel brought Schäuble back into her government cabinet as Finance Minister and together they campaigned hard to militarise the EU.

France's President from 2007 to 2012, Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, was implicated in a number of cases, one of which involved bribes paid as part of France's sale of Agosta class submarines to Pakistan that was the source of illegal party financing during Eduard Balladur's failed 1995 presidential campaign [whereby the budget ministry – led at the time by Sarkozy – was to approve state guarantees for "deficient or underfunded" contracts], because of the alleged kickbacks. In March 2021, Sarkozy was found to have played an "active role" in forging a "corruption pact" resulting in overspending some 16 million euro in his own 2016 bid for Presidential re-election, found guilty of corruption and influence peddling, and sentenced to three years in prison, two of them suspended. (Willsher, 2021) A third case is on-going, involving claims that Moammar Gadhafi's Libyan government secretly gave Sarkozy 50 million euros to fund his winning 2007 French Presidential campaign.

In the Ferrostaal case, a Portuguese honorary diplomat approached a Ferrostaal board member offering help to get the deal, and set up a direct meeting in the summer of 2002 with then Prime Minister of Portugal, José Manuel Barroso (subsequently appointed Head of the European Commission), and collected roughly €1.6 million as a consultancy fee – one of dozens of suspicious brokerage and consulting payments made "to decision-makers in the Portuguese government, ministries or navy." (Schmitt, 2010) An ineffective Portuguese investigation was closed in 2014, with no convictions. (Tufts University, 2023)

It is of note that the EU leaders most active in efforts to move defence procurement to the EU level where there is no political oversight by national authorities, no judicial power of investigation by national agencies, and no legal competence of national courts for bringing cases, are those who have been investigated and/or prosecuted by national authorities for engaging in arms industry corruption. All three, Barroso, Merkel and Sarkozy, personally intervened in Ireland (Irish Examiner, 4 April 2008, 20 July 2008; Irish Times 17 April 2008) to secure the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty before and after these militarist plans were put on hold through the people of Ireland's rejection of the Lisbon Treaty

in a referendum (due to the defence provisions' eradication of 'military neutrality'). The trio have effectively transformed illegal corruption into legal corruption through the ratification of these Lisbon Treaty provisions on CSDP and PESCO because they are the basis for secondary legislation creating a standing military force and transferring the arms procurement process to the EU level, where there is no political, legal or democratic oversight.

EU militarism, standing army, and warfare expenditure - not subject to transparency or oversight

Money earmarked for security and defence spending in the 2021–27 Multi-annual Financial Framework of the EU is €43.9 billion, an increase of more than 123%. Stemming from the Lisbon Treaty provisions, under the cover of what the EU calls “Strategic Compass” on 21st March 2022, the EU member-state governments “formally approved” a “Rapid Deployment Capacity (RDC) comprising of a “minimum of 5000 standing troops”, “as a force that is permanently available and trains together with the goal of reaching a standing force” (European Parliament 27 March 2023). The EU will demand that this RDC army is supported by major defence spending and to procure the weapons it deems necessary. The ‘off-books’ fund for financial EU military actions (so-called “Peace Facility”) established by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/509 of 22 March 2021 was supposed to have a spending ceiling of 5 billion euro in 2018 prices, however, the governments have regularly revised this financial ceiling upwards – e.g. a later ceiling is “EUR 12 040 000 000 in current prices.” (Council of the EU, 26 June 2023) (CFSP) 2023/1304) These monies are being used to finance the continuation and intensity of the war in Ukraine, which is the opposite of what the 42% of citizens across the EU seeking a negotiated ceasefire want (versus just 23% that want to fuel and prolong the war (discussed later)). Announced in March 2025, the European Commission intends for states to break the laws on EMU - “activating the national escape clause of the Stability and Growth Pact” - in order to create a budget of €800 billion to spend on armaments. (European Commission, 28 March 2025)

All off-books funds need to be “placed inside the budget ...to ensure proper clarity and sound financial management” (House of Lords, 2012, point 319) but these off-budget monies of the so-called “Peace Facility” established by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/509 of 22 March 2021 are controlled by “The Facility Committee” appointed by member-state governments, with no external oversight or audit checks. Despite the EU signing up to anti-corruption legislation in the U.N. Convention Against Corruption, the enactment of the U.N. Convention Against Corruption by the EU is to only concern and “cover fraudulent conduct with respect to revenues, expenditure and assets at the expense of the general budget of the European Union (the ‘Union budget’)” (Directive (EU) 2017/1371, 5 July 2017) and does not apply to off-book funds such as this so-called Peace Facility. As the OECD notes, “instruments [that] sit outside the EU’s standard budget procedure... are not subject to the discharge procedure; a consideration which gives rise to concern...” given that “transparency is an important underpinning of public trust and assurance regarding how public funds are used” (2017: 26, 5). None of the documentation on this agreement is available for public viewing as the link leads to this message instead of the documentation: “The content of this document is not accessible. Nevertheless, a request for access can be sent to the Access to documents department.” I sent requests to view the documents to the ‘Access to documents department’ and the requests were all denied.

Leaders of EU member-states are currently fostering a regulation establishing common defence procurement (2022/0219 (COD)) allowing three or more member-states to engage in arms deals through this “Instrument” that is to complement PESCO, the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence, and the European Defence Fund “endowed with a budget of €7,953 billion for the period 2021-27” - a massive funding increase of 1256% (European Commission 30 March 2023)). The EU common defence procurement (2022/0219 (COD)) legislation requires setting up “a procurement agent to act on their behalf”, for engagement with contractors and sub-contractors whose activities

are merely to “not contravene the security and defence interests of the Union and its Member States”, which are undefined. The only reference to corruption in the 10,000 word draft legislation states “the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) may carry out investigations, including on-the-spot checks and inspections, with a view to establishing whether there has been fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity affecting the financial interests of the Union” (European Commission, 2023), with the ‘financial interests of the Union’ defined as only “main budget” funds. The evident lack of transparency at the supranational level provides significant opportunity for mass corruption on a scale heretofore unseen.

Militarism and the universities’ EU agents (“Jean Monnet Professors”)

The MIC incorporates academics as well as politicians into this network of legal and illegal corruption. Building upon President Eisenhower’s warning about the rise of the military industrial complex and Senator J. William Fulbright’s concern about the more expansive military-industrial-academic complex, Henry A. Giroux explains in his book *University in Chains: Confronting the Military-Industrial-Academic Complex*, the development of the university as a ‘hypermodern militarized knowledge factory’ in reference to the increasing attacks on higher education by the forces of militarisation who regard critical thought itself as a threat to the dominant political order. The university is now part of an unholy alliance that largely serves dominant state, military and business policies while decoupling vital aspects of academic knowledge production from democratic values and projects. The result is the reshaping of the structure of the university, the content of courses, and the broader culture of the university: “the attack on the university is an assault that deprives young people of a meaningful future and renders undischarged human possibilities, the obligations of civic responsibility, and the very idea of an informed citizen moot, if not dangerous” (ibid). NATO-EU-military industrial complex agents in universities are working full-time to demand Ireland’s full integration into NATO-EU-military industrial complex structures alongside the end of the mass public’s and politicians’ support for Irish neutrality.

Senator Tom Clonan, an ex-UN peacekeeper with the Irish Defence Forces explains, “the people who are most vocal about us joining NATO are people who have never heard a shot fired in anger, and people who will never serve in uniform and I include in that some very very outspoken hawkish academics in Ireland who really, really ought to know better.” (Clonan, 8 July 2023) Clonan is most probably speaking of the cohort of so-called “Jean Monnet” EU spokespersons embedded in universities, who are paid directly by the European Union to be its ‘intellectual ambassadors’ (Weiler, 2014). These EU ambassadors are unique post-holders in universities, because they all “come to it with idealistic/ideological baggage which one does not necessarily find in comparable areas of the social sciences, area studies, and the like” (ibid). As the most powerful Jean Monnet post-holder, the President of the EU’s University Institute explains, “herein lies the contradiction. ...we have a higher calling...as scholars we are committed to dispassionate critical enquiry without partisan political bias – to the extent possible” but the Jean Monnet professor mission is in direct contradiction to the academic’s primary mission to pursue the truth, because it is not possible to reconcile their “instinct to defend [the EU] when [it] is criticised” with the pursuit of truth “even if it is uncomfortable to the institutions, the funders of the Jean Monnet Programme”. (Weiler, 2014) Whilst all Jean Monnet spokespersons are implicitly part of the military industrial complex, some are more explicitly involved than others. In examining the case of one prominent hawk Jean Monnet spokesman, based in University College Dublin for several decades, the links between funding, discourses and the military industrial complex are clear.

First affiliated with Trinity College, Dublin and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington DC, United States-born Ben Tonra, embedded deeply in the Fine Gael political party (including membership of its [youth] National Executive) that has jettisoned neutrality from the beginnings of Ireland's membership of the EEC, has consistently demanded Ireland drop 'military neutrality', defined in his words as "Ireland's non-membership of existing military alliances" (1994). For Tonra (and indeed, his political party Fine Gael), that definition allows full membership of a European Union military alliance on the grounds that "This policy of military neutrality has never been presented as precluding a defence element to European Union" (1994). Tonra, awarded a Jean Monnet Chair in 2003, is "project leader" for the Irish Government and EU funded Think Tank, the Institute of [International and] European Affairs on security and defence. On 11 November 2008 he told the Irish Parliament

Neutrality is not a foreign policy and does not even give content or orientation to a foreign policy... in terms of the Lisbon treaty and its contradiction of what we understand to be Irish neutrality, my essential point is that the content of Irish foreign policy has nothing whatsoever to do with neutrality. We need to do things at the sharper end of peacekeeping and, arguably, peacemaking.....We must, as individuals, stop using the word "neutrality", which has nothing to do with our foreign policy.

Tonra's connections to the military industrial complex span many networks and funds. Lockheed Martin, the US arms corporation (found guilty of corruption numerous times), was a key sponsor of the so-called "National Security Summit Ireland" Tonra promoted and spoke at in 2022. Tonra is "a director of the Irish Defence and Security Association" which registered as a lobbyist in 2021 to represent the financial interests of "Irish or Irish-based SMEs, Research Organisations and Multinational Corporations in the defence industry – and recently paid Tonra[et al.]’s Azure Forum to produce a report on the Irish defence industry". (Cooke, 2022) This example is reflective of the link between vested interests, the military industrial complex, the European Union, NATO, government and the universities, that works to undermine and deny public policy preferences for neutrality not just in Ireland but in other states such as Sweden, Finland, and Austria. The media are a vital bridge for the militarists and Jean Monnet university-based agents to communicate their anti-neutrality discourses and to target not just the unwitting public but also NGOs and any independent politicians that do not support the establishment militarist agenda.

Militarism and the media

Two themes emerge as important factors in understanding the impact of the media as part of the militarist side of the two-level game: declining consumption and trust. A Reuters Institute global survey of attitudes conducted in 24 European states, 8 in the Americas, 11 in the Asia Pacific, and 3 in Africa in 2022 found that "overall news consumption has declined considerably in many countries while trust has fallen back almost everywhere." (Newman, 2022) A second study of five states across continents in April 2022 focused on the impact of the Ukraine conflict and found news avoidance has already increased markedly from 2019 to 2022 in the UK (11pp) and Brazil (20pp). (Eddy and Fletcher, 2022) Overall figures show that roughly half of people in Poland (47%), USA (46%), UK (46%) and Brazil (56%) actively avoid the news followed by 1 in 3 people in Germany (36%). (Eddy and Fletcher, 2022)

Trust in the news has fallen in almost half the countries in the global survey. (Newman, 2022) Nearly one in three respondents actively avoiding the news do so because they think it can't be trusted (29%) (Newmann, 2022: 13). A large majority of people globally think all or most news organisations put

their own commercial or political interests ahead of what's best for society – just 1 in 5 think they prioritise societal good (19%). A similar pattern exists regarding opinions on news media independence from undue political or government influence – just a tiny minority think the media is free from undue political influence. (Newmann 2002: 16)

Levels of news avoidance increased in response to the media saturation coverage of the Ukraine conflict: in Germany, Poland, and the US, the proportion who actively avoid the news has increased by 7pp, 6pp and 4pp, respectively. (Eddy and Fletcher, 2022: 35) The fact that trust in the news has decreased over the same time period points to the decision to avoid the news due to its disinformation and propagandism linked to government and business interests. This is supported for the fact that a majority in those surveyed states felt the media have not explained the wider implications of the Ukraine conflict or provided a different range of perspectives on it. (Eddy and Fletcher, 2022: 36)

The propagandistic nature of the coverage does not appear to have had the effect on public opinion that governments hoped, as 35% of citizens across ten states in Europe (Britain, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and Sweden) want a negotiated ceasefire, versus 23% that want to fuel and prolong the war. The governments' position - characterised as "the upbeat talk in many European capitals, which see the war as an EU "moment"" (2022: 15) for it as a "superpower" (2022: 2) and as a "midwife of a much more muscular EU" (2022: 24) - is outnumbered in the demos: "The survey reveals a growing gap between the stated positions of many European governments and the public mood in their countries." (Krastev and Leonard, 2022: 3) On average, 42% of people think their government is giving too much attention to the war in Ukraine compared to just 3% saying not enough. (Krastev and Leonard, 2022: 13)

What is most worrying is the EU's use of polls to design its propaganda strategy, as recommended by its own think tank to "present the conflict as a defensive struggle against Russian aggression rather than talking about Ukrainian victory and defeating Russia" to try to stymie the growth of the peace camp section of the population and manipulate through such discourses... "Finding a language that appeals....could provide a way of squaring the circle of public opinion." (2022: 24) It is clear from the report that the EU elite pursuing superpower status through the Ukraine war feel imperilled by the expansion of the citizen majority peace camp: "the most worrying sign is that ... If this is allowed to happen – and if the EU becomes immobilised by its own divisions – then the war could signal the permanent marginalisation of Europe on the world stage". This imperialist fear explains why the EU is so abusive and aggressive towards those refusing to supply troops and sanction strikes into Russia, and those calling for a peaceful resolution to the conflict (Wax, 2024; Ataman, 2024; Yle, 24 April 2022), including the aforementioned ordinary citizens, as well as NGOs and non-government politicians. The next section explores that discursive battlefield, focusing on actors and one-sided tactics, in particular, manipulated opinion polls and misinformation polls reports.

Irish journalist Justine McCarthy (6 March 2022) summed up the discursive tactics of the militarist side of the two-level game in Ireland:

many people, including some in Leinster House, have called for Ireland to drop its neutrality policy and send arms to Ukraine. The discussion about this country's role has assumed a subtext that, if you are opposed to any type of military intervention, you must be pro-Putin or soft on belligerents... You're either with us or against us, goes its anthem. That is how confrontation escalates and grows beyond the reach of reason... We are bombarded with a narrative that the West is best, the rest is evil, and only weapons of death are capable of protecting the values we cherish...

Erkki Tuomioja, ex-Finnish Foreign Minister and vice chair of his Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, told America's NPR that the Finnish debate is characterised by "...fear, which is actually

fuelled also by our media, which is in a state of, I would say, war psychosis” (Yle, 24 April 2022) and stated he did not believe a Russian attack on Finland was realistic. He also explained “I’m also concerned about the level of the public debate. Anybody who questions [NATO] membership is being vilified as a Putin agent”. The pattern of these discursive dynamics in shutting down opposition to the war in Ukraine is seen mirrored across polities – the tactics used to promote militarism and eradicate neutrality are also ubiquitous.

Former Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald personally advocated joining NATO (1995) but felt he had to appear to adhere to some semblance of neutrality (Dáil Éireann, Vol. 327: Col. 1423) due to pressure from public opinion - in writing about how foreign policy interests are formulated, FitzGerald (2000) admitted that national governments take decisions that operate against the interests of society as a whole, due to pressure from vested interests. Those ‘vested interests’ are an intersection of NATO with powerful global corporations, especially the arms industry known as the ‘military industrial complex’. The ‘Bilderberg Group’ is a touchstone example of how these interests foment and coalesce, indeed, its 2022 Washington conference “is a high-level council of war, headlined by the secretary general of Nato, Bilderberg veteran Jens Stoltenberg”. (Skelton, 4 June 2022) NATO is a listed subject of the 2023 Bilderberg summit (Bilderberg, 18 - 21 May 2023 Lisbon, Portugal) to be discussed by “most powerful financial lobbyists in the world” including Goldman Sachs; “big oil, with the heads of Total, BP and Galp”; “Big pharma, with the heads of Merck and Pfizer and a director of AstraZeneca” (ibid). Considering the number and seniority of public figures and policymakers who attend Bilderberg, there is eerie lack of coverage in the world’s mainstream press.

Militarist Tactics – three approaches

Three categories of tactics are 1) code words, ‘word play’ and meaningful silences; 2: disinformation including false reports of opinion poll data and fake polls with biased question wording; 3) propaganda, including attempted fear-mongering using unfounded threats.

1) Code words, ‘word play’ and meaningful silences

“Peacewashing” usefully describes these discourse tactics of militarists. Greta Thunberg described the COP27 climate summit as an opportunity for “people in power... to [use] greenwashing, lying and cheating”. The term “greenwashing” reflects a form of advertising or marketing spin used deceptively to persuade the public that an organisation's products, aims and policies are environmentally friendly through the use of environmental imagery, misleading labels, and hiding trade-offs. In the same way, governments, militarists and organisations such as the EU and NATO use the terms “peace enforcement”, “military aspects of peace support”, and “Peace Facility” to obscure from the public that fact that they constitute warfare, militarisation and funding for the use of lethal force, respectively. Tonra engages in this, saying “.... We need to do things at the sharper end of peacekeeping” (emphasis added), to describe the move to war fighting that he demands. The same linguistic gymnastics is seen in Finnish political discourses, for example on 20 March 1997, Defence minister Anneli Taina told a meeting of the Paasikivi Society that “the peacemaking planned for the EU ...conformed to the concept of broader peacekeeping, as defined by parliament” (Eilen, 20 March 1997, emphasis added). Olli Kivinen stated in his "The Equation Twists Towards NATO" column for Helsingin Sanomat newspaper on 23rd November 2000, "the EU's common defence, which is developing under the code name "crisis management", took a major step forward when the plan to gather troops was announced in Brussels in the beginning of the week". L. Johan Eliasson confirms this

codename for common defence was the outcome of Swedish-Finnish coalition negotiations in the WEU-EU merger process, “References to the gradual construction of the WEU as the EU's military component created the link between crisis management and defense the two had originally sought to avoid” (2004). These examples demonstrate the strategic silences, suppression of the use of the word ‘neutrality’, and word play, that unravels the democratic fabric of neutral states. Senator David Norris sums up the effects: “In the way it constantly changes its name and elements of its structure, the European armaments group reminds me of the AIDS virus. Our triple lock strategy plays the same role as the triple therapy. The disease remains but it is becoming chronic instead of fatal. It is a cancer at the heart of Europe.” (2008)

Tactic 2: disinformation: false reports of opinion poll data and fake polls with biased question wording

The difference between misinformation and disinformation is that of error and knowingly disseminating false content meant to deceive. Gaslighting *involves manipulation of information* whereby information provided may comprise truth, half-truths, denial, minimisation, lies, concealment, falsification and so on. Arguably, opinion poll disinformation is a strategy of political gaslighting on a mass scale, designed to destabilise and disorient public opinion on political issues, in this case, [chronically low] levels of citizens’ support for NATO membership in neutral states. Early examples of poll manipulation to eradicate support for neutrality are found in the European Union, then EEC, in the 1970s. In 1979, Anton DePorte argued that “reports of neutralism and pacificism in European public opinion” were of concern to elites that feared that “the domestic base of support for the [North Atlantic] Alliance had been eroded” (in Eichenberg, 1989: 123-124). In this context, Richard Eichenberg notes the consequence that “some questions contain background or ‘lead-ins’ that are controversial or inaccurate” and in particular, “more subtle and amusing difficulties have arisen from the interest in neutralism” (1989: 24). He was referring to the results of polls asking a question about “preferred alliance” that included the response option of “do not participate in any alliance – take a completely neutral position”.

It is argued that Eurobarometer (the EU’s polling tool), is ‘not only meant as a research instrument, but also as some kind of people consulting tool for improving public decision-making’ (Duchesne, 2006: 1). Serious normative questions are raised about Eurobarometer CSDP results, because (1) polls are expected to seek to capture the true, genuine policy preferences of Europeans; (2) people suffer distressing cognitive dissonance and identity dissociations when presented with seeming ‘evidence’ of national public positions that contradict and undermine the true positions known and held by the community of people in question; and (3) the politically-constructed polling ‘evidence’ is used by elites to pursue policies that are contrary to the will of the majority of citizens, rendering the EU's claims to democracy questionable.

In April 1979, Eurobarometer 11 (Q. 235) asked about the ‘best way’ to provide for the respondent nation’s ‘military security’. For reasons unknown, neutral Ireland, Northern Ireland and Denmark were not included, so each of the states’ populations that were asked this question were in NATO (France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg). Excluding the people who replied ‘don’t know’ (over 1000 respondents or 5% of all those polled), a bare majority favoured participation in NATO (53%) and the second most popular option was neutrality, favoured by 1 in 5 respondents, ahead of the WEU military alliance-type option (17%) or a non-military alliance (10%). In France, neutrality was marginally the most popular option (31.2%) followed by WEU membership (30.5%) and NATO (27.5%) membership, with 10.8% opting for a non-military alliance of Western Europe nations. In Italy, neutrality was the second most popular policy (29.2%) after NATO (36.8%). Two-thirds

majorities in Germany (66.3%) and Britain (67.8%) favoured NATO, with neutrality the second most popular option in Britain (18.4%) and the least favoured in Germany (10.1%). Overall, amongst the six EEC member-states, neutrality was the second most popular means to achieve military security (22.2%) after membership of NATO (53.0%). *The evident transnational public support for neutrality meant neutrality was never again provided as an option in the wording of Eurobarometer survey questions* asking people their preferred way to achieve security in Europe.

This evidence supports the proposition that the political goals of the European Union in seeking to create an EU Security and Defence Union have not just informed the design and question wording of Eurobarometer, but determine the outcome of the opinion polls, and how those results are communicated to the wider world. Manipulation of polls and misreporting of survey results are deployed by EU/NATO-funded academics, media, research agencies and think-tanks in order to deceive the public and force a referendum result to join NATO or to justify an application to join NATO.

Turning to the case of Ireland, five opinion polls on public attitudes to NATO membership were reported in the media since the start of the conflict in Ukraine. Each of the five polls were misreported (more accurately, ‘disreported’) and/or based on deliberately biased question wording and framing, in order to claim majorities in favour of joining NATO: 1) RedC Sunday Business Post 27 March 2022; 2) Irish Times, 16 April 2022; 3) Irish Times, 28 August 2022; 4) Irish Times, 23 June 2023; 5) Red C (25 June 2023).

Using a RedC poll, the Sunday Business Post (27 March 2022) claimed “48 per cent of people believe Ireland should join Nato to boost its security”. This report suggests respondents were asked a straightforward, “do you want Ireland to join NATO” question (notably the ‘to boost security’ wording is biased and unfounded – many argued from the start that NATO is an alliance that creates insecurity (Swomley, 1949)). Instead they were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with a list of statements made by unknown persons in relation to the war in Ukraine, i.e. “Please state the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements that other people have made following the Russian invasion of Ukraine”. The newspaper report also falsely claimed the “Poll shows 46% in favour of Irish troops serving in [a] European army”, specifically that respondents “say they would vote yes in a referendum on the issue” (Brennan, 26 March 2022) The question concerned an unknown person’s opinion about [holding] a referendum on the question of troops serving in a European army. The survey did not ask how respondents would *vote* in any referendum, let alone a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ on Irish troops serving in a European army.

Journalists reporting on an Irish Times IPSOS poll on 16 April 2022 claimed that 63% of those surveyed were willing for Ireland to join NATO, shown in pie chart graphics. The newspaper journalist later tweeted “The base for these graphs is all those in favour of a change. Though that’s clear in the copy we should have made it clear in the graphs too. Sorry.” (Leahy, 16 April 2022) (Irish Times Political Editor via Twitter, 16 April 2022)) The true figure of 15% was never provided either over social media or in print.

In August 2022, the Irish Times published the results of another poll on NATO membership, claiming “the country was more or less divided on Nato membership with 52 per cent in support of joining” (Carswell, 28 August 2022) without acknowledging it was not a genuine political opinion poll and was designed to ensure bias in favour of NATO membership. As mentioned earlier, Richard Eichenberg notes the tactics used to manipulate opinion data, for example, “some questions contain background or ‘lead-ins’ that are controversial or inaccurate” – in this case the newspaper stated “One third of the respondents to the survey, 614 people, were asked to read a paragraph about military conflict” but that ‘paragraph’ was comprised of wholly inaccurate claims and unfounded threats, i.e. “Ireland would

not be able to meaningfully defend itself against attack”: “already be[ing] in the middle of world War 3”, “Ireland is in a very vulnerable position” as “no NATO membership ... make[s] Ireland a potential target.” And then the survey asked if the respondents want Ireland to join NATO! The newspaper merely wrote “when presented with a short narrative about military conflict” and together with the private company, portrayed the survey as a genuine political opinion poll.

The *Irish Times* newspaper failed to admit that the ‘survey’ was manipulated to push respondents to agree to NATO membership, which is clear from the claims by the author of the ‘report’:

We wanted to understand how Irish people feel about the possibility of joining NATO or an EU army...We wanted to explore whether narratives could influence people’s thinking and voting intention if we were to have a referendum on NATO membership....How the narrative around neutrality and NATO membership is framed carries weight: it could make all the difference to a referendum result. (Cogan, 22 August 2022)

In a correspondence published on Twitter, the researcher admitted that “it was a standalone research project rather than a political opinion poll”. (Cogan, 29 August 2022) As a research project, it was particularly poor and uninformed, with basic errors, for example, the authors conflate an army with a military alliance: “Men and those aged 65+ are more likely to favour *joining a military alliance, whether NATO or an EU army*” (emphasis added). (Cogan, 27 August 2022) The Irish Times committed two further poll disinformation offences, falsely claiming in 2022 and 2023 a majority of people favour NATO membership when the true figures are just 13% and 14% respectively.

These falsehoods are further disseminated by government-EU-NATO ‘ambassador’-agents in universities, for example, within an onslaught of propaganda emanating from these quarters in the wake of the Government ‘Forum’ (discussed below), Andrew Cottey claimed “the voices in favour of the purist version of neutrality are sometimes loud, they do not necessarily represent majority opinion” when every valid opinion poll in the history of the state has shown majority opinion favours active neutrality. He used the aforementioned poll reports of the Irish Times August 2022 and RedC, June 2023 to further the propaganda, claiming these biased and misreported polls are “possibly suggesting greater public openness to NATO membership”. Any bone fide academic would critique and not use this data – Cottey’s “NATOWatch” propaganda sedimentation exercise simply noted “the methodology to some extent depended on leading questions”.

The Irish Times repeated the exact same ‘mistake’ reporting results of the next IPSOS poll it commissioned in 2023. Again, via social media the newspaper tweeted: “[@IrishTimes 3:01 PM · Jun 18, 2023](#) Correction: A tweet from this account on Saturday afternoon stated in error that 56 per cent of people surveyed in an Irish Times/Ipsos poll on neutrality think Ireland should join Nato.” “In fact, as our news and analysis articles stated, it was 56 per cent of those who would like to see a change in neutrality policy who favour joining Nato.” The newspaper failed to publish in print and online that their correction meant that just 14% of those polled favoured NATO membership.

Finally, *Sunday Business Post* (25 June 2023) reports claimed 34% of people in Ireland favoured joining NATO based on another Red C poll. However, once again, the reports failed to admit the same biased framing that asked people’s position on others’ proposal to join NATO, i.e. it was not a direct question asking the respondents’ own policy preferences, and the proposition being promoted by the ‘others’ was biased towards joining.

The fact that five out of five poll reports falsely claim majorities favouring NATO membership suggests the corporate interests of the newspapers lies in support for militarism. This phenomenon of reports of sudden spikes in public support of NATO membership is mirrored in other neutral states. For

example, Swedish tabloid newspaper Aftonbladet reported rocketing figures of respondents favouring NATO membership - a media source 91% owned by the Schibsted Media Group, a holding of Schibsted ASA, headed by tech venture capitalist Karl-Christian Agerup who happens to be a very enthusiastic Board member of the NATO [Defence Tech] Innovation Fund, worth over a billion euro. (NATO, 3 May 2023)

Deliberate misinformation is also carried globally by the mass media in relation to Swedish public opinion on NATO membership. For example, the US publication *Time* claimed "A Gallup poll published in September of that year [2022] found that 74% of Swedes supported the country joining NATO." (Syed, 2023) In fact, the poll never reported any figures on the question of support for joining NATO (mostly likely because, if the question were asked, the figures showed a majority rejecting membership) but only reported on results from a question "Do you approve or disapprove of the job performance of the leadership of NATO?" (Reinhart, 2022) In fact, reported figures for NATO membership support only reached 37% in a 2022 poll. (Szumski, 2022) Further surveys were reported using on-line samples (reflective of the Irish survey sample threatened with Ireland being targeted in world war three and unable to defend itself from attack because of non-membership of NATO) commissioned by tabloid newspaper Aftonbladet that showed rocketing figures of respondents favouring NATO membership. It is reasonable to posit that the opinion polls showing sudden increases in support for NATO membership in Sweden ("showed 57% of Swedes now favoured NATO membership, up from 51% in March") are also as biased and misreported, as all of the opinion polls in Ireland showing similar spikes (falsely showing 63% favoured NATO membership, *Irish Times* April 2022, and falsely claiming that 56% favoured joining NATO, *Irish Times* June 2023). Comparing the two cases of Ireland and Finland over the same time period, a 1996 MRBI opinion poll conducted for the *Irish Times* showed that just 13% of people in Ireland would be willing for Ireland to join NATO (Poll shows a symbolic support for neutrality, *Irish Times*, 5 March 1996) whilst an opinion poll carried out between November 1996 and January 1997 for the Centre for Finnish Business and Policy Studies (EVA 2023), showed only 17% wanted Finland to join NATO (Eilen, 1997).

The intended effect of the disinformation and biased polls is to create a false social reality among people in Ireland so they will underestimate support for neutrality and think that a majority favour rejecting neutrality and/or NATO membership when in actuality 4 in 5 people in Ireland support neutrality and between 13% and 15% want to join NATO. The militarists' efforts to create an inverted perception of the attitudes of others towards neutrality may be undertaken in the hope of undermining people's willingness to discuss the issue and thus obstructs organising around it, and secondly, erroneously enlarged perceptions of the opposition's numbers might increase conformity pressures to acquiesce to the governments' campaigns to join NATO. The role of NGOs, discussed in the next section, comes to the fore in providing countermovements to these attempts to create a false consensus by mobilising in support of neutrality, and in particular, commissioning polls that capture accurately public opinion on neutrality.

Tactic 3: propaganda, selling fear, unfounded threats

If fake polls are designed to soften up public opinion, the disinformation tactic of selling fear is on the other end of the scale of coercing public opinion to support military conflict. For example, Nacos et al. (2011) used quantitative and qualitative evidence to demonstrate how the US government administration hyped fear to sell the Iraq War to the public after the 9/11 attacks, while obscuring civil liberties abuses - the media largely abdicated its watchdog role, choosing to amplify the administration's message while downplaying issues that might have called the administration's

statements and strategies into question. The same unfounded threats of attack, and negative discourses against neutrality supporters are used in Ireland. For example a Government politician, Neale Richmond, told unfounded falsehoods to the Austrian state broadcaster TV ORF (Fokus Europa F: 2 Neutralität Irland, 23.11.2022), saying, "...since the Russian invasion of Ukraine... a day doesn't pass by, where people aren't concerned about a Russian ship or aeroplane crashing into Irish territory" (ORF, 23 November 2022). Russia's ambassador to Ireland Yuriy Filatov called out the same threat discourse tactic published in the (Government-appointed) *Commission on the Defence Forces 2022* report (it cited EU foreign affairs ministers claims about 'aggressive actions' by Russia) saying "Any unbiased observer would be hard put to find any evidence of such a 'threat'" (Carswell, 10 February 2022). A worrying aspect of elite access to military force is the development of motivated bias in international threat perception, which, coupled with a diversionary use of force whereby governments use conflict to distract from domestic policy failures, particularly in election years, (Fordham, 1998) can contribute to a dynamic of perpetual war. In addition to government-appointed agents and media and university-based EU spokesperson, think tanks also join in the chorus of threat discourses as the next section demonstrates.

Militarism and Think Tanks

The number of think tanks promoting militarism in Europe have exploded in the past decade, because, as NATO puts it, "at other times, policy issues are better communicated by third parties, such as think tanks and academics, than through official statements" (Babst, 2009: 6). Aside from the Jean Monnet university-based spokespersons, the European Union, supported by member-state governments, also funds a vast network of think tanks. This is reflected in the proliferation of think tank reports on the Ukraine crisis since it started in February 2022 – the EU listed over eight hundred such reports on its website within eighteen months. (Consilium, July 2023) That's a rate of 47 reports published every month, or an average of one and half reports issued every day. In Ireland, new EU-funded think tanks have sprung up, such as Azure Forum – described as "a dedicated – first of its kind – peace, security and defence policy think tank based in Ireland" - in addition to the long-standing ones such as the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA) and the European Movement Ireland. The cross-over of personnel between think tanks but also positions in universities, government/state bodies, and the European Union is notable, for example the Azure Forum directors Ben Tonra and Caitríona Heintz are named as part of the IIEA think tank, University College Dublin, the EU Institute of Security Studies and the Department of Foreign Affairs (e.g. "She [Heintz] is a member of the Irish government's Department of Foreign Affairs Foreign Policy Network, having represented the Department at meetings on Asia Pacific/cyber questions in Brussels previously", Azure Forum (no date)). (Commission on the Defence Forces, 2021)

The threat discourses used by militarists to demand an end to neutrality, and membership of NATO, are illogical and contradictory, for example, the EU Jean Monnet spokesman, Andrew Cottey states "...Ireland faces a low, arguably very low, threat national security environment.... Ireland's national security environment remains a low threat one ... the likelihood of an outright Russian attack on Ireland surely remains very low" and in the next breath, claims "Ireland would appear to be a particularly strong example of free-riding.... Ireland has been a free-rider on NATO ever since the alliance was established in 1949, benefitting from the deterrence of the Soviet Union provided by the alliance". This is an illogical argument, as deterrence only occurs against a real and credible threat, and as that same author admitted there is no real and credible threat, the corollaries apply: a state receiving no benefit of deterrence logically cannot be a 'free-rider'. (2022: 4-5) The second 'threat'

used by militarists to demand an end to neutrality through membership of NATO is cyber security, and the third ‘threat’ is attacks on transnational sea cables – again, both are completely illogical given that the State itself acknowledges in its *Green Paper on Defence* “military neutrality is immaterial for threats that are generic and transnational in character e.g., cyber-security or terrorism” (Ireland, 2015: 8)

Neutrality and NGOs

“I am here to be as objective as possible but I will say that the achievement of the “No” side was significant. It notched up a notable vote and saw a substantial increase after a substantial stable period,” said Richard Sinnott in a presentation to the Oireachtas Sub-Committee on Ireland’s Future in the European Union on 18 November 2008. He was describing the results of the activities of protagonists behind the referendum campaign that resulted in a second public rejection of an EU treaty due to a desire to retain neutrality. The ability of the NGO sector to challenge the hegemonic discourses of the state and its agents including businesses, trade unions, media, think tanks and the majority of the political establishment makes it an important actor within the two-level game system. Normatively, non-governmental organisations are a vital cog in the political machinery of direct democracy in Ireland and play a significant role in providing information to the public through pamphlets, public meetings and press conferences, on areas of politics that are very tightly controlled by a tiny elite within governing political parties.

Table 5 below lists the most active NGOs in the realm of foreign policy and neutrality. There are several coordinated and autonomous local chapters and affiliated groups within many of the organisations listed as well as transnational movements at the higher level for cooperation, support and exchange, for example, International Committee of the Red Cross, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Members are from across the political spectrum – most are internationalist in their views, well-travelled and highly educated - because these organisations are issue-based and are not seeking to organise into a political party or obtain power within the political system. (Lacey, 2013: 129-135). Most activists, who come from all sectors of society, including students, private sector workers, the unemployed, trade unionists, retired civil servants, self-employed farmers, refugees, artists and musicians, carry out voluntary work for several NGOs, especially during significant political events such as referendum campaigns, including the most recent event staged by the government, the ‘Forum on International Security Policy’ outlined in the final section of this paper.

Table 5: Non-Governmental Organisations associated with the resilience of Irish neutrality

Peace and Neutrality Alliance (PANA)
Action from Ireland (Afri)
Irish Anti-War Movement (IAWM)
Irish Neutrality League
Comhlámh, the Irish Association for Development Workers
People First/Meitheal
National Platform
Irish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (Irish CND)
Greenpeace
ShannonWatch

StoP Swords Into Ploughshares
Catholic Worker Movement
Veterans for Peace
Cork Neutrality League
Dochas
Pax Christi
Connolly Youth Movement
Extinction Rebellion
Society of Friends (Quakers)

Neutrality – the President of Ireland

In addition to the NGOs, another non-governmental political actor in the form of the President of Ireland plays a role in the two-level game. The President of Ireland is elected directly by the people and has two main roles, firstly, the guardian of the Constitution and secondly, the representative of the Irish State through mainly ceremonial duties. Although executive authority in Ireland is expressly vested in the government, the government is obliged to keep the President informed on matters of domestic and foreign policy. In that context, the current President Michael D Higgins has given voice to concerns over various governmental attempts to eliminate facets of neutrality and commit Ireland to further EU militarism. For example, in 2018, a journalist noted “what might be interpreted as a public warning about neutrality to the Taoiseach, who is also the minister for defence, the President stated the government has a duty to explain why it signed up as a member of PESCO (Permanent Structured Co-operation), the EU's security and defence operation” (McCarthy, 21 October 2018). Continuing this line of questioning in June 2023, the President of Ireland reflected public support for active, positive neutrality in an interview with a newspaper in which he questioned the selection of speakers at the government's four-day “International Security Forum” event, i.e. “the composition of the various panels was mostly made up of “the admirals, the generals, the air force, the rest of it”, as well as “the formerly neutral countries who are now joining Nato”. He asked why there was no representation from still-neutral countries such as Austria and Malta.” (Whyte, 2023). The President is entirely correct in his observation of the biased selection of the invitees – indeed, aside from the military and other speakers from outside Ireland, every invited lecturer from a university in Ireland is either EU funded, a Jean Monnet funded agent of the EU, or a known government party affiliate. Just one speaker from the NGO PANA was permitted to contribute on the subject of neutrality.

The President was critical, too, of the European Union for its increasing military posturing, citing French president Emmanuel Macron's recent comments that “the future of Europe is as the most reliable pillar in Nato”. Several politicians welcomed the President's remarks, saying “the majority of Irish people will back the President. My opinion is Michael D Higgins has nailed it... I mean he says the Irish government are playing with fire, I think that's correct. He says Micheál Martin's security forum, which kicks off in Cork on Thursday, is stacked, and I think that's very true as well. So any attempt to silence the President on these issues in the next couple of days will cause a big crisis for the Government.” (Cox, 18 June 2023). The ‘establishment’ reaction was a storm of character assassination and verbal abuse (i.e. claiming the President said something he did not say) carried through the media. The President's contribution cannot be underestimated for the four in five people in Ireland who want positive, active neutrality, and the NGOs that work tirelessly to educate, inform, and ultimately to form a bulwark in attempts to hold the government to account.

The Government “Forum on International Security Policy”

I wrote in 2022 that “Neutrality has rarely been allowed as a topic of discussion in its own right, and instead is subordinated to discussion of the merits and demands of NATO membership and of EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mandates”. (Devine 2022) I experienced this directly when the government issued an “invitation” to the Forum. Instead of one of the two panels on neutrality on the last day of the Forum, the invitation was to a European Security and Defence panel that was loaded with Jean Monnet spokesperson and military personnel on the penultimate day. When I requested information on the procedures, I was told I would be asked questions for half of the 75 minutes allocated. When I asked for those questions, the information was refused. When I asked to speak for three minutes separate from the questioning to present my research, the response was “No”. It was clear that an academic with expertise on neutrality was never going to be allowed to speak on that topic at the Forum, not even for three out of seventy-five minutes. Martina Devlin, a journalist covering the Forum, summed it up thus:

...the real problem is that a lop-sided conference has been set up, with panellists (no matter how distinguished) lacking in diverse viewpoints, making it difficult to treat this as a genuine public discussion. Such inept programming neuters the forum....the forum looks like a naked attempt by the Government to reconfigure opinion on neutrality...the forum is a scoping exercise: Government parties testing the water on whether public support exists for a move towards a more militaristic style of foreign policy. A Citizens’ Assembly would have been the democratic way to proceed but coalition leaders prefer the notion of dissolving the Triple Lock – a stipulation before Irish troops can be deployed overseas – rather than consulting the people on neutrality. As we know from experience the answer might not suit them. (23 June 2023).

The limited foreign coverage of the Forum included the claim, made by the largely French government-controlled Agence France-Presse (AFP) that “pursuing NATO membership” is “the course followed by successive [Irish] governments since the outbreak of World War II”. (AFP, 22 June 2023) Although the government claimed it has no intention of joining NATO, independent politicians and NGOs as well as all the Forum invitees knew that, as Clonan puts it: “This consultative forum on neutrality.... is an attempt to get us into NATO by stealth” (Clonan, Echo Chamber Podcast Episode 1048. 5 July, 14 minutes 30 seconds). An annual telephone survey (709 adults aged 16+ interviewed 3rd-30th March 2022) called ‘the Ipsos Veracity Index’ asked a question “I will read you a list of different types of people. For each would you tell me if you generally trust them to tell the truth, or not?” and the results showed that for the public, Government Ministers (36%) and Politicians (27%) are the least trusted of twenty-five professional cohorts to tell the truth, with social media influencers the only group below them on the ranking. It is therefore likely, given the activities of the NGOs, the President of Ireland, and a handful of independent journalists and politicians, that the public will remain wary of government discourses rather than taking them at face value. Previous tactics employed by this government to force through legislation eradicating active neutrality suggest that the government will attempt to force a bill through the parliament for NATO membership or the repeal of the triple lock in 2025 and may yet guillotine the debate on the bill if backbenchers appear to revolt.

Why are Irish Government leaders intent on securing membership of NATO?

The question is, what is driving the Government leaders to push legislation through the parliament abolishing the Triple Lock to enable informal but fully effective NATO membership, and to allow the use of lethal force in EU and NATO operations? One working hypothesis concerns the age-old problem

of corruption. This issue has dogged the politics of neutrality for centuries in Ireland. In 1790 Wolfe Tone stated clearly in his manifesto for Irish neutrality: “Your innocence is yet, I trust, untainted by the rank leaven of corruption. Ye have no interests to bias your judgment but the interest of Ireland....direct your councils tothe establishment of the welfare, and glory and independence of Ireland for ever and ever”. (Tone 30 June 1790 in Moody et al. 2009 [Vol. 1]: 61, emphasis added) (Devine, 2013: 377) Daniel O’Connell, the first democratically elected politician in Western Europe, in 1811, conferred thanks on statesmen who “had, with the purest patriotism, refused everything that power could give; they had rejected all the allurements of office, rather than sacrifice, or even postpone the assertion of principle” (1871: 53) - in today’s terms, vested interests biasing judgment and betraying the interests of the Irish electorate constitutes government leaders being promised an office in the European Union. The current leader of Fianna Fail, Micheál Martin TD, is said to be “the next Irish nominee for European Commissioner if he chooses. He has a longer shot at bigger jobs, including president of the European Council or EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs.... Significant recent speeches on China and defence policy mirrored the mainstream in Brussels” (Howlin, 12 May 2023) – it is clear that the head of government is pushing the EU’s agenda and is widely expected by his political peers and the media to get what could be a quid pro quo reward for it. His own party’s elected representatives have admitted they believe he is destined for an EU role in Brussels (O’Connell, 25 June 2023). This view is widely held outside of the party also: “There is a view held by some long-time Martin observers that he will resign this time next year and depart for Brussels, where he has been spoken of as a possible successor to Charles Michel as President of the European Council.” (Leahy, 24 June 2023) There is contemporary precedence for ministers jettisoning neutrality for the EU’s agenda and shortly thereafter occupying a position of EU Commissioner or EU ambassador (see Devine 2011). One can only examine the evidence and hypothesise. Other more negative pressures may also be at play that echoes the experience of government ministers during the EU’s instigation of the so-called ‘bailout’. (Hutton, 10 September 2015)

The government has several strategies to avoid holding a referendum on NATO membership and/or the Triple Lock, including promising a ‘citizens assembly’ but failed to hold one, likely due to research showing continued public support for neutrality incorporating the Triple Lock, and rejection of NATO membership. Instead the government held a ‘Forum’ in June 2023 and hoped to use the ‘report’ on this event as a basis to legislate for NATO membership and/or the abolition of the Triple Lock which mandates that Irish defence forces numbering more than twelve personnel can only contribute to missions abroad with UN Security Council or General Assembly authorisation, as well as Government and Parliament approval. Regardless, the government knows that there is no public mandate for eradicating the Triple Lock as a cornerstone of Irish active, positive neutrality but appears intent on doing it.

Conclusion

This submission has set out to explore the question of the resilience of Irish neutrality to date, modelled within a “two-level game” by analysing the actors, resources, tactics and discourses that constitute the struggle. However, the struggle also exists in connection to the production, publication and dissemination of this paper - to read this paper, if it is indeed accepted for publication - is to be a participant in that struggle, wittingly or otherwise, because it is a political act. Academic research on neutrality, despite being widely published and cited in the past, is now strongly discouraged as part of the rapid change in educational institutions, where freedom of thought and expression is in retreat in many areas. “Administrators of universities have become top-down representatives of government,

rather than defenders of the independence of their institutions. Funding is sought from corporations as well as governments [through the European Union]: "market forces" is a euphemism for conformity to corporate demands." (Mosley, 2013) My own experience of these changes mirrors that of many others, as Ola Tunander of The Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) explains (6 March 2021), "Researchers who question the legitimacy of US wars seem to experience being ousted from their positions in research and media institutions": Communications from a Programme Chair have been posted on student course pages telling them not to take modules; Jean Monnet EU agents have demanded the removal of critical thinking assignments and replacement with "policy briefings for government ministers", and the course content has been criticised by the Head of School simply because it covers the subject of neutrality, whilst modules delivered for nearly twenty years have been removed for "Jean Monnetification" treatment and delivery by EU-funded agents.

This submission has outlined the long-standing public attachment to neutrality, the consistency in the concept that accords with international law and the values of identity and independence that underpin public support for neutrality. It outlined some of the reasons why people in neutral states don't wish to join NATO, e.g. due to a lack of control over decisions and automatic involvement in wars; being wary of the conduct of NATO interventions; fears of illegal acts undertaken and a lack of political and legal recourse to arrest any notions of impunity; and the lack of responsiveness to public opinion against conflict escalation. A very brief outline of the changes the Irish Government has made to neutrality in the context of European Union security and defence integration served as the backdrop to the identification and positioning of the 'players' and their strategies to eradicate or support neutrality in a "two level game". Each of their roles has been critically analysed, focusing on the government/military industrial complex/academia involvement in both legal and illegal corruption, oppression, and misinformation, within a normative democratic framework.

As demonstrated in this paper, the government has broken the social contract by failing to represent public preferences for neutrality and has been working hard to prevent the public from knowing this fact. Three main drivers of this government failure are 1) differences in identification: the public in Ireland identify with their community and its needs, the governments' leaders identify with the European Union elite and its ambitions; 2) elite pursuit of material incentives of power and office at the European Union level in exchange for eradicating neutrality; 3) corruption, both legal and illegal, the former includes financial gain of EU agents through EU funding of think tanks, Jean Monnet 'ambassador' agents acting as EU spokespeople occupying academics roles in universities, media organisations and 'journalists', and the paid EU 'consultant' and 'lobbyist' individuals who dominate media airtime. The latter includes arms deal bribes and kickbacks at the level of government. These agents have used multiple polling discourses as a propaganda tool to justify the security and defence ambitions of the EU elite in the face of genuine public opposition. Parallels were drawn with developments in other 'post'-neutral states such as Finland and Sweden.

The submission concluded by filling in the gaps in the two-level game framework to enable a fuller and more realistic picture of the resilience of Irish neutrality. Ultimately, given the requirement of a referendum and the need to secure public approval of NATO membership and/or the removal of the Triple Lock, the government strategies for obtaining official, rather than defacto, informal membership are stymied. Finally, given the dynamics of oppression outlined in this submission, the possibility of students, academics and the general public of reading critical research on the topic of neutrality are virtually extinguished.

Bibliography

- Agence France-Presse (AFP) (2023) Ireland's debate on neutrality derailed by anti-NATO protest. Courthouse News Service.(22 June) Retrieved at: <https://www.courthousenews.com/irelands-debate-on-neutrality-derailed-by-anti-nato-protest/>
- Amnesty International. (2009) No justice for the victims of NATO bombings. (23 April) Available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2009/04/no-justicia-victimas-bombardeos-otan-20090423/>
- Ataman, Joseph. (2024) Marine Le Pen promises French far right will rein in aid to Ukraine. CNN. (July 5). <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/07/05/europe/france-le-pen-ukraine-mbappe-intl-cmd>
- Azure Forum. (no date) Profile: *Caitríona Heint Executive Director*. <https://azureforum.org/caitrona-heint/>
- Babst, Stephanie. (2009). Public Diplomacy – the Art of Engaging and Influencing, Speech by Dr. Stefanie Babst, NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy Strategy at the NATO PfP Symposium at NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, 22 January. Available at: http://www.atlanticcommunity.org/app/webroot/files/articlepdf/Babst_Public_Diplomacy.pdf
- Barroso, José Manuel Durão. (2007). "The European Union after the Lisbon Treaty", SPEECH/07/793 delivered at the 4th Joint Parliamentary meeting on the Future of Europe. Brussels. (4th December). Available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/07/793&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>. Last accessed 12 February 2018.
- Bellamy, Alex J. and Paul D. Williams. (2009) 'The West and contemporary peace operations', *Journal of Peace Research* 46(1): 39–57
- Bieler, Andreas (2000) Globalisation and the Enlargement of the European Union: Austrian and Swedish Forces in the *Struggle over Membership*. London: Routledge.
- Bilderberg. (2023) Meetings. 18 - 21 May 2023 Lisbon, Portugal. 2 - 5 June 2022 Washington, D.C., USA. Retrieved from: <https://bilderbergmeetings.org/meetings/meetings-overview/2020>
- Brennan, Michael. (2022) Poll shows 46% in favour of Irish troops serving in European army. *Sunday Business Post*. (26 March)
- Burke, Edward. 2011. "Strategic, Coherent and Constructive: Three Pillars for a New Irish Foreign Policy". In: Edward Burke and Ronan Lyons (eds), *Next Generation Ireland*. Blackrock: Blackhall Publishing, pp. 179-208.
- Burnham, Gilbert, Riyadh Lafta, Shannon Doocy, Les Roberts. 2006. Mortality after the 2003 invasion of Iraq: a cross-sectional cluster sample survey. *The Lancet*, Volume 368, Issue 9545, pp.1421-1428. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(06\)69491-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(06)69491-9).
- Carswell, Simon. (2022) Envoy challenges military body's 'bogeyman' portrayal of Russia. *Irish Times*. (10 February). Retrieved at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/envoy-challenges-military-body-s-bogeyman-portrayal-of-russia-1.4799066>

Carswell, Simon. (2022) Envoy challenges military body's 'bogeyman' portrayal of Russia. Irish Times. (10 February). Retrieved from: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/envoy-challenges-military-body-s-bogeyman-portrayal-of-russia-1.4799066>

Christiansson, Magnus (2010) 'Solidarity and Sovereignty – The Two-Dimensional Game of Swedish Security Policy', *Baltic Security and Defence Review* 12(2): 26–49.

Clonan, Tom. (2023) "Senator Tom Clonan - Still Fighting". Episode 048 Echo Chamber *Podcast*. Tortoise Shack Media (9 July) Available at <https://www.goloudnow.com/podcasts/the-echo-chamber-podcast-tortoise-shack-media-491/1048-still-fighting-senator-tom-clonan-421493>

Commission on the Defence Forces (2022) *Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces*. Retrieved at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/eb4c0-report-of-the-commission-on-defence-forces/>

Commission on the Defence Forces (2021) *Biography Caitriona Heintz* (22 January) Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.ie/en/commission-on-the-defence-forces/biographies/caitriona-heintz/>.

Consilium (2023) Think Tank reports on the invasion of Ukraine *Think Tank Review* *gsclibrary* (14 July). Retrieved from: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/documents-publications/library/library-blog/posts/think-tank-reports-on-the-invasion-of-ukraine/>

Cooke, J Vivian. (2022) Ireland starts to get a military industrial complex: Too many speakers at the NSSI Conference pushed expensive weapons of war. *Village Magazine*. (August/September) Retrieved from: <https://villagemagazine.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Military.pdf>

Cotter, Andrew. (2022) A Celtic Zeitenwende? – Continuity and Change in Irish National Security Policy. In *Defence Forces Review 2022*. Public Relations Section at the Chief of Staff's Branch, Defence Forces Printing Press.

Cotter, Andrew. (2023) Ireland debates security policy, but NATO membership not on the horizon, *NATOWatch*, Briefing Paper No.108 (9 July 2023). Retrieved from: <https://natowatch.org/default/2023/ireland-debates-security-policy-nato-membership-not-horizon>

Council of the European Union (2021) Decision (CFSP) 2021/509 of 22 March 2021. *Council of the EU* (22 March 2021) (Retrieved from: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/509/oj>)

Council of the European Union (2023) Decision (CFSP) 2023/1304 of 26 June 2023. *Council of the EU*. (26 June 2023) Retrieved from: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/1304/oj>

Coveney, Simon. (2022) Ukraine War Testing Irish Neutrality. *Harvard Gazette*. (4 May) <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2022/05/ukraine-war-testing-irish-neutrality/>

Coveney, Simon (2022) in Wilson, James. Quite Harrowing. Interview with NewsTalk Radio. (15 April) <https://www.newstalk.com/news/quite-harrowing-coveney-reflects-on-visit-to-scene-of-russian-atrocities-1332374>

Cowen, Brian (2003) 'Minister Cowen Announces Joint Irish, Finnish, Swedish and Austrian Proposal on EU Defence', Irish Department of Foreign Affairs Press Release. Retrieved from: <http://www.dfa.ie/home/index.aspx?id=25889>

Cowen, Brian (2003) Letter to Franco FRATTINI, President of the Council of the European Union /GC 2003 – European Security and Defence Policy (Available at <http://www.statewatch.org/news/2003/dec/cig62.pdf> (last accessed July 2023))

Devine, Karen. (2024). The Resilience of Irish Neutrality. In Naman Karl-Thomas Habtom (ed) *Neutrality in the Post-Cold War Era*. E-International Relations (open access) pp. 52-79.

Devine, Karen. (2022). Neutrality: Frank Aiken's Legacy and its Lessons for the Conflict in Ukraine. In Joe Murray (ed) *A Force for Good? Reflections on Neutrality and the Future of Irish Defence*. Dublin: Action From Ireland (Afri) pp. 8-20.

Devine, Karen. (2020). Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in Irish Foreign Policy. Special Issues Small State Diplomacy *New Zealand International Review*, 45, 4, pp. 11-15.

Devine, Karen. (2018). Epistemological Pluralism : Integrating Poststructuralist Deconstruction with Structural Equation Modeling. In *SAGE Research Methods Cases Part 2*, London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Devine, Karen. (2017). Imperialism and Colonialism in European Union Economic and Monetary Policies in Roger Cole (ed) *The EU: Democracy or Empire?*, pp. 18-22.

Devine, Karen. (2017). The NATO-EU "War Against Neutrality". *Public Affairs Ireland*, Dublin,. <https://pai.ie/201711irish-neutrality/>

Devine, Karen. (2016). The Difference between Political Neutrality and Military Neutrality. In John Lannon and Roger Cole (eds) *Shannon Airport and Twenty-First Century War*, PANA, pp38-43.

Devine, Karen. (2013). Values and Identities in Irish Peace Policy: Four Centuries of Norm Continuity and Change. *Swiss Political Science Review*. 19, 3, pp. 376-409.

Devine, Karen. (2012). Epistemology Matters: A Reply to David Patrick Houghton and a call for Epistemological Pluralism. *International Politics* 49, 6, pp710-745.

Devine, Karen. (2011). Neutrality and the Development of European Union Common Security and Defence Policy: Compatible or Competing? *Cooperation and Conflict* (Co-Editor of Special Issue). 46, 3, pp334-369.

Devine, Karen (with Christine Agius). (2011). 'Neutrality: a really dead concept?' A reprise. *Cooperation and Conflict* (Co-Editor of Special Issue). 46, 3, pp261-284.

Devine, Karen. (2011). The ethos and elements of Irish neutrality: 18th – 21st Centuries In Igor Novaković (ed) *Neutrality in the 21st Century: Lessons for Serbia*. Government of Sweden/ISAC/ Armed Forces of the Kingdom of Sweden, pp. 67-80.

Devine, Karen. (2011) Variation in the content and analysis of Eurobarometer surveys: implications for making cross-national inferences, European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) General Conference, 25-AUG-11 - 27-AUG-11, Reykjavik, Iceland

Devine, Karen. (2010). Irish Political Parties' Attitudes towards Neutrality and the Evolution of the EU's Foreign, Security and Defence Policies. *The Europeanization of Party Politics in Ireland, North and South*, London: Routledge, pp.51-74.

Devine, Karen. (2009). Irish Political Parties' Attitudes towards Neutrality and the Evolution of the EU's Foreign, Security and Defence Policies. *Irish Political Studies* (Special Issue), 24, 4, pp467-490.

Devine, Karen. (2009). Irish neutrality and the Lisbon Treaty. *Neutrality: Irish Experience, European Experience*, pp30-33.

Devine, Karen. (2008). A Comparative Critique of Irish Neutrality in the 'Unneutral' discourse. *Irish Studies In International Affairs*, 19, pp73-97.

Devine, Karen. (2008). Stretching the IR Theoretical Spectrum on Irish Neutrality: A Critical Social Constructivist Framework. *International Political Science Review*, 29, 4, pp461-488.

Devine, Karen, M. (2006). The myth of 'the myth of Irish neutrality': deconstructing concepts of Irish neutrality using International Relations theories. *Irish Studies In International Affairs*, 17, pp115-139.

Devlin, Martina. (2023) Gardai removing protestors from a one-sided Conference was a bad look for Government. *Irish Independent*. (26 June)

Dwyer, T. Ryle. (1991). *De Valera: The Man and the Myths*. Dublin: Poolbeg.

Eliasson, L. Johan. (2004). Traditions, Identity and Security: The Legacy of Neutrality in Finnish and Swedish Security Policies in Light of European Integration. [European Integration Online Papers](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5014999_Traditions_Identity_and_Security_The_Legacy_of_Neutrality_in_Finnish_and_Swedish_Security_Policies_in_Light_of_European_Integration/link/00b49533cb1cabf99c000000/download) 8(06). Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5014999_Traditions_Identity_and_Security_The_Legacy_of_Neutrality_in_Finnish_and_Swedish_Security_Policies_in_Light_of_European_Integration/link/00b49533cb1cabf99c000000/download

Eddy, Kirsten and Richard Fletcher (2022) Perceptions of media coverage of the war in Ukraine. (15 June)

Eichenberg, Richard C. (1989). *Public Opinion and National Security in Western Europe: Consensus Lost?*. Macmillan.

Eisenhower, President Dwight D. (17 November, 1961) *Final TV Talk 1/17/61* (1), Box 38, Speech Series, Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower as President, 1953-61, Eisenhower Library; National Archives and Records Administration. <https://www.c-span.org/video/?15026-1/president-dwight-eisenhower-farewell-address>

Electoral Commission (2023) "Our Work on Referendums" Available at: <https://www.electoralcommission.ie/our-work-on-referendums/>

Embassy of France, London (2005) *Brief Guide to the European Security and Defence Policy*. Retrieved from: https://uk.ambafrance.org/IMG/0601_Brief_guide_to_ESDP-3.pdf

Eurobarometer. 1-13 and earlier EC polls were analysed using the GESIS ZACAT data portal, GESIS is member of the [Leibniz Association](http://www.gesis.org/en/eurobarometer-data-service/). Available at: <http://www.gesis.org/en/eurobarometer-data-service/>

Eurobarometer (2016) Eurobarometer 85.1 (2016). *GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA6693 Data file Version 2.0.0*, <https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13375>.

European Commission (1967) *Preliminary Commission Opinion on the applications for accession submitted by the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark and Norway (29 September 1967)*. (29 September) retrieved from: https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/preliminary_commission_opinion_on_the_applications_for_accession_submitted_by_the_united_kingdom_ireland_denmark_and_norway_29_september_1967-en-6cdb71d4-af5e-49d9-a482-86f4f5fb6247.html

European Commission (1991) 'Commission Opinion on Austria's Application for Membership (based on SEC(91) 1590 final)', Bulletin of the European Communities (Supplement 4) (31 July). Available at: http://aei.pitt.edu/1574/01/Austria_opinion.pdf

European Commission. (1992a). "Europe and the challenge of enlargement" *Bulletin of the European Communities Supplement 3/92*, Publications Office, Brussels, June 24, 1992. <https://op.europa.eu/s/ziTu>

European Commission. (1992b). "The challenge of enlargement. Commission opinion on Finland's application for membership." *Bulletin of the European Communities, Supplement 6/92* Publications Office, Brussels November 4, 1992. <http://aei.pitt.edu/1568/>

European Commission (2022) Proposal for a Regulation on establishing the European defence industry Reinforcement through common Procurement Act. COM/2022/349 final. (19 July). Retrieved from: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022PC0349>

European Commission (2023) European Commission Press Release. European Defence Fund: €1.2 billion to boost EU defence capabilities and innovation. Brussels, (30 March). Retrieved at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_2021

European Commission. (2025). European Commission Press Release "Future European Defence". (28 March) Brussels. Available at: https://commission.europa.eu/topics/defence/future-european-defence_en

European Council. (2013). *Official Journal of the European Union L60* March 3, 2013: 131-139. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2013:060:FULL&from=NL>

European Court of Human Rights, Grand Chamber Decision as to the admissibility of Application no. 52207/99, 12 December 2001, available at: <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/docx/?library=ECHR&id=001-22099&filename=BANKOVI%C4%86%20AND%20OTHERS%20v.%20BELGIUM%20AND%20OTHERS.docx&logEvent=False>

European Parliament. (2023) Motion for a European Parliament Resolution on EU Rapid Deployment Capacity, EU Battlegroups and Article 44 TEU: the way forward [2022/2145\(INI\)](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2023-0077_EN.html) (23 March) .Available at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2023-0077_EN.html

Eva (2023) There has been a sharp increase in support for NATO membership. Eva Blog. Available at: <https://www.eva.fi/en/blog/2021/10/26/there-has-been-a-sharp-increase-in-support-for-nato-membership/>

Eilen (1997) Archive and Chronology of Finnish Foreign Policy. (20 March) Retrieved from: <https://www.eilen.fi/en/chronology/1997/?q=Anneli%20Taina>

European Council (2022) *Conclusions – 24 and 25 March 2022 II. SECURITY AND DEFENCE* (24-25 March) Available at: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-1-2022-INIT/en/pdf>

Feinstein, Andrew, Paul Holden and Barnaby Pace. (2011) "Corruption and the arms trade: sins of commission", *SIPRI Yearbook 2011: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Available at: <https://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2011/01>

Finlan, Michael. 1988. "Young FG hears genetic fingerprint call". *The Irish Times* February 6, 1988.

FitzGerald, Garret (1995) 'Military neutrality immoral, despite virtuous Irish claims', *Irish Times*, 15th April

FitzGerald, Garret. (2000). Diluting Lobbies and Unleashing Growth. In Rory O'Donnell (ed) *Europe: The Irish Experience*. Dublin: Institute of European Affairs.

Fordham, Benjamin (1998) The Politics of Threat Perception and the Use of Force: A Political Economy Model of U.S. Uses of Force, 1949-1994. *International Studies Quarterly*, 42(3): 567-590.

Forss, Stefan (2014). The Development of Russian Military Policy and Finland. Available at: <https://aff.a.se/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/russianpolicy.pdf>

Giroux, Henry A. (2007). *University in Chains: Confronting the Military-Industrial-Academic Complex*. London: Routledge.

Hall, Ben. (2008). "Sarkozy all discretion on Dublin visit". *Financial Times*. July 21, 2008.

Helsingin Sanomat. (2002). "Swedish public against Nato membership says poll" 6 March. Retrieved from: <http://www2.hs.fi/english/archive/news.asp?id=20020306IE5> (last accessed February 2009)

Hooge, Liesbet (1999) Supranational Activists or Intergovernmental Agents?" *Comparative Political Studies*, 32: 460-

Hourican, Neasa. (2023a). (@neasa_neasa) "A senior political force in gov, side stepping the participative democracy process we have (citizens assemblies) to hand pick speakers on a highly divisive subject and calling it public debate." Twitter/X June 22, 2023. https://twitter.com/neasa_neasa/status/1673647163723911168

Hourican, Neasa. (2023b). (@neasa_neasa) "Deeply Undemocratic Forum" Twitter/X June 28, 2023. https://twitter.com/neasa_neasa/status/1674104843567235075

Hourican, Neasa. 2(023c). (@neasa_neasa) "Engine of Disinformation" Twitter/X June 27, 2023. https://twitter.com/neasa_neasa/status/1673647163723911168

House of Lords. (2012) House of Lords Committee EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) Report – Govt Response Grid. House of Lords Committee EU MFF Report. UK Parliament. (May) Retrieved from: <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/eu-select/final> - mff hol committee report – response grid – 02072012 (2).pdf

Howlin, Gerard. (2023). "Is Europe beckoning for Micheál Martin?: The Tánaiste's next role could be in Brussels – or in coalition with SF." *The Irish Times*. (23 May): 14.

Hutton, Brian. (2015). Finance Minister Michael Noonan: Former ECB boss Jean Claude Trichet warned a 'bomb will go off in Dublin' if investors were burned. *Irish Independent*. (10 September). Available at: <https://www.independent.ie/business/irish/banking-inquiry/finance-minister-michael-noonan-former-ecb-boss-jean-claude-trichet-warned-a-bomb-will-go-off-in-dublin-if-investors-were-burned-31517669.html>

International Committee of the Red Cross (no date) *ECHR, Bankovic and Others v. Belgium and 16 Other States*. Available at: <https://casebook.icrc.org/case-study/echr-bankovic-and-others-v-belgium-and-16-other-states>

International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) Tribunal. (2000). *Final Report*. June 13, 2000. <https://www.icty.org/en/press/final-report-prosecutor-committee-established-review-nato-bombing-campaign-against-federal>

IPSOS. (2022). IPSOS Veracity Tracker. Available at: <https://www.ipsos.com/en-ie/ipsos-veracity-index-2022>

Ireland. (1996). *White Paper on Foreign Policy*. Dublin: Stationary Office.

Ireland. (2015) *Green Paper on Defence*. Dublin: Stationary Office. Retrieved from: <https://assets.gov.ie/24285/585a2c35199444a7be6d14e0b775c258.pdf>

Ireland, Department of Foreign Affairs. 2023a. *Terms of Reference: Consultative Forum on International Security Policy June 2023*. May 30, 2023. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/4f4ee-terms-of-reference-consultative-forum-on-international-security-policy-june-2023/>

Ireland, Department of Foreign Affairs. 2023b. *Consultative Forum on International Security Policy*. June 1, 2023. <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/e2a6b-consultative-forum-on-international-security-policy/>

Irish Examiner (anon). 2008a. "EC President campaigns for Lisbon Treaty Yes Vote." *Irish Examiner*, April 4, 2008. <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-30358016.html>

Irish Examiner (anon). 2008b. "German Chancellor Urges Yes Vote on Lisbon Treaty." *Irish Examiner*, April 14, 2008. <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-30357675.html>

Irish Examiner (2008c) Merkel in Dublin to push for Yes vote in Lisbon poll. *Irish Examiner* (14 April) Retrieved from: <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-30357543.html>

Irish Examiner (2008d) SF: Sarkozy must respect Ireland's No vote. *Irish Examiner* (20 July) Retrieved from: <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-30370476.html>

Irish Times (1995) Neutrals must join NATO – Kohl aide. *Irish Times*. (10 March)

Irish Times. (2008) Barros says Lisbon Treaty Good for Ireland. *Irish Times* (17 April) Retrieved from: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/barroso-says-lisbon-treaty-good-for-ireland-1.821367>

Karlsson, Birgit. (1995). Neutrality and Economy: The Redefining of Swedish Neutrality, 1946-52. *Journal of Peace Research* 32 (1):37-48.

Keatinge, Patrick. (2019) Reflections on Neutrality. Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA). Retrieved at :<https://www.iiea.com/images/uploads/resources/260510791700.pdf>

Kivinen, Olli. (2000) "The Equation Twists Towards NATO". *Helsingin Sanomat* (23rd November). Retrieved from: <https://www.eilen.fi/en/chronology/2000/?q=Olli%20Kivinen>

Kirk, Lisbeth. (2001). 'Solana: Neutrality is a Concept of the Past' *EU Observer*. January 17, 2001. <https://euobserver.com/news/1291>

Kirk, Lisbeth, (2001). "No Solidarity with Neutral Countries" *EU Observer*. January 19, 2001. <https://euobserver.com/news/1314>

Kirk, Lisbeth (2003) 'Neutrals Protest against Mutual Defence Clause', *EUobserver* 8 December. Available at: <http://euobserver.com/?aid=13815>

Krastev, Ivan and Mark Leonard (2022) Peace versus Justice: The Coming European Split over the War in Ukraine. European Council on Foreign Relations. (June) Retrieved from: <https://ecfr.eu/publication/peace-versus-justice-the-coming-european-split-over-the-war-in-ukraine/>

Kreps, Sarah. 2010. "Elite Consensus as a Determinant of Alliance Cohesion: Why Public Opinion Hardly Matters for NATO-led Operations in Afghanistan." *Foreign Policy Analysis* 6, no.3: 191–215. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1743-8594.2010.00108.x>

Lacey, Peter. 2013. "The People's Movement: EU Critical Action & Irish Social Activism". PhD diss., National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

Leahy, Pat. (@PatLeahyIT) 2022. "The base for these graphs is all those in favour of a change. Though that's clear in the copy we should have made it clear in the graphs too. Sorry." Twitter/X, April 16, 2022. <https://twitter.com/PatLeahyIT/status/1514938558880047106>

Leahy, Pat and Dan McLaughlin (2022) Overwhelming support for retention of Ireland's military neutrality. *Irish Times*. (15 April) Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/overwhelming-support-for-retention-of-ireland-s-military-neutrality-1.4853176>

Levine, Jon. (2023) Robert F. Kennedy Jr: 'It is insane to even keep NATO going', New York Post. (15 July). Retrieved at: <https://nypost.com/2023/07/15/robert-f-kennedy-jr-it-is-insane-to-even-keep-nato-going/>

Lopez Ralph. (2010). Soldier's Shocking Allegation: Troops Ordered to Engage in "360 Rotational Fire" Against Civilians. Alternet. (June 21) Available at: <https://archive.globalpolicy.org/invasion-and-war/atrocities-and-criminal-homicides-/49230.html>

Maher, Denis. 1986. *The Tortuous Path, The course of Ireland's entry into the EEC (1948-73)*. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

Mearsheimer, John (2014) Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault. *Foreign Affairs*. 11: 77-84, 85-89. Retrieved from: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24483306>

McCarthy, Justine. (2018). "President Michael D. Higgins first shots over Ireland's commitment to neutrality". *The Times* October 18, 2018. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/president-michael-d-higgins-fires-shots-over-ireland-s-commitment-to-neutrality-2kgvbx9j5>

McCarthy, Justine. (2022) Stay Neutral Ireland, *Sunday Times*. (6 March)
Monnet, Jean. 1978. *Memoirs*. New York: Doubleday & Company

Moody, T., R. McDowell and C. Woods (2009) (eds.). *The Writings of Theobald Wolfe Tone*. Volumes 1- 3. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Mosely, Ivo. (2013) In The Name Of The People https://wikispooks.com/wiki/Academic#cite_note-http://2F.2Fivomosley.com.2Fin-the-name-of-the-people.2Fin_The_Name_Of_The_People-1

Nuclear Watch. (2015, August 22). Watchdogs Denounce Slap on Wrist for Illegal Lobbying Activities By the World's Biggest Defense Contractor [Press release]. Retrieved from: <https://nukewatch.org/2015/08/22/watchdogs-denounce-slap-on-wrist-for-illegal-lobbying-activities/> (see also <https://nukewatch.org/2015/07/10/lockheed-martins-illegal-lobbying-to-extend-sandia-contract/>)

Nacos, Brigitte L., Yaeli Bloch-Elkon, Robert Y. Shapiro (2011) *Selling Fear. Counterterrorism, the Media, and Public Opinion*. University of Chicago Press.

NATO. (2020). "North Atlantic Council Statement as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Enters Into Force." *Press Release (2020) 131*. December 15, 2020. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_180087.htm

NATO (2022) *NATO and the 2003 campaign against Iraq*. (Last updated: 19 May. 2022 13:02) Available at: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_51977.htm

NATO. (2023). "Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation in NATO". February 27, 2023. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_48895.htm

NATO. (2023) Allies complete appointment of the NATO Innovation Fund's Board of Directors. (3 May) Retrieved from: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_214270.htm?selectedLocale=fr

Netherlands, the Kingdom of.. (2017). "Explanation of vote of the Netherlands on text of Nuclear Ban Treaty." July 7, 2017. http://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/nuclear-weapon-ban/statements/7July_Netherlands.pdf

Newman, Nic (2022) Overview and key findings of the 2022 Digital News Report. Reuters Institute (15th June) Available at: <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2022/dnr-executive-summary>

Norris, David. (2008) Report of Sub-Committee on Ireland's Future in the EU: Statements. *Seanad Éireann debate* Vol. 192 No. 14 (9 December).

North Atlantic Council. 2017. "North Atlantic Council Statement on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons." *Press Release (2017) 135*. September 20, 2017. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_146954.htm

O'Connell, J., (1871). (ed.), *The Life and Speeches of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol. I. 2 Vols. Dublin: James Duffy. Available at: http://openlibrary.org/books/OL7024229M/The_select_speeches_of_Daniel_O%27Connell

O'Connell, Hugh. (2023). "Micheál Martin controls his own destiny — but Fianna Fáil TDs think he could be Brussels-bound." *Irish Independent*. June 25, 2023.

O'Leary, Naomi. (2022). "Ireland would not need a referendum to join NATO, says Taoiseach." *Irish Times*. June 8. <https://www.irishtimes.com/world/europe/2022/06/08/ireland-would-not-need-referendum-to-join-nato-says-taoiseach/>

OECD. (2017) Budgeting and performance in the European Union. *OECD Journal on Budgeting* Volume 2017/1. Retrieved from: <https://www.oecd.org/gov/budgeting/budgeting-and-performance-in-the-eu-oecd-review.pdf>

ORF. (2022) "Fokus Europa F: 2 Neutralität Irland", *Austrian Public TV ORF* (23 November).

Perlo-Freeman, Sam. (2018). "Arms, corruption, and the state: Understanding the role of arms trade corruption in power politics." *The Economics of Peace and Security Journal*, 13(2): 37-46. <https://doi.org/10.15355/epsj.13.2.37>

RedC & Sunday Business Post. (2022) Poll shows 46% in favour of Irish troops serving in European army. *Sunday Business Post* (27 March). Retrieved from: <https://www.businesspost.ie/politics/poll-shows-46-in-favour-of-irish-troops-serving-in-european-army/>

Reinhart, RJ. (2022) Most Finns, Swedes Approve of NATO's Leadership. Gallup News. (16 September) Retrieved from: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/401102/finns-swedes-approve-nato-leadership.aspx>

RedC Research (2023) Opinion Poll Report June 2023 (25 June) Retrieved from: <https://www.redcresearch.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Business-Post-RED-C-Opinion-Poll-Report-June-23.pdf>

@REDCMD (2022) "God this annoys me", Twitter. (27 February) Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/REDCMD/status/1498037073013612550>

@REDCMD (2022) "This", (retweet of <https://twitter.com/AntonSavageShow/status/1498060512768188421>) Twitter. (27 February) Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/REDCMD/status/1498061724326539264>

@REDCMD (2022) "To me and I think lots of average people...", Twitter. (26 February) Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/REDCMD/status/1497363867206406146>

Referendum Commission (2002) "Legislation". Available at: <https://www.refcom.ie/the-commission/legislation/>

Schmitt, Jörg (2010) Germany's Ferrostaal Suspected of Organizing Bribes for Other Firms. *Spiegel International*. (30 March) Available at: <https://www.spiegel.de/international/business/corruption-investigation-germany-s-ferrostaal-suspected-of-organizing-bribes-for-other-firms-a-686513.html>

Sinnott, Richard. the (2008) Discussion with Professor Richard Sinnott. Oireachtas Joint Committee on European Affairs (Sub-Committee on Ireland's Future in the European Union. Vol. 192 No. 4 (18 November). Retrieved from: https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint_committee_on_european_affairs/2008-11-18/

Skelton, Charlie. (2022) Bilderberg reconvenes in person after two-year pandemic gap. *The Guardian*. (4 June). Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/04/bilderberg-reconvenes-in-person-after-two-year-pandemic-gap>

Swomley, John M. (1949) Alliance of Insecurity. *Fellowship of Reconciliation NY*, 15(6): 17-20.

Syed, Armani (2023) Why Sweden's Path to NATO Membership Has Been So Rocky . *Time*. (11 July). Retrieved from: <https://time.com/6293624/sweden-nato-erdogan/>

Szumski, Charles. (2022) Survey shows Swedes divided on NATO membership. *EurActiv*. (21 January) Retrieved from: https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short_news/survey-shows-swedes-divided-on-nato-membership/

Tone, Theobald. [June/July 1790]. In Moody, T., R. McDowell and C. Woods. (2009) (eds) *The Writings of Theobald Wolfe Tone, 1763–98*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (50–66).

Tonra, Ben. (1994). 'Ireland in European Political Cooperation: the victory of substance over form', *Irish Political Studies* 9:99-118.

Tonra, Ben. (2008). Session 2 11.30am The Sub Committee on Ireland's Future in the European Union: Ireland's approach to the CFSP/ESDP and its position on military neutrality. Speakers Prof Ben Tonra, UCD and Mr. Daniel Keohane, European Institute for Security Studies. *Module III Ireland's future policy approach within the EU. The Sub Committee on Ireland's Future in the European Union* (11 November). Retrieved from:

<http://debatesarchive.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/committeetakes/EUF2008111100003?opendocument&highlight=Ben%20Tonra11-11/>

Trybus, Martin (2005) *European Union Law and Defence Integration*. Oxford: Hart Publishing.

Tufts University. (2023) Introduction to the Compendium of Arms Trade Corruption. Retrieved from: <https://sites.tufts.edu/corruptarmsdeals>

Sparviero, Sergio and Josef Trappel (2022) Austria. In Nic Newman (ed) Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2022. Retrieved from https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/Digital_News-Report_2022.pdf

Tunander, Ola. (2021) Silently Disciplining Research. *Modern Times, Ny Tid, Whistleblower supplement*, (March 6) retrieved from: <https://worldbeyondwar.org/silently-disciplining-research/>

Tuomioja, Erkki. (2003). *For a genuinely European defence*. Address by Mr Erkki Tuomioja, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, at the Western European Union Parliamentary Assembly, Paris, France, on 2 December. [Available at <http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=60674&contentlan=2>]

Von Sydow, B. and Lindh, A. (2000, December 11). Statement by Minister of Defense and Foreign Minister in response to comments by the commander in Chief. Utrikesdepartementet Departements råd. Retrieved on January 5, 2001 from <http://www.regeringen.se> (copy available from author).

Wax, Eddy. (2024) Von der Leyen launches EU campaign by slamming Marine Le Pen's party as 'Putin's friends'. *Politico*. (March 7) <https://www.politico.eu/article/ursula-von-der-leyen-eu-campaign-slamming-marine-le-pen-national-rally-party-vladimir-putin-friend/>

Weiler, Joseph H.H. (2014) President of the European University Institute, Florence Jean Monnet Conference 2014 keynote speech - <http://aprei.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Jean-Monnet-Conference-2014.pdf>

Whyte, Barry J. (2023) Michael D Higgins exclusive: Ireland is 'playing with fire' in 'dangerous drift' towards Nato. *Sunday Business Post*. (17 June) Retrieved from: <https://www.businesspost.ie/news/michael-d-higgins-exclusive-ireland-is-playing-with-fire-in-dangerous-drift-towards-nato/>

Williams, Paul D. (2018) In US Failure to Pay Peacekeeping Bills, Larger UN Financing Questions Raised. *The Global Observatory*. (October 23) Available at: <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2018/10/in-us-failure-pay-peacekeeping-bills-larger-financing-questions-raised/>

Wikileaks (2007) Sweden: Scene-setter for Prime Minister Reinfeldt's May 15 Visit to Washington (4 May) Canonical ID: 07STOCKHOLM506_a

Williams, Paul D. (2020) The Security Council's peacekeeping trilemma. *International Affairs* 96: 2: 479–499; 10.1093/ia/iiz199

Willsher, Kim (2021) Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy sentenced to jail for corruption. *The Guardian*. (1 March) Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/01/former-french-president-nicolas-sarkozy-sentenced-to-three-years-for-corruption>

YLE News (2022) Veteran MP: "Finnish media in war psychosis" *Yle Finland* (24 April) Available at: <https://yle.fi/a/3-12415541>

Yle News. (2022) Niinistö: Polls demonstrate required popular support for Nato membership. *Yle*. (31 March) Retrieved from: <https://yle.fi/a/3-12384116>