

The Irish Free State and Russia's Navy Training Exercises

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As the COVID-19 mainstream media narrative steadily disappears from news headlines around the world, following the highly coincidental timing of last week's Davos Agenda virtual [event](#) held by the World Economic Forum, the corporate media has now, in lockstep, moved onto what many commentators predicted they would – an escalation in the current Ukraine crisis, in which Russia has been accused of planning an 'imminent' invasion of its smaller Western neighbour, with Kiev having come under the control the US-EU aligned governments of Petro Poroshenko and Volodymyr Zelensky since the 2014 CIA and MI6-orchestrated Euromaidan colour revolution was launched in response to then-President Viktor Yanukoych's November 2013 decision to suspend a trade deal with Brussels in order to pursue closer ties with Moscow.

Despite the narrative of an 'imminent Russian invasion' first appearing in the mainstream media at the end of November [2021](#) and being promoted by the same corporate outlets ever since then, in a manner not dissimilar to previous regime change lies such as 'Saddam has WMDs' or 'Iran is building a nuclear bomb', the sudden abandonment of COVID-19 by the corporate media in the past week has now seen a hypothetical Russian invasion of Ukraine taking centre stage and subsequently, Moscow becoming the target of a coordinated campaign of condemnation by the Western establishment – including from my own country, Ireland.

On Monday, Foreign Minister of the 26-County State, Simon Coveney, [speaking](#) in Brussels, condemned standard Russian Navy training exercises due to take place in early February, 240km off the southern Irish coast – a condemnation that, amidst the current context of the Ukraine crisis, has garnered worldwide attention, including from the [Russian media](#), but one that also stands in stark contrast to the facilitation of both British and US imperialism by the Irish Free State since its inception.

Established following the 1921 Anglo-Irish agreement, which saw Ireland partitioned into a north-eastern six county state remaining directly under British rule, and the 26 County pro-

British 'Irish Free State', the southern Irish government has not only consistently turned a blind eye to the British military occupation of the north-east of the country over the past century and the ensuing atrocities and injustices that it has entailed – but has also colluded in protecting British interests in order to uphold that occupation.

From June 1922 until May 1923, the fledgling Free State army used British-supplied weapons to fight a bloody counter-revolution against Irish Republicans seeking to defend the Irish Republic declared in arms in Dublin on Easter Monday 1916 – 77 Irish Republican prisoners were executed by Free State forces during this 11 month period, a figure that doesn't include direct combat fatalities or extra-judicial killings such as the notorious [Ballyseedy massacre](#).

Following the end of the Treaty War, the use of Free State forces to facilitate British Imperialism in Ireland continued through the use of military internment camps for Irish Republicans such as the Curragh – a practice that continues today through the use of the non-jury 'Special Criminal Court', where the [word](#) of a senior Garda alone can see Republicans jailed for 'membership of an illegal organisation' in Portlaoise Gaol, the highest security prison in Europe, in which heavily-armed 26 County troops keep Republican political prisoners under lock and key.

Following the turn of the century and the 9/11 attacks however, this facilitation of British imperialism by the Irish Free State was also widened to accommodate US imperialism, with Shannon Airport, located in County Clare on Ireland's west coast, becoming a de facto US airbase in the run-up to the US-led war on Afghanistan, an arrangement that remains in place more than 20 years and see's that the southern Irish State, a supposedly neutral entity, remains the first European stopover for US Forces en route to unleash devastation in the Middle East – and unlike February's planned Russian training exercises in international waters, has come in for little to no condemnation by the Free State's political and media establishment.

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