

Dorone: Donal Waters do you consent for this recording to take place?

Donal: Of course I do, yeah. Yes I do.

Dor: Perfect, thank you. So just to start perhaps you can just tell everyone your name, your age and a bit about your education?

Don: My name is Donal Waters, my age is 65 going on 66 in a few months and my education being a second level education that's basically it you know. I was born in the North West of Ireland, 25 miles from the border with the UK, the 6 counties, I was there until I was 23 years of age, I worked in Sligo for a number of years, 5 years or so and I went and joined the Garda. I joined the Garda Siochana and became a member of the guards and I was based in Dublin for most of my life, I spent some time in Kildare, I spent a small time in Ballyshannon (For the foot and mouth disease and then there was some trouble problem because there was a border at the time. And the border has just been removed at the time actually, it had been removed at the time which meant you can move on a border only a short time before then on approved roads and I knew a bit of both of them, how to get around the... That's basically where I come from.

Dor: And how come then you moved to Dublin? Was that for work then?

Don: Work. When I joined the guards, I indirectly got an opportunity. I had a choice of Dublin or the border and I took Dublin. It was an indirect personal official, that's just a secret, just somebody gave me an option of then, we were copying Templemore and I took Dublin.

Dor: How come you chose Dublin? And not the border?

Don: I had a cup of coffee with a guard in Donegal and he was living in Dublin and he told me all the benefits about Dublin and it's nicer way of life than in the country and I said I agreed. So I went with it. So I never look back not going to the country, I did consider it once or twice to go back, but that's what happened and I ended up living in Dublin and I got married in Dublin to a Kerry woman and here I am.

Dor: Lovely. How about your family then? Did they, are they all from the North West?

Don: No, the West of Sligo, they all, well one of my sisters, my nearest sister is in Kildare. I have another sister married in Longford with 6 children. My sister in Kildare is married with no children, I have a sister in Sligo not married and I had 3 brothers in Sligo all married and with children. One has 4, one has 3 and one has 2 children so. All brothers with children.

Dor: Wow. And when you grew up as a child did you feel the borders much? I mean, did you have to interact with the 6 counties at all?

Don: We did, yes. It was actually very real and very realistic in one way. You went across the border into Enniskillen, but you went with caution, you only went to Enniskillen really if you went further than that would have been a bit scary. The roads are sometimes unimproved and we had to go to the North for certain type of stuff for instance an example is the cement was not made in Ireland. One company made cement in Ireland, Irish cement, and if they went on strike, we'll have to cross the border to get it. That's just a sample. and for other parts

you couldn't get anything but we had an advantage living next to the border we could cross it whereas somebody from Kildare or Kerry couldn't like that, but we could it was only 25 miles to cross the border. And the business people actually were extremely nice and very easy to deal with, but we were never sure what would happen on the roads, customs were very difficult to deal with, on both sides of the border were just difficult, I remember when I was buying cement and that, and then in later years I sent my father down for parts down to Derry for parts of a machine where I found you know, I didn't bother going with him because I was doing things at home, but normally I wouldn't send him on his own, but he went down and he came back totally crazily amazed by people in the North, how well they looked after him and how he never lifted a thing everything was lifted to the car for him, heavy stuff, heavy parts of machinery, never moved a finger just, he paid them with a cheque and they took it off him, they trusted him. The people in the North were, business people in the North were extremely willing to do business with people in the South where people in the South are a bit weary about you they didn't know. and I found if you went further South in the country people are absolutely kindest fewer than they are in the North. Fearful place to go to. We had no problem, I went through it once a week, usually on a Wednesday after the shops up there are open and the shops in Sligo are closed. We went down, I took a friend of mine, and to make things a bit more strange of how we went as you know how it goes — divide North and South, mostly Protestant church of Ireland which is similar to Church of England in the North that was their religion and in Ireland mostly Catholics with some Church of Ireland there as a descent from Church of England you know. I had about 15–20% of those people living nearest around me, some of my neighbours were that, one of my best friends at the time was one of those, and he travelled with me to the North. We both went down not knowing what we were, what our interests were and we kept that quiet you know what we were who we were who. He was Church of Ireland I was Catholic and we are heading up to the North. And we were stopped by customs, stopped by police, stopped at everything else, asked questions, told some lies, got through came back home. And we went down every Wednesday.

Dor: That's amazing. I actually have two questions for you. The first is why do you think the view of people in the Republic was different than the view of people in the 6 counties about the Republic?

Don: There's two things, one things I said is business wise, people didn't trust anybody in the North because, I don't mean any other reason than just that there was troubles in the North, most of the Troubles started back in the '60s, prior to that, I just barely remember prior to that, but there was no problem. You had to cross a border yes, nobody likes crossing a border, nobody likes being stopped by customs and there's always some bit of smuggling going on in the border. There's stories and jokes about it and everything else. There was always something you went down and got something cheaper because there was a difference in price and difference in tax and that was part and past of how we lived close enough, and I wasn't very close to it because most people were closer around our part and went there on a regular basis. We went down for essentials we needed, parts and just, mostly when they got a car they'd go down and you'd get parts, get accessories for the car, that you actually wouldn't get in the south and you wouldn't get for the same price. We would go down and we would be getting stereo units and lights and different things somebody else couldn't get in 6 counties more south you know. But, why, because of the troubles in the '60s, I was born in the '50s, and because of the troubles in the late '60s, people were weary of what was going on, the

bombing, most of it went on in the north, the killings going on in the north, and some sayings went that isn't it funny that all the people who lived as farmers and business people next door to one another in the early '60s then the late '60s were killing one another. So, before that we knew that catholics and protestants got on okay in the north, to an extent, there were yes a lot of problems with it in history. But, a catholic didn't fair as good as a protestant did and I knew that because an uncle of a guy that was a friend of mine lived in the north, they all lived in the north, all hgis relations lived in the north and we knew how much better they were off than the catholics which was accepted to an extent until the troubles came in and that's what happened. But if you came from Kerry, I got a realisation one time from Kerry a long time ago when the border was still there in the '80s, shortly, well into the '80s, when I brought my parents in law from Kerry across the border and I could actually sense the fear they had of crossing the border which was a regular thing for me to do and they just couldn't understand being stopped by uniform police or uniform customs and being questioned and to turn off Irish songs, or rebel songs in your car going through, and going through the north, that was part and parcel with where we lived.

Dor: And you speak then about your friend who is church of Ireland, did you ever have, was there ever any sort of segregation when you were growing up, whether you were protestant or catholic in Sligo?

Don: Yes, there was. There was four of us altogether, and he was a protestant in it, of that group and we were mostly going around in cars but he lived close enough to me, his family were very friendly with my mother and father and they got on extremely well until an extent that they would have their own ways but that was okay. But some of my friends would slag him because he was in a minority, his school actually closed down which was two miles away from our school and he integrated into our school which meant he had to leave the classroom when religious classes were on and stand outside the door and that type of thing and yeah, so in that way he had to be a bit stronger, even though we was smaller and weaker he had to be stronger in personality to deal with us. But of later years, friends would be slagging him, and there would be a little bit of talk rising between religion and politics and I would deal with them. So we would neither talk about any of the two or the girlfriends and we'd discuss none of those things, if anyone had any trouble with us mentioning it we would just stop. So we made an agreement that it would never be discussed, we'd discuss anything else but not those two things.

Dor: That's great.

Don: So, not religion and not girlfriends, that was our arrangement. So we stuck to the pact

Dor: Sounds like a healthy relationship, haha.

Don: Yeah, haha.

Dor: So you said you used to work as a guard?

Don: Yeah.

Dor: Are you still working today?

Don: No, I am retired. I'm 6 years retired now at the end of June.

Dor: Great, and how are you filling up your time?

Don: Umm, busier than ever and I won't list all the work I've to do around the house in case anyone is listening.

Dor: That's okay, perhaps I'll open up another subject, Sean was saying you are involved with in the GAA community?

Don: Yeah.

Dor: What does that mean?

Don: Well, I'm not a mentor or a trainer or anything like that in the GAA community. I was involved in the GAA community because Sean and Ciaran and Emer were players in the local GAA. I was involved in the GAA back home, I played football at home, there was no real club, we were in a very rural area, even our priest didn't agree with announcing a football match being on, that was not for church us you know at the time. He was old fashioned, a very nice man but he was old fashioned. So we had no club house, no changing rooms. We had no way of getting to a match, only a bike and if the pitch was too wet you couldn't play so there were old fashion ways in comparison to like all the people in the country had nicer places to play and they had more interaction. I must emphasize that my parish was a peninsula off the northwest coast of sligo and as I always say we are surrounded by water on three sides, on three sides of the peninsula and that meant that nobody passed through and interacted with other people, you'd go out and come back in the using the same roads, it was nearly like an island in its own way but attached to the mainland you know. It was three miles wide and parts of it, so, but that's giving an explanation so I didn't get involved in it too much I wasn't management or anything but when I retired I went and I would always give them a hand if there was any events on at all or anything like that, car parking or gates or whatever had to be done. Then you had, so when I retired they have a thing called groundforce. So groundforce is just a name for a group of people that are retired, have you heard of the sheds? The shed is something similar where people go out and retired members talk and meet together and do bits and things. They've taken it a step further in the GAA in here in portmarnock where we actually, so ground force means we do all the maintenance, so there's five or six pitches on the club, there's a clubhouse there and the pitches need to be cut, they need to be marked regularly and maintenance to be done, gates to be fixed, hedges to be cut, something we shouldn't be doing but we're doing them and health and safety mightn't always be there but we're doing them and these things. You do a week a month is what you're officially put down for but we do Monday Tuesday, try to get as much as we can done then and some of us play golf on wednesdays and maybe come back on thursday depending you don't have to come back and you could be on a team of about 8 or 9 and 4 or 5 maybe 6 might turn up 7 might turn up, depends what's on and family circumstances. Then Friday might play golf again on Friday and then that's the week done. I just happen to play golf on wednesday and a couple of the lads play golf with me on wednesday. But if we are not playing golf on that wednesday we will go up and do some, we start at 10 o'clock in the morning and were called in for tea at 11 o'clock and were back out again half an hour later and we finish around 1. So that's the short day that it is, it's officially for 3 hours or whatever it is and you try and get a pitch or two marked in the 3 or 4 hours.

Dor: That's great.

Don: Try and keep things going but yeah, that's how much we're involved with the GAA club. There's other things you get involved in but they're just minor things you know. I used to be involved in the meetings, I used to be involved in the committees but I gave it all up. I didn't, I reckon I didn't have the experience enough in management to be involved in the committees even though I had a big input into it. I went as far as vice chairperson of it only by default, because nobody else wanted the job and I had the vice chairman role for a year or two and then I pulled out of it then after that. That's the GAA for you now.

Dor: We're going to come back to it.

Don: Is that confusing or is there anything else you would like me to come back to?

Dor: No, no it's not confusing, this is good. I am just kind of checking stuff in my head because I know as well that I would like to speak about that a bit more as we continue but I know that for now it's good.

Don: At a time earlier like when I was working if they wanted advice on something like road closures or if they were having events I would be the one to give them that type of advice because I was working in the guards, and locally working too, I was in the local police force, I covered that area. So, I did all those things for them so you know. I still would give them advice on that type of thing you know. So, everybody comes from a different profession and they all give different advice you know we've accountants and electricians. I like doing maintenance work up there, especially electrical work, so yeah.

Dor: It sounds like it's a very strong community you know. Overall, like a lot of people volunteering to do stuff together to keep it going.

Don: It is. We are lucky in Portmarnock, it's a young community and I remember when I came to Dublin first in 1977 I could see from where I was working houses being built in Portmarnock. And I remember driving through what was a very old village and I constantly saw roofs being put on houses and from then late '60s to the '70s Portmarnock was being built you know.

Dor: That's amazing, yeah.

Don: People would come from all parts of the country as well as Dublin, you know, to live here. There's a lot of country people living here from all different backgrounds.

Dor: Yeah, I know that, just my husband Ciaran, he grew up in Portmarnock, you know, your Sean and him have a mutual friend, The Regans.

Don: Yeah, that's right, yeah. If you look at his house, I think in the '70s it would of been built, you know, and they would have been coming from older houses.

Dor: Yeah, you're right.

Don: I remember the village being one tiny little shop, it had two tiny little filling stations whereas now it's one big one. Petrol stations you know. I remember the tin roofed church in Portmarnock. And the old wooden church up the road here and the new one now so the new church was only after being built when we came here. So we came here in 1982. I can remember from before I came, before I got married here because I used to come out to work here as part of my district working.

Dor: That's nice.

Don: So it was very much still out in the country place you know.

Dor: Was it still very expensive?

Don: It was very expensive, I bought at the peak.

Dor: I had to ask, haha.

Don: I never got a break like that. It's not very expensive if you look at it now. If you bought a house now and then in ten years time was looking back you'd be like that was a cracker.

Dor: That's it sure it was cheap at the time. So perhaps that's a good leading question then, to what is your living standard today? And perspective?

Don: My living standard is very good today. I can't complain. I had a job that paid okay, yes there were problems with property and everything else, didn't have a whole pile of money but my living standards were good. I'm on a good pension. On a pension that's good enough to keep me

going. It's guaranteed, that's the main thing about it, it's guaranteed and my standard of living is good. I wouldn't be driving around in a fancy new car, I wouldn't be going on expensive holidays, I like to go on holidays quite often but they're not that expensive, no splashing of money around, wouldn't have the money to splash around, from our backgrounds, yeah, it's good.

Dor: So has it gone up or down relating to your parents or your grandparents?

Don: Oh it's gone up big time. My parents didn't go on holidays, they went to Dublin when they got married for two days or something, and that was it. They never went on holidays apart from that except to visit some of us, my brother was in England for a while and they went and visited him and they visited here a few times and they went down to my wedding down in Kerry. Other than that they didn't go too far. They were happy enough where they were, you know, everything was, they didn't have any longing or urge to go on holidays. It wasn't part of the culture at that time. Whereas now everyone says where were you recently and how many times were you away this year so it's different you know. This Corona? might change people's outlooks on that you know.

Dor: Yeah, I think it's interesting as well, you know, like Ireland has changed so much in the last 50 years, let's say, so it's really interesting to see what kind of living standards are across the country.

Don: Yes, well I was only talking about this the other day to someone. When I was younger, when I was growing up at home, holidays in Ireland were people coming down from Dublin or from Belfast to come to term house accommodation holidays in the west of Ireland. We thought they were very well off. They came down with a car, we had a car but it was a banger of a car you wouldn't take it to Dublin as it might not make it back. But that was the type of things that those people did, that was the affluence of that time. We didn't know anything about people flying away for holidays. Ryanair wasn't even created for years later, Aerlingus it would cost you an arm and a leg to go to England, and America was only the type of place you went with a one-way ticket to go there and work there at the time. We grew up with that at that time and then the Americans would come home in a couple of years and stay a month at home in our own homes, they didn't stay at hotels or go to restaurants for meals, that was the way of life. Nobody went to restaurants for meals, when you went to a place, like you didn't go somewhere for a cup of coffee you brought your sandwich and your tea with you in a bottle you know. It was only really wealthy people who went to restaurants and there wasn't that big of a choice of restaurants at the time. So the wealthy went in, they were the people who owned businesses you know they owned shops or businesses. So that was life, granted it was different.

Dor: And what did your parents work as?

Don: They were farming. My father was a carpenter by trade and he did some carpenter work in later life. Which actually got him a contributory state pension, which was lucky so he did 10 years at the time in carpentry working on the buildings as a carpenter to make ends meet but mostly farming originally. Mixed farming.

Dor: And did they grow vegetables or was it more?

Don: He grew potatoes and he milked cows and he reared cattle.

Dor: All the things Irish people are famous for: good potatoes, good milk and good dairy.

Don: Yeah. My parish was quite well known for being a potato producer, like Keelings produces vegetables you know, my parish was known for this, everybody produced potatoes. To this day there is nobody in my parish producing potatoes. Nobody.

Dor: How come?

Don: Price, cost. I can guarantee you not one person and if there is one person I think he's just outside the parish and he has to do it by licence im told. So he needs to have a licence to produce potatoes. A lot of regulations came in, I grew up producing potatoes for my father, giving him a hand with it. Then in later years I started to sell them and on one occasion, around 82 actually it was, I went to a shop to sell potatoes and I was told to take them out of the shop. He said he would buy them off me alright but he wouldn't take them off me because I had the wrong bag. The bag didn't have labels on it, which was all the EU regulations, I don't see anything wrong with that now but at the time I was trying to sell potatoes and I had a plain labelled bag, whereas he wanted a bag which actually stated what they were. The bag was probably of use for something else, but they were all weighed properly and produced properly, but the new regulations were coming in to have them bagged properly. So, that was one of the things that changed it.

Dor: Yeah. That's a good topic that you raised as well and we are also going to come back to that and the EU role in Ireland.

Don: I know, yeah, I read the questions, haha.

Dor: Yes I know you did, Sean sent me a photo, haha. What is the main difficulty you encounter today?

Don: I can't win the lotto. No no, emm. I don't understand that question, difficulty? At present days we can't go anywhere but forget about that for a moment. In general in life, I'm retired, we can go where we want, she and myself, I don't mean we can go where we want but we can plan a holiday, we can plan weekends away, we can go places. Generally people of my year who are retired, we're okay you know we're okay. And don't give me this thing of you know young people today are worse off, they have no idea how much sacrifice we made to get this house in portmarnock. So like they have no idea and they're not going to listen to me when I say the sacrifices we made in savings. I cycled to work on a banger of a bike, the two wheels wouldn't coordinate, the saving was horrendous. You did not go for a cup of coffee, you did not go for a meal out, you didn't go for a pint with the few lads, we just made all those sacrifices for years to get a deposit for this house you know and it wasn't cheap. And the interest rate at the time was 18.2% so compare that to today, no one would listen to me but these are the facts. Sacrifices were made.

Dor: They're going to listen now cause it's on recording, haha

Don: Haha. But yeah, I mean real sacrifices like your life was on hold until you got your price of the house and that was it, you know.

Dor: Yeah. Which group of people would you most count on? So family, friends, peers?

Don: Family at the moment. My family is living around me. Sean is down the road as you know, Ciaran is across from me. Emer is in clontarf but she's at home at the moment because she teaches and she spends her summer holidays here and her christmas holidays, easter holidays, 90% of her time! No, I'm only joking.

Dor: Haha, so you spend a lot of time with them?

Don: Well, we have a good amount of friends, a good group of friends. They are in a way what would I call it. You're dependent on them, you don't realise it until this situation comes in. Until this situation arises. They are people you met regularly, like my wife went walking

regularly with friends, so it's not to say that friends don't matter, they do matter an awful lot. With my friends we'd be up in the GAA club, I go up and meet them once a month and we'd have a bit of craic. I go golfing with different groups of people, I meet different people golfing, you go for a casual game of golf doesn't matter who it is. and you might meet them the next week and the week after, but you never count them as people you are going to be running up to the house and going in the back door and go have a cup of coffee. That's not the way it's done, but the interactual people they're very very important and we've lost that at this very moment but that will come back.

Dor: I'm sure it will. It's just hard.

Don: But family is first anyway.

Dor: And do you, are you involved in any social organisations? any political organisations? I mean you mentioned the GAA before, and you spend a lot of time there don't you?

Don: Political no, and if you ask me how I vote...

Dor: I didn't ask you but go for it, how did you vote, haha?

Don: I have voted for different parties, I am not a person who will stick with the family tradition. We move depending on the person, and the politics they're doing on the day and how we feel they're doing. I might not be correct but I would vote the way I think not the way the family thought.

Dor: That's good. That's great. And then, do you feel that you are represented or that you are representing your country where you are living now?

Don: That I am representing the country?

Dor: Yeah, as a person or as an ex-guard.

Don: I mean, I represent it, yes. I mean, the present government I am very, very happy with. The present situation of the government I am very, very happy with. There was a slight fear there that someone else might come in but yeah, that didn't happen, just to say, haha. Hasn't happened yet. And the reason I am saying that, I know you're coming at this from a political and across countries perspectives and theres and EU mention in this but if we were in this crisis at a time when a different party had control, we wouldn't have, this is my opinion now, we wouldn't have the freedom that the banks have and the government has at the moment to keep the country going with money. I think that the business people would lock down, and would be gone. I think the EU would look on us differently and people across the EU would look on us differently and quite frankly we wouldn't have the same freedom of money coming at us from the central bank to keep the country going and this government has stacked some money away and if other people had been there it would have been well and truly wasted on people who are not willing to make money. We need business people to make money. I'm not jealous and I never made any of the money they made but I think we need them there at times like this or for other locations when money is needed. You also mentioned friends, we also need people who are looking at us in a different light and are like you're good for 10bn or 20bn we will give it to you, we don't want someone kind of just saying we will just waste 10bn on people who will not work or are not willing to work. That's my twisted, you might think it's my twisted view on things.

Dor: Ah, I don't think so at all. I think it's a really interesting perspective. I've gathered so many different perspectives and this is the first time I heard it this way. I am delighted, you know.

Don: I would think about the big companies, the high tech companies that are there and I hear negative thoughts about them and everything else, if you have high tech companies making billions as they say, I say fairplay to them, but they are bringing billions, the thousands of people who work for them are paying tax in this country who are putting billions into our pockets or into our governments. If they walk out tomorrow morning, all the pharmaceutical companies and all the high tech companies that are there, take out all the foreign national companies, we have nobody paying tax from those companies here. I don't care what they make, if they make 100 billion and only pay 1 billion in tax that's one billion more than we are getting than we paid out 2 billion in dole. And it doesn't matter what they make, they can invest some of it and reinvest again I don't mind, doesn't matter. I only look at the figure that we are getting from them and the figure we are getting from them is huge tax coming, huge employment, alone then the tax that people are paying from their wages and the money that they have to spend in this country ou in the weekends, thursday nights, friday nights, saturday nights in Dublin, sunday nights a quiet night, they can go and spend it and do what they want with it that's their choice but they're giving more employment, more taxes and that's how the economy works, that's how economics works in my view.

Dor: Okay.

Don: So, I don't care if they make billions, they are entitled to make billions, fair play to them.

Dor: Okay great. So let's start with the non introduction questions and see how we get on with them. So, here is the first one. What does the word peace mean for you?

Don: Peace means a lot of things. I can cross the border in Northern Ireland, freely. It also means from the view of just talking about business, it means that people can come in and invest in this country, when we are in peaceful times and have come in and invested in this country. Both sides of the border actually, people have invested big time in the north now but that's what it means, it means freedom of movement and investment, foreign investment in the country and it also means, this is a joking one, that when I go on holidays and I say I'm from Ireland that I'm not going to be told to go bang bang. Do you know what that means?

Dor: Eh, not really.

Don: If I was in Spain or France, well, not France maybe, but in further east in countries there on holidays and they said they don't associate me with being Irish or English, you know so they ask me where I am from and I say Ireland and they say bang bang, we're noted for having guns and shooting people and bombs and things like that. That's their view of Ireland.

Dor: Really?

Don: Prior to peace, yeah. So now we have a peaceful country.

Dor: So when you say peace, you mean the Good Friday Agreement?

Don: The Good Friday Agreement was an excellent one I don't know too many details about it but it brought an awful lot of peace to the country and it brought an awful lot of hope and yes those people who were always going to be a negative descendants, and didn't want anything to do with it, they had to come along as it went on and see the benefits of it. There's always going to be those there, and if I went up the north across the border tomorrow morning, there they are, I know them, I know who they are. Some of them went from here when they got caught.

Dor: And then do you think, so you know you are saying that a part of peace is the freedom of movement, then do you think that Brexit is compromising it then? Or is it going to compromise it?

Don: Brexit is complicated to an extent and I am very anti-brexit in my mind but I am slightly on hold with what's going to happen with it. I am certainly look to have england on board with the EU just for the simple reason of movement and it's causing problems with northern Ireland again and I've a northern man who's very close to me from home as he's from there and it's causing problems with that, it's even causing problems with the virus we have at the moment and the spread of it. We have no way of controlling our borders in relation to our island. Brexit, I just worry about how, my view again and I am usually way out with my view, is that england anything I read about wars, world war 2 or anything like that, england always lived on a knife edge in relation to as to whether they could keep themselves, their full supply of food, Ireland is a fully self sufficient country for food. Now, I'm not worried about England, I'm just saying the fact as I see it. They obviously see it different. In World War 2 if they had of gotten a chance to cut of the ships coming into england they would have starved them to death and we'd be living in a different world. That didn't happen. Now we are going into the EU and I don't understand a country that wants to bypass france and spain and others and head out to bigger waters than the atlantic ocean and mediteranean to send their goods. I think the Eu would be in control of tariffs and taxes on british goods coming out of the country. That's my view on it but obviously being people over there they think differently, including my brother in law from Ireland. He thinks, and living there in Manchester for the last 20 years and he thinks it's great to get out of the EU. He said only yesterday to me we were paying 70 bn pounds, you know that figures wrong, but he was saying they were paying that every year to the EU. That's what he's being fed over there. So, okay for him. but I just don't understand a country that wants to leave a market. As I said, if I was selling goods here in portmarnock and producing something, would I drive to Cork to sell it when I can sell it in Dublin? I don't understand it. That's my view on Brexit so it's gonna make a big difference to people travelling through Britain to go into Europe unless things are done and it's gonna be more difficult now and it can't be done according to the EU this year so. They are my views on it. I could go deeper but I don't want to go deeper. Hit me with a different line if you want to.

Dor: It's up to you, you know, it's so complicated. You know there is an interesting view because there is a Brexit there is a better chance for a united Ireland.

Don: Yes, now you've hit me with a different line. Yes, certainly, even though I'm of the opinion that this virus has taken us a step further that way as well.

Dor: The virus? Tell me more.

Don: Well, see, the problems they are having bringing the people, making rules for England in relation to lockdown and in relation to testing and everything and it's put up all sorts of difficulties and we've got one in Ireland, we've got people flying across the border and it happened, going into donegal and they brought the virus with them. Whereas if they had of stayed at home like they should of been staying at home, if we were all one island then that wouldn't of happened. Those few people in the north wouldn't have gotten it, now cavan and monaghan has got it, it's just all those things. and there's no united Ireland agreement on that. They're trying to bring that in and I do think that England would actually like to have the united Ireland agreement on this pandemic to be honest with you. But there now after, a lot of things have to happen before people see the light. Johnson and his party are having a different attitude to the virus. So, if he didn't have it he'd of let the whole country die you know.

Dor: Yeah, well I agree. We first, you know, with Johnson kinda decided that there is a border in the Irish sea between England and Ireland and so maybe you know he is kind of releasing

Ireland to be united. Another interesting thing is that the people in the north, I was reading a guardian article about it and they have you know before Johnson got sick they realised that the spread of the virus is insane and following the rest of the recommendations for the UK is no good. So they were actually looking into the Irish governments, the republics governments regulations and it was the communities that have started kind of like closing themselves together to not spread the virus which I think is an amazing initiative.

Don: Do you mean the communities of the EU or the communities of Ireland?

Dor: The communities of Northern Ireland, the six counties.

Don: Oh yeah, sorry.

Dor: The communities within each town were doing their own campaigns to stay at home. Not supported perhaps by England or Johnson and all that they were following the republic way of doing it.

Don: Yes, but Arlene Foster is afraid to make a decision one way or another in case she upsets Johnson and it depends, I know from my background from living round there, that it depends so much on money and keeping the English pound going, they were so well off in comparison to us who lived 25 miles on the other side of the border, they were so well off from a farming perspective and everything else. We used to have a joke at home where they bought a new tractor because the wheel got punctured a new one you know, that's how well off they were. They actually had grants to buy machinery and had the best tractors, best machinery, best land and that was only across a thin line you know. So mothering it is keeping them, and they love that money if that fades away there will be different changes and different ideas. It'll take a lot more time than just one year or ten years before it comes around to that. You mentioned something about the EU there, personally I wasn't very happy with their attitudes towards the virus. I didn't think they had a coordinated approach to the whole of the EU.

Dor: What do you think they should have done?

Don: Someone, somebody within the group should have been appointed responsible for it, a whole team of experts and everything else and come along and make decisions or make recommendations, more so because you can't decide for the republic, but make recommendations to do x y and a z, and if you didn't do that well then you were getting it. The whole thing was left up to everyone else to decide. It was like leaving people in a pub to decide, like waiting for a bomb to go off you know, there's a bomb going to go off here in 10 minutes it's up to you to leave, protect yourself and get out. Somebody has to make decisions for you. That's what happened in Ireland initially, the HSE made the decision about turning periods in and dealing with the pandemic and the government went with it and announced them and recommended them and everything else and people went with it because it was somebody in authority making a decision. We didn't have somebody in authority in the EU making a decision. That's my feeling on it.

Dor: So, just to clarify a bit, you think this pandemic has kind of separated us a bit? Like each country? Is that what you mean?

Don: They left us all segregated to make up our own mind and that's what happened. We have people doing two things. Minding their own politics number one and minding the economics of it and those things as well so, if they came along and said we will finance whatever problems you have and sort out and support everybody in a lockdown probably would have saved it. I think if this had happened in the next 10 years, it would have taken a completely different approach. Hopefully with the EU soon there.

Dor: Yeah. You're in a place where there is no war, do you think there is peace there?

Don: I would think there is peace there but I have the experience of, I live in a very peaceful part of Dublin but I know people who are not living in a very peaceful part of Dublin and they're not living in a war zone. I worked in areas in Dublin that I do find like how do these people live here. I couldn't live in one of these conditions of stolen cars you know or shootings, armed robberies and yet they go about their business daily. And when I was in the guards I asked them, if you won a million pounds tomorrow morning would you leave? "Ahh, no way, no". So, it's peaceful for them, it's peaceful for me out of war. The nearest we've got the war at my age group here in Ireland is the north to be honest with you. People my age don't remember the war, I wasn't taught about it or anything when I was growing up so. I don't remember world war 2, I remember the north. I wasn't involved in it, so something happened just across that thin line but it didn't happen in the south until they brought it south. Then we were involved.

Dor: And did your parents not get involved at all? In the conflict in the North?

Don: No, no. They just left it, that was for those people down there. See there's a bigger history to Ireland than you're just approaching there. They were plantations that were put in there. They were, people were put in there, it was sort of done in such a way that you're singled from everybody else, you're different. They had a different religion number one, and number two their mothership supplied them with grants and money to keep them there and go back further in history on why that happened, they got rid of them out of England because they were coming up politically to the opposition that put them over there, so that's the type of things that goes on. Suppose that goes on everywhere around the world so yeah, you killed them or you exiled them you know.

Dor: So you know you're saying there is quite a harsh separation between the Republic and the North.

Don: There was.

Dor: So, what do you think then about the Catholic communities living there? I mean they made the decision to stay in these counties?

Don: They did. But way back in the beginning of the troubles they left. Whole streets left in Belfast and Derry, a lot of them came to Dublin you know. They had to leave, they were burned out. That was a war situation, no war was declared but it was a war situation like if you think of it their house had been burned, their street had been burned, they made the decision to try and leave. People that are living there at the moment they don't seem any different. I mean, I lived amongst Protestants at home. They were neighbours of mine, they were very nice. They might have had a slight, depends who you're talking to but they might have had a slight attitude to Catholics, you know maybe looking down on people but that was very very slight not worth talking about. Everyone went on with life, as I said one family that were best-friends with my parents were Protestants. This with my parents over the road, and his mother and my mother went to the local ICA regularly. They got lifts over there or they travelled home together cause it was only two miles away, went to the meetings, went to every other occasion that was going on you know. When the Protestants had some sort of function on in their school, we all went over and supported their school, their sale of work or whatever was going on. We lived in a community and we got on, you'd expect that in the north again, to an extent back to that depends on where you are and what street you're in but in general it's back to that.

Dor: So what is the sound of war and what is the sound of peace?

Don: Jaysus, well the sound of war is bombs, bombs in around you, armies on the streets. The sound of peace is nobody's there, no army, no bombs going off, no shootings. There is a fear with war which was very evident during the second world war from my reading of it and the sirens, the war, the bombings, not knowing what was going to happen and yet in comes a virus that silently creeps through us and I said that's a war as well. That's coming through our community and we don't know where to look, you could hide from a bomb, you could hide from a bullet or you could stay in a bunker like they did in world war two, but that's the sound of it. Peace is nice and quiet. You can go about your business, do your shopping, go to work, come home.

Dor: Yeah, and do you think that peace is a relation with oneself or is it between people or states?

Don: There's two different things in that question because you have that peace is part of oneself, that's mentally, the mind and that's your problem, that's the mind's problem. Get over it, get that sorted you know, if you wanna get it sorted you get it sorted you know. With nations, is that what you said?

Dor: With states, yeah, nations.

Don: Yeah, war is with nations. We don't experience that much in this country so far but where you're coming from, other conditions of that and that book I read, Jesus, I got an insight into Russia and the different states in it and everything else and the problems that were there and how people had to move and how one family had to move two or three times because of the houses being bombed around them or the houses being burned around them, and they still left and came back to look at them again and then moved back to those places again like this type of thing. Like we don't experience that in Ireland, we haven't experienced that in Ireland, maybe more to an extent in the north, smaller extent but not as big as what I've read about and what I have seen in European wars. We don't have that effect like that doesn't affect us too much here. It did back in penal times when we say what England was ruling Ireland you know, there was control of land and control of everything else. They were times when people's houses were being burned down or people were being kicked out of their houses, that was way back.

Dor: And do you think for instance that every so often when there was a very, you know like a very big horrible event like Bloody Sunday or something like that, that the communities then on both sides of the border would get more tense to each other? or not? Cause you were saying that you were moving quite a bit? You know every Wednesday you would cross the border. So would these events affect the intensity?

Don: I'm just clarifying across the border, I would've moved across the border on a Wednesday yes, to Enniskillen which is very much close to the border. But on the occasion when I had to go further, absolutely terrified of the unknown. Not of what had happened but not knowing what was going to happen, who was going to stop us and not knowing if the IRA was going to stop us on the roads. and on one occasion I travelled to the north from Dublin in the Nury direction looking for parts of a car for a friend of mine at work that was in the guards and he asked me to bring him down and I brought him down. and another friend, another guard came with us and we travelled down to Nury and we asked for enquiries and we were sent out to the right of the country, towards Dublin and we didn't get what we wanted and we came

back and we were told to go through Nury and to go west and then to turn off left there was a road there and an area, and this was before google maps or anything like that, and you will get a car dealership there or a second hand dealership there that will help you out. So we went and we had found it, turned left and our car was facing south, we had gone down a laneway, a rough road and the dealership was on our right and we went into it. Now we're terrified because we are 3 guards from the north, sorry the south, we are also 3 catholics from the south which would be an uncommon thing for us all as we didn't know any protestants in the guards but anyway so we're in our plain clothes, just our ordinary jeans and things. He was off looking for the part, he had some list of what he wanted and he wasn't getting too far with it with the guy. I was looking for to upgrade the quality of the seats in my car or something that I was talking about earlier and so I started asking questions about the one car I saw it in and when I questioned the price on it, the bonnet of the car was dropped and it just missed my head by a hair. I felt it going by my nose and I was told to get out and the reason we were told to get out was because we had southern accents and they didn't want to deal with us. That was in a protestant and catholic kind of thing. So I started going very fast, and I said to the other two, lads come on. With the car facing south on the road, and not a very good road, we took off down the road and the two fellas were terrified and said where are you going and I said I'm heading south, I don't care, I'm heading south. Then they said how will they know when we are in the south and I said I'll tell you shortly and we knew by road signs, not the quality of the roads, actually the roads got worse but by road signs. I said we're in the south we are okay. We had travelled along those unapproved roads very very fast and gotten out of the place. Those types of things did happen on the odd occasion, and because I was probably being smart with the price of the thing I said jeez that's awful dear you know, I was told to get out. They were looking at us suspiciously before, they didn't want to make a deal with us. We were three fellas and obviously looking back on it, it was obvious we were police. Which police were we? It was very easy to pick it out we were southern accents. So, and they could have had a different tendency. When you say the bombs, on the bloody sunday bomb, that was long long before my time. It wasn't that long ago and I'm not going to blame it but people would certain people would join a group and you know who that is it's the IRA to be part of a fight against that you know and to a certain type, not my friends or not my type we wouldn't of been joining up or getting involved. I suppose you got that from your parents. My parents didn't have any tendencies or speaking negatively about other groups and most of my friends' parents had the same attitude you know they didn't go down that road. In fact, I came from parents that didn't none of my neighbours did either. Some of my cousins for example had that. One of my cousins had three boys in it and they had always had those IRA tendencies and hence there were helicopters flying over the house and always checking in on them and what not on regular occasions. We knew about it but yet one of them had a boat and would go out fishing in the sea and I went out with him on regular occasions, and was very friendly with him. We all knew where we stood, we knew what position we were in you know. I didn't criticize their actions or anything like that and they didn't criticise me or the job that I was doing. They were distant cousins, I mean they were 3rd cousins of mine, living close by at home, and yet if they were called to support the cause as they call it, they went.

Dor: And how then did you see them? There were different views on the IRA. There's the freedom fighters, I remember this was how they were portrayed at least when we grew up. And then there is the terrorists, the terrorists organisation. What did you think of them?

Don: You see, as you said there's freedom fighters. What's freedom? Freedom to get the country free? Is that what you're coming at or, and I think it's very difficult, you see there were two different groups in that and people were making money out of that and there's people that are still making money out of it. If the border completely goes, and England hands up the 6 counties tomorrow morning, there'll be a lot of people up there disappointed and they're Catholics because they won't be making money on the smoking and not paying taxes because the police in England can't police that place. The Northern Ireland police can't police it the same way that we can police the south. It's more difficult and therefore there are areas in the north which are not policed and I suppose people do business in their own way, and they have said it. They have said it to friends of mine, we do things differently to how you do them in Dublin or to how you do them in the rest of the country and it's the cash game and it is this and that and the other. They're making a fortune out of it. That's their way of life and they like that. I wouldn't like that way of life and not many people I know would like that way of life. I wouldn't like to live there in that terror and fear but if you're friendly with them, you're friendly with them so you're okay but if you step out of line you're in trouble. The concept or the idea of being freedom fighters sometimes that can be a bit of a romantic notion you know. I think 1916 rising was a romantic notion and it failed in its own way you know but they got further than they thought'd they'd get, then they should of got the way they'd planned it. But the same craic is going on with freedom fighters you know you seen what happened in the elections. One fella put in down in Waterford shouted up the Ra, like if you can't drop that as a TD in this country well then he's going nowhere you know. I don't even know if they got that on tv but I mean if he can't drop that attitude, he won't be going anywhere. In hindsight, the orders and the bombs got us somewhere, don't agree with it but it got us somewhere. To the good friday agreement, and got us that bit of peace you know. Whereas, maybe if we had sat back and did nothing we'd be left here now, I don't know. It's difficult and that's the same all across the world, if you stand up for your rights and go to do something you might go a bit further and start killing innocent people and that's not, that's too far. That's out of reach.

Dor: Yeah.

Don: You find it hard to get my view, don't you?

Dor: No, I think it's, because I'm recording it I don't want to bore you with things I already said but this is actually a very common view that I've heard from a few people and it's fascinating, you know, and that's why all this time I was actually looking to see the opinion of an actual IRA person and how do you see all this, so, and it all makes sense. Like, in my head I'm making, like, a map of what Ireland is, of the people, how do you see Ireland. It's more than you get in your history books or anything else, more than you ever heard. And it's amazing the things that are like exactly the same, and they're not things that you are going to look at in wikipedia or whatever so that's why I am asking them because I think it's important and I think it's important for us to understand the times were living and to make conclusions to this. Like for instance, all the attitudes of the IRA is one thing, but then we have Sinn Fein being voted in for example, some people say you're voting in IRA members and what does that mean. So there's a lot of kind of things coming, clashing, not clashing you know, harmonising with each other.

Don: Yeah. Well, you know my view on voting in the Sinn Fein, it's the attitudes of people, well, we're very much a country of foreign nationals and foreign people, and it's the attitudes not the attitudes the views of people in other nations and other countries, especially in a country like this where we have what multinational business going on there and if you're

coming over from the United States and you're viewing the IRAs, ooft you know, they're dangerous, you know. There's been people kidnapped, it's been not safe to live there, and everything else. And when the troubles started people did pull out of Ireland, people had tourists houses in Ireland, in South of Ireland pulled out because it was still in people's minds that could happen again and it probably very well could because they might tax them out of the country, you don't know and they probably would tax them out of the country. But to go to the Sinn Fein's being voted in. There's nothing wrong with them being voted in if they have a proper attitude to other businesses, other people, and everything else. Go back to when I was joining the guards first, I went into community relations in my local area in coolock and I started going to meetings in very rough areas and there was a sinn fein representative there who completely wouldn't talk to me because I was a member of the guards. Would not talk and he lived locally in the area and if he was at a meeting he would just totally shred us to pieces and I was the main person there to be shredded and I was the sergeant at the time and the inspector and everything else and as time went on I remember being out on the beat one night with other local guards and I met him, and he was coming down the road and he crossed the road when he saw two guards coming. Just took us as being dirt, in his mind we were the wrong people so. and when we were meeting on opposite sides of the road I just said good evening and I won't say his surname, and he got a shock and says how are you, we tried to stop and talk to him but he felt awkward and eventually got away. He didn't wanna be seen talking to us. He just didn't want to be seen with us. So years went on and meetings went on and communities believe it or not were looking for a better, as you would call the war, they were looking for more peace in their areas. We were there defending that and trying to build that up for them. He was there as a political person, in the middle of this. So he would go to the meetings with us and everything else. I found the people at these meetings had no allegiance, they had no problem going into a room with a 100 people where I'd be in their talking to them and them talking to me and as against his wishes. and he was using a table as a chair and everything else and what not, and he reaches over and I was mingling and talking to one of the people. We were getting what they wanted for them, getting them peace, getting them different things. and one day he did come along and he said yous there he says I made a mistake when I was in politics earlier on in life, when Donal came in to do work for us here, we snubbed him. We gave him an awful time and that was a big mistake. He was on our side and all the rest of the guards were on our side. When sinn fein wanted to show fear and power in that community as in on behalf of them, they brought people in from the north. Down from the north and sit at the tables and with the sinn fein people and start ranting and raging and giving out about negative stuff to the guards. And what happened on a few occasions was, there'd be thousands of people in those halls, what happened on a few occasions with the tables when the meetings were over, all the bombarding and the negativity that was thrown at the guards and especially at me at the time. Even though I felt threatened I should be burned, and other stuff should happen to me, okay I ignored it. People who were all mostly clapping and cheering, were all standing around in a group and talking to me and my colleague was with me and I looked up at the table and they were on their own up there, just on their own. and they actually started asking questions, how come you're all flipping talking to them? and one of them told them, they're our local police, they're on our side. and that changed completely the way we looked at police and we looked at sinn fein, and then he came along years later and said he took the wrong attitude. So it's all perceptions about people isn't it.

Dor: Yeah.

Don: So it worked and everyone of those people ended up being friends with us and with members of the guards in the station. I mean friends and more by the time of retirement so you know there you are haha. So I can't be turned. and It is perception. So what is war? There's a war going on of drugs. This thing was all started because of a war going on of drugs and of stolen cars and what would they call it, oh yeah, anti-social behaviour was the main theme of the whole thing. and who was gonna solve it? Was sinn fein gonna solve it? No. They weren't gonna solve it, they were gonna take somebody out and beat him up you know. Baseball bats and things like that, that's not gonna solve anything. We were going to arrest them and process them in the proper way you know, or maybe not arrest them but process them in the proper system. They might need help, they might need to be charged, they might need different things. and we brought in the local authority to deal with that. It was all a matter of bringing them in so that meant housing, that meant different things and it meant that if a family were taking over an estate that. As in, one family got in, they wanted somebody else in because that was more friends for themselves. So we got a say in housing and who went into housing. and worked that with everybody with the local authority, with the guards and with the locals. Things changed and after a while things changed big time. and that's the same I suppose with war you know with the major difference that is. And you've some questions in relation to that.

Dor: I do, yeah.

Don: You're looking, like, I'm trying to get into what you're thinking at the moment.

Dor: You'll get that afterwards, I promise you. I'm actually writing notes for afterwards. I promise. I am looking forward to meeting you in person and not like this on Zoom. It will be much more fun. But let's see, my next question is, in the current political situation what do you consider as the main split and polarisation in terms of power?

Don: In the current political situation...

Dor: What do you consider as the main split in polarisation with regards to power? So for instance, some people said that the fact that Sinn Fein was voted in, that's a sign of polarisation. There is a split in the people and what they want this country to be or how they want it to be led. So, I'm basically asking your view, what do you think is the main split in the country?

Don: Yes, there's a main split, I suppose, finger on the polls there's a statement you could make that the last government if we were to analyse how they ran the country well then I would say they did very well. But if you're at the other end of it and your housing is a problem or your this, that and the other is a problem, they didn't do very well on your behalf to an extent but along comes a pandemic or a bad day or a bad time and we turn up to have 4 or 5 billion sitting there and we also have, and I keep repeating this, and we also have credit ability. We have people who are actually willing to give us credit. It's not so nice of me sitting in my house here if I can't go down to the bank and get a loan to buy food and that's the way we would have been if this country, this government hadn't managed the finances the way they were. So, if, and I keep saying this but if those people had kept getting their finances and their hands on cash before this pandemic, we wouldn't of had anything. and we have people with different mindsets, it's not my mindset, it's people who are coming in to do business in this country it's their mindset. They would have been pulling the plug on all the big businesses in this country which would leave us with billions, billions, less in taxes coming in.

Everyone would go out and just take billions. Unemployment would be back and then suddenly comes a virus pandemic and we can't even fly anywhere to get out of the country. We can't even send some people to Australia so we would be in a different situation and it's a bit of a learning curve for those parties as much as it is for everyone else. The party that was in and ran the country the way they ran it I didn't see a whole pile wrong with it. I think people need to get off their bums and work and make an effort besides sitting at home waiting for somebody to come and give you the handout. You must make an effort to do that and I think my view is that people didn't want, it's preferred the handout, to go over people on the dole, I know the, they've been in school with me, they're still there at home, they're still there if I go down to funerals, they have been on the dole as long as I know them. Nothing wrong with them. I know one or two people who are highly skilled when it comes to carpentry work and have done a little bit of carpentry work in their life and won't do it. Nothing wrong with them mentally, nothing wrong with them physically, just it's a nicer way of living if you just take a handout from the state and that we have to control that to an extent. You say we've only 5% unemployment and that means we're fully this, were not. We have still got people living off the state. They want to live off for things. If you want a free house, you can get a free house in this country. Somebody pays €600,000 for a house in Portmarnock and somebody else gets a free house next door to you, same house. There's a lot of things that go with that more so than just the free house. It means that all the maintenance on that house is being given free, it's done free. I know as I've seen this first hand from working with communities and other areas. It's just all done free and that annoys me. As I had a discussion with somebody the other day I was telling them about it and here they were that it was a local authority area with purchased houses, which is a stake above authority houses, just the step above, you bought the house with the local authority. There it is now, a huge big area in a well off part of Dublin and I worked in it, and I went to meetings in it and what not. and the main problems in the meetings was, not with us but with the local authority and we were having a fight with the local authority because they didn't come down and take the leaves from the footpaths. and this is an idea of what people won't do for themselves. They didn't pick up the leaves from the footpaths. They could hardly give them bags to put them into, they were like no we are not doing it, they refused to do it. Now, all of them are retired in that area, in that estate. That estate was built since the 1960s or 1970s, they're all retired. Everyone of them is because I know them. I'm retired here and all my neighbours are retired here. Even two of us went out in this pandemic and cleared the green nearby and made a footpath. 200 metres of it or more, we widened our footpath by about 200 metres on each side. We cleaned it up and we brushed it up. We didn't ask anyone to come in and do it. These people in some of these estates, with these attitudes it's like somebody else has paid for it and that's where business people won't come in. These people will never get employed in these high tech businesses. So, why would you bring your business into people who are going to be saying give me handouts, give me more, tax us more to pay them. The high tech companies will go that's wrong. That's my view.

Dor: It's a very good view.

Don: Maybe I'm not saying it correctly but, I might not be getting it across properly. But if we don't have the companies in paying taxes or sorry employing people to pay taxes. I'm not bothered about the 1% or 2% they'd only pay in their pockets. It's the people who are employed there who are getting a living out of it. Who can pay for their children's education, who can pay for their meals, who can pay for their house. They're the people we want in this

country I think. Not saying we should neglect other people who are not able to do that. Yes, we can look after them, that's what this country is for, democracy in the country is for something else and economics. But we need people to get up and work and do something. Doing nought and getting paid for it, okay?

Dor: The next question, I think you kind of answered it but I'll let you state your view specifically. Do you practice peace in your own surroundings?

Don: Peace?

Dor: Yeah.

Don: Oh, geez, I do, yeah, if I didn't practice peace in my house, I'd be gone, haha.

Dor: Haha, that is very true.

Don: At the moment I'm living with two women and I'm a yes man, haha.

Dor: Haha, well, that's good. And do you see yourself individually, collectively or socially responsible for bringing or maintaining peace ?

Don: Let's put it this way, if somebody was out playing golf with me in a group and there was an argument going on I would always say to the guys, let's calm it down a bit let's quieten it down a bit you know. But you might have a discussion or an argument and that's good. If you go to European countries and you sit and watch the locals having the little coffees they have there. They have very heated discussions among one another you know. I think that's great. We don't do that in Ireland. We actually say something and one person gets up and leave or moves on you know. I have on occasion said, fellas let's calm it or cool it down here. Nothing deep on about it. I turn a blind eye sometimes, you know. Well, not a blind eye I turn a closed ear, haha.

Dor: Haha. So, do you think that there were or there are institutions that are responsible for bringing or maintaining peace? So, for instance, would be like the states or civil society or religious organisations or trade unions, anything like that?

Don: Different politicians that I've gone through in my lifetime have had different attitudes towards peace. Maybe I shouldn't mention Charlie Haughey, I mean Charlie Haughey and Margaret Thatcher didn't get on and that slowed down peace. Now, which of them was responsible for it not happening, I don't know. Maybe both. But Charlie's, he wouldn't have had the right attitude when it comes to peace. He had some good points but in certain things that we see with this country, take Beaumont hospital for instance, we wouldn't have it without his input of some sort and we have a financial institute inside in central Dublin I dunno if he had tremendous efforts with that but anyway yes politicians have. But when it comes to peace, two people that would be most likely when it comes to peace at the time with Margaret Thatcher and Charlie Hughey, they just didn't see eye to eye, their personalities came into it and they didn't see eye to eye you know. and that held things back to an extent and also the IRA fed into these things and what not. He had a game for gun running and what not and therefore he was playing, and when it comes to politicians and when it comes to politics, Politicians play for one team and one team only: more votes to get elected. I honestly could not be a politician for the life of me if I had to go with a wrong idea to get my votes. I wouldn't go against my ideas, I wouldn't be able to say things out as I think they are and as they should be. I would be doing it and I wouldn't be making votes and therefore if you're a politician you must go with the general run of things and the general run of things at the time was to go

with the negativity of England. Just like there is negativity, there is always a negativity course when it comes to countries living so close together. No two countries get on dead peacefully. They have always got negativity, in some way or another. That's the nature of the way we live. But politicians of late have been far better at peaceful negotiations I think than in the past. Maybe Jack Lynch time, he was a bit better; he made the idea that he hadn't got the guts for it. It's all down to reading history and in depth into history but I think the politicians that are there at the moment, we've got a very good ambassador and we have two very good president ambassadors female ambassadors for this country and we've a president at the moment who has a fantastic ambassador. It's just in the way that they speak to people and the way that they interact with people, other nations. Two presidents our previous presidents were brilliant, our party at the moment, the party that is in power at the moment are brilliant and that's where I have the problem that if Sinn Fein politicians go in, how will they react. Or how will other people react to them. When it comes to doing negotiations with anything in relation to England or indeed with people and countries that are in the EU, how are they going to go about them? and they've all got a view of our history and the view of being linked to them when it comes to the IRA and everything else. That's my problem when it comes to those kinds of people getting in. Not that I have got anything on personalities themselves, I mean some of them have wrong personalities but those can be changed, but the negativity will be there for a while and will come back from all those countries. and I can see plugs being pulled and lights going out in factories in the morning if this were to happen, if it did happen. Leo Varadkar and his team took an absolutely fantastic approach to everything including this pandemic. Why people voted the way they voted? RTE has a part to play in all of this. The media has a part to play in it.

Dor: Tell me a bit more about it?

Don: They have a big part to play in it. They pumped out all of the negativities. and they fed people with you're not being given a house and therefore we are going to look for a free house. You're entitled to a free house, you should go looking for a free house. It's all negative stuff being fed. Listen to the way that RTE asks questions or any other journalist asks questions. Listen to the way they ask questions. The questions are asked in such a way, you're going to get a negative answer. And then seeds are sewn for negativity. And that's what happened and is happening. Where are the people who are homeless at the moment, where are the people that are without houses at the moment? Where are they now? Our streets are empty. We don't have that going on. How come everything is okay at that end of it and the pandemic has taken over the whole thing. Not saying there isn't having problems but negativity was fed by the media, big time. And if you tell someone this is wrong, and then the next person says this is wrong, then the next person is like oh god it must be wrong two people have said it you know. But if someone says it's right. Positivity and you'll get a different answer.

Dor: Well, that's true and I think from a lot of people we have interviewed, especially the people we interviewed as this pandemic began, or was approaching, a lot of people were very happy with how Varadkar was handling, is handling the situation.

Don: Yeah.

Dor: Do you think that?

Don: Sorry, having said that, just to say we were absolutely very, very lucky that he was there and his team and the teams that are in there with him and to have on board, what's his name, Hoolihan. What's his first name, the doctor?

Dor: Simon Harris, are you referring to the minister for health?

Don: No, I'm talking about the doctor in the HSE.

Dor: Oh, I wouldn't know, I'm not familiar.

Don: Can't think of it anyway but they're all part of a team that the government has put together. They're all being built up by people with positive ideas you know. They have worked in a very positive way when it comes to this. They have taken a very positive approach to the EU when it came to Brexit. Simon Harris and Leo Varadkar took a very positive approach to it. He even came as far as to say help Britain get over one of the problems that they had with it you know. Get it done, get on with it you know. Deal with other problems afterwards you know. This negativity gets people down you know and builds the wrong ideas, builds the wrong ways. Sorry now for pushing all that at you.

Dor: No, that's okay, that's good. Do you think peace is a result of one's personal or generational historical experience?

Don: That depends where. I am coming from a peaceful time, I have been in a peaceful time all my life and I wouldn't be starting a war in the morning you know and I don't think anybody I know would be starting a war. So, peace, comes from what, say it again, comes from which?

Dor: Does it come from like a personal, personal view or does it come from a generational historical experience of like war, deprivation or injustice?

Don: You know, I don't even know the answer to that because reading about different countries and war and the small bit I have read on it. We'll take for instance the president at the moment in America. He hasn't started a war yet and that surprises a lot of people but if you look at it down through the years every other country, every other president has been involved in a war in America.

Dor: Well, it's not that he hasn't started I mean he did take troops out of Syria and let the Russians and the Turks deal with it, you know, so maybe he is not like taking the guns specifically but I'd say he is...

Don: Yeah, but if he is to continue being president and he's going to get backed to be president, he's going to have to do some bit of war because they are people that are paying his money.

Dor: That's it. The gun industry.

Don: So, that's what comes at it, like what is war. I'm not going to start a war but if I need political powers to keep me going as president, if that's the stupidity of my mind and I don't care about other people and about millions dying, well then I am going to be promoting a war. But I don't think the people of Northern Ireland, and that's my nearest thing to a war call it, I don't think the people who were actually growing up there lived there for years and had the thought of ever having a war you know. You know they might have gone to war, some of their grandparents or parents had gone to war on behalf of England I know some Irish did but they didn't think of bringing a war to northern Ireland. It was only when the troubles started that genuinely a war did start I suppose. and fear and everything else did start you know. and suddenly, as we always say, people that were living as a family, close together, we're now against one another. Burning one another's kids and farms and everything down. That's gone on all around Europe and all over Russia, they just read it recently and everything else so you know. Anything you read about it's gone on you know. People were living there and next thing all of a sudden you have people moving from one part of the world to another and one side of the country to the next you know. Why? Nobody said 10 years ago that would happen.

Dor: That's it. So...

Don: Previously so, you know, situations change.

Dor: Maybe I can tie this in now with your answer to the next question, that is asking do people volunteer to go to war? Or do you think it's a personal choice?

Don: History tells us that in the two world wars, people in Ireland did they volunteer to go to war, yes they did. They volunteered to go to war. Is it the missionaries where they go off and get paid for it and get money to go to war? They did volunteer for that. Nobody would volunteer for a war in this country at the moment. Nobody would want to go to war the way we live in this country and indeed in England, nobody wants a war. But when you suck in an army, first of all you send your army off to war and then you've to say right I've to start recruiting. That's the way it goes on you know. Next thing you have people building machine guns as they did in all other wars and people building tanks and people building ships. and everyone is sucked into it then you know. That's human nature. That's just life. But nobody wants a war. If you were asked the question ten minutes before the war starts do you want a war? No. Politicians might say it's easy enough to say we're going to go to war with someone or we're going to send troops in there and that's on other nations. We don't have that type of lifestyle in this country. We're not a war type of nation. To go in and have a war like. What happened in the Falklands was... Everyone was peaceful. Soldiers were there in the barracks working away and the Argentinians were in the Falklands and they said okay we'll take in QE2 and 24hrs a day, 7 days a week and we turned it around and sent thousands of people and fellas down there to fight a war. you know talking about war months before that. And then you had top commanders and everything else that were killed. People were buried down there. Dead. That's a war, it just happens. It's like the pandemic. It's like the weather changing. Things change, you know?

Dor: So, who do you think is profiting from war?

Don: Criminals do profit from war. In other countries, there are wars going on all over the world at the moment. Small wars going on. If you take Africa, who is profiting from, there's certain 1 or 2 making fortunes out of gold and mining and what not going on there. Go back to the other extreme, go to america and say who is profiting from a war? The emission manufacturers are profiting from a war. People do profit from a war and people have profited from war. At the expense of the peasants or the ordinary person you know. and what did Hitler want to be fighting a load of countries for? What was his gain? Take over the whole world? Conned to many ones and lost the war.

Dor: And what do you think, who profited from the Troubles then?

Don: Who profited from the Troubles then? The IRA didn't intend to profit from them but they seen a niche and did profit from it. They hugely profited from it. To an extent they profited from it but in the end they didn't gain a whole pile. Not what they thought they were going to gain. Take over and be the top nation that was going to push the british out you know. Smuggling is a huge part and black market and not paying taxes and everything else. If you're in that type of bubble in that area, you're making a profit. You're a small group of people making a profit inside there and that's your life. You're safe in there. You don't get to choose what people will pass you through. Nobody does care about anybody else when it comes to war situations so they don't care about people who have lost their business in it and there's other

people who are making billions and have a big house up the road, in certain parts in northern Ireland, as some of them do. and I've never had a job in my life and I won't have time to do one, I've tonnes from going from north to south. Smuggling oil and smuggling this and that and the other. And not paying taxes. Couldn't be my style of life or anybody I know's style of life because I don't think I should be hiding in a bubble like a little area that nobody else can come into or go to or anything else. But they're making millions out of it. That's their narrow mindness. Not to mind their way of thinking.

Dor: Yeah. How do you think that affects post-war politics?

Don: Post-war politics. I'm not too sure what you mean by that there now, post war politics.

Dor: Well the conclusions of who profited from the troubles, you say the IRA profited from the troubles. So, how does that...?

Don: No, the IRA profited in some part in that they thought their profit was to be made by buy more ammunition by more this kind of thing but they were not paying taxes. They were living in a bubble of their own as in the governments didn't matter, north and south. Did not exist you know. We're going to take over and run this country our way you know. But just because somebody is mad enough to think like that and everything else doesn't say it's right. And doesn't say it's actually conditioned to actually living within the EU. We will all go off and do business with other people. They don't see that. That's their thinking. That's my view of the way they're thinking, sorry maybe that's not the way they think, that's my view of the way they think. They would like to take over the country and run it the way that they would like. and you go back to politics and every party has its own people as I said to you and I voted for different strands so therefore I am not affiliated to any party and every political party looks after its own people when they get into power. So, maybe they're thinking the same thing, if we go in we'd look after our own people. How capable would they be at doing the job? I don't know I couldn't see them being capable enough but that's my view. That's not always correct. But I could see more educated people or people with different approaches to life and different approaches to others having a better way at running the country. I like the way the people are running it at the moment so.

Dor: So, I am actually going to go to a question that is a bit ahead just because it is completely continuous of what we were just discussing but do you think a state can be run by a working class person? and I'm saying that specifically because Sinn Fein essentially is associated with or as a working class party

Don: Yeah. Simple answer in my mind is that no. No.

Dor: Can you expand on that?

Don: Because you've thrown Sinn Fein in and with their attitudes and with their ideas. Their political attitudes and ideas and their affiliations and yes if they rolled over and turned their thing round the same as Leo Varadkar and the way that other politicians across Europe do things, that's the way it would run. But if you're going to roll it over and say we are still the threatening force in this country then no. and the working class people, going back to what I said earlier on, working class people is a bit of a myth saying working class people, they are people who don't work at all. They are usually people who don't work and are called working class people. And you can't run a political system or an economic system with people who don't work. Most of the people pay into a pool and it is taken to do whatever is needed around the country. So, no, I don't think it's good enough, no.

Dor: And did anyone in your family fight in a war?

Don: No. War was never mentioned in my house. Troubles were never mentioned in my house. Can you believe that?

Dor: You know, that's a thing I heard a lot from people.

Don: I was young. I was between 6 and 8 at the time that the troubles started in the north. The riots, I was 14 or going on 14. and it came on television. and the nearest thing I heard about anything being said about a war was, when those troubles started I said aww, I was all for the police stopping them you know. and my mother said no, don't boast of things like that, she didn't elaborate. I said why, she didn't elaborate. You're wrong she says to me there, I was only around 13 or 14 at the time and she says that's where you're wrong, they are right or something like that. She didn't elaborate. My father never discussed a war, my grandfather never discussed a war, my grandmother would often have talked about the rationing that went on at the time of a war. No war was ever mentioned. And I was born 10 years after this was mentioned. Nine years maybe.

Dor: Do you think that testimonies of war contribute to peace building?

Don: I would think so yes. Yeah, testimonies and people put head to count for what they did which I think is very very important. And there's a book there called the burning of Dresden which is the bombing of Dresden and the burning of it you know and I was very impressed with it and one of the places I want to go is to go and see this because they actually got all the parties on the both sides of world war two to pay for the rebuilding of dresden because nobody would build it after bombing it. And they got them all to pay for it. I mean it had been demolished by bombs, pushed them into a heap on the side of the road and said you're building it. There was something still up to collect money from England, from Germany and from every other place you know, America and the whole lot as nobody took responsibility for rebuilding it specifically. And nobody took responsibility for paying for it. It's a different way of looking at things. That's just my thing, but yeah, it puts their head to a count for things they did illegally during the war. War princes and things like that, people who got away with an awful lot of stuff that they shouldn't have gotten away with. These things take too long to go down through courts as well.

Dor: And do you think peace has advanced the society we live in?

Don: Advances?

Dor: Advanced. So the fact that there is peace, does it advance the society?

Don: In Ireland?

Dor: Yeah.

Don: 'Course it has. Sure, Ireland has improved massively with peace. I mean, like we can drive up and down the north you know and that's, I look at that and that to us, that is peace. Like that is peace. It was a small time war to any of us in comparison to other countries but that is peace driving freely, going on holidays. We went on holidays, we went up to the north you know myself and we stayed in hotels in two different places in the north. Yes when we were there we felt a bit fearful in one place because of the marches, the band marches you know. We just weren't too sure. We have an old perception of what these things entail you know, who they are and what they're about and everything else. and we just moved on from that little town. We were going to go in for lunch and we moved on and came home. Yes, the

country has advanced an awful lot with peace. Because there is peace there. Even though there is scurrishes every now and again, you get that everywhere. Again it's the media. I blame the media for the way they report things. Their wording. The wording they use is wrong all the time. I mean anyone can play with words.

Dor: Well, I mean there's always an intention behind how the wording is said or the things that they're informing you on.

Don: I know. I know there is, yeah.

Dor: Do you know a completely different view of life, so a view of things so not to do with the Irish or the British or anything but I remember one day, the last war that Israel had in Gaza. The media in Ireland had also had one way of looking at stuff and I remember reading an article in the Irish times and I was so disappointed because the headline said "They are nice Israelis".

Don: They're what? What did you say?

Dor: They're are some nice Israelis.

Don: Oh yes, yes, haha, I know, I know.

Dor: And it's a decision of wording you know, but it's always the way it is. There's always an inner agenda, just behind the screen. And there's always a specific, I think politics has to do with what party puts what money into what newspaper or what website or whatever.

Don: Yeah. Well if you listen to the questions the way RTE or any other reporters ask, it's a question with a certain type of answer intended. and that's what happens, it's just wrong but that's what happens and that's what has gone on. That's what has a lot of problems in this country when it comes to homelessness and unemployment or anything else. No matter how good the employment gets in this country, they'll still put a negative spin on it you know.

Dor: Yeah.

Don: They still put a negative twist on it saying it's all wrong. And it should be twisted in such a way where you should feel bad like I should have a job you know. I should be employed. I should have worked for 30 or 40 years of my life you know. No that's not the way it is. It's you're entitled to do nothing and contribute nothing but take plenty.

Dor: Yeah. Social security is very high in this country. It really is, one of the highest I've seen. Do you think that peace is related to distribution of wealth? Or ownership of property?

Don: No. No, I never thought of it like that. Peace no, no. I said to you earlier on in the beginning that there's people living in local authority houses in very very rough areas. That's their communities, that's where they come from. They said if they had a million pounds tomorrow morning they wouldn't leave. This surprised me when I asked that question you know. I said if you won the lotto in the morning would you leave here, "Aww, no, no". Now maybe they would. I don't know but that's just what they said. They'd still be going back. There's a saying in Ireland saying the savage loves his native home and we all do. We have a relation to our native home and does, is peace related to property? No. There's wealthy people that can live in properties and if you go into their lifestyle and maybe there are only two people living in that house, a big huge mansion and they might not be getting on. Be living in two seperate parts of it. That's not what you want. It's all got to do with your family and your status in life and where you are within your community. Let's put it this way, I couldn't see myself living in dalkey. I don't associate myself with millionaires row or anything like that. Even a massive big mansion in portmarnock, I don't see myself. This is the type of community I like. This type of thing here, it suits me. No. It's nice and peaceful. It's nice.

Dor: Yeah. We were always kind of, we have a house in Swords and every so often Ciaran's cousin who is a millionaire, he made a lot of money in the Celtic Tiger, comes to us and says you know you have your chance to move to Malahide and I'm like why would we wanna move to Malahide, haha.

Don: Yeah.

Dor: You know, we love where we live. This is, you know, where we are happy. We wouldn't wanna trade this for anything else.

Don: Your sense of community is a recollection of people around you you know, when you go to an area you're living with people. Like if you go down to the beach at the moment now, you'll see hundreds of people down there that you won't even know, because they're not from here. And they'll have a different attitude down there to what the locals would have had last week when the 2 km was in you know. So it's a completely different peaceful area you know at that time but they're entitled to come out to the beach like that's it you know, that's life, haha.

Dor: That's a Portmarnock grumpiness about a stranger.

Don: But you see them there and you know they're not locals and just they're ways of doing things differently we've to look at that you know.

Dor: Yeah. Okay so I will move to the next one. We are doing very well. Only a couple more to go.

Don: That's okay.

Dor: What is solidarity for you? and is it practiced in your surroundings?

Don: Sorry, say that again, what is solidarity? I'm a bit puzzled by that word. Solidarity is mentioned in other countries but not, what does it mean I'm giving up something does it?

Dor: Well, I don't know it can, you know you are the second person who asked me what is solidarity and I suppose that's why the question is to the people and not to me. Like for me solidarity is unity, is brotherhood, is standing together. It's empathizing with one another, it's stuff like that. But you know, different people say different things about it. Usually across these lines. Does it mean anything like that to you?

Don: Solidarity. Sticking together and, it doesn't really come into discussions in this part of the country in my life with solidarity. I have allegiance to my family, I have allegiance to the people who live around me or any other human being that's in Ireland. See wrong doing you might say okay, empathize and sympathize with them anyway, that would be more towards the solidarity end of it, wouldn't it? Solidarity is a word that's been mentioned in more far away countries than here you know. It's a big thing for those countries, but it's not, I don't see it as being a big thing for, not turning it down or anything. You'd be naturally solidarity and you'd be that way with, to sympathize with people and empathize with people and what not. And you wouldn't wanna see anything done wrong to your fellow citizens.

Dor: That's fair enough. That's okay, we can move to the next one. How does wage labor bring you together with or separate you from other workers?

Don: Bit difficult to answer that one in so far that I grew up in not very well off circumstances or anything like that and so there was no big amount of money you know. Everybody else was the same around me I guess, but I got a job. It's a middle of the road job when it comes to pay. As somebody once said you'll never be well off but you won't be poor either, the wages will keep coming in. And then when I was working in the guards, I worked with people from all age groups, and all wage groups and I discovered that everybody except for situations that you're a laborer or

you're on a building site and you're getting x amount of money. If you're a member of the garda síochána you're in a slightly different bracket. You go into the same bloody establishment and to the same point with the same people. For instance, I play golf in a club and I have people from all walks of life there. Well if anyone thinks they're going to be a snob in there well then forget it because I have taxi drivers, I met a roofer the other day, he actually came up and fixed my roof the other day and where did I get his name? I got him from the golf club, from members of the golf club. And he wouldn't come out. I tried to get him to come out, rang him several times. I sent him a text saying "you've been recommended by x, y and a z in the golf club and several others speak highly of you. He then came back to me immediately. And he comes out, some people would look at a roofer and say he's nobody you know, got a hundred euro there for 15 minutes work. So wages like, what are wages. I'm not the type of person who takes a certain view of people because they're doctors or because they're laborers or turning my nose up at the laborers. I have worked with people like that. And I just treat them all the same. If I met you on a cruise ship doesn't matter. I wouldn't ask why are you here because you're a laborer or unemployed or anything like that. You've got a good thing.

Dor: And do you think peace is influenced by employment and working conditions?

Don: I'm sure it is. The troubles in the North started because of working conditions. Troubles in the North started because of working conditions and lack of work number 1 and conditions of work number 2. Sorry that would be number 3 because the other one was the vote with England, not getting the vote. So that ruined your status in life when you didn't have a vote, you had no status. You were a second place citizen when it comes to houses. and the communist system and the bit I read about it there recently, was something similar to that you know. You got a good job. You got points up higher in the scale, you got a better house. and the story in that book is about your man, who sold a car. He sold a car for profit and he wasn't meant to sell the car for profit. Whereas in the north if you couldn't get on certain councils, if you couldn't get on certain committees well then you couldn't get anywhere in life and people were suppressed and depressed in northern Ireland because of it. That's what started the troubles. So, yes it does. Having said all that now, saw a tiny bit of that back home in the local creamery where we also admitted to, if you were on the committee of the creamery, milk was great, it was made by people working the creamery or on the committee and it was great quality, and if you were on the committee you were entitled to upgrade your own milk. As I say it was better quality. But you were able to upgrade it for a penny or two a pint more which was a lot when it came to gallons of milk. And that was a lot of money at the time, a penny or two. and that went on and the people who were on the committee, some of them, they weren't big enough to do it but they were protestants or things holding these committees and they were always getting the higher price for their milk among the centre of Catholics that was there, so you know. They were able to do that. That goes on in a far larger scale in the north and goes on on a far larger scale in the rest of the world. and people are suppressed by this and by not being able to vote. Voting number 1 and lack of ability to get into certain establishments or certain same politics, suppresses people big time. Big time.

Dor: Yeah. As well as housing actually, you know, they couldn't buy a house.

Don: No, they couldn't buy a house, no. That was the thing about the votes, kept them down, the housing, they controlled everything else, you know.

Dor: One after the other. Yeah.

Don: Yeah.

Dor: Do you think the EU or the prospect of joining the EU brought peace to the area?

Don: I wouldn't say it brought peace as much as we had peace, some sort of peace before we went into the EU. Like take Turkey, it's not a peaceful country and it's trying to get into the EU you know. Or they haven't got their human rights rules and regulations established correctly. To get into the EU you must be in some way, one of the normal peaceful countries in some way. England got into the EU and then we followed suit then in after them so you know. Don't know if it's anything to do with peace really you know.

Dor: Okay. Do you think European peace is related to internal immigration?

Don: Internal immigration. At the moment, there's a lot of people coming into Europe and that's the only one good thing I can see the EU doing. I know Great Britain would probably say no, probably will say no when they vote. We're talking about two different worlds, two different countries when it comes to migrations and immigrations and all this sort of thing. In Ireland's history, we had a problem in this country down through the years, some will associate it with England and some will associate it with famine and what not probably caused by England but we won't go into all that. And where did we go? We got on our boats and ships and whatever it is and we head for America. For two reasons: 1 was probably had some relations over there and some people had and 2 they spoke the same language that we did and they took us in big time. The EU was doing the exactly same thing in the other way round, taking in people now as the Americans did. How that's policed? The Americans when they took them in policed them very well and actually integrated them into fire brigades and policing and all of that jobs. Are we doing that with them in Europe? I don't know. I don't see that. Probably are and we'll see it more in years to come but is it happening as fast as it did in America, I don't know if it is or not. Like you can go down the negative major thought and say I don't want people of color or different races to come into Ireland or into Europe but they're already here. They're going to be here. Nothing is going to stop it you know. The Americans could have said years ago that we don't want anymore irish but they did want us, they wanted us to work and they wanted us and they ended up running the country actually as it turned out. Down through the generations. I honestly don't know what's happening with the amount of migrants that are coming into the country at the moment, I have no idea what's happening with them. While England has come along and said I don't want them, I don't want any of this kind of thing and yet they're responsible for it originally. They were totally responsible for it originally. And England has plenty of them in there. How are they treating them? I wouldn't say very well. From what bit I've seen of the areas that they're living in and everything else you know, they're not integrating them enough. Whereas in America they did it in a completely different way. Maybe I've a wrong view of America from the bit I've seen of it but the bit I've seen of England, I've been in both countries, in both places and the bit I've seen in England, they're in certain areas, taking over certain areas. Left in poor conditions. One of the most obvious things was in... Not Manchester, not Liverpool... I can't think of the name of it. Was it Manchester? It might have been Manchester. Black, dirty streets. Not proper bins to put the rubbish into you know. You need to add them to a certain community, integrate them not doentrot them you know. It's not good for them. You must bring them along and say this is for your own good you know. They'll learn, they'll get it after a while. Sure they've done all that in Coolock you know. So they learned, one of the first things they taught them in Coolock was not to say anything negative about their own areas. They were getting up on the media and

saying negative things and I said why did you do that? I just stand up in front of loads of rubbish in your area. and it'll get a full article in the Irish times. Cause they came out and took it, and I said why did you do that? I said who's reading the Irish times here? I don't know. Well I said, there's no one here and every other part of the city is reading it. You know thinking this place is an awful place. They're looking at me like what does it have to do with you? so why don't you just get rid of the rubbish and don't let them do that to you, show negative things. So, I've gone off the track I know a bit but I'm just saying that it's how we treat people and it's how we educate people is how we integrate them into a community and that is very very important when people are coming in from other countries to there and they are vulnerable and they will congregate and live in groups. And not knowing how to improve that and the way they think the way things should be. But if they're shown different ways of doing things and how to integrate they will and that's my view. That's just...

Dor: No, that's good. How do you think peace relates to relations with countries in other continents and immigration from there?

Don: I don't know. I honestly don't know how. Seeing as I'm a very outsider, sure there's war zones all over the bloody place. You've got Africa, you've got Eastern Europe, you've got South America, you know. A lot of them is a group of people with power, controlling power, controlling the finances and controlling everything else. and that's all it is. And if you put these people, sucking along to them or going along with them. Like for instance if you have got a whole team of people around in this small part of the government.. most of them don't want to be, they're highly supportive of the people who are in power, 99% of them don't want to be Taoiseach. They don't want to be a minister. They're happy enough to be a cog in the wheel. So if you're in these other countries where there's more, you're a cog in the wheel of being well looked after or your family is being well looked after or they're going to create a war or assist in a war. It's a human nature thing, it's a horrible thing this human nature thing. I don't know. I just don't know. I'm not experienced enough with war torn countries to give...

Dor: That's okay, that's okay. It's really just about perspective and not necessarily about your experience, you know.

Don: Yeah.

Dor: For instance, how do you think the idea of Europe includes and excludes?

Don: Europe is including. At the moment they're bringing everybody into it. There's no doubt about it and rightly so they're bringing in and hopefully everything is correct in war torn countries. They're coming from war torn countries, looking for a better life and who wouldn't from the stories we hear about those places. But it's one thing taking them in and plonking them along the mediterranean there. How are they integrating them? Have they got a proper system of integrating them and that's that problem. I see the problem there in that. And I think that people were integrated properly and I'm going cak to America and stop me if I'm wrong on this but I do think they were great. You were in Ellis Island, you got in, got your stamp, and in you went and you integrated into the community. And you went to somebody who knew you. You had religious groups in one place, political groups in other areas and everyone was looked after you know. Got jobs. Are people being given jobs when they're coming into Europe? No. They're not integrating them with jobs at all. Wrongly they're being put into, I don't like these centres they're being put into. I think this is completely disgraceful and what would I call it, if

you spent a number of years there your mind is going to be in a different place than when you came in. It's more bad than it was when you came in.

Dor: I would agree with you as well.

Don: Yeah.

Dor: Okay two more questions, last energy, here we go! This is a completely different one. How does peace relate to climate change?

Don: Well, how does peace relate to climate change? Difficult, let me think now. How does the virus relate to climate change? Well we have a climate change because of the virus. The pandemic that we have in the world we have no planes, We've no fuel. I have a tank of diesel in my car there that's only half full and I filled it in February. So, hopefully all that will have a fantastic effect on the climate change you know. How does peace, well if you've got war, just take the war in, Saddam Hussein's was wherever he had that in Kuwait where the bombs, where they blew up all the oil fields you know. That must have had an awful affect on the climate change in the world. I mean if that amount of oil is burning and laying stupidly there. Producing that bombs and bombing countries and bombing the world and other places. Sure peace and no bombings is. I don't think war and climate change have much of an effect on climate change unless you're really bombing or burning oil fields or setting off gas and these are just carrier jets flying around a different world there. Explosions must have an awful effect on climate. Has to have.

Dor: Okay. Here we go, your last one, Donal, haha. Would you consider peace building a political endeavour?

Don: I would, certainly, yeah.

Dor: And who do you think is a political subject that can carry it?

Don: Who? In this country or?

Dor: Sure.

Don: I told you earlier on, the presidents that we have in this country, they have no power to dictate or anything like that but they have power to influence and they had a great attitude and indeed they turned the table around the other way and if the queen of England came over to Ireland the same things she'd say, she made it very peaceful approaches to this country and put her standing to most of our heads that she was able to do that you know. Who is seen to do it now? At the moment, the political regime that's in there at the moment Leo Varadkar, all his team. And I'm sure the same is on the other side with Fianna Fail. They're totally in line for peace and having a peaceful situation. I think the EU has a good attitude towards it. How they're going to implement it, I don't know. I'm getting worried. I was a very much pro EU person and I still am but I'm getting a little bit fractious of the way they stand in a lot of things and why they don't stick to a different stand. They have a big organisation, it's got trillions of dollars in it and euros and I suppose in another relation it can't be dismantled, it's there so why aren't they undertaking a different attitude to the migrants coming into europe. Why didn't they take a different attitude to the virus that's there at the moment. More of a structured government's attitude toward things. Do you know? They just can't go on at the moment. Just letting countries feed in money and giving out money and grants and different things. They just can't go on like that you know. So it's going to be talked about and there will be more discussion on that later and they'll have to think more about it but I am a bit worried

about those two things, why they didn't take a different stand on that now. Or why they're not taking a better stance on the migrants. It's like saying we stop for rain at two o'clock, it's not gonna stop, they're gonna come in you know. And what negotiations are they making? Or what efforts are they making to negotiate with these other countries that are causing all these people to leave. Why aren't they coming in. I think the EU needs to stand up, get off the seat and stand up. Rightly or wrongly the Americans got in different places and tried to do something. Sometimes they failed, sometimes they didn't. Do it right. But someone has to make a move and do something you know and the British should be involved as well but they were causing a lot of the problems anyway in the first place.

Dor: That's the main trouble.

Don: We won't go there, haha.

Dor: Donal, I really appreciate it, you talking to us. It was really fun and very intellectual conversations, so thank you so much.