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PATRIOTISM

THE VOICE
OF THE
REPUBLICAN
NORTH

Vol. 2

No. 5

APRIL 1964

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3000 Honour Ireland's Martyred Dead

THE Annual Commemoration Parade and Ceremony, to Honour Ireland's dead in Belfast on Easter Sunday, was a most impressive and magnificent Spectacle of Devotion, Respect, and loyalty to Ireland's Martyred dead, and was attended by a larger crowd than in Previous years.

Organised by the National Commemoration Committee, the Parade reverted back to the 1956 Route of Marching, from Beechmount Avenue, along Falls Road to the Republican Plot in Milltown Cemetery.

Before leaving Beechmount Ave., The St. Peter's Brass and Reed Band played the National Anthem. At 3 p.m. sharp the Parade moved off at the Command of the Marshal, led by the Colour Party of three, bearing the tricolour, the flag of the Irish Republic; the Plough and the Stars; the flag of the Citizen Army, and the Sunburst, the flag of na Tianna Eireann, (the Boy Scouts of Ireland). Behind them came the four Wreath bearers, and in marshal array, almost 2,000 young men and women, and some not so young—Marching with Military precision, bearing and discipline, to the martial airs played by St. Peter's Brass and Reed Band and the John F. Kennedy Pipe Band, along the mile-long route to Milltown Cemetery.

Thousands lined the footpaths all along the road, and in nearly every breast was seen an Easter Lily. In evidence, too, was the reverence and respect shown to the national flag by many of the on-lookers, some of whom took off their hats, whilst others saluted, and in the Cemetery itself over 1,000 had already gathered.

A very large force of C.I.D. and R.U.C. were both at Beechmount Avenue and Milltown Cemetery, whilst Patrol Cars patrolled the route.

With the arrival of the parade at the Republican Plot, a most colourful and moving ceremony took place, presided over by Mr. D. Toner, who outlined the reason of the commemoration, and stressed the necessity of keeping up the continuity of the struggle in that same cause for which so many of our noble dead had sacrificed their lives. This was followed by a decade of the Rosary in Gaelic led by Mr. Frank McGlade, after which the

Proclamation of the Republic was read by Mr. Malachi McBurney. Then in a most solemn and impressive scene "The Memory of the Dead," was rendered by St. Peter's Band, whilst the colour party dipped the flags over the grave in reverent salute.

Speaking first in Gaelic and then in English, Mr. Sean Stephenson, Cork, delivered the oration.

"Every year throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, Republicans assemble to honour their Martyred dead and to commemorate in a very special way the fight and sacrifice made in Dublin during Easter Week 1916, the fight that began on that glorious Easter Monday of forty-eight years ago, when a small band of 100 poorly armed, but determined men and women went out scorning death and danger, defying the might of the British Empire, to strike a blow for old Ireland, to proclaim the Republic, and to make yet another attempt, to break the connection with England.

For one whole week, they gave battle to the enemy, putting up a magnificent fight, against overwhelming odds, through no fault of their own they were unable to break the connection with England, but they proclaimed the Republic, and proclaimed it in the only way possible, by force of arms.

By their action, they tore the Irish people away from the professional politicians of that day, gave them courage, a back-bone again, united them, and set them marching as only a united people can march, until they were within reach of complete victory, only to have disaster strike in 1921, when treachery and deceit, destroyed

national Unity. Since then several attempts have been made to achieve the ideals of Easter Week, by the methods of Easter Week, the Bombing Campaign in 1939 was one example when Perry Malone and his comrades, successors to the men of Easter Week, carried the war for Irish freedom to the heart of the enemy Empire. During the forties men like Tom Williams, Gerry O'Callaghan, Rocky Burns, Sean McCaughey, remembered as the men of '16 remembered before them, that "England's difficulty was Ireland's opportunity," while the latest attempt to restore Ireland's Freedom and unity, was the campaign of 1956-62.

In spite of all sacrifices made, British rule and power in Ireland remains as strong as ever. Republican Ireland stands further away from her ideals to-day, than she did on that Easter Monday of forty-eight years ago. The equal rights and opportunities guaranteed to the Irish people by the proclamation of 1916 will be denied to them, as long as British rule continues in any part of Ireland. The only remedy is to organise an effective resistance, that will overthrow British rule in Ireland, drive out the British army of occupation, unite the country, and give our people the opportunity to elect an all Ireland Parliament, that will govern Ireland for the benefit of all the Irish people, and not merely for a minority. We have no easy task ahead of us, but we must face up and overcome our difficulties, as the men and women of Easter 1916 overcame theirs.

The Republican movement is re-organising, the object of the re-organisation is to resume the struggle for Irish freedom as soon as this becomes a practical possibility. To this end I wish to address myself specifically to all young men to seriously consider joining the Republican movement. We of the Republican movement believe that the finest way for young Irish men to serve their country, is to join our ranks, and prepare themselves to play a man's part in the struggle for freedom.

You are not being asked to join an illegal organisation, indeed the militant wing of the Republican movement is the only Irish organisation of its kind that has any law-

ful or moral rights to exist. Republicans of this generation, like Republicans in the past declare, that the British army of occupation and its auxiliary forces are the true illegal organisations in Ireland. We appeal to all people irrespective of class or creed, to join one of the branches of the movement and work for the day when the British army and other occupation forces will no longer exist in Ireland.

Wreaths were then laid on the plot on behalf of the National Graves Association, the Cumann Na Mian Na Fianna Eireann, the Republican Movement, Mr. Trainor and Mrs. Kelly.

The Ceremony concluded with the sounding of the Last Post by a member of St. Peter's Band in which the flags were again dipped in salute to the dead, and then raised in final stature and triumph as the final notes of the Reveille died away.

LURGAN

Over 100 people assembled to honour the men of 1916 at the Republican Plot in Lurgan. Brendan Lavery said a decade of the Rosary and the proclamation was read by Brendan Lennon. The oration was delivered by George O'Toole, who called on the people to remember Tone and Emmet and the men of 1916, and to follow their ideals as the men, at whose grave they stood, had followed them.

Similar parades were also held in Killeaney and Camlough in South Armagh.

NEWRY

A large force of C.I.D. and R.U.C. mingled with the crowd of 1,500 strong who assembled and paraded to St. Mary's Cemetery Newry, on Easter Sunday, to honour Ireland's dead. The Tricolour flanked by the Plough and the Stars, and the Sunburst of Na Tiannas Eireann headed the parade and Easter Lilies were much in evidence.

DUNGANNON

Pomeroy Accordion Band and Dungannon Silver Band attended the Easter Sunday Commemoration Parade to the grave of Volunteer Patrick Loughran in St. Patrick's Cemetery Dungannon.

A large crowd including many former political pioneers attended the ceremony.

3000 Honours Ireland's Martyred Dead

DERRY CITY

A large force of plain clothes and uniformed police were in attendance at the Easter Commemoration in Derry City.

Mr. Patrick Quinn, Belfast, delivered the oration to the large congregation.

DONEGAL

A large crowd of about 1,000 attended the Easter Commemoration at Drumboe, Stranolar, Co. Donegal. The chairman was Eamonn Melaugh of Derry, who read the roll of honour. A decade of the Rosary in Irish was led by Sean O'Heaney of Glencolmille, and the proclamation of Easter Week was read by Patrick Curran of Letterkenny. The oration was delivered by Mr. Gerald Doherty, Strabane.

After tracing the fight for freedom from Wolfe Tone's day to Easter Week, he gave a short talk on the Drumboe Martyrs, Enright, Larkin, Daly and Sullivan executed by "Free State" forces in March, 1923, when Pearse speaking over, O'Donabhain Rossa's grave said:—"splendid and Holy causes are served by men, who are in themselves splendid and holy he could have said it over all the Drumboe Martyrs."

Mr. Doherty then appealed to those present, to tell the story of Ireland's fight for freedom to the young, in order that they could model their lives on the heroes, and the heroines of Irish Independence, and in doing that, we would be assured of a better national spirit, a more christian Ireland, and a higher standard of morality. He concluded the oration in calling on the young men and women to join the Republican movement.

Patrick Dawson then read the Easter statement from the Republican Publicity Bureau.

[FOOTNOTE: Once again the "Free State" forces seized the Easter lilies on sale. This follows on their attempts over the past twelve months, to curb the sale of the emblem which is worn throughout Ireland to honour the men of 1916.]

British and proud of it

New Zealand is to issue a new form of passport. It will remove from the front cover the once arrogant boast that the person is a British subject.

This is being done mainly because New Zealanders have been finding difficulty in travelling through some European, and most of the new African countries, where a British passport automatically puts them at the end of the queue.

Which is probably why so many people in the six occupied counties of Ireland are changing over to Irish passports when they go abroad.

Back to Westminster Policy

IN the General Election for the Imperial Parliament in 1935 an agreement was reached between the Republican and Nationalist organisations in Tyrone—Fermanagh—Mid-Ulster constituencies to withdraw their nominated candidates and in the interests of unity to nominate two agreed candidates to contest the seats on the Abstentionist ticket. As a result of this agreement the late Mr. Mulvey and Mr. Cunningham were elected. Both kept to the terms of the agreement and refused to take their seats at Westminster.

In the second General Election held about 1939 both were again returned on the same conditions. But sometime after this, the agreement was broken when Mr. Mulvey & Co., held a picked convention at a time when republicans were being interned and requested permission to take their seats which of course was readily granted since the convention was comprised mainly of their own supporters.

During their period at Westminster, Mr. Mulvey continually pin-pointed these acts of intolerance, discrimination, gerrymandering etc. on which the Nationalists of to-day are almost twenty-five years later are still allegedly trying to "educate" the English politicians—acts which are and have always been part and parcel of the Stormont set-up and for which Britain and her politicians of all political brands have been and are to-day responsible.

Mr. Mulvey went further than this and organised "support" among the Labour M.P.s—a group which was called "The Friends of Ireland" and which numbered about 200—a group which promised support in the removal of these injustices in the six-Counties as outlined by Mr. Mulvey. Hence from the Parliamentary speeches, talks, publicity and propaganda directed by him along these lines there can be absolutely no doubt or ignorance among all section of political groups and the press about the situation of the minority in the six-Counties and these evils resulting from the partition of our nation.

At the end of World War II Labour came into power in England and hopes were high among Mr. Mulvey's supporters that here at last was a chance for the "Friends of Ireland" to do something about the situation here—because more than half of the party in power had given their promise in that connection.

But one of the first things the Labour Government did was to make permanent, in their estimation the partition of Ireland by introducing and enacting the Government of Ireland Act of 1949 which ordained that partition could not be abolished except by the consent of the Stormont regime. Needless to say all the other acts of intolerance, discrimination etc., were also ignored or forgotten about. Only about 50 of the 200 "Friends of Ireland" either voted against or abstained in the final vote on this Bill, and for this they were all severely censured by the party executive. It was the end of the "Friends of Ireland" group.

It is laughable and ironic if not tragic that those who sent Mr. Mulvey to Westminster and all those who are well aware of the futility of his efforts at that time still want to repeat this performance and to depend on the word of English politicians to-day who still try to make the people believe that the proper place to ventilate the grievances of the nationally-minded people of the North is on the floor of Westminster. Despite all the treachery, hypocrisy, and empty platitudes of the different political parties in England, the politicians of the six-counties are continuing to feed the nationally-minded people on promises of alleged support and help from those who have continually used them for their own political ends, and particularly who are part and parcel of the power and connection which binds us to England and which is responsible for partition.

Let us recall some of the leaders of these parties who once pretended they were friends of Ireland—In the Liberal line, Asquith, Churchill, Lloyd George the architects of partition—and the Labour leaders Ramsey MacDonald, J. H. Thomas, Atlee, who helped to reinforce it. They were all friends of Ireland when they needed the Irish vote in England. We cannot but look with suspicion and distrust on the actions of the Nationalist M.P.s. who recently sent letters and visited these political groups, seeking their help and support in these matters of discrimination, in view of these facts of the past so well known to them and the fact that they are all aware of the situation in the six-counties. They certainly know that they can expect no genuine help from them.

But irrespective of this point of view, they should be guided by such failures and follies of the past and realise that their rightful place is at home helping to organise the people in one united effort and action which would ignore both Westminster and Stormont and concentrate on returning a group that would pledge its allegiance to a parliament of the Irish Republic for all-Ireland.

Even Arthur Griffith described the Westminster policy as "useless, degrading and demoralising" and went on to say:—

"The practice of sending Irishmen to represent the Irish people in the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain is an acquiescence in an usurpation and a fraud".

Silence is Golden

"When they spoke of the absence of co-operation from the Jewish Community, the British were not referring to the heads of the Community who, from time to time, though not always, gave them the maximum help, with a view to repelling "the wave of terrorism."

They were referring to the mass of the people, and the people did not help them. They helped the rebels. They saw them going out to fight and kept their lips sealed. They saw them coming back from battle and they were silent. Silence was probably the most important though not the only aid they gave.

The people gave the underground what the country's natural conditions failed to give; cover. We did not hide behind trees. We were guided by living trees.

The depth of an open underground is measured by the sympathy of the people for its struggle. (Extract from "The Revolt" by Menachem Begin).

THE ROAD TO FREEDOM

"The generation that is now growing old in Ireland had almost forgotten our heroes. We have learned the great art of parleying with our enemy and of achieving nation-hood by negotiation. The heroes had trodden hard and bloody ways; we should tread soft and flowery ways. The heroes had given up all things; we had learned a way of gaining all things, land and good living and the friendship of our foe. But the soil of Ireland, yea, the very stones of our cities have cried out against our infidelity that would barter an old tradition of nation-hood even for a thing so precious as peace. This the heroes have done for us; for their spirits dwell in the places where they lived, and the hills of Ireland must be rent, and the cities levelled to the ground, and all her children driven out upon the seas of the world, before those voices are silenced that bid us be faithful still and to make no peace with England until Ireland is ours".

Padraig Pearse.

The Idea of Freedom

The idea of freedom had captured our hearts completely. The individual identified himself utterly with the idea. If it meant the surrender of his personal liberty—he surrendered it; if it required that he leave his family—he left it; if it called for continuous exposure to danger—he resigned himself to it; if it demanded his life—he gave it.

(Extract from "The Revolt" by Menachem Begin).

Statement of All-Ireland Directory

An All-Ireland Convention, of the Wolfe Tone Directories meeting in Belfast, considered the forthcoming elections to the British Parliament and decided unanimously to commend the programme of the republican candidates.

The delegates, from Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Belfast and all parts of the Six Counties, embracing Irishmen of different religious persuasions, agreed that the long-term republican objective of one sovereign government for all Ireland offers the only practical road towards the solution of the economic and political difficulties which face the Irish people today.

The Directory further declared its belief that the only true non-sectarian programme, in complete harmony with the modern spirit of friendliness and co-operation among Irishmen for the common good of all, is that which sweeps aside all the religious-sectarian complications arising from continued British rule over a portion of our country, and presents instead the genuine prospect of full and free co-operation between Irishmen of all religions, on the basis of equality, within the framework of a sovereign, democratic State.

Members of the Directory, while sympathising with the good intentions and honest aspirations of those who support other anti-Unionist parties, could not find in the programmes of those parties any realistic proposals to deal with our basic problems, either economic or political, which could have any hope of implementation under the present arrangement by which a British parliament maintains supreme control over all affairs in the six-county area, and which guarantees by its very nature the perpetual domination of Unionist-sectarian politics.

Therefore the Directory, although independent of any party affiliation or loyalty, republican or otherwise appeals to all anti-Unionist representatives who might consider intervention against the twelve republican candidates, to submerge their immediate party political interests in the interests of the broader national cause of mobilising the popular vote in a united expression of our people's longing for the establishment of normal political relationships within our common country.

The Directory recommends that all Irishmen, whatever their party political allegiance and whatever their religion, as long as they sincerely hope for an end to the bitterness of forty years of partition politics, and as long as they desire a government with sovereign powers capable of introducing those radical measures needed to solve our age-old problems of unemployment and emigration, should express their aspirations in the only practical way open to them — by casting their votes for the republican programme.

LEARN SING AND TEACH IRISH SONGS AND POEMS

Mother Ireland's Appeal

Shall I call in vain, in the bick'ring rain
That moistens the land with its showers of strife;
Shall my sons of old leave my sheltering fold
At the beckoning hand of a treacherous life.
Shall the songs they sang as the bullets rang
Be forgotten now in the glare of fame
And the flag they bore nigh to Vict'ry's door
Be dishonoured now to the depths of shame.
Shall my faithful few tread the path anew
Where little white crosses blossom so thick:
And the prison cell tales of suffer'ing tell
Of the cruel blows and the brutal kick.

Seven hundred years filled with blood and tears
And my wounds unhealed with the drift of time:
With the Tyrant's chains forged with greater pains
Round my tortured limbs like a beast of crime.
Hear my plea tonight — In my Cause UNITE
And forward advance — as a nation ONE
To ensure one blow 'gainst the common foe
For peace and honour 'neath Liberty's Sun.

THE GIFFORD GIRL

Joseph Mary Plunkett, one of the signatories to the proclamation of Easter Week 1916 was sentenced to death by a British Courtmartial in Richmond Military Barracks, Dublin on May 3rd 1916. Shortly after midnight that same night he was married in the prison cell to Miss Grace Gifford. He was then immediately taken to Kilmainham Jail and shot to death in the prison yard in the early dawn of May 4th 1916.

Grace Gifford or Plunkett was some years later 1920-21 imprisoned in Kilmainham — the same prison where her noble, heroic husband faced the firing squad — and on the wall of the prison cell which she occupied can still be seen her beautiful drawing of The Madonna.

In a very moving poem entitled "The Gifford Girl" the Rev. L. J. Feeney, S.J. portrays that sad wedding morn.

Two dresses laid she by at night
And tossed her flowing hair.
She rose at dawn and stood in fright
And wondered which to wear.
Should it be WHITE for her delight
or BLACK for her despair?

She saw a widow weep — and now
She saw a laughing bride.
A little bit she laughed, but how more bitterly she cried!
And the wedding-veil upon her brow
She very tightly tied.

She walked triumphantly at dawn
Across the lonesome vale.
Beyond the dim breen and lawn
She heard a curlew wail.
She stood and tapped her fingers on
The door of Richmond Jail.

That Richmond Jail might open wide
She smote it with her hand
"Who knocks? the weary warder cried
And could not understand.
A trembling girlish voice replied
"A woman of Ireland!"

A hush that chilled the very stone
Upon the prison fell.
Young Plunkett straightened up alone
Within his narrow cell;
He bade the prison gong intone
And be their Wedding bell.

O! Ye who know a lover's grief
And feel a lover's pride;
What gave this breaking heart relief
And cheered this drooping bride:
What said this lover in the brief
Last hour before he died?

Whatever lovers say — he said
And then he passed along.
They put a hood upon his head
And bound it with a thong
Then — England lost a ball of lead
And Ireland lost a song.

A Hero and a soldier, too
They buried him in lime;
Upon his wedding morn they slew
A lover in his prime:
Into a burning ditch they threw
A poet and his rhyme.

A Brood of Riflemen who vie
With brute and knave and churl
On Judgement Day, I prophesy
You'll hear his ashes swirl —
And God will make you store it:
Eye for Eye, with the Gifford Girl.

Rev. McElroy and Republicans

Claud Gordon, in his six-County commentary in the Sunday Press 23/2/64 refers to the splendid work being done by the Queen's University student body known as the "New Ireland Society" and particularly their publication "New Ireland".

He mentions a "devastating article" contributed by Rev. Albert McElroy, president of the six-County Liberal Association and he goes on to write that "some of the things Rev. McElroy says would make the hairs of republicans stand on end," and he also refers to the six-County set up as not being a "normal democratic society".

Rev. McElroy has already said many things which have made the hairs of republicans stand on end when he referred to them as "Criminals and Murderers" and described the alleged offences for which republican prisoners were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, and for which republicans were interned without trial as criminal acts, immoral and political lunacy, but he was merely repeating the self same slanders made by his political predecessors on the men of 1916 to 1922. Whilst his brand of democracy is fully suspect or perhaps applies only to those who are prepared to recognise the constitutional position of the Stormont set-up and the right of England to govern in this country through its satellites. Because he has already denied republicans the democratic right to preach the doctrine of republicanism and separatism and to contest elections or use whatever tactics or methods they think best in pursuance of their republican ideals.

Sometime ago he condemned the visit of the Hungarian Attache to Belfast as being the representative of the most rotten regime in the world supported by Russian Bayonets but not a word of condemnation from him about the rotten regime in his own country being supported by English bayonets.

Rev. McElroy concludes his article by saying that "In spite of Sinn Féin, in spite of the I.R.A. and in spite of Glengall Street, Ireland will be united. If it is not, if two sets of Christians living in the same small island cannot compose their differences in a civilised way — what hope is there for the world". The leader of the six-County Liberals forgets or does he? that these two sets of Christians living in the same small island are prevented from composing their differences in a peaceful way by the intervention of British bayonets, British subsidies and financial aid; subversive British propaganda; in a word British rule and usurpation.

If he is sincere in wanting these differences composed in a peaceful way, let him direct his criticism towards the removal of Britain's occupation forces from our shores.

DENUNCIATION OF REPUBLICAN POLICY & METHODS - HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

ON May 3rd 1916, the first three of the 1916 leaders were executed in Kilmainham Jail; Tom Clark, Patrick Pearse and Thomas McDonagh, and the following day the "Irish Independent"—which had resumed publication after a fortnight's enforced stoppage—after referring to the executions went on to denounce the Rising and those who took part in it.

"No term of denunciation", it wrote, "that pen could write would be too strong to apply to those responsible for the INSANE and CRIMINAL Rising of last week... The men who took the initiative in disturbing the peace of the country have not and had not a shred of public sympathy... The leaders who organised and the prominently active spirits deserve little consideration or compassion. The 'Rising' was a mere matter of hours, a Miserable Fiasco leaving behind its trail of woe and horror. Let us in God's name be done with revolution or thought of revolution in Ireland, whatever be its guise or pretext".

On the following day 5th May after announcing the execution of four more of the leaders viz: Joseph Plunkett, Willie Pearse, Edward Daly and Michael O'Hanrahan, it again voiced its denunciation and hatred in the following words:

"We have strongly condemned this outbreak and we have no sympathy with the insurgents. As regards the leaders of the revolt who have been sentenced, any feeling of sympathy with them in Ireland will be checked by the thought of what their Mad Venture has cost Dublin and Ireland in blood and suffering".

On May 6th it denounced the Citizen Army and referred to it as the back-bone of the Insurrection which brought such ruin and misery on the City of Dublin: going on to state "The influence of Liberty Hall and sympathisers of the type of Countess Markievicz was distinctly sinister".

On May 10th it published a picture of James Connolly with the accompanying words "Still lies in Dublin Castle recovering from his wounds".

In an article on the same day it again referred to the "Wild enterprise of Easter Week" and it called for "Strong measures as will put an end to the Criminal Madness which inspired the recent Rising... Let the worst of the Ring-leaders be singled out and dealt with as they deserve".

On the 12th May it announced further executions of Con Colbert, Eamon Ceannt, Michael Mallon and J. J. Heuston and said:—

"Certain of the leaders remain undealt with and the part they played was worse than that of some of those who have paid the extreme penalty. Are they, because of an indiscriminate demand for clemency, to get off lightly, while others who were no more prominent have been executed? If so, leniency will be interpreted as a sign of weakness".

On that very morning the 12th May the 'Independent' got its wish, and James Connolly badly wounded

and unable to walk or stand was tied to a chair and taken to the prison-yard of Kilmainham, was shot to death, whilst Sean MacDiarmada also crippled was executed.

But the 'Independent' was not yet finished with its campaign of denunciation and vilification of the men of Easter Week and on the 18th May it wrote:—

"The people of Ireland in the mass looked upon the Rebellion as a Crime against the vital interests of the Nation... We can never forget that the whole dreadful business was precipitated not by the military but by the Criminal Madness of the Insurgents and that the troops when they came in force into the city on Wednesday 26th April were regarded by the general body of the citizens as deliverers."

The 'Independent' penned these words on the 18th May about 20 days after it had been admitted by these so-called British deliverers that they had on the 28th and 29th April shot out of hand fifteen unarmed innocent civilians in the North King Street area in their own homes and threw their bodies into cellars and attics where in some cases they were not discovered for days.

To-day forty-eight years after that epic week of heroism, courage, nobleness and martyrdom, this same newspaper and its weekly, continues its campaign of hatred and antagonism towards the followers and successors of the men of Easter Week and all those who strive for a realisation of the aims and ideals for which they died.

The 'Independent' of Easter Week in its condemnation of the Rising and those who took part in it had the support of the Redmonds the Devlins and the West Britons of their day.

To-day history repeats itself—It is the same old story. In its denunciation of the Republican movement to-day it has the willing collaboration of the Nationalists and Liberal M.P.s. and the West Britons of our own day.

The very same condemnatory and slanderous language was used about the young men of 1956-1957 and is still being used. Their patriotic endeavours has been described as criminal, sinister, miserable, fiasco, terrorism, futile conflict and folly;—The actions of a small group etc.

But just as the people of all-Ireland repudiated the vilifiers of the men of Easter Week and rallied to serve the self-same cause for which they died, so too, will the time come, be it long or short, when the traducers and slanderers of the men of our own day will be repudiated and the actions of those who served and are still serving the Cause of Ireland United and Free, be vindicated.

James Connolly and Partition

In May 1914, the Liberal Prime Minister Asquith and his Government passed a Home Rule Bill for Ireland with an amending Bill which excluded the six Counties, thus partitioning the Irish nation as at present. The Nationalist or Irish Party as they were then called under the leadership of Redmond, Devlin & Co., secretly agreed with Sir Edward Carson and the Liberal Government that partition was to be permanent.

This act of treachery drew from James Connolly, the leader of Irish Labour, later executed in 1916 for his part in the Rising during Easter Week, the following strong denunciation.

"The recent proposals of Messrs. Asquith, Devlin, Redmond & Co., for the settlement of the Home Rule question deserve the earnest attention of the working class democracy of this country. They reveal in a most striking and unmistakable manner the depths of betrayal to which the so-called Nationalist politicians are willing to sink. For generations the conscience of the civilised world has been shocked by the historical record of the partition of Poland...

But Ireland, what of Ireland? It is the trusted leaders of Ireland that in secret conclave with the enemies of Ireland have agreed to see Ireland as a nation disrupted politically, and her children divided under separate political governments with warring interests...

Such a scheme as that agreed to by Redmond and Devlin, the betrayal of the national democracy of industrial Ulster, would destroy the incoming unity of the Irish Labour movement and paralyse all advanced movements whilst it endured.

To it Labour should give the bitterest opposition, against it Labour in Ulster should fight even to the death, if necessary as our fathers fought before us".

There have been many brands of Labour since Connolly wrote these words but none of them to show bitter opposition or to fight it even to the death as advocated by him. Some like the Northern Ireland Labour Party fully support partition. Whilst others, depending on the Nationally-minded are opposed to partition but their opposition goes on further. In fact their bitterest opposition is sometimes reserved for those who are fighting partition to the death.

Mail Bag Irregularities in Belfast Prison

A Chara,

Recently in Stormont, the Nationalist M.P.s. raised the matter of serious irregularities in Belfast Prison concerning the mis-use of prisoners' and prison-officers' time, and the pilfering of prison stores and supplies. As usual the whole question fizzled out like a damp squib, highlighting once again the ineffectualness of Nationalist party attendance at Stormont.

Mr. Fitzsimmons, Parliamentary Secretary, blandly dismissed the charges by stating that these allegations had been investigated and proved groundless, and that an inventory of prison stores had not revealed any deficiencies.

Those, who like myself, had been interned in Belfast Prison during the years 1956-1961 may be forgiven our cynical chuckles as our experiences there proved that even the most cursory inventory was bound to reveal enormous deficiencies, especially in the line of victuals.

To augment our meagre prison diet, internees often traded cigarettes and tobacco, the traditional prison currency, for substantial quantities of tea, sugar, vegetables, meat, raisins etc., from the prison stores. This practice was carried on by most internees and lasted for the best part of three years before we were granted our own cook-house, and the amount of contraband provisions acquired in this manner was truly prodigious.

One of many similar stories which springs to my mind concerns a certain prison officer who was the butt of his fellow-officers' practical jokes, and who was for ever carrying parcels of pilfered food home from prison cook-house. On arriving home one night he opened a parcel which he thought contained fresh meat, but to his chagrin he found that someone had substituted herrings heads. He was a figure of ridicule for weeks after and the story serves to illustrate that these irregularities do take place and are in fact an open secret in the prison.

(Ex Internee, Belfast).

All Articles, pars, poems etc. should be sent c/o "The Editor", 126 Ardilea Street, Belfast.

When finished with this copy of Tirghra, please pass on to a friend.

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