

WAR NEWS

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COERCION IN ENGLAND.

The British have always prided themselves on being a nation whose whole system of Government was based on the liberty of the subject, and restrictions on the exercise of any arbitrary power by the Government.

It is true that for several hundred years the liberty of the subject has been more jealously guarded in Britain than anywhere else in the world. Kings who have tried to infringe this fundamental principle of British law have been beheaded or dethroned. Constitutional crises have arisen over this same principle and the upholders of it have emerged victorious from them.

Though whole series of coercion acts have been passed by the British Parliament, their application has been limited to Ireland or other parts of the Empire. Since 1824-5 (Trades Disputes Acts, since repealed) no coercive legislation at all has operated in England, except the Defence of the Realm Act during the emergency of the war of 1914-8.

One hundred and fourteen years of freedom from any form of coercion, preceded by a tradition of three hundred years of resistance to any legislation of this type. It is true that this freedom was merely due to the fact that the sight of one or two policemen is sufficient to overawe any attempt on the part of the English to break any law. But even though this freedom had its origins in the cowardice of the British, it has lasted so long that it has become perhaps the most essential part of the British tradition. It has been one of the mainstays of the British in their case against totalitarian states. Any change in it has been completely unthinkable to the British.

But now they have been forced to abandon their most cherished tradition. In 1939, instead of the Parliament at Westminster peacefully proceeding, as they have so often done, to pass coercive legislation for Ireland or other countries which would not apply to themselves, they have been forced to pass a coercion Act for use in Britain itself.

And it is an Act which will prove useless to them. The English will feel reassured and safe, thinking it will mean the end of the I.R.A. Then there will be another set of explosions and the panic will be greater than ever as they realise the ineffectiveness of all their legislation and precautions.

ABANDONMENT OF BRITISH CLAIMS.

This British Coercion Act has even more significance than is outlined above. It represents the abandonment of the whole position the British have so carefully upheld in regard to Ireland and Partition. For the first time they are forced to recognise the essential unity and separateness of the Irish Nation. Till now they have maintained that all Irishmen were British subjects and could not be deported from Britain. Now they are forced to recognise that they are Irishmen, and say that they must have power to deport them.

And better still, THE "UNITED KINGDOM" IS NO LONGER UNITED. Till now they have maintained that the Six Counties were an integral part of the United Kingdom and could not be separated from it. They have

maintained that the people of the Six Counties were a different race from the people of the rest of Ireland, and could not be distinguished from the people of England. Now all this is changed.

The "United" Kingdom is divided AND THE DIVISION OF IRELAND IS IGNORED. A man from Belfast can be deported just as well as a man from Dublin. They are forced to recognise that both are equally Irish and that both are equally dangerous to England. As long as no interests really important to Britain were at stake, they upheld with great care the thesis that there were two distinct races in Ireland.

But now that it is a question of trying to protect themselves, they are no longer concerned with any thesis, they are forced to recognise reality. And the reality is that there can be no division of Ireland, no distinction between Belfast and Dublin. That is a fact, and now that the British have found themselves in danger they have been forced to abandon their hypocrisy and recognise that fact. By their own legislation, they have destroyed in face of the world their whole case for maintaining partition.

HOARE'S FIGURES.

In introducing his bill in the British Parliament Sir Samuel Hoare said that I.R.A. operations since January numbered 127. On another page of this paper a list of operations carried out during this period will be seen. This list, for various reasons, is by no means complete. It will be seen, however, that the operations included in it reach a total of 189. The difference is accounted for by the efforts of the British police and Government to attribute fires and explosions to accident whenever it is possible for them to do so.

Only in a few cases can explosions be described as accidental, as it is usually too obvious what really happened, but fires can fairly easily be attributed to cigarette ends etc. Even when four fires occurred in or around Cannon Street Railway Station, London, during a period of 12 days (July 7-19th), it was stated that "incondiarism was not suspected". This policy has been deliberately adopted in an attempt to allay the panic in England and minimise the damage caused.

On the other hand, when it suits their own purposes, the British will attribute to the I.R.A. incidents with which they have no connection. Thus, on July 24th, unsuccessful attempts were made to set fire to five shops in Stirling, Scotland. It should be clearly understood that no operations are being carried out by the I.R.A. in either Scotland or Wales, as both of these countries possess Nationalist movements working for their emancipation from British rule. Accordingly their neutrality is respected. It is possible that incidents such as that quoted above are the work of English agents provocateurs, trying to stir up trouble between Ireland and those countries.

FIELD OVER

We regret that owing to lack of space a number of articles including those on Economics and International Affairs have to be held over. Gabhamaid ar leithsgeal faoi'n aiste Gaedhilge boith ar iarraidh. Tuigfear a dheacracht is ta se duinn gach 's ar mhian linn a chur isteach.

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HOW THE WAR IN ENGLAND WAS STARTED.

In our last issue we briefly gave a few of the reasons why the Army Council of Oglaiigh na h-Eireann decided on the carrying out of the present Campaign in England. At this stage, now that the campaign has been in force over a period of six months, it may be well to repeat the manner in which it was started and to give some details as to its progress.

At the time of the first explosions many people in Ireland did not fully understand what was happening, failing to realize that those explosions were not merely isolated acts, but were part of a campaign which will be carried on until Ireland is finally separated from the British Empire. In the absence of such understanding much matter which, though published in the newspapers at the time, did not receive the importance its importance warranted, passed unnoticed by many people. These are the reasons which lead us to devote some of our limited space to the repetition of matter already published elsewhere.

When the Army Council decided that the only possible policy at the present time was one of active hostilities in England, their first step was to send a formal ULTIMATUM to the British Foreign Secretary, demanding the evacuation of British troops from Ireland and outlining the measures that would be taken in the case of Failure to comply with the terms of this Ultimatum. A copy of this historic document is given below.

Oglaiigh na h-Eireann.
(Irish Republican Army)

General Headquarters, Dublin.
January 12th, 1939.

To:
His Excellency,
The Rt. Hon. Viscount Halifax, G.C.B.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to inform you that the Government of the Irish Republic, having as its first duty towards its people the establishment and maintenance of peace and order here, demand the withdrawal of all British armed forces stationed in Ireland.

These forces are an active incitement to turmoil and civil strife, not alone in being a symbol of hostile occupation, but in their effect and potentialities as an invading army.

It is secondly the duty of the Government to establish relations of friendship between the Irish and all other peoples and to achieve this we must insist upon the withdrawal of British troops from our country and a declaration from your Government renouncing all claim to interfere in its domestic policy or internal affairs.

The Irish people have no cause of hostility to any European nation, even those nations whose natural development may bring them into conflict with British interests, and we are desirous of making it clear that we shall in no event take part in a war of aggression against any people or permit the nation to be regarded as having any community or identity of interest with Britain that would make us liable to attack by British enemies.

The occupation of our territory by troops of another nation and the persistent subvention here of activities directly against the expressed national will and in the interests of a foreign power, prevent the expansion and development of our institutions in consonance with our social needs and purposes - and must cease.

WITH THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE IN ENGLAND

A summary is given below of a partial return of operations carried out since January 16th (Date of expiry of Ultimatum sent to British Government).

Certain operations are omitted from this list, as their inclusion might implicate captured Volunteers awaiting trials or others still unknown to the British authorities.

1939 JANUARY 16th: Seven major explosions, mostly directed against English electrical lines and stations, two in London, three in Manchester, one in Birmingham, one in Northumberland. Although great damage was caused, and supplies of current interrupted these operations were only partly successful, mainly owing to the precautions necessary to avoid taking human life.

FEBRUARY 3rd. Major explosions at two London underground railway stations.

FEBRUARY 4th. Several explosions in London. Four fires in stores in Coventry. Explosion outside Walton Gaol, Liverpool.

FEBRUARY 11th. Explosions in coal bays at Kings Cross, London.

FEBRUARY 19th. Explosions in London and Nottingham.

MARCH 20th. Two big explosions at Great Yarmouth Electric Power Station.

MARCH 25th. Four explosions in Coventry. 1,000 telephones put out of action.

MARCH 30th. Explosions in Birmingham, Liverpool and Coventry.

MARCH 31st. Seven explosions in London at intervals throughout the night.

APRIL 4th. Three major explosions in Birmingham "rocked centre of city". Others in Coventry and Liverpool.

APRIL 11th. One explosion in Liverpool.
Explosion in Electrical Sub-station in Nottingham.

APRIL 12th. Six explosions in London, four in Coventry, one in Birmingham.

APRIL 18th. One explosion in Liverpool.

APRIL 25th. Two explosions in Liverpool, one in Birmingham.

MAY 3rd. Four explosions in Liverpool, one in Manchester.

MAY 4th. Tear-gas bombs in two Liverpool cinemas.

MAY 5th. Four explosions in Coventry and four in London.

MAY 12th. Five explosions in Manchester and three in London.

MAY 18th. Interrupted operation in London. Only one telephone kiosk damaged by explosion.

MAY 19th. Fires in eight sea-side hotels by delayed-action incendiary units. (Blackpool, Margate, Brighton, Southen, Southport, Morecambe, Eastbourne and Harrogate)

MAY 30th. Two cinema explosions and fires in Birmingham. Bombs
at Coventry failed to explode.
Big fire in London factory, 50 fire engines called out.

JUNE 6th. Explosion and fire at Factory in Bedford. 500 gallons of oil and cylinders of oxygen destroyed.

JUNE 16th. Fire in aerodrome near Salisbury. Valuable apparatus and documents destroyed.

JUNE 26th, 28th. Three fires at warehouses in London. These were described as the worst fires in London for 40 years. An entire street was destroyed and the damage estimated at £1,500,000

JULY 2nd. Considerable damage caused by explosions at seven railway stations (Birmingham, Coventry, Derby, Leamington, Leicester, Nottingham, Stafford). Ten thousand tons of coal on fire at Croydon Electrical works. Firemen powerless to control blaze.

JULY 7th. Fire at Cannon Street Station, London, Trains held up.

JULY 17th. Explosion at Wolverhampton Railway station.

Owing to lack of space, we are compelled to hold over until the next issue, a complete list of operations.

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