

CONSCRIPTION

All available evidence points unmistakeably to the early enforcement of Conscription. The country is occupied by an immense number of enemy forces, who are known to be carrying out the most elaborate military preparations for enforcing the blood-tax and rehearsing at all their manoeuvres the "hunting down" of Sinn Feiners. Lists of conscripts have been prepared. Finally, the English officer placed in supreme authority by the English Government in Ireland has **recently** declared, claiming to speak authoritatively on behalf of his Government, that they are fully determined to enforce Conscription if, as is now certain to be the case, the amount of recruits required are not forthcoming. This statement has been officially confirmed, and notices to that effect sent to all recruiting committees.

Therefore the Standing Committee of Sinn Fein considers it necessary to call the attention of all Sinn Feinidh throughout Ireland to the imminence of the peril and to give a lead to the country as to the methods to be employed in resisting the outrage. It must be clearly understood that immediately on England attempting to enforce the measure she will be met by Armed Resistance, and as a result all Civil Authority will be superseded by the different military commands.

Accordingly we issue the following General Instructions to our members, and we urge on them to seriously consider the awful necessity which compels us to take the lead in the matter. We leave it to the intelligence of such of our members as are unable to meet force with force to take the necessary measures to ensure their own safety, and we cannot go into details as to the methods to be employed by them other than to ask them to use every means at their disposal to assist the Irish Military Commanders and to do all in their power to hinder the enemy in his efforts to stamp out the Irish race.

We wish to point out:—

FIRSTLY—The enactment of the Conscription Act is, as was well put in the first resolution of the Mansion House Committee, equivalent to the establishment of a "State of War" between England and Ireland.

SECONDLY—The enforcement of this Law in any area would result in changing this "State of War" into actual warfare.

THIRDLY—If and when this eventuality arises, martial law will doubtless be proclaimed, the Government of Ireland will pass out of the hands of all political organisations like Sinn Fein, and beyond the influence of civilians, such as the Mansion House Committee, or Defence Committees, and the only Irish authority with power to deal with all matters, civilian and military, will be the Irish Military Commanders.

Therefore, it appears to us that our political organisation, Sinn Fein, the Mansion House Committee, and the Defence Committees throughout the country, can only profitably and legitimately concern themselves in **preparing** the country for the conditions which will most certainly arise on the enforcement of the Conscription Act.

That such enforcement is probable is proved, **First**, by the presence of immense enemy forces in the country **Secondly**, by the preparation of lists of conscripts; **Thirdly**, by the declarations of the Government.

The preparations for resistance should consist in:—

- (1)—The strengthening of our military forces by every man of military age joining the Volunteers.
- (2)—The weakening of enemy forces by withholding aid and sympathy from the police and military.
- (3)—The "holding the harvest" in such shape and form that it may neither be commandeered or destroyed by enemy forces. Potato pits must be concealed and enormous stocks of salted provisions hidden away. The old traditional English methods will doubtless be employed. They will burn the crops and kill the live stock throughout the country.
- (4)—The accumulation of medical stores and the provision of accommodation for sick and wounded. This naturally belongs to Volunteer efforts of doctors, the Cumann na mBan.

As these instructions are being issued, the announcement has been made that the English Food Controller is coming to Ireland on the invitation of the English Military Governor to take an inventory of our stocks of food, and this, taken in conjunction with the persistent threats of the English Government's intention to enforce the measure in the autumn points to the conclusion that now that our crops have been harvested and secured in the farmers' barns every effort must be made to

HOLD THE HARVEST

AND

Save our People from the menace of Starvation