

SINN FEIN HEADQUARTERS, 23 SUFFOLK STREET.

# DAILY SHEET.

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## "PEACE BY CHRISTMAS"

An important pronouncement by Cardinal Logue was made in a letter read at all the Masses throughout the Archdiocese of Armagh on Sunday, November 18th, last.

Cardinal Logue's letter is addressed "to the Clergy and Faithful of the Archdiocese," and such outside his jurisdiction as may attach any weight to his poor words," and says:—

"The time is fast approaching which we should devote to immediate preparation for a due celebration of the birth of the Prince of Peace. May the good God, in His mercy, grant that we may be spared from such misery as marred the joys and blighted the happiness of some recent Christmases.

"As a harbinger of His birth, our divine Redeemer established a universal peace throughout the entire world. By the ministry of His angels He proclaimed this peace to men of good will. Peace, therefore, good will, union, and charity should be the leading features of the Feast of Christmas. What a sad contrast poor Ireland has had in recent years! The festival, which should rejoice all hearts, has been ushered in by strife, hatred, dissension, ill-will, outrage, the violation of God's law and all uncharitableness.

"Unhappily we are threatened with a similar state of things during the forthcoming Christmas."

His Eminence then appeals to the prisoners to abandon the hunger-strike, "and to seek in future some more reasonable, natural and lawful means of enforcing the liberation from what they consider an unfair and harsh imprisonment, or in advocating their political views.

"In the second place, I would earnestly appeal to the Government, who declares their readiness to liberate those untried and unconvicted prisoners, not to do things by halves and by dribbles, thus prolonging the agony. The leaders of the so-called Republican Party have declared that they are prepared to abstain from violence and seek to secure their political aims by constitutional means. . . . I think, therefore, that the best policy of the Free State Government would be to clear the prisons and camps, as quickly as it could be effected, of all internees, except those convicted of crime, or liable to be tried for crime, without paying much heed to useless undertakings.

"This would likely bring us peace at Christmas. I would also likely enable the country to get into the condition of a settled Government. There are laws enacted to meet transgressions; the Judges have shown themselves prepared to enforce the laws; there is sufficient machinery to detect malefactors and make them amenable.

"If any one be caught in the violation of the laws, he should be tried as soon as may be, and not be kept in a state of suspended freedom. Pending trial, he should be treated in prison according to the rules observed in every civilised State.

"The suggestions I have made are mere human suggestions, some of them may be found foolish suggestions. But there is a wisdom which infinitely transcends all human wisdom, a guidance which can never err, the wisdom and guidance of Almighty God. Men are liable to err, 'liars' in their balances, 'and uncertain in their designs.'"

The Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, Archbishop of Attalia, in a letter addressed to the Dundalk business men's deputation, which waited on Mr. Cosgrave on the 24th November last, said:—"That not alone mercy but justice demanded the release of the prisoners." Practically every public Board in Ireland has reiterated this demand, and yet they are held.

## "STALE WIND."

Mr. Kevin O'Higgins, in his reply to the Mountmellick Rural D.C., urges the Council to devote themselves to giving the people better value for the higher rates. He then proceeds to point out to the proposer of the resolution, "himself a released prisoner," that he is probably aware that if prisoners are being gradually released it is not because certain rural district councillors foregather to deliver themselves of a certain amount of stale political wind, or use the necessary measures taken by the Government for the protection of the people as a pretext for abstaining from doing the work they were elected to do, but because the conspiracy which menaced the life of this infant State has been successfully defeated, because democracy has been vindicated, and the authority of the people to shape their policy through their elected representatives has been established beyond the possibility of serious challenge.

The stale wind really comes from Mr. O'Higgins himself. He has copied his English masters in this as in everything else. They never ceased calling the Irish Volunteers murderers and looters. Mr. O'Higgins, like them, is carrying this propaganda to a fine art.

Democracy is a stranger to Mr. O'Higgins. It must be, considering that he is responsible for the holding in jail of seventeen elected representatives of the people, while twenty-seven others are at the mercy of the disbanded C.I.D.

He further states that many of the prisoners (5,000), so we may assume he refers to the majority, are not political prisoners, but are guilty of the grossest crimes against their neighbours and the common weal.

We understand that even Mr. O'Higgins's own courts ruled that a state of war has existed. If they were wrong in their judgment it was the business of the Minister for Home Affairs to correct them, and he abstained from doing so. He cannot have it both ways—if the men in jail are prisoners of war, belligerents cannot be classed as criminals because of acts of war.



The war has been over since the 28th April last, yet Mr. Higgins still detains the prisoners.

## 8th DECEMBER, 1922.

To-day is the anniversary of one of the greatest crimes in history. Twelve months ago, Rory O'Connor, Liam Mellows, Joe McKelvey and Richard Barrett were done to death in the grey dawn of a December morning as a reprisal for an act of which they knew nothing.

Twelve short months only since they were murdered. Their memory lives with us to-day. We cherish it in our hearts as something sacred and holy. Four young lives—from North, South, East and West—the fiery cross is scared forever upon the land of Eire.

No reason was alleged for this deed. A laconic sentence in the Southern Parliament was their epitaph—"An Official Reprisal."

They went, as did Kevin Barry, Barney Ryan, Thomas Traynor, Erskine Childers, and all the rest of the noble band to their deaths as quietly and as nobly as they had lived.

They are gone. The soil of Ireland is the richer for their blood, and their memory will live with us forever.

## NEWS FROM THE CAMPS.

Mountjoy.—E. Enright is still detained. His mental condition grows worse. As reported yesterday, no nurses have been admitted to Mountjoy since the strike.

Kilmainham.—The Mayor of Limerick, Austin Stack, and Tom Derrig are all seriously ill. R. Pilkington, S. Lehan, Casey, Bullin, Mellows and Coghlan are still in bed. Kilroy and Lehan have swollen feet, cardiac dropsy from too early exertion. The nurses are withdrawn since 5th December. The medical orderlies are quite insufficient. Ernie O'Malley and Sean Buckley have been and are still bed patients since beginning of strike.

Newbridge.—Six of the recent hunger-strikers have been removed to the Curragh hospital. In the Newbridge makeshift hospital there are several bad cases. P. McElliot (Kerry) lost his sight. Nothing has been done for him. He is suffering a great deal. Martin Ford (late of Brennan and Walshe's) and another man—Ryan, also from Dublin are suffering from delirium. They are getting no special treatment.

## THE PRISONERS.

We read in a weekly contemporary that there was lightening of the heart all over Ireland when it was reported that the hunger-strike was at an end. The writer would give his readers to believe that now the agony is over and all people with humane feelings may sleep without further uneasiness.

This is unhappily far from the truth. Some of the prisoners are now enduring an agony as great, if not greater, than that they bore during their long fast. Desperate men were driven by barbarous treatment to take desperate measures. They seized the weapon of hunger-strike—the only one at their disposal—and used it in a clean and splendid fashion for over forty days. This severe test cost two men their lives. The others have lived, some with broken bodies and others, we fear, with broken minds. They lie still in their cells or huts, as the case may be, weak and sick. They await their release. They are still untried, notwithstanding Cardinal Logue's call to the Free State Government to try them or release them. If no charge can be proved against them they should be freed at once, and be in a position to get the care and attention absolutely necessary to bring them back some measure of health.

The prison orderlies can hardly give the nursing needed by these cases. "The prisoners are only now beginning to sleep fairly well. Some of the strongest write that they are 'now sleeping very well, almost six hours last night.' They awake to find themselves in the same surroundings in which they suffered tortures. This alone would keep anyone from recovering his strength. The mind reacts on the body, and so there can be little hope of a speedy recovery.

Surely this writer will bring things home in truer fashion to his readers next week? Was it the same person who wrote in 1916:

"Here's to you, Constance, in your cell!"?

She is still in her cell for the very same cause, with this difference, that whereas in 1916 she was nobody's representative, to-day she is the representative of 5,832 citizens of Dublin. What is her crime? Has she been tried? Will her poet admirer not appeal to his readers now to see that she is released? There are thousands like her, and they are all suffering. If his poetic sense is not touched by their bravery in 1923, perhaps his sense of justice is outraged by the treatment they are receiving at the hands of their captors. Let him shout his loudest for "Release."