

Governmental Policy
and
Constitution
of
Óglaigh na h-Éireann

Adopted by

General Army Convention
March, 1933.

Copies may be obtained from
REPUBLICAN PRESS, LTD.,
12 St. Andrew Street,
DUBLIN.
PRICE ONE PENNY.

OGLAIGH NA h-EIREANN

(Irish Republican Army).

FOREWORD

BY THE ARMY COUNCIL.

The Army Council hopes that the publication in booklet form of the Constitution of Oglagh na h-Eireann (Irish Republican Army) and of the "Constitution and Governmental Programme for the Republic of Ireland" will enable these documents to be widely known and studied.

The enemies of the Republic have long represented Oglagh na h-Eireann as being "a secret society," while in fact there never was any secrecy as to its aims and objects, or as to the control of the organisation. As will be seen, the control and leadership of the organisation are elected on the most democratic methods.

In the "Constitution and Governmental Programme for the Republic of Ireland" the ultimate aims and ideals of Oglagh na h-Eireann are set forth. **In this document all the essentials of government are provided for, and a programme for national reconstruction and the establishment of social justice is outlined.**

The publication of this programme comes at a time when the existing economic order has broken down completely in most countries, and when in Ireland are seen around us on all sides—in city, town and countryside—mass unemployment, poverty, misery and a growing feeling of despondency as to the future. Men's minds are everywhere turning eagerly towards alternatives in the hope of finding a way out of the situation. Everything which was held to be solid in the economic structure has crumbled and the whole basis on which society is organised has proved corrupt.

We have within our own Nation all the resources which are required to provide every citizen not only with the essentials of life but with comfort. Luxuries may not yet be available, but the first stage is to provide an adequate standard for all.

The resources and wealth of the Nation are very largely in the possession and under the control of those sections who are hostile to National Freedom, and who have allied themselves

with British Imperialism. The immediate task is to rescue from them the heritage which they have robbed and plundered from the mass of the people. The powerful interests which dominate Irish life at present were built up on the basis of the Conquest.

The machinery of State was devised and has been developed to serve these interests. The powers of this State machine must be smashed. The machinery of State of the Republic of Ireland will be devised to serve, not any privileged sections, but the needs of the whole people.

A population growing through the embargo on emigration, constitutes a fresh problem. Rural unemployment can only be solved by a right and full use of a bountiful soil—through a vast land settlement policy backed with the credit of the community for the building of homes, and the stocking and equipping of holdings. **Land settlement cannot be seriously tackled while it proceeds on the lines of Land Acts and Land Bonds Acts dictated by the landlords.** The entire Land Commission with its whole landlord-created system must be swept away. Landlordism has its root in the Conquest, and consequently it must be abolished. As far as possible restitution must be demanded from the plunderers of Irish soil.

Unemployment is not being solved and it cannot be solved by the system on which industry has been built up in the past, and on which industrial development is being expedited at present in the Twenty-six County area. Ownership and control of industry are in the hands of individuals and of companies whose only object is to reap the highest profits which can be extracted, and who, naturally, while actuated by this object will strive to keep the workers in economic bondage.

Moreover, industrial organisation on such a basis will, in time, lead to more widespread unemployment, poverty and hunger, as is the case to-day in every highly industrialised country which has reached the maximum of productive capacity. **Side by side with vast actual and potential wealth and productive capacity, millions are starving.** Our programme aims at eliminating these evils from Irish society, by the establishment of a more just and a saner economic and social order.

Because banking and credit form the keystone of every economic system, the financial monopoly of the bankers must

be ended, and these functions assumed by the community. Any system of economic organisation otherwise good would be rendered useless while the monopoly of finance and credit remained in the hands of individuals and groups operating it, as at present, for their own private gain in direct conflict with the interests of the community. It is only through the functions of banking and credit that the benefits of the Nation's wealth can be transmitted to all the citizens.

Volunteers of Oglaigh na h-Eireann must accept the responsibility which the organisation has shouldered and which history and tradition has imposed on it; that is the leadership of the struggle for National Freedom and for the economic liberation of the people. They must make themselves familiar with all phases of that struggle. **Not only must they be the organised and armed vanguard but they must also supply leadership and guidance in directing the thoughts of the people along constructive revolutionary lines.**

It is the hope of the Army Council that the circulation of this booklet will not be confined to Volunteers, but that it will appeal to that wider public who also long for National Freedom, and who desire the well-being of those of our people who have been dispossessed and denied their rights.

January, 1934.

OGLAIGH na h-EIREANN
(Irish Republican Army).

**Constitution and Governmental
Programme for the Republic of Ireland**

**Adopted by a General Army Convention of
Oglaigh na h-Eireann, March, 1933.**

1. SOVEREIGNTY.

THE National Sovereignty of the Republic of Ireland resides under God in the citizens of the entire Nation. It is non-judicable and inalienable. It cannot be surrendered or transferred to an external authority or power; any attempt made to surrender or transfer it shall be treason. It shall be the right and the duty of every citizen of the Republic to defend and maintain the Nation's Sovereignty.

The National Sovereignty of the Republic extends not only to all citizens of the Republic, and to all persons habitually resident in Ireland; to the soil of the Nation and all its resources; to all the wealth and all the wealth-producing processes of the Nation.

2. CITIZENSHIP.

All persons born in Ireland shall be citizens of the Republic of Ireland.

Aliens may be naturalised on complying with the regulations to be prescribed.

3. LANGUAGE.

The National and Official Language of the Republic of Ireland shall be the Irish Language.

4. RELIGION.

The free profession and practise of religion, and freedom of conscience are, subject to public order and morality, guaranteed to every citizen.

5. EDUCATION.

Education of the youth shall be compulsory and free. Pro-

visions shall be made for vocational training. Higher technical and scientific education shall be made available for those who have special aptitude and abilities. The number to be allowed to pass through vocational courses to be regulated to prevent overcrowding.

Education shall have as a primary aim the establishment of the National Language and the promotion and development of the distinctive Irish culture.

6. GOVERNMENT.

The supreme Government of the Republic shall be appointed by deputies elected successively from district, county and provincial assemblies.

(Note: The classification and distribution of electors, on a vocational basis, remains for fuller and more detailed consideration).

A decentralised system of Government shall be evolved.

7. THE STATE AND THE CITIZEN.

The State shall provide protection for life, liberty and property of every citizen, and shall protect him against injustice, tyranny or the exercise of arbitrary powers or privileges.

The State shall provide each citizen with the means of existence in decent comfort from birth, with education, and, on attaining to manhood, with the means and opportunity for securing a livelihood.

The State shall provide adequate means of subsistence for workers for whom employment is not available.

The State shall lay down and enforce the payment of a standard minimum wage for workers employed in each industry and occupation.

The State shall make provision for the maintenance of the mentally defective, physically deformed or incapacitated, who are unable to earn their own livelihood.

The State shall make adequate provision for the maintenance of citizens in their old age and for widows and orphans.

8. THE NATION'S RESOURCES.

The right of the individual citizen shall be admitted to personal and private property, the possession of which is not in conflict with or detrimental to the common good.

(1) **Land and Agriculture:** The soil of the Nation and all

its resources are the property of the people, and shall be subject to their jurisdiction.

The soil of the Nation shall be used primarily to produce food for the people.

It shall be the policy of the State to settle on the soil as great a proportion of the population as it can bear, and as economic good sense justifies. Large holdings of land not being used productively in accordance with Government requirements shall be distributed.

Occupiers of land who comply with the reasonable requirements of the Community shall be guaranteed security of tenure with the right of succession to members of their families. These requirements shall be met by producing sufficient food to render the community self-supporting and independent of foreign food supplies.

As the State shall demand the utilisation of land to its fullest productive capacity, it shall guarantee to the producer a minimum return for produce. The State shall accept responsibility for the marketing of the surplus at a guaranteed minimum price after provision has been made by the producer for himself and his family.

No export of food shall be permitted until the full needs of the Nation, on a population basis, are adequately provided for.

It shall be the policy of the State to promote, as rapidly as possible, the co-operative organisation of the agricultural industry. Through the co-operative organisation credit shall be made available, by the State banking institution, for the fullest development of all branches of the industry, and for improving the standard of life of the agricultural community.

The agricultural co-operative organisation shall be co-ordinated with the distributing and marketing organisations; these shall be responsible for regulating the production and the internal distribution of food supplies, and for marketing the national surplus.

Co-operative organising of the agricultural industry shall be voluntary. Legislation shall not be applied to compel those who do not wish to enter the co-operatives.

Those who elect to remain aloof shall not be entitled, as of right, to share in the State credits and facilities afforded to the co-operative communities. They shall be responsible for according to any hired labour they may employ conditions of

employment equal to the standard maintained in the co-operative enterprises.

(2) **Fisheries:** All rivers, lakes and inland natural waterways, and their resources, are the property of the people and shall be subject to their jurisdiction.

The claims of any individual, or company, to their exclusive ownership or use, or to the fisheries thereof, shall be abolished.

Inland, coast and deep-sea fisheries shall be controlled and protected by the State.

It shall be the policy of the State to promote the development of the fishing industry on co-operative lines. Through the co-operative fisheries organisation credit shall be made available by the State banking institution, for the fullest development, organisation and modern equipment of the industry, and for improving the standard of life of the fishing community.

(3) **Industry:** The national wealth and credit shall be made available and shall be applied by the State for the creation of a manufacturing industry capable at least of providing for the normal and essential needs of the community.

Industry so created shall be the property of the community.

Workers in these industries shall be responsible for their operation, under State direction and management, and they shall be remunerated on a wage basis.

The productive organisation shall be co-ordinated with the distributing organisation; these shall be responsible for regulating production, internal distribution, and for the marketing abroad of any surplus.

(4) **Distribution:** It shall be the policy of the State to bring about, as early as possible, the co-operative distribution of products. To achieve this end such financial and credit facilities as will be required shall be made available through the State banking institution.

Each co-operative shall be responsible for distribution within its own area, and for transferring any surplus to the Central Marketing Board. Such commodities as are needed and which are not available or manufactured within the area of the co-operative shall be obtained through the Central Marketing and Imports Board.

The Distributing Co-operative organs shall work in conjunction with the producers, both agricultural and industrial, in their areas, and with the Central Marketing and Imports Board.

9. BANKING AND CREDITS.

The State shall establish a monopoly in banking, and in the creation and issuing of credit and currency, so that the wealth and credit of the Nation shall be made available for the benefit of the community.

10. PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

Private enterprise both in the production and distribution of commodities shall be permitted, subject to the maintenance of conditions of employment in private enterprises, equal to the standard maintained in State financed co-operative enterprises.

Private enterprise shall not be of right entitled to share or participate in the credit and other facilities afforded by the State to co-operatives.

11. TRADE AND COMMERCE.

To stabilise and safeguard the national economy, and to control production and distribution, exports and imports shall be controlled by the State through the Central Marketing and Imports Board.

Imports which would impede internal production shall not be admitted.

Overseas and coasting trade shall, as far as possible, be carried by the State Mercantile Marine.

12. TRANSPORT.

Railways, Canals, Air and Waterways and all forms of public inland transport shall be operated by a body set up by "The National Economic Council."

13. INSURANCE.

All forms of Insurance shall be made a State monopoly.

After a date to be appointed insurances shall not be effected with private companies. Insurances which have not at that date matured or expired may be continued.

14. HOUSING.

The State shall be responsible for the provision of adequate housing of citizens.

Citizens shall be encouraged and assisted by the State to become the owners of their own homes.

After a date to be fixed by the government, the building of houses for sale or rent shall be declared illegal.

Houses declared unfit for habitation by the Public Authority shall be destroyed and no compensation shall be paid to the landlord in respect of such houses and sites.

15. GROUND RENTS.

As the soil of the Nation is the property of the people and subject to their jurisdiction, this jurisdiction shall be exercised to abolish landlordism in land in cities and towns, and in any land required as sites for building purposes.

Land required for building purposes and for providing social amenities shall be acquired on the basis of its agricultural value, and no payment shall be made in respect of the additional values created in it by the community.

16. TAXATION.

Taxation for national purposes shall be assessed and levied on:—

- (1) Personal income of the individual, that is, after allowance for the maintenance of himself and his family has been provided for.
- (2) Private trading and property.
- (3) Co-operative trading.
- (4) Unearned income—a supertax to be imposed.
- (5) Land not being used productively.
- (6) Luxuries.

17. ECONOMIC CONTROL AND DIRECTION.

A body shall be created by the Government and styled The National Economic Council, the members of which shall be chosen by the co-operatives. Its functions shall be to co-ordinate and advise on the control and development of:—

- (1) Agriculture.
- (2) Fisheries.
- (3) Manufacturing Industries.
- (4) Banking, credits and taxation.
- (5) Internal Marketing, Exports and Imports.
- (6) Transport.
- (7) Insurance.
- (8) Housing.

18. JUSTICE.

The present elaborate and bewildering system of law shall be swept away and a codification of laws in non-technical language shall be carried out.

The principle of arbitration shall be adopted and extended as far as possible in civil cases.

The Judiciary shall be appointed by, but shall be independent of, the Government and shall be irremovable except on proven mal-administration.

The legal profession shall be a branch of the Civil Service and the services of lawyers shall be available to all citizens. In certain cases the State may charge a fee for legal services.

The regular police forces shall be as small as possible and shall be supplemented by forces recruited and controlled by local authorities.

The penal code shall aim at the reforming of offenders rather than at their punishment.

19. DEFENCE.

In case of national danger all adult citizens shall be liable for national service, not necessarily of a military nature.

The Defence Forces of the Republic shall be organised on a militia or territorial basis, except such limited forces as are required for the training of troops, for administration and for maintenance duties.

CONSTITUTION OF Óglaigh na h-Eireann

1. TITLE.

The Army shall be known as Oglagh na h-Eireann.

2. MEMBERSHIP.

Enlistment in Oglagh na h-Eireann shall be open to all Irishmen of good character who have attained the age of sixteen years and who accept the objects of Oglagh na h-Eireann as Stated in the Constitution.

3. OBJECTS.

- (1) To guard the honour and uphold the sovereignty and unity of the Republic of Ireland.
- (2) To establish and uphold a lawful Government in sole and absolute control of the Republic.
- (3) To secure and defend civil and religious liberty and equal rights and equal opportunities for all citizens.
- (4) To promote the revival of the Irish Language as the everyday language of the people, and to promote the development of the best mental and physical characteristics of our race.

4. MEANS.

The means by which Oglagh na h-Eireann shall endeavour to achieve its Objects are:—

- (1) Force of arms.
- (2) Organising, training, and equipping the manhood of Ireland as an efficient military force.
- (3) Assisting, as directed by the Army Authority, all Organisations working for the same Objects.

5. ARMY CONTROL.

- (1) The General Army Convention shall be the Supreme Army Authority.
- (2) The Army Council shall be the Supreme Army Authority when a General Convention is not in session.
- (3) The Army Council shall have power to delegate its powers to a Government which is actively endeavouring to function as the *de facto* Government of the Republic.
- (4) When a Government is functioning as the *de facto* Govern-

ment of the Republic, a General Army Convention shall be convened to give the Allegiance of Oglaiġh na h-Eireann to such a Government.

- (5) All personnel, and all Armament, Equipment and other resources of Oglaiġh na h-Eireann shall be at the disposal of, and be subject to the Army Authority, to be employed and utilised as the Army Authority shall direct.

6. GENERAL ARMY CONVENTION.

- (1) A General Army Convention of Delegates (selected as set out hereinafter) shall meet once every year unless the majority of these delegates notify the Army Council that they deem it better for military reasons to postpone it. When a General Army Convention is postponed it shall be summoned to meet as soon as the majority of the delegates shall notify the Army Council that they deem it advisable.
- (2) An Extraordinary General Army Convention shall be called when a majority of the Executive so decide.
- (3) That should it be necessary to summon an Extraordinary General Convention, and that the urgency of the issue for the Convention does not permit of the selection of Delegates, as prescribed, that the Delegates to the previous General Convention constitute the Extraordinary General Convention. When for any reason a Delegate to the previous General Convention has become ineligible, or is not available, the Battalion Council shall elect a Delegate in his stead, every active Volunteer in the Battalion being eligible.
- (4) When the Army is engaged on active service, no Company, Battalion, Brigade, or General Convention shall be held until a reasonable time after hostilities have terminated, unless the Army Authority decide otherwise.
- (5) An Executive of Twelve members shall be elected by Ballot at the General Army Convention; at least Eight of these members shall be delegates to the Convention; Four members may be elected from active Volunteers who are not delegates.

(b) The General Army Convention shall elect at least six substitutes to fill any vacancies which may arise on the Executive.

(6) The following shall be entitled to attend and vote at the General Army Convention:—

- (a) Delegates selected by Battalion Convention;
- (b) Delegates selected by General Headquarters Staff and Staffs of Brigades, Divisions and Commands;
- (c) All Members of the Executive;
- (d) All Members of the Army Council;
- (e) The Chief of Staff, the Adjutant General and the Quartermaster General.

(7) Only Volunteers on the Active List shall be eligible as Delegates to the General Army Convention.

(8) A majority of the General Army Convention may invite anyone whom they wish to attend to speak.

(9) The Chairman of the General Army Convention shall be chosen by the General Convention.

7. DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE EXECUTIVE.

(1) The Chairman of the General Army Convention or his representative shall, within forty-eight hours after the termination of the Convention, summon a meeting of the Army Executive over which he shall preside during the election of a Chairman and Secretary. The Army Executive shall then proceed with the election of an Army Council of seven members.

(2) The Army Executive shall meet at least once every six months. The Secretary of the Executive shall be responsible for the summoning of the members.

(3) It shall be the duty of the Executive to advise the Army Council on all matters concerning the Army.

(4) The Executive shall have power, by a majority vote, to summon an Extraordinary General Army Convention.

(5) A member of the Executive, who, for any reason ceases to be an active member of Oglai na h-Eireann, shall cease to be a member of the Executive.

(6) Casual vacancies on the Executive shall be filled by co-option after any substitutes that may be elected by the General Army Convention have been exhausted.

(7) The Executive shall hold office until the following General Army Convention shall elect another Executive.

(8) All members of the Army Council, and the Chief of Staff, the Adjutant General and the Quartermaster General,

shall be entitled to attend and speak at all meetings of the Executive, but shall not be entitled to vote unless they are members of the Executive.

- (9) An extraordinary meeting of the Executive shall be summoned by the Secretary of the Executive when a majority of the Army Council or a majority of the Executive so decide.
- (10) Two-thirds of the available members shall constitute a quorum of the Executive for co-option purposes only. Full Executive powers shall not be vested in less than five members.

8. DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE ARMY COUNCIL.

- (1) The Chairman of the Army Executive or his representative shall, as soon as possible after the election of the Army Council, summon a meeting of the Army Council over which he shall preside until a Chairman and Secretary have been elected.
- (2) The Army Council shall meet at least once a month.
- (3) Vacancies occurring in the Army Council shall be filled from substitutes elected by the Executive or co-opted by the Army Council in advance. Co-options by the Army Council must be ratified by the Executive at its next meeting.
- (4) Any active Volunteer shall be eligible for membership of the Army Council.
- (5) The Army Council shall have power to:—
 - (a) Conclude peace or declare war when a majority of the Council so decide;
 - (b) Appoint a Chief of Staff and ratify all appointments to the Commissioned ranks;
 - (c) Make Regulations regarding Organisations, Training, Discipline, Equipment and Operations such as will ensure that the Army shall be as efficient as possible;
 - (d) Take all necessary steps to secure co-ordination with other Republican Organisations;
 - (e) Keep in touch with all foreign Organisations and countries which may help the Army in any way;
 - (f) Arrange for the care of wounded Volunteers and their dependents and the dependents of

Volunteers killed, imprisoned, or on active service.

- (6) The Chief of Staff, Adjutant General, and Quartermaster General, shall be entitled to attend and speak at all meetings of the Army Council, but shall not be entitled to vote unless they are members of the Army Council.
- (7) Four members shall constitute a quorum of the Army Council.
- (8) A member of the Army Council who for any reason ceases to be an active Volunteer shall cease to be a member of the Army Council.

9. SELECTION OF DELEGATES TO THE BATTALION AND GENERAL ARMY CONVENTIONS.

Battalion Conventions.

- (1) Delegates to the Battalion Convention shall be elected by Ballot as follows:—

[a] At each parade called for the purpose, one delegate shall be elected to attend Battalion Convention when the number of men on parade does not exceed fifteen; two delegates where the number of men on parade is over fifteen and under thirty-one; and one further delegate for each additional ten Volunteers over thirty-one;

[b] One member of the Battalion Staff (other than Battalion Commander) elected by the staff including all officers in charge Battalion Special Services, at a meeting summoned for that purpose.

- (2) The Battalion Commander and the Commander of each Company in the Battalion shall be entitled to attend and vote at the Battalion Convention.
- (3) Each Battalion Convention shall meet when instructed by the Army Authority and elect one delegate when the total number of Volunteers who paraded for Company Conventions did not exceed two hundred, and one delegate for each additional two hundred Volunteers, to represent the Battalion at the General Army Convention.
- (4) Only Volunteers on the active list shall be eligible as delegates to the Battalion Convention.

10. BRIGADE CONVENTIONS.

Where the Independent Unit is a Brigade, a Brigade Conven-

tion may be held consisting of the delegates elected by the Companies, Battalion Staffs, and the Brigade Staff, with power to pass or reject any resolutions brought forward by these delegates. The delegates from each Battalion shall each select their own delegate to the General Army Convention.

11. ELECTION OF BRIGADE, DIVISIONAL, AND COMMAND STAFF DELEGATES TO GENERAL ARMY CONVENTION.

The staff (including officers in charge of Special Services) of each brigade Division and Command shall meet when instructed by the Army Authority and elect one delegate each to the General Army Convention.

12. ELECTION OF DELEGATES TO THE GENERAL ARMY CONVENTION BY GENERAL HEAD- QUARTERS STAFF.

Two delegates shall be elected at a meeting of General Headquarters Staff-Officers with the exception of the Chief of Staff, Adjutant General, and Quartermaster General.

13. RESOLUTIONS TO GENERAL ARMY CONVENTION.

Battalion and Brigade Conventions and the meetings of Brigade, Division, Command and General Headquarters Staffs for the election of delegates to General Army Convention shall have power to discuss any matter relating to the Army or the Nation and to pass resolutions regarding such matters. These resolutions shall be forwarded to G.H.Q. within the time specified by the Army Authority and shall appear on the Agenda for the General Army Convention.

14. EVERY VOLUNTEER SHALL MAKE THE FOLLOWING DECLARATION:—

"I.....promise that I will promote the objects of Oglagh na h-Eireann to the best of my knowledge and ability, and that I will obey all orders and regulations issued to me by the Army Authority, and by my superior officers."

14. CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION.

It shall require a two-thirds majority of a General Army Convention to change any article in this Constitution.

March, 1932.

