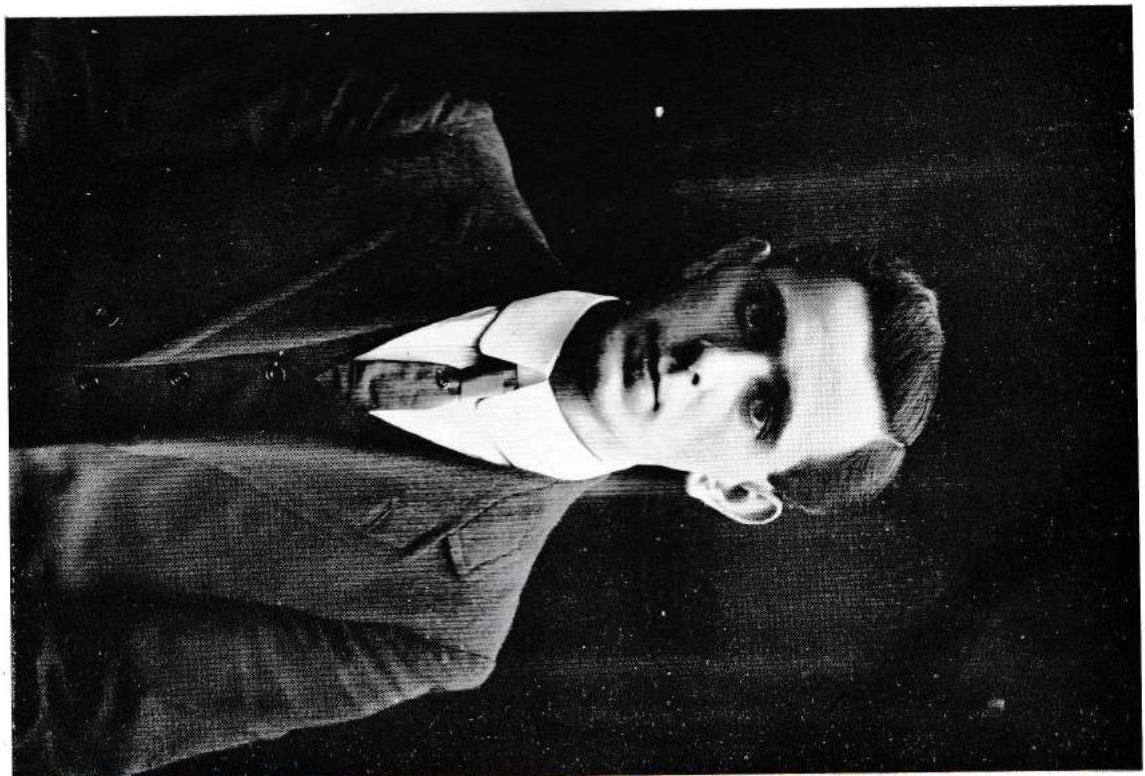




II. MANCHESTER MARTYRS COMMEMORATION CORK, 1915

*(Back row, left to right) Paddy Cotter, Sean Nolan, Daithi Cotter, Sean Scanlon, Fred Murray.
 (Second row, left to right) Ted Sullivan, Seamus Courtney, Tom Barry, Diarmuid Lynch, Con Twomey.
 (Seated) Sean Murphy, Tomas McCurtain, Sean MacDiarmada (who delivered the oration), Herbert M. Pim, Sean O'Sullivan,
 Sean O Murthille.*



III. Sean Mac Diarmada.

POBLAChT NA H EIREANN.
THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT
OF THE
IRISH REPUBLIC
TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN: In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment, and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory.

We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and government has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people. In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty; six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations.

The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.

Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishment of a permanent National Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women, the Provisional Government, hereby constituted, will administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust for the people.

We place the cause of the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose blessing we invoke upon our arms, and we pray that no one who serves that cause will dishonour it by cowardice, inhumanity, or rapine. In this supreme hour the Irish nation must, by its valour and discipline and by the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called.

Signed on Behalf of the Provisional Government,

THOMAS J. CLARKE.

SEAN Mac DIARMADA. THOMAS MacDONAGH.
 P. H. PEARSE. EAMONN CEANNT.
 JAMES CONNOLLY. JOSEPH PLUNKETT.

of Education and "Dublin Castle" (on matters affecting the language movement, of course) which to many of us were objectionable. There was a multiplicity of such moves, and thus there was a growing divergence between what may be termed the "Right Wing" and the "Left Wing" over the years prior to 1915. When "Left Wing" opposition to those methods was voiced, the Right deemed it Sinn Feinism and politics. The initial factor, however, was that Right Wing policy developed very definitely along Redmonite Party lines, which was at variance with that of "Sinn Fein"—the term then generally used for all national opponents of the Parliamentary Party. Dr. Douglas Hyde, the President, was in fact the leader of the Right Wing. I remember an incident at the Ard Fheis 1913 at Galway: His rulings from the chair were distinctly one-sided throughout the proceedings. Though I was able to follow the discussions my knowledge of Irish was too slight to enable me to participate in the debates, or "appeal from the ruling of the Chair"—(a very ordinary feature of American deliberative assemblies). So, I had to content myself with the pertinent query: "An tusa an Ard Fheis"? During the greater part of 1914 I was absent in the United States. On my return I found that the cleavage between the two wings of the Coiste Gnotha had widened. Prior to this the I.R.B. Executive had taken no official steps with regard to the election of the Coiste Gnotha, though our members on the latter body did to very limited extent. This in itself was proof that the I.R.B. had no wish to inject "politics" into the work of the Gaelic League. The "Right Wing" comprised men and women who had given veteran service to the language movement; all we had previously sought was to keep them from pursuing tactics which savoured of "parliamentarianism."

By the summer of 1915, however, when the stage was being secretly set for Insurrection against Britain, the time had come in my opinion when the "Left Wing" should control the Coiste Gnotha—not to use it for the propagation of Republicanism but to obviate the possibility of tactics contrary thereto. I discussed this with my I.R.B. colleagues on the Coiste, and probably with Tom Clarke though I have no distinct recollection of such discussion with the latter. Well in advance of the Ard Fheis date I communicated with prominent Gaelic Leaguers throughout the country—who were also I.R.B. men—urging that delegates favourable to our political views should without fail be selected to attend at Dundalk. Colleagues on the Coiste next suggested that we endeavour to elect men then in prison: Sean MacDiarmada, Earnan de Blaghd, and one other I think.¹ It was felt that their election would convey a salutary lesson to all concerned.

Our delegate friends at Dundalk (not all I.R.B. men) held a caucus meet-

¹ A. McCabe.

ing; the decision was unanimous with one exception. Nominations were made accordingly. As the result of the ballot was being announced and Sean MacDiarmada's name appeared high on the list, An Craibhin's uneasiness became apparent. When the election of the next prisoner was read Dr. Hyde swept his papers from the rostrum and left the Convention Hall. A delegation to him at his hotel brought back word that he had resigned from the presidency. This situation had not been sought or expected by us. But, had he given that as an ultimatum when the list of nominations was read, we would not have swerved from our plan at that juncture in national affairs. The new Coiste was safe from the I.R.B. viewpoint!

O'Donovan Rossa Funeral

Though a member of the Funeral Committee I had hardly any hand in the arrangements. Just then I had been busy with the Ard Fheis at Dundalk, whence we returned to Dublin a day or two prior to Sunday, August 1st.

Meeting for Reorganisation of the Supreme Council

This was held in Dublin either about the middle of July, 1915 (before the G. L. Ard Fheis) or about the middle of August (on my return from the Officers' Training Course, Dublin-Wicklow, under "Ginger" O'Connell). There was not a full attendance of the elected Divisional Centres. Those present proceeded with the completion of the membership of the Supreme Council. Tom Clarke, Sean MacDiarmada, Padraig Pearse and Dr. MacCartan were co-opted. *Dr. MacCartan was co-opted.*

Robert Monteith

Towards the end of August Monteith was ready to proceed to Germany—via New York. Tom Clarke and I decided to give him £100 for his expenses; this sum was handed to him in Tom's shop.

First meeting of the new Supreme Council

This, I think, was held in September. Denis McCullough was elected President (which, be it noted, meant President of the Irish Republic virtually established by the I.R.B.). Sean MacDiarmada was re-elected Secretary and Tom Clarke re-elected Treasurer. These three now comprised the "Executive."

Denis McCullough was the elected representative of Ulster. The other Divisions were represented as follows: Leinster, Sean Tobin; Munster, Diarmuid Lynch; Connaught, Alex. McCabe; South England, Dick Connolly; North England, Joseph Gleeson; Scotland, Pat. McCormick.

Padraig Pearse and Dr. MacCartan—co-opted members in addition to Clarke and MacD.—completed the Council. I would say that all eleven were present, but am not certain.

Casement pamphlet distribution—see separate statement.

Landing Place for Cargo of Arms

Later in September, I had a talk with Pearse. He desired that I secure the views of Tralee men and others in that part of Kerry as to the relative merit of Ventry Harbour and any other advantageous spots in that region for the landing of a cargo of arms and their expeditious distribution therefrom. I proceeded to Cork, reported there to the police under the "Order" and transacted some business in the ordinary course. "Reported" again though I was leaving for Tralee (my insurance managership took me to all parts of Munster). The telegraph operators at Cork Station were usually I.R.B. men and they were aware that the "G.man" on duty there always wired ahead to the police at my destination. (Sean O'Hegarty, Tommy O'Riordan, etc. were able to decode his messages.) So, on arrival at Tralee I again duly "reported." On presenting my Registration Book the constable on duty remarked: "Aren't you an Irishman?" to which I answered "yes." He continued "Then what the blazes do you want to register for?" and handed back my book unendorsed. I said "O.K." and left. As matters turned out later, I should have insisted on the usual endorsement to show that I had "reported." After some months I had reason to wonder whether that R.I.C. man was really friendly and was afraid to acknowledge his own remissness when the matter of my non-registration at Tralee arose, or whether he had acted on orders and "put one over on me."

My visit coincided with a meeting of the Tralee Volunteers. There I contacted Austin Stack and a few of his chief lieutenants. All favoured Fenit as the landing place—from which a light railway ran to Tralee. The local "G.men" kept peeping over the wall of the laneway, but that sort of thing was commonplace and no notice was taken of them. Next afternoon I went on to Dingle (a few miles from Ventry). One of my first calls was to the R.I.C. barrack (not for the purpose of "reporting" which was unnecessary at Dingle) where I canvassed the men for Life Insurance. In the light of my real mission to that town, and especially in light of actual happenings in the Tan War, that solicitation does seem ironical.

Then I contacted the I.R.B. Centre. In the dusk of the evening he, accompanied by two of his men, met me outside the town. Sitting in the middle of a field we had our chat. They also favoured Fenit, —pointing out that Ventry was some twenty miles from Tralee (where the necessarily large body of Volunteers needed for the first stage of transmission was located);

that the conveyance of the cargo from Ventry through the bottle neck of the Dingle peninsula would be extremely hazardous as a small body of police posted there might bring the whole enterprise to disaster. The Centre at Listowel was equally convinced that Fenit was preferable to any other point on the Kerry coast.

The result of my visit was promptly reported to Pearse; also to Clarke and MacDiarmada. I have no recollection of the matter being discussed at any meeting of the Supreme Council. (Here I may remark that it is certain James Connolly had no knowledge whatever of the expected cargo of arms from Germany until January 19th-21st, 1916,—when it was agreed that he become a member of the Military Council.)

Pearse's Secret Instructions for I.V. Comdts. (I.R.B. Men)

1916.

These Pearse gave to me early in January, 1916, at St. Enda's; I was to convey them orally to the Cork, Kerry, Limerick and Galway Commandants. He outlined the positions which these Brigades were to occupy on the Volunteer manoeuvres which had been decided on for the Easter week-end, viz.: Cork to hold the County to the south of the Boggeragh Mountains—left flank contacting the Kerry Brigade which was to extend eastwards from Tralee; Limerick was to contact the Kerry men on the south and those of Limerick—Clare—Galway to the north. Limerick, Clare and Galway were "to hold the line of the Shannon to Athlone."

There was no immediate hurry for the transmission of these orders so I remained on in Dublin for the scheduled Supreme Council meeting.

Then the "ENEMY ALIEN" Order was served on me (based on my non-registration at Tralee!). This confined me to a five mile radius from my residence in Dublin and resulted in the cancellation of my mission.

(Further details respecting those secret orders are given in The Countermanding Orders of Holy Week, 1916.¹)

Also Article written in 1911 for AN COSANTOIR (Not published)

Supreme Council Meeting, January, 1916

Denis McCullough presided. At least ten and perhaps the entire eleven members of the Council were present. Clarke and MacDiarmada—accepted as leaders and known to be the two members of the "Executive" resident in Dublin and in closest contact with events which would govern decisions of the I.R.B.—had the entire confidence of the Council. At that meeting they initiated all the leads to the principal matters discussed; Pearse had little to say on any subject. To me, possessed as I was of knowledge of many of their moves (as already detailed), it was evident that neither of these three

¹ See p. 44 et. seq.

desired to report the full extent of their progress,—not, I am satisfied, because of any lack of confidence in their colleagues but for the obvious reason that the secret decisions and plans of the Military Council had better be kept within as narrow a circle as possible. In my opinion, then and now, this attitude was the part of commonsense and wisdom.

MacDiarmada's motion that "we fight at the earliest date possible" was in line with that attitude, and the Council as a whole was fully justified in being satisfied with that decision.

(R. M. Fox's remarks about "nods and winks"—which obviously refer to my statements appearing in Le Roux's "Tom Clarke and the Irish Freedom Movement"—exhibit not merely a lack of grasp of the situation but are hypercritical in his ridiculous effort to prove that only for Connolly's insistence there would have been no insurrection.)

Detention of James Connolly

1916.

Connolly "disappeared" on January 19, 1916; he was back at Liberty Hall on the 22nd. During his "disappearance" I spoke with Sean MacDiarmada on the matter. Sean's only answer was a smile—which "spoke volumes" to me (perhaps Mr. Fox would now add "smiles" to "nods and winks"!). I was satisfied that Sean knew of Connolly's whereabouts and did not wish to discuss him. I was equally satisfied that Sean's colleagues on the then Military Council also knew. Having the fullest confidence in the five members thereof I pursued this question no further. And, when early in March I saw Connolly in conference with those whom I knew to be members of the Military Council, and coupled this with his previous impetuous outspokenness and threats regarding lone action by the Citizen Army—which bid fair to bring to disaster all the I.R.B. plans for the Rising—the definite conclusion was not far to seek that his "arrest" in January was the deliberate act of the I.R.B. Military Council. When discussing Connolly's disappearance with William O'Brien, in Richmond Barracks after the "Easter Week" surrender, he agreed with that conclusion. He told me that when speaking with James Connolly after his return on January 22nd, Connolly refused to say anything about his whereabouts during the previous few days.

Committee on Telegraph-Telephone "Manholes"

First meeting called by Sean MacDiarmada about the 1st of April—Andy Fitzpatrick, Sean Byrne, Dick Mulcahy and myself. Additional members later—John Twamley and the brothers King. The report was compiled by me and delivered to Sean MacD. on Monday of Holy Week. (Other details given in my "Supplementary Statement on Easter Week".)

For O'Connell's letter from the PO regarding search of clubs in the Sp. House

copy of file - 25 PARADE SQ.

Military Council—Co-option of Tomas MacDonagh

See my "Supplementary Statement on Easter Week."

"EASTER WEEK"—G.P.O. Area

The Report on Operation in this area, compiled by me and ratified at a general meeting of the survivors of the Garrison in 1938, is in the hands of the G.P.O. Garrison Committee. A copy of it was handed to An Taoiseach a few years ago and I believe was deposited by him in the National Library.¹

Post "Easter Week" Reorganisation of the I.R.B.

1917.

When the "Convict" prisoners were released from Pentonville in June, 1917, Dr. MacCartan joined us—at Holyhead, I think—and informed me (I was the only member of the pre-Easter Week Supreme Council among them) that a temporary Council had functioned in our absence.

The following autumn the Supreme Council was regularly re-established—thanks to the preliminary work done by Michael Collins at Frongoch and during 1917 while Secretary of the National Aid Assn. I forget the full personnel of the new S.C. so at the moment I will name only the members of the "Executive": Sean McGarry (President), Michael Collins (Secretary), and Diarmuid Lynch (Treasurer).

The "Easter Week" Proclamation had revealed the continued existence till then of the I.R.B. as a functioning organisation. One of the post-Easter developments was that a few veteran members (Cathal Brugha among them) decided that there was no further need for the secret organisation. (Commandant de Valera informed me immediately after leaving Pentonville that he would discontinue membership, but gave no reason for his decision). Others who had participated in the Insurrection felt that while remaining in the I.R.B. they should no longer be subject to the old discipline. Those who desired to relinquish membership were, of course, at liberty to do so. But the new Supreme Council determined that the continuance of the I.R.B. was still essential; that an amended Constitution was necessary; that discipline would be rigidly enforced; that whole-time organisers would be put in the field. Draft of revised Constitution was drawn up by Tomas Aghas, Con Collins and myself. This was further revised by Mick Collins and me. In due course, it was ratified by the S.C.

(In the matter of this Constitution we find an instance of the oft-alleged knowledge by British officials of secret I.R.B. and other documents as at the time they were issued or were in effect; in "The Secret

¹ See p. 150

Societies of Ireland" by H. B. C. Pollard (published 1928) he includes what he cites as the "Constitution of the I.R.B. in 1914." But it so happens that the Constitution reproduced by him (Appendix J) as for 1914 is not the pre-Easter Week Constitution but that revised and adopted at the end of 1917. Copy of the latter probably fell into the hands of the British during the Black and Tan raids. It is not pertinent to this statement to comment on any other feature of Pollard's book).

Comment on the Constitution of 1917

I never saw an official printed copy of this amended Constitution; it had not been printed at the date of my imprisonment in February 1918. Therefore I am not in a position to say if the version given by Pollard is a full reproduction.¹ Under clause 32 as cited by him, I note a reference to clauses 33, 35, 36 which clauses do not appear. Otherwise, from my recollection of the changes made I would say the text of the document is correctly quoted. Some of the principal changes from the previous Constitution were:

(a) A provision to expel any member who subsequent to initiation into the I.R.B. should join any other oath-bound organisation. There was a particular reason for this in 1917 and the Supreme Council was determined that the I.R.B. should continue to have but *one* object, and that is members should not be dominated by any other secret organisation. (Clauses 5, 6.)

(b) The sub-division of each geographical province in Ireland into *two* I.R.B. Divisions—thus laying the foundation for more intensive recruitment, and incidentally enlarging the membership of the Supreme Council (elected and co-opted) from 11 to 15. (Clause 10.)

(c) More specific regulations pertaining to a Declaration of War. (Clauses 20, 21.)

(d) The addition of a proviso for the appointment of a "Military Council" and limitation of its powers. (Clause 31.)

Sinn Fein Convention, October, 1917

The Provisional Executive Committee of Sinn Fein discussed the draft of a constitution to be submitted to the coming Convention. Griffith, Milroy and other old-time Sinn Feiners were in favour of retaining the original Sinn Fein idea of "The King, Lords and Commons of Ireland,"—an unbelievably retrograde step a year and a half after "Easter Week." I.R.B. members of the Provisional Committee led by Mick Collins, supported by non-I.R.B. men who included Joe McGuinness, vigorously protested against this move; the prospect of their success was not encouraging.

Though not a member of that Committee I had an interview with de

¹ It is a full reproduction.—Editor.

Valera who was, in which I stressed the definite I.R.B. attitude—that we would fight against any backdown from the “Easter Week” Proclamation. He also wanted to hold to the latter and evidently had a plan to meet the situation. Those other members of the Committee who opposed the retrograde proposal held a private meeting—at which I recollect Count Plunkett, Joe McGuinness, Piaras Beaslai. The result of our talk was that steps should be taken to contact in advance delegates chosen to attend the Convention. The I.R.B. accordingly decided to re-enact the plan followed in the case of the 1915 Gaelic League Ard Fheis—with a view not merely to ensure a “republican” constitution for the reorganised Sinn Fein organisation, but also the election of a permanent Executive Committee which could be relied on to uphold it. Immediately prior to the Convention de Valera had suggested a preamble to the Constitution reading:

“Sinn Fein aims at securing the international recognition of Ireland as an independent Irish Republic. Having achieved that status the Irish people may by Referendum freely choose their own form of Government.”

Fortunately, Griffith and his supporters on the Provisional Committee accepted that, but the I.R.B. was still doubtful as to what might happen at the Convention. It proceeded with its plan. Our efforts were not confined to I.R.B. men. The delegates communicated with reported at the Foresters’ Hall and were informed of the circumstances. Also, they were handed a list of those whom we deemed it wise to elect on the permanent governing body. Some of them, or others in whom they confided, reported this move to the Convention—where it was sharply criticised. This did not worry us—our purpose was not personal but national. The tenseness of the situation was relieved by Griffith’s laudable withdrawal of his candidacy for the Presidency in favour of de Valera. De Valera’s draft constitution was adopted unanimously: nothing further was heard of “The King, Lords and Commons of Ireland.” While the personnel of the Executive elected differed very considerably from that suggested by the I.R.B. it was entirely satisfactory. Sinn Fein had become a definitely Republican organisation.

Sinn Fein Food Control

1918.

While the seizure of pigs (on their way to the North Wall for export) and their detention in Dublin was effected in my capacity as Sinn Fein Food Director, it may be said to have been a combined Sinn Fein—I.R.B.—Irish Volunteer undertaking.

It was a prelude to my deportation to the U.S.—which terminated my membership of the Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

Some details of the I.R.B. organisation in Munster, 1912-1916, are given on pages following:

I.R.B. Organisation in Munster, 1912-1916

After a lapse of over 30 years I find it impossible to recall fully the location and strength of the various circles and groups in the province. I had all the information then of course—through County and District Centres.

I give such details as I can recall: these apply for the most part to 1912-13. I was absent in the U.S. during 1914. Then, personal business confined me chiefly to Dublin over 1915. When any special I.R.B. matters called me South at the latter period, efforts to transact business were camouflage to a large extent.¹

Some of the names mentioned hereunder will serve for the securing of further particulars.

As previously stated I reported to the Clan-na-Gael Convention, 1914, that the strength of the “Home Organisation” (i.e. in Ireland, England and Scotland) was approximately 2,000. This figure probably represented the strength in Ireland alone by 1916.

The Irish Volunteers after the Split with Redmond furnished not alone a favourable but a definite recruiting field for the I.R.B. But as active Volunteers were for the most part looked on by the I.R.B. as men who would participate in an Insurrection when the right moment was revealed, there was no longer any necessity for a great increase in I.R.B. membership, especially as the great majority of Commandants and senior officers of the Volunteers were already members of the secret organisation.

KERRY

I have no recollection of having ever attended a Circle meeting in Kerry. Austin Stack was County Centre and I kept contact through him. I did, however, on my own initiative swear in four men at Valentia Cable Station: Tim Ring, “Tos” O’Sullivan, W. Scaife and Alec Smith. In the matter of selecting a landing place for arms cargo I interviewed men at Dingle and Listowel. Of the prominent Tralee men still living there, Eamonn O’Connor is the only one I can remember—I’m pretty certain he was I.R.B. as well as Volunteer.

¹In a letter to Florence O’Donoghue 31/10/45, Diarmuid Lynch wrote: “Since I became a member of the I.R.B. in 1908 there was no regular organiser for Munster—not up to 1918 anyway. Mick Crowe in the course of his railway duties did some spasmodic work in that line, so did Cathal Brugha as he travelled the country on his own business, so did I after I became representative for Munster on the Supreme Council, as I made constant trips through the South as Manager for Munster for the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the U.S. (1911-16). My opportunities were more widespread than theirs.”

CLARE

There was a circle at Ennistymon, and one at Crusheen—with groups at various places: Carrigaholt, Ennis, Kildysart, etc. I have a very happy recollection of the circumstances under which I swore in a man at Carrigaholt—but that is not for the record.

Whether Michael and Paddy Brennan were then members I cannot say for a certainty. Sean O'Muirthille, Gaelic League Organiser, was in touch with the entire County. That he gave me information concerning certain districts I'm certain but cannot recall details. There was what might be termed an unofficial Circle somewhere in the country beyond Ennistymon (I forget the name of the locality), which occupied a peculiar position. The Centre was Tomas O'Loughlin, an old man of 70 or thereabouts, who held the strange idea of keeping his men apart from any official contacts. Though this was irregular he was permitted to have his way. He was very secretive in all his talk and actions. I recall with pleasure an incident in which he figured:

At Ennistymon, 1915, I learned from Sean O'Muirthille that the local Irish Volunteers were negotiating with the Redmond Volunteers (then defunct as an organisation) for the purchase of twenty Enfield Rifles, but had not the cash to complete the transaction. I went straight to Dublin and The O'Rahilly gave me the requisite £40. Returning, I put up at Sean O'Muirthille's headquarters—a small hotel where Tomas O'Loughlin was also staying at the time. It was agreed that the local IVs. should retain ten rifles. The other ten were to be distributed at my discretion; these were brought to my bedroom and eventually went: 2 to Carrigaholt, 2 to Ennis, and 6 to Crusheen. Next morning, I learned that old Tomás on his own initiative and without saying a word to anybody had remained on guard all night on the stairs outside my room—he having been suspicious of a young R.I.C. man going home on leave who happened to stay at this hotel overnight. In post-Easter days this would have seemed very trivial but back in 1915 we were enthused and proud of the old man's spirit.

Other collaboration during my visits to County Clare which I recollect with pleasure was that of two clergymen. They were splendid.

This incident of the Ennistymon rifles throws a light on the then dearth of arms among the Volunteers, and how essential the prospective "Aud" cargo was for the plans of the I.R.B. in 1916.

LIMERICK

I completely forget the strength of the I.R.B. in the County. Under the influence of the old veteran, John Daly, whom I never missed an opportunity to call on (he was incapacitated in my day), and his active lieutenants Jim

Leddin, Colivet, etc., I am satisfied that the organisation was fairly strong in the city. I never attended a meeting of the Limerick Circle; none of my visits coincided with one.

I recollect contacts with individuals and groups at Pallasgreen, Doon, etc.

TIPPERARY

Frank Drohan had a Circle at Clonmel; William Benn one at Tipperary town; P. C. O'Mahony one at Cashel (of which one or more Rockwell students were members). I attended a meeting at Tipperary and one at Cashel,—about 15 members present at each, not the full membership. There were, I believe, one or two groups further north in the County, but I was never in those localities.¹

WATERFORD

Willie Walsh had a Circle at Waterford City. I believe there were one or two groups elsewhere in the County; the facts have escaped my memory.

CORK

The Circle at Cork City—to which I was transferred about 1910—was then in its infancy with a small membership which included: Sean O'Hegarty (Centre), Thomas Barry, Tomas MacCurtain, Sean Murphy, Donnall Og O'Callaghan, Diarmuid Fawsitt, Bob Langford, Tadgh Barry, Tommy O'Riordan, Tommy O'Mahony, Sean O'Sullivan, Billy O'Shea.² The latter was the only man of the organisation of former years (which had faded out) now attached to the reorganised Circle. Quite a number of city men then living had belonged to the I.R.B. but for one reason or another they were not now deemed up to standard.

The Circle made considerable progress over 1912-16 but my contacts during the latter years were few. Elsewhere in the County the only Circles I recollect were at Macroom, Cobh and Millstreet. There were groups at Kinsale, Fermoy, Glanworth, Mitchelstown, Skibbereen and Tracton. I swore in men in some of these places.

(Signed) DIARMUID LYNCH.

March, 1947.

¹ In a letter to Florence O'Donoghue, 31/10/45, Diarmuid Lynch wrote:

"I attended some two or three meetings of the Circle in Tipperary town, and had other talks with the 'C' . . . I have a faint recollection of only one of his men—a likely looking lad who wore distinctly brown clothes. Whether or not he was Sean Treacy, who I take it was then a member, I cannot say. As new men became available in that district they would have been enrolled by the Centre. My last visit to that Circle would probably have been in 1915; the total membership was, I'm pretty certain, not more than ten."

² Sean O'Hegarty states that Edward Corcoran, Michael Prior and Jack Mahony were also members—Editor.

CHAPTER III

CASEMENT PAMPHLET

The Distribution of, 1915

The story of this item of I.R.B. activity during the First World War is given herewith in detail as requested by the Bureau of Military History.

The difficulty envisaged by the I.R.B. in 1915, in what nowadays seems such a simple matter, throws a light on pre-"Easter Week" conditions. As in other matters, a way was found to circumvent the extreme watchfulness of British Government officials in Ireland.

The pamphlet comprised a series of articles written anonymously by Sir Roger Casement some years earlier. The outbreak of the 1914 war brought Casement's ideas into the realm of "Practical politics." The series was published in the *Gaelic American*, New York (the official organ of the Clan-na-Gael) in 1914, and then reproduced by it in pamphlet form. Subsequently it ran in *Irish Freedom*, Dublin.

The Supreme Council, prior to my return from the U.S. in November 1914, ordered a large edition printed by the *Enniscorthy Echo*—the editor, sub-editor and most of the staff of which were I.R.B. men. When printed, the pamphlets were placed temporarily in Larry de Lacy's house. Soon afterwards a raid was made thereon by the R.I.C. for the purpose of arresting Sean O'Hegarty (head of the I.R.B. in Cork who had been dismissed from the Post Office there because of his national activities, and who was then staying with de Lacy) in connection with the posting in the Enniscorthy area of leaflets controverting some British propaganda. Reference to these matters in the *Enniscorthy Echo*, April 19, 1930, states that the stock of pamphlets escaped the notice of the police. They were promptly transferred to a friendly farmer's place "somewhere in Wexford," and there they remained for many months.

At a meeting of the Supreme Council in the Spring of 1915 the difficulty of advantageous distribution was stressed—circulation by "Sinn Feiners" (which term included I.R.B. men) might defeat its purpose, viz., an impartial study of them. Though important, this matter of distribution was not urgent; the meeting passed on to other items on the agenda. At a later meeting I mentioned a plan for getting them into the hands of each County, Urban, and Rural Councillor and to professional men throughout the country; the job was left in my hands.

Among the leading seed merchants in Dublin, Cork, etc., were staunch "Unionists" whom the British Government officials would never dream of associating with the dissemination of documents savouring of "disloyalty" or contrary to the "Defence of the Realm Regulations." This and the fact that the season was at hand for the issuance of their bulb catalogues (about the size of the Casement pamphlet) suggested the scheme.

"All is fair in love and war," so I decided to have sets of envelopes imprinted with the name and address of one seed firm in each of six centres,—Dublin, Galway, Tralee, Cork, Waterford and Dundalk, and of a concern in Belfast engaged in a different but extensively advertised line. I was, of course, fairly certain that in due course all these firms would be interrogated sharply by Dublin Castle; also that they would receive indignant protests from pro-British elements among their customers. Even so, I was fully satisfied that eventually no injury would result from the ruse—other than the momentarily outraged feelings of those whose names had been thus used. Anyway, the stratagem gave the best assurance of hoodwinking the Post Office in the execution of good national work.

The lists of Councillors were not available, except those in Co. Cork (which were given in Guy's Directory). We therefore had one of our members in the Local Government Board headquarters write the secretary of each Council for the names and addresses. The latter were promptly turned over to me. The next step was to ascertain the total number to be covered from respective centres, added to which was a large number of professional men grouped likewise.

Suitable envelopes having been procured, the imprinting was done by James Connolly at Liberty Hall.¹ The addresses were typed by the staff of one of our men. Next, the requisite bundles were delivered at four addresses to await the pamphlets.

We were now ready to bring the pamphlets from Wexford. I arranged with William Sears, editor of the *Enniscorthy Echo*, to have an escort of I.R.B. men meet me at Ferns, and then guide us to the cache.

Joe Dunn, a taxi driver and I.R.B. man, arranged for the taxi. We started from Dublin in the early afternoon. Half way to Ferns, with time to spare, we stopped for a roadside snack. Soon a large motor car hove in sight. As it came abreast of us Joe pretended to be working at his engine. The driver of the car—whose passenger was a British Naval officer—asked if he could be of help—an offer which Joe graciously declined as he had "only a little

¹ In a comment on the script of a radio talk by Donagh MacDonagh on James Connolly in 1945, Diarmuid Lynch wrote:

"In the fall of 1915 I had a confidential printing job on hand for the Supreme Council I.R.B. Tom Clarke recommended that Connolly be asked to do it; he co-operated with alacrity and efficiency. At this time he was on most friendly terms with Clarke, Pearse etc."—Editor.

engine trouble." We were to meet that car again. Further on we stopped at a hotel for tea—the "tourist" being shown to the "coffee room" and Joe to the kitchen. Reaching Ferns at dusk, our escort met us as arranged—Seamus Doyle, P. Keegan and M. Davis—which was fortunate. A heavy fog had set in, and as one of them directed Joe along a bye-route the number of four-cross roads we came to—with right and left turnings—exceeded anything either Joe or myself had ever experienced. Arriving at the spot, we found that it was "Oulartleigh House" belonging to Thomas Murphy who did an extensive threshing mill business. The number of farmers etc. present was embarrassing; this occasioned a long delay before we could load the potato sacks in which the pamphlets had been packed. They filled the back of the taxi.

It was 2 a.m. when we reached Arklow on the return journey—with the fog growing more and more dense. Just past the town we came to a cross road, and neither Joe nor myself knew which we should take for Dublin—and Anthony Mackey was waiting up at his home on the south side of the city to take delivery of our precious load! As we wondered how or where we could get our direction we deemed ourselves fortunate to see a light not far away and to this we drove. Imagine our surprise to find it shone not from a private residence but from that British Naval officer's car.

The chauffeur informed us that we were on the wrong road; that we should have turned left at the cross. Just then a Coastguard, armed with carbine, hopped over the wall and plied us with questions—we had the front windows open: Where are you going? Where did you come from? etc., all of which Joe answered quite calmly. Then he placed his hand on the handle of the rear door, but instead of opening it he asked: "Anybody in the rear"? to which Joe replied "No." Fortunately for us, and for all concerned, the fog had made the windows opaque. Had that Coastguard opened the door and seen the rear piled with burlap bags containing bulky material, certain it is that further investigation would ensue—with the alternative of shooting our way out. Great was our relief when our inquisitor concluded without more ado that we were "law-abiding" travellers; he obligingly told us that the road straight ahead was impassable for a car; that we should go back to the cross and turn to the right. We felt doubly grateful then as had shooting started we would unquestionably have driven straight ahead from our waiting position—to almost certain disaster on the rocks. (The presence of that Coastguard convinced us that the building near by was a Coastguard Station; but "Nada" in the *Enniscorthy Echo* refers to it as Kynock's Ammunition factory. It is now the Arklow Pottery Works.)

When a few miles along the Dublin road one of our lamps gave out. While Joe was in the act of recharging with carbide we noticed an approach-

ing bright glow behind us—evidently from a strong electric light which could have been none else than that of the car we parted from at Kynock's. Our "guilty conscience" convinced us that the British officials had on second thoughts decided to investigate us further—folks who at that hour of the morning didn't know the road to Dublin. Our first thought was to pull to the side of the road, get inside the fence and be ready for eventualities. But in the next few seconds Joe got the lamp alight and decided to "give them a run for it." Off we tore through the fog at an uncomfortably high speed; it was impossible to see clearly more than a length or two ahead. When nearing bends it seemed that only a miracle could save us from crashing. Joe was, however, equal to the task. He admitted never having experienced a more difficult one. That powerful naval car could, I'm sure, have caught up with us. Instead, over a stretch of miles he kept about 150 yards to the rear, taking advantage doubtless of getting the lay of the road from us. Our guess was that we would be trailed all the way to Dublin, but, no,—at a certain cross we turned left and he continued straight on towards Wicklow. Another sigh of relief, and yet another twinge of misgiving: "Would that naval man telephone the Bray and Dublin police to be on the lookout for a 'suspicious car.'"?

It was daylight when we reached Bray, and apart from the last mentioned possibility it would be too risky to be seen unloading such sacks from a new taxi so early in the morning—at the house of a "Sinn Feiner." So, at my suggestion, Joe made a detour and headed through the Dublin mountains for Rathfarnham and St. Enda's college. In the avenue there we secreted the sacks among the shrubbery. Joe cleaned out his taxi the best he could and set out for Dublin. I went up to the college to talk with Pádraig Pearse. I found him already dressed; he came with me to see the sacks. He thought they could be hidden to better advantage so we dragged them to a thicker patch. I told him I would have a grocer's van call for them as early as possible, and he remarked that he would inform his lodge keeper, Mícheál Mac Ruaidhri (?). Though I knew the old man to be one of the best, I demurred, whereon Pearse remarked: "Oh, I must tell Mícheál; if he should come across them during the day and realised that I had not trusted him with my knowledge of their whereabouts he'd never forgive me."

The sacks reached the houses where the envelopes were in readiness. There the members of each household and other helpers got the material ready for mailing (letter post).

An All-Ireland Final at Croke Park was imminent. I advised I.R.B. men in the Provinces to meet me after the match, at a central location—where suitcases containing bundles were ready for them. These were to be handed in at the respective Post Offices exactly at 6 p.m. the following Thursday—not earlier and not later. Thus, should the contents by some mischance be

discovered at any one Post Office, the probability was that those posted elsewhere could be delivered to the addresses before the authorities could issue a warning.

The area covered from Dublin was the largest, and this delivery almost came to grief at the post office. The young lad entrusted with the posting reached the front office of the G.P.O. promptly at 6 o'clock, only to find that *bulk* post should be handed in at the rear platform. To get to the back was but a matter of a minute or two but when he got there it was, of course, after six, and six was the closing time for such deliveries; the postman on duty refused to accept them. The boy, however, had "an old head on young shoulders"; he pleaded the excuse that a pal met him on the way to the G.P.O. and insisted on his having a drink; that if the postman did not take his letters from him he would lose his job. The plea succeeded.

Early that Thursday I left for Cork. Next day I visited Kinsale on business and called on an Urban Councillor who was well disposed to "Sinn Fein." He expressed his astonishment that he should have received by the morning post from a "Unionist" firm in Cork city a very ably written pamphlet entitled "Ireland, Germany and the Freedom of the Seas," and that colleagues of his also received copies. He was much impressed by the contents but simply could not understand how or why it should have come from such a firm. The news was most welcome to me,—it was proof that the ruse worked satisfactorily at Cork. I offered a possible "explanation" of the envelope and quickly went on to discuss my personal business.

Later it became evident that Cork was not the only efficient centre; deliveries were duly made from all the others. Then the fun began.

Special orders were issued immediately by postal headquarters that thereafter items of bulk postage should be opened and examined on receipt at any post office. This information was conveyed to us by I.R.B. men in the Dublin G.P.O. White, Tomkins and Courage of Belfast offered a reward of £100 for information giving the name of the party who had thus used its name. Nicholas Hardy & Co. Dundalk offered £100 likewise. But though at least 40 individuals knew the man who had directed the job at various stages, their loyalty to the cause of Irish Independence was proof against any "reward."

DIARMUID LYNCH.

March 25, 1947.

Diarmuid Lynch does not give exact dates either for the printing in Ireland or the distribution of the pamphlet. The following notes are supplementary to his record.

The pamphlets had been printed and were stored in Larry De Lacy's house at 8 New Street, Enniscorthy, before Sean O'Hegarty was arrested there on

24 February, 1915. The raiding party on that occasion overlooked them.

The distribution date was shortly before 20 September, 1915. The *Northern Whig* of that date attributes the pamphlet to Kuno Meyer and another unnamed Professor, and says it was apparently printed in America. The *Daily Express* of the same date says that envelopes bearing the names of the following firms were used: The Co-Operative Wholesale Society Ltd., Mulgrave Street, Limerick; Messrs. R. Fennessey and Sons, Waterford; Sir James W. Mackey Ltd., Dublin. The last named firm, in a letter appearing in the *Freeman's Journal* of 21 September, 1915, disclaimed responsibility for the issue of the pamphlet and exonerated their staff.

The following advertisement (quarter page) appeared in the *Irish Independent* of 20 September, 1915.

£100 REWARD

"Will be paid for such information as will lead to the conviction of the person concerned in circulating through the post to different parts of Ireland in envelopes, on which our name and address are printed,

Pamphlet entitled:

'Ireland, Germany'—price 5 cents.
White, Tomkins and Courage Ltd.
Clarendon Mills, Belfast."

In the *Freeman's Journal* of 21 September an advertisement in similar wording (4 inch, single column) appears over the name of Messrs. Nicholas Hardy & Co. Ltd., Auctioneers and Seedsmen, 72 Park St., Dundalk.

Diarmuid Lynch told me that the names of other firms in Cork, Galway and Tralee were used also, but he was unable to recollect the names with any certainty.

Editor.

My wife (then Miss Agnes Ryan, M.A.) brought the consignment for Belfast up by train and had them posted there, in the "White, Tomkins & Courage" envelopes.

DENIS McCULLOUGH.

CHAPTER IV

THE COUNTERMANDING ORDERS
OF HOLY WEEK, 1916

BY

DIARMUID LYNCH

That part of the article on Commandant Tomas MacCurtain published in the February, 1945, issue of *An Cosantoir* which dealt with the failure of the Cork Brigade to participate in the Easter Week Rising suggests two thoughts: First, that the conflicting orders issued from Dublin to the Irish Volunteers at Easter-time, 1916, which so mystified Commandants outside the Metropolitan area, remain a mystery even to-day to anyone who has not made an intensive study of prior developments among the men who then controlled or sought to control the destiny of the Volunteers; second, that a chronological sketch showing the sequence of events would help to elucidate the situation.

In October-November, 1913, a Provisional Committee was formed in Dublin to bring into existence a Volunteer organisation. Eoin MacNeill was elected Chairman. The majority of the Committee were members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, a fact unknown to the minority (which included the Chairman)—the I.R.B. being a secret body, the continued existence of which was unknown to the public.

At a public meeting held on November 25th in that year, the "Irish Volunteers" organisation was formally established. Its objects were declared to be:

1. To secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to all the people of Ireland.
2. To train, discipline, arm and equip a body of Irish Volunteers for the above purpose.
3. To unite for this purpose Irishmen of every creed and of every party and class.

The "rights and liberties" mentioned were never defined, nor were the means whereby they might be "secured." Some people construed them as meaning defence of the anticipated "Home Rule" position to oppose which the Carsonite Volunteers had been organised previously in the North. The I.R.B., with an eye not alone to the hostility of the British Government

to the establishment in Ireland of any organisation, national and military in character, but also to the antagonism of the Irish people in general at that time to any policy savouring of "extreme-ism" or opposed to that of the Irish Parliamentary Party, decided not to oppose openly such a construction. For itself, however, the I.R.B., true to the Fenian tradition of the 'sixties, which it had ever fostered, definitely construed the terms to mean: maintenance of the right of Ireland to national independence as a Republican State, and to secure that right through an Insurrection in arms.

This difference in outlook on the aims and objects of the Volunteers existed also among the members of the governing body of the Volunteer organisation. To this can be traced the serious crux which arose in Holy Week, 1916. If the revolutionary aims of the I.R.B. or its purpose to enlist the Irish Volunteers as a fighting force in an Insurrection were to succeed, it necessarily had to keep them secret from men who held different views.

In June, 1914, Tom Clarke and Sean MacDiarmada—representing the "Executive" of the I.R.B.¹—were definitely opposed to Redmond's demand that the Provisional Committee should co-opt twenty-five nominees of his, which in effect would give him control of that body and of the Volunteer organisation. Bulmer Hobson, Secretary of the Committee and a member of the Supreme Council I.R.B., not alone decided to vote for capitulation to Redmond, but induced other members of the Committee to support his view. Redmond thus won control of the Volunteers. Hobson was compelled thereupon to resign all offices held by him in the I.R.B., but was permitted to retain membership in that organisation.

In the following September, Redmond attempted to throw the strength of the Volunteers behind Britain's war effort. The Split in the Volunteers ensued. Ninety-five per cent. of those enrolled followed Redmond under the title "National Volunteers." Approximately 10,000 "Irish Volunteers" remained loyal to the original Committee; these retained the original title.

Twenty members of the reorganised Provisional Committee of the "Irish Volunteers" (including MacNeill—Chairman, Hobson—Secretary, Pearse, MacDiarmada etc.) issued a call for a Convention, and proposed (among other points) to

"2. Reaffirm without qualification the manifesto proposed and adopted at the inaugural meeting.

"3. Oppose any diminution of the measure of Irish self-government which now exists as a Statute on paper, and which would not now have reached that stage but for the Irish Volunteers."

¹This "Executive" comprised the President, Treasurer and Secretary of the Supreme Council. When the Council was not in session, control of the organisation vested in the "Executive."

In this the I.R.B. leaders were guided by the same considerations as at the inception of the Volunteers in 1913, with the additional purpose of winning back from Redmond as many as possible of those who followed him at the Split. While proposal number three gave colour to the construction placed on the terms "rights and liberties" by the so-called "moderates" on the Committee, the I.R.B. members of it had no misconception on this point.

The Irish Volunteer Convention was held on October 25th 1914. Its policy was, generally speaking, a reiteration of previous declarations. It elected an "Executive Committee."

Subsequent to the capitulation to Redmond, the difference in outlook between what may be termed the "moderate" element and that of the revolutionary wing of the Volunteer Executive Committee was not emphasised to any appreciable extent until Holy Week, 1916. Over this period Hobson did occasionally stress the purpose of the Irish Volunteers as a purely defensive one, and he, due to his former positions in the councils of the I.R.B., had a deeper insight into the attitude of MacDiarmada and Pearse than that possessed by his "moderate" colleagues. Pearse and MacDiarmada did not force an issue on this question; it would not suit their purpose to do so. But, so well had they guarded the secret of their insurrectionary preparations, that not until Holy Week, 1916 (and then only by chance), did Hobson realise that a Rising was actually imminent. He then did his utmost to frustrate the plans which they and their colleagues of the Military Council had perfected for it.

From the very inception of the Irish Volunteers, men prominent in the I.R.B. throughout the country, especially in the most populous centres, took a leading part in organising and training the various Companies and Battalions. What with this and the further fact that the secret organisation was well represented among the rank and file of the Volunteers, the force as a whole gradually, and perhaps unconsciously, became imbued with an "offensive" rather than a "defensive" concept.

Pearse's writings and speeches were a powerful influence in that respect; O'Donovan Rossa's funeral on August 1, 1915, marked a tremendous step in the same direction. The marching contingents were marshalled by Commandant Tomas MacDonagh on behalf of I.V. Headquarters Staff; uniformed Volunteers headed by their officers, formed the most striking feature of the procession; Volunteers comprised the firing party at the graveside. Pearse's oration (from which we quote) was a clarion call to the nation, and particularly to the Irish Volunteers:

"... if there is anything that makes it fitting that I, rather than some other, I, rather than one of the grey-haired men who were young with

him and shared in his labour and in his suffering, should speak here, it is perhaps that I may be taken as speaking on behalf of a new generation that has been re-baptised in the Fenian faith, and that has accepted responsibility of carrying out the Fenian programme. I propose to you then that, here by the grave of this unrepentant Fenian, we renew our baptismal vows; that, here by the grave of this unconquered and unconquerable man, we ask of God, each one for himself, such unshakable purpose, such high and gallant courage, such unbreakable strength of soul as belonged to O'Donovan Rossa.

"Deliberately here we avow ourselves, as he avowed himself in the dock, Irishmen of one allegiance only. We of the Irish Volunteers, and you others who are associated with us in to-day's task and duty, are bound together and must stand together henceforth in brotherly union for the achievement of the freedom of Ireland. And we know only one definition of freedom: it is Tone's definition, it is Mitchel's definition, it is Rossa's definition. Let no man blaspheme the cause that the dead generations of Ireland served by giving it any other name and definition than their name and their definition.

"... Our foes... cannot undo the miracles of God who ripens in the hearts of young men the seeds sown by the young men of a former generation. And the seeds sown by the young men of '65 and '67 are coming to their miraculous ripening to-day... The Defenders of this Realm have worked well in secret and in the open. They think that they have pacified Ireland. They think that they have purchased half of us and intimidated the other half. They think that they have foreseen everything, think that they have provided against everything; but the fools, the fools, the fools!—they have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace."

That the Volunteers who heard, and read, these inspiring words felt themselves "re-baptised in the Fenian faith," and were confirmed in the determination to "carry out the Fenian programme," cannot be doubted.

Few, however, realised that Pearse and his I.R.B. colleagues were at that moment perfecting plans "for the achievement of the freedom of Ireland" as defined by Tone and Mitchel and Rossa.

In the summer of that year (1915), the then "Executive" of the Supreme Council, I.R.B. (on which I substituted for MacDiarmada) appointed a "Military Committee." The original members of the latter were Pádraig Pearse, Joseph Plunkett and Eamonn Ceannt. Later, Tom Clarke and Sean MacDiarmada (the two members of the I.R.B. "executive" resident in Dublin) actively co-operated. Henceforth, the body may be termed "THE MILITARY COUNCIL"—by which title it became known in after years.

James Connolly was co-opted late in January, 1916, and Tomas MacDonagh early in April. Thus the Military Council eventually numbered seven—the seven signatories to the Easter Proclamation of the Irish Republic.

The date of the projected Rising had been selected by the end of 1915; the method by which the effective participation of the whole Volunteer force could be arranged without exposing the secret purpose of the Military Council was a problem of prime importance. Mindful of the 1914 capitulation to Redmond—contrary to the judgment of the I.R.B. Executive—the question of such participation could not safely be left to a vote of the governing body of the Irish Volunteers. A simple and what at the time seemed an effective solution was decided on; Pearse, besides being a member of the secret revolutionary group, was also Director of Organisation on the I.V. Headquarters Staff, and in this latter capacity it was one of his functions to order any general exercises or manoeuvres by the Volunteers throughout the country. The issuance by him of such an instruction for Easter-time, 1916, was calculated not to arouse the least suspicion and to ensure a general mobilisation under arms at the opportune moment.

Pearse's order appeared in due course in the *Irish Volunteer* of April 8th, 1916. In the light of subsequent events, the camouflage in the first and third paragraphs is of particular interest:

“ 1. Following the lines of last year, every unit of the Irish Volunteers will hold manoeuvres during the Easter Holidays. The object of the manoeuvres is to test mobilisation with equipment.

“ 3. Each Brigade, Battalion or Company commander, as the case may be, will, on or before 1st May next, send to the Director of Organisation a detailed report of the Manoeuvres carried out by his unit.

P. H. Pearse, Commandant,
Director of Organisation.”

This was published with the approval of the Volunteer Executive and of Eoin MacNeill, Chief of Staff, but Pearse did not tell them that he had already issued secret orders to the Brigade Commandants as to the areas in which their respective “manoeuvres” were to be held. Nor did he inform them of the ultimate purposes which those manoeuvres were intended to serve.

MacNeill when reviewing a muster of Volunteers at Lough Gur, Co. Limerick, about the end of March, 1916, inadvertently got an inkling that Commandant Pearse had issued certain orders of which he had not been aware. The O/C on that occasion, in the belief that the I.V. Chief-of-Staff had cognisance of all orders issued, casually remarked that he as Commandant of the Limerick Brigade had received instructions to “hold the line of the Shannon in the event of actual hostilities.” This seemed rather peculiar to

MacNeill but he did not dwell on the subject and its real significance did not then occur to him.

There is no other evidence available to me to show the approximate date on which these secret instructions had been issued by Pearse, nor by whom they had been conveyed. I happen to know that the initial strategic positions to be occupied by the Brigades of the South and West had been envisaged at the end of 1915: Cork was to hold the County to the south and west of the Boggeragh Mountains—left flank contacting the Kerry Brigade which was to extend eastwards from Tralee; Limerick was to contact Kerry on the south, Clare and Galway to the north; Limerick, Clare and Galway were to hold the line of the Shannon to Athlone. These details were given to me by Pearse at Saint Enda's in January, 1916; they were to be transmitted orally by me to the respective Commandants. My mission was, however, cancelled; I had no further association with these despatches. (Though irrelevant here, the reason for my disconnection with this phase may be mentioned because of its relationship with a matter of historical interest. In the autumn of 1915, on instructions from Pearse, I paid a special visit to Tralee, Dingle, and other coastal points in the south-west to ascertain the most suitable spot at which a shipload of arms from Germany could be landed and from which they could be most expeditiously distributed. I reported in favour of Fenit, which was the point eventually chosen. Another result of this visit was that the British Government held I had not on entering a “proclaimed area” fulfilled the regulations pertaining to registration by “friendly aliens,” and in January, 1916, served me with an Order under which I was classified as an “enemy alien” and confined to a five mile radius from my temporary residence in Dublin.)

On Spy Wednesday, April 19th, the famous “Castle document” was read at a meeting of the Dublin Corporation. To cope with the alleged plans of the Castle authorities as detailed therein, MacNeill, Chief-of-Staff, issued an Order that day to the Irish Volunteers:

“Your object will be to preserve the arms and the organisation of the Irish Volunteers. . . In general you will arrange that your men defend themselves and each other in small groups so placed that they may best be able to hold out.”

The fact that the Volunteers were thus keyed up at this particular moment suited the Military Council admirably. But, a rude shock was in store for them.

Bulmer Hobson (according to Le Roux in “Tom Clarke and the Irish Freedom Movement”), at a meeting of the Volunteer Executive held that same evening (Wednesday), overheard a conversation between I.R.B. members of that body from which he deduced that a Rising was contem-

plated. He immediately informed MacNeill who now coupled this information with what he had learned at Lough Gur; both decided to thwart the plans.

Late that night (apparently) they drafted an order instructing Commandant J. J. O'Connell to proceed to Cork, and authorising him to "take chief command . . . over all Volunteers in Munster." It also stipulated that "all orders issued by Commandant Pearse, or by any other person heretofore, are hereby cancelled or recalled," and that officers in Munster should "report to Commandant O'Connell as required by him on the subject of any special orders which they had received and any arrangements made or to be made by them in consequence."

On Holy Thursday night, MacNeill (accompanied by Hobson) called on Pearse at St. Enda's and put to him the direct question as to whether an Insurrection was planned. Pearse answered in the affirmative, MacNeill then said that he would do his utmost short of informing the British Government, to stop it. Accordingly, MacNeill and Hobson during the small hours of Good Friday morning took further steps to call off the Easter manoeuvres of the Irish Volunteers ordered by Pearse as Director of Organisation.

This attitude of MacNeill with respect to participation by the Irish Volunteers in an armed insurrection is understandable on the basis of his interpretation of the inaugural policy of the Volunteers. It also furnishes justification for the Military Council in having withheld its revolutionary plans from MacNeill and from the Volunteer Executive as a whole.

The fact that Easter-time, 1916, was a most "opportune moment" for Irishmen to strike for Ireland's freedom—a time at which Britain was engaged in a desperate struggle with a powerful enemy, and when many small nations sought to secure or maintain their independence by engaging in that conflict—cannot now be gainsaid. And, had the Volunteers not participated in the Easter Rising, this question would have arisen in after years: Why did the Irish Volunteers—a military body pledged to secure and maintain certain undefined "liberties,"—not avail of that opportunity to fight for the achievement of National Independence?

The supplementary orders drafted Holy Thursday night by MacNeill and Hobson were sweeping in character, but as these do not seem to have been promulgated (for a reason apparent in the next paragraph) it is unnecessary to quote them.

Copy of MacNeill's order pertaining to Commandant O'Connell (dated April 19th) reached an office in O'Connell St., early on Friday. It was read there by Tomas Aghas and myself about noon. I immediately reported its contents to Clarke and Connolly; this was the first intimation they had of it or of any other move of MacNeill's to stop the Rising. Before 1 p.m. MacDonagh arrived at the O'Connell St. address. I showed the MacNeill order to him, and he asserted that "the matter is alright." Questioned

further as to what he meant, MacDonagh stated that MacDiarmada and himself (and Pearse, as I learned later) had interviewed MacNeill that morning at his residence, that they "put all their cards on the table," and that MacNeill on learning for the first time that a shipload of arms was due to arrive "abdicated his position as Chief-of-Staff"—thereby permitting the Military Council to take control of the Volunteers as they had planned.

Pearse, after receipt of MacNeill's ultimatum on Holy Thursday night, contacted MacDiarmada and MacDonagh; the three of them lost no time in interviewing MacNeill; between 8 and 9 o'clock Friday morning they called on him at his residence, Woodtown Park, Rathfarnham. He was in bed at the time and received MacDiarmada in his bedroom. MacDiarmada for the first time recited to him facts pertaining to the Rising; that it was to commence on Easter Sunday. He also told MacNeill that a shipload of arms and ammunition was expected from Germany; MacNeill on hearing this for the first time, replied, "In view of that, the fight is inevitable and we are all in it." MacDiarmada also told him that a Proclamation was to be issued on Easter Sunday; on being asked what its terms were MacDiarmada stated that the document was not yet complete. MacNeill then dressed and came downstairs where he found Pearse and MacDonagh waiting; the three visitors joined him to breakfast. (These details were furnished to me by Eoin MacNeill on August 14, 1936. They confirm, substantially, MacDonagh's remarks of Good Friday afternoon, 1916).

Thus the disaster which threatened the plans of the Military Council had been warded off—temporarily. The way was again clear for action. Lest news or rumours of the crux just overcome should have reached the country, MacDiarmada at once sent despatches to various centres. That for Cork was taken by Jim Ryan (later Minister in the de Valera Cabinet). It read:

"Commandants MacCurtain and MacSwiney are to proceed with the Rising. Commandant O'Connell is to go forthwith to (?) as per previous advices."

MacCurtain's reply: "Tell Sean we will blaze away while the stuff lasts," showed that the Military Council had the Cork situation well in hand Saturday morning, April 22nd. But subsequent orders and events confused the whole position.

The Military Council received word that Saturday that the German arms ship had been captured by the British.¹ The efficient arming of the Volunteers in the South and West had thus become impossible. News of the

¹ The statement in *An Cosantoir* of February, 1945, that "the *Aud* was under continuous observation from the time she left port until she arrived in Tralee Bay," gives a wrong impression. Captain Karl Spindler's account of the voyage—"The Mystery of the Casement Ship"—demonstrates how the *Aud* under the neutral Norwegian

capture reached MacNeill later; he called several advisers into conference that night and decided once more to take matters out of the control of Pearse, MacDiarmada, etc., he despatched messengers throughout the country with this countermanding order:

“Volunteers completely deceived. All orders for special action are hereby cancelled and on no account will action be taken.”

About 10 p.m. he summoned Jim Ryan (who had just returned from the South) and gave him copies of this order—one to be delivered to Commandant MacCurtain, Cork. The O’Rahilly was despatched to Limerick, others elsewhere. Thus the plans of the Military Council were again disrupted. The Rising based on those plans was scheduled to commence the following afternoon (Easter Sunday)!

About midnight (Saturday) MacDonagh arrived at 27 Hardwicke Street—MacDiarmada’s headquarters for the night—with news of MacNeill’s latest countermand. The situation was appalling. Pearse and Plunkett arrived later. The four sat in conference—in which I, by virtue of my membership of the Supreme Council I.R.B., was called on by MacDiarmada to participate. Clarke, Connolly and Ceannt, who had not stayed at their own homes that night, were not available. The consensus of opinion among those present was that the Rising should be proceeded with, and it was decided that a full meeting of the Military Council be called for next morning at Liberty Hall.

To ensure widespread circulation of Saturday night’s cancellation order, the following appeared in the *Sunday Independent*, April 23rd:

“Owing to the very critical position, all orders given to Irish Volunteers for to-morrow, Easter Sunday, are hereby rescinded, and no parades, marches, or other movements of Irish Volunteers will take place. Each individual Volunteer will obey this order strictly in every particular.

EOIN MACNEILL.”

flag, successfully bluffed British naval units whenever she passed them en route. The proof of this is evidenced by the fact that more than twenty hours elapsed between her arrival (5 p.m. Thursday) and the hour of her virtual arrest by the British (1 p.m. Friday)—during which time the cargo of arms could have been landed had the Volunteers been at Fenit to receive them. (The explanation of the Tralee men’s failure to contact the *Aud* on arrival is to be found in Devoy’s “*Recollections of An Irish Rebel*”).

The British had been on the look-out for the German steamer, *Libau*. She, in her Norwegian guise as the *Aud*, fooled them. She also fooled the Captain of *Shatter II* twelve hours after arrival in Tralee Bay, when the latter interviewed Spindler at 5 a.m. Good Friday. But, papers found on Casement on his arrest later that morning (Spindler p. 169) evidently directed suspicion in a special manner to the *Aud*. The challenge of the British “wireless boat” at one o’clock that afternoon can thus be accounted for.

Undismayed, the Military Council in session at Liberty Hall Easter Sunday forenoon made two important decisions:

- First: To send despatches immediately to the various Commandants confirming MacNeill’s cancellation of that day’s manoeuvres;
- Second: That the Rising would commence in Dublin next day at noon—despatches to this effect to be forwarded that night to the country Battalions.

The first was intended to obviate the possibility that units outside the Metropolitan area might start operations before the Dublin Battalions could occupy their allotted positions on Easter Monday. Also, that should the British perchance become aware of this follow-up of MacNeill’s countermand, any suspicion on their part of impending action by the Volunteers may thereby be allayed.

Messages implementing decision number one were despatched from Liberty Hall about 1 p.m. In addition to the twofold purpose mentioned in preceding paragraph, it is obvious from the following note written by Pearse at 5.5 p.m. Sunday, that the intention was to convince MacNeill also that the Rising had been called off—thus obviating any further untoward action by him:

“To Eoin MacNeill, Woodtown Park.

“Commandant MacDonagh is to call on you this afternoon. He countermanded the Dublin parades to-day with my authority. I confirmed your countermand as the leading men would not have obeyed it without my confirmation.”

The second decision of the Military Council—**THAT THE RISING WOULD COMMENCE IN DUBLIN NEXT DAY, EASTER MONDAY**, was the vital one. These indomitable men could not be swerved from the task to which they had set their hand.

Couriers were notified to be present that Sunday evening at the rooms of the Keating Branch of the Gaelic League North Frederick Street. Pearse arrived there about 8 p.m. He had ready on small slips of paper a brief despatch which read:

“We start operations at noon to-day, Monday. Carry out your instructions.”

Signed either “P.H.P.” or “P.H. Pearse.”

Some of these left Dublin that night; others not until next day. The “opportune moment” had arrived. No human act could now stop the Rising. The effects of MacNeill’s countermands had been minimised so far as the Dublin Battalions were concerned, and Hobson was under arrest

since the afternoon of Good Friday. Even had the British military machine in Ireland got into action prior to noon Easter Monday, the fight would have gone on, though the initial operations would thereby have taken a different turn.

When during the last few terrible days the plans of the Military Council were at times on the verge of irretrievable disaster, these valiant men remained unshaken in their resolve. Once the Insurrection got under way, their heartrending experiences were for the most part forgotten by them. They had "saved Ireland's honour" and were content.

We who have had opportunity to ponder on incidents in Ireland's fight for Freedom during the subsequent years, may well feel that the outcome of those untoward experiences of Holy Week, 1916, were Providential in more than one respect.

The valedictory words of Padraig Pearse, Commander-in-Chief of the Irish Republican forces, written in the burning G.P.O. on Friday, April 28th, 1916 (with respect to the failure of most of the country battalions to participate in the Rising) will serve as a fitting close to this review of what proved to be a bewildering chapter in the history of the Insurrection:

"Of the fatal countermanding order which prevented those plans from being carried out, I shall not speak further. Both Eoin MacNeill and we have acted in the best interests of Ireland."

There is, however, another noteworthy phase: Historians when dealing with previous Irish revolutions belaboured the fact that the organisations responsible for them were cursed and thwarted by spies and informers. They also insinuated that all Irish revolutionists against British domination were "easy marks" for such spies, and were fools to think that their plans could be kept secret from the eyes of the British Government. These critics side-stepped the well-known fact that every great Power has had its spies continually prying into the military secrets of its rivals—often with considerable success. The point I wish to stress in conclusion is that neither the leadership of the I.R.B. in 1916 nor that of the other organisations which participated in the Rising of "Easter Week" was cursed by either spies or traitors. Herein we have splendid testimony to the extreme care in recruiting exercised by the men responsible for the I.R.B. over a generation (coupled with propitious circumstances), and in particular to the methods followed by the members of the Military Council who guarded their secrets so jealously that the insurrectionary forces were enabled to march unopposed into their several strategic positions on Easter Monday, 1916.

CHAPTER V

"THE HISTORY OF THE IRISH CITIZEN ARMY"¹

BY

R. M. FOX

Comments by DIARMUID LYNCH
(April, 1946)

FOREWORD

Due to prolonged absences from Ireland over 1917-32 I missed some published accounts of the Rising which, it seems, gave the main credit for "Easter Week" to the leadership of James Connolly. Mr. P. S. O'Hegarty's remark in "The Victory of Sinn Fein":

"There has been much talk, and much writing, as to who was responsible for the insurrection, and I doubt if Mr. Robert Lynd's sentimental attribution of it to the Dublin Strike and the Citizen Army and James Connolly will ever be overtaken,"

directed my attention to the extent to which this aspect of the history of the period had lacked impartial presentation.

In later years Mr. R. M. Fox's "Green Banners" and his "History of the Irish Citizen Army" further emphasised one aspect of events. Repeatedly, Mr. Fox decried the organisation and the men to whom the greater credit belongs, viz., The Irish Republican Brotherhood, the members of its Supreme Council, and the members of its Military Council.

Clearly, the author was ignorant of many factors in the pre-Easter situation. But, surely, he cannot have been ignorant of outstanding and indisputable facts which came to light after the Rising—including the important preparations made by the I.R.B. Military Council *prior* to the date on which James Connolly was co-opted a member of that Council (January 19-21, 1916).

The extent to which Mr. Fox's narrative lacks impartial presentation of all the facts makes it incumbent on me to refute his numerous misstatements. Criticism of a general character would be entirely inadequate. I have therefore quoted numerous excerpts and *commented on each*.

¹ Published by James Duffy & Co., Ltd., Dublin, 1943

If the annoyance engendered by his type of "history" has led me into an occasional censorious attitude towards the Irish Citizen Army as an organisation (whose members were my esteemed comrades in arms), and towards General James Connolly (my revered commanding officer in the G.P.O.) as a leader, I can only regret the circumstances responsible therefor.

DIARMUID LYNCH.

(May, 1946).

- P. 3. "The idea of the workers organising their own force . . . was the weapon used by James Connolly to force the Easter Insurrection."

Comment :

The claim that Connolly "forced" the insurrection of "Easter Week" is a *myth*—which, due to reiteration, has been accepted widely as fact. An unbiased historian on examining the record cannot fail to recognise that the I.R.B. Military Council, prior to Connolly's membership thereof, needed no "forcing."

- P. 3. ". . . The organised force, which, under the leadership of James Connolly, advanced from being a purely workers' defence force to the point of becoming the advance guard of the movement for insurrection in 1916."

Comment :

There is no factual basis for this further claim that the Irish Citizen Army was "the advance guard of the movement for Insurrection in 1916." Prior to January 19th 1916, Connolly had no knowledge even of the existence of the I.R.B. Military Council. In ignorance of this Council's insurrectionary plans—extensive and far advanced towards maturity at that date—Connolly's tactics threatened irretrievable disaster. Hence his arrest and detention by the Military Council.

- P. 6. (Monteith quoted) : "When the men of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union . . . formed another battalion of the Citizen Army."

Comment :

In the light of subsequent developments such references to Battalions of the I.C.A. might well be forgotten.

- P. 8. "For some time" writes O'Casey in his *Story of the I.C.A.* . . . "Thousands of working men zealously endeavoured to learn 'The soldiers' glorious trade.' Yet many who paraded . . . could not give the time needed for training and discipline. The solid core of the army numbered only a few hundred men."

Comment :

I do not blame Connolly, nor any of his lieutenants, for the fact that the large number of Liberty Hall men who paraded, etc., with the I.C.A. after its inception in 1913, later withdrew from its activities and from the opportunity "to learn the soldiers' glorious trade." Their outlook was a purely "Labour" one; it was not National and not Republican. But the fact that the active I.C.A. members dwindled to some 200 is a striking commentary on the ridiculous claim made for Connolly that he was the outstanding man in the propagation of Republicanism in Ireland and made "Easter Week" possible.

- P. 8. "From the beginning the Citizen Army, besides being a strike force, stood firmly to those principles of national freedom which Connolly had voiced since the earliest days of his public activities in Ireland."

Comment :

"From the beginning" ?

- P. 9. "The Citizen Army . . . was in the field about a month earlier than the Irish Volunteers."

Comment :

It was first in its own field—the Labour field, but not in the National sense.

- P. 9. "The *Irish Times* report (of meeting November 25th, 1913, at which the Irish Volunteers' organisation was established) . . . hostile to both the C.A. and the I.V.s, exaggerated the disorder. One speaker was howled down on account of his attitude to the strike. . . ."

"It is true that some of the leaders of that body were distrusted, especially in the days when the Redmondite section dominated the Volunteer councils."

Comment :

Here the writer introduces a *reason* of what may be deemed a national character as applied to I.C.A. opposition to the Irish Volunteers on the date of their inception—which reason did not arise until June, 1914. Redmond's nominees were in a majority only from June, 1914, to the following September, but the hostility of the I.C.A. existed from the establishment of the Irish Volunteers—to which the *Irish Times* report refers. If the I.C.A., between November, 1913, and June, 1914, had been imbued with a broad National and Republican outlook, its leaders, instead of having been hostile to the Irish Volunteers, would have welcomed the establishment and progress of the latter.

- P. 9. "The Citizen Army considered the working class as the most resolute section of the movement for national independence. A period of rivalry resulted."

Comment :

This is written of a time, November 1913—August 1914, when the Citizen Army had no aim beyond the protection of its own sectional interest. The vast majority of Labour, as was the case of the vast majority of the Irish people outside the I.R.B., the Gaelic League and G.A.A., had lost their sense of Nationalism. The “rivalry” he writes of was entirely on the part of the I.C.A. which failed utterly to appreciate the *National* aim of the Irish Volunteers.

The first of the declared objects of the *Irish Volunteers* was :

“To secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to all the people of Ireland.”

P. 10. Fox quotes *The Irish Worker* :

“Let others who may prate about ‘the rights and liberties common to all Irishmen.’”

Comment :

Here we have hostility not merely to some speaker whose attitude to the Strike was deemed unfriendly by the I.C.A. nor to Redmond’s enforced domination of the Irish Volunteers (which, as already mentioned, did not take effect until seven months after the establishment of the I.V.s), but a most uncalled for slur on the Irish Volunteers as a whole (which included the I.R.B.).

At this period, of course, the I.C.A. was as ignorant of the existence of the I.R.B. as was practically the entire Irish people (with very few possible exceptions) outside the membership of the I.R.B. itself. Not until Easter Monday, 1916, did the people of Ireland come to realise that the I.R.B. of the 60’s never ceased to function : that over the 49 years which elapsed since ’67 it kept alive and fostered the ideal of an independent Irish Republic ; or that its members were the core and the backbone of the Irish Volunteers ; or that it was the leaders of the I.R.B. who alone comprised the secret Military Council up to January 21st, 1916, and who had prior to this date perfected the plans for a Rising at Easter time, 1916.

P. 10. “Right from 1896 . . . Connolly had striven for an open revolutionary Republican movement in Ireland. He had always objected to conspiratorial groups cut off from the mass of the people, condemned to futile and ineffective whisperings and plottings.”

Comment :

While it is true that James Connolly in 1896 openly advocated an Irish Socialist Republic (free from the political domination of Britain), the revolutionary element in his policy was the *Socialistic* one,—“the

public ownership by the Irish people of the land, and the instruments of production, distribution and exchange ; agriculture to be administered as a public function, under boards of management elected by the agricultural population and responsible to them and to the nation at large ; all other forms of labour necessary to the well-being of the community to be conducted on the same principles.”

In 1896, and later, it was safe enough for an individual Socialist or a Socialist organisation to advocate *openly* a Republic the dominant feature of which advocacy was socialistic. The attitude of the British Government would have been very different had Connolly had an armed organisation (numerically strong) under his command whose *first* and only immediate objective was to break the political connection with Britain, and whose purpose was to achieve national independence through armed insurrection.

Mr. Fox’s comments on p. 10 about “conspiratorial groups . . . condemned to futile and ineffective whisperings and plottings” (and similar statements elsewhere), fail to do justice to the men who planned the Rising.

To glorify Connolly—and in the effort to disparage Clarke, Pearse, MacDiarmada and their colleagues of the I.R.B. as mere ineffective whisperers and plotters—he evidently believes in the maxim: “Audacity, audacity and then audacity” !

P. 10. “As the plans for the insurrection matured, Connolly came to an understanding with the Irish Republican Brotherhood element in the Volunteers.”

Comment :

The plan—the worth-while plans—moving towards maturity in January, 1916 were those of the I.R.B. Military Council—a fact which Mr. Fox does not state. In that month this Military Council deemed it necessary to arrest Connolly to keep him from wrecking those plans of which he had prior thereto been ignorant. He had known nothing about the agreement with Germany for a supply of arms and ammunition, nor of their plans for the Volunteers throughout the country. When informed of them (after he was sworn to secrecy, doubtless), Connolly agreed to act in unison with the I.R.B. Council. Thus, he became a valuable “conspiratorial” ally.

P. 11. “The Citizen Army *always* asserted the demand for national independence—for an ‘Irish Workers’ Republic.’”

Comment :

The Constitution adopted by the I.C.A. in March 1914 (see O’Casey’s *The Irish Citizen Army*, p. 71) while setting out Connolly’s socialistic

ideas, makes no mention of an Irish Republic as one of its objects. The fact is—as O'Casey admits (as of 1914 apparently)—that “labour though fundamentally democratic, is far from being national.”

- P. 14. “Connolly feared at one time that the opportunity for an insurrection would be lost. He set himself to counter this possibility.”

Comment :

That Connolly felt this way before he was taken into the confidence of the Military Council (January 1916) is unquestioned.

But when his ignorance of the actual situation was dispelled by the Military Council on January 20th or 21st, 1916, when he came to learn of the plans already perfected and that the Military Council had selected Easter time for the Rising, he could no longer fear “that the opportunity for an insurrection would be lost.”

- P. 14. Mr. Fox continues (after the word “possibility” in above extract) :
 “First, he wanted to know how far he could depend on the Citizen Army. This was *a few weeks before the rising when he had made up his mind*. One by one he called them into an upper room at Liberty Hall and to each he put the unequivocal question : “*are you prepared to come out in a rising if the Citizen Army stands alone.*” ?

Comment :

Now, in “*a few weeks before the Rising*” marks the date of these alleged interviews as *early in April*. This alleged incident raises some pertinent questions, viz., :

- (1) Was Connolly not satisfied before the first of April 1916 of the spirit of the I.C.A. to obey his orders as Commandant thereof, and of their readiness to fight at his command ?
- (2) Was he not satisfied in these respects when in November 1914 he was ready to call out the Citizen Army to prevent the deportation of Monteith which the British Government had ordered ?
- (3) Was he not thus satisfied when he ordered the I.C.A. to conduct fake attacks on Dublin Castle, Magazine Fort, etc., in 1916—when faced with the possibility that the British Command might have deemed either of these “attacks” as genuine, and might have opened fire on the I.C.A. accordingly ?
- (4) Was he not so satisfied when early in January 1916 (or thereabouts) he had issued orders to his Vice-Commandant, Michael Mallin, that if Connolly “were taken” (for “disappeared”) that the Citizen Army should “*fight at once*” ?
- (5) Another and more important question enters into the incident

of the alleged interviews Connolly had with the I.C.A. on or about 1st April, 1916 :

Ten weeks had elapsed since the date on which Connolly was co-opted a member of the Military Council and became party to the arrangement that on *Easter Sunday* the Rising was to begin with the Irish Volunteers and Citizen Army entering on it as *a combined force*. He was also aware of the fact that the Military Council would not divulge either the decision to strike or the date thereof until the last possible moment arrived for giving instructions to the various Commandants who were to lead their respective Battalions into action. This secrecy was an all-important factor, lest through loose talk on the part of any individual the British Government officials in Ireland might learn of what was afoot—with disastrous results.

- (6) Why should Connolly, in view of the secret knowledge in his possession, ask each member of the *rank and file* of the I.C.A. *early in April 1916* : “*Are you prepared to come out in a Rising if the Citizen Army stands alone ?*” Here was a definite *intimation to each* of 200 men that a *Rising was an immediate prospect*. In the first place, Connolly must have been convinced since the date of his association with Clarke, MacDiarmada, Pearse, Ceannt and Plunkett¹ in January that the Citizen Army would not be fighting alone—just as those men must then have been fully satisfied that the Irish Volunteers would not be fighting alone. The alleged *quiz of the I.C.A. men* does not accord with common sense. And, it was *as dangerous as it was needless*.

From my association with men of the I.C.A. in the fight during Easter Week, and from what I learned of the fight put up by the rest of that Army in other Garrisons, I know that no finer or more loyal body of men ever fought for Irish Freedom. I can say the same of the Irish Volunteers. But if any of the responsible leaders were to quiz similarly any 200 or any 20 of the I.V. rank and file three weeks before the appointed day of the Rising, I would deem such action worse than foolhardy. In everyday life how often does the possessor of a secret confide that secret to “a friend” in whom he has confidence, and this friend confides in another friend, etc.

Had even a rumour of this secret—that a *Rising* was imminent—

¹ (MacDonagh was not a member of the Military Council until the week of 9th-15th of April, 1916).

reached Dublin Castle, there would have been no "Easter Week"!

In the absence of irrefutable confirmatory evidence, I do not accept Mr. Fox's statements with regard to those alleged interviews—which, if true, would be tantamount to an accusation against James Connolly that he broke faith with his colleagues on the Military Council.

- P. 36. "In the same issue of the paper (*Irish Worker*, Nov., 1913) *Madame Markievicz* . . . also struck the national note.

Comment :

What is this intended to suggest? That the I.C.A. (and Liberty Hall) had a national and republican outlook in 1913?

- P. 41. "Connolly was a man in whose mind the physical force tradition of Irish revolutionary history was *always* a strong and vital influence."

Comment :

Seeing that Connolly was a man who believed in organised effort, it is strange—if Fox's statement is true—how he failed to be linked up with either the I.R.B. in Ireland or the Clan-na-Gael in the U.S.A.

- P. 50. "There was no further unpleasantness with the police, and the band went unmolested.

"Such an incident indicates how the Citizen Army rose directly out of the situation and grasped the first handy weapon to aid itself in the struggle. In after years critics have tried to give the Citizen Army a theoretical basis either of a labour or a national character. But these men marching with hurleys to protect their band or trying to hold their own in the day to day struggle *had no carefully worked out theories.*"

Comment :

This is not in accordance with claims made elsewhere by Mr. Fox for the I.C.A. and it does admit that there is a difference between a National and a Labour character in an organisation.

- P. 60. "And now the Irish Volunteers were competing for the allegiance of workers."

Comment :

Ridiculous! The I.V.s competed with no organisation. It appealed to the manhood of *Ireland*—which included the men of every class and calling. (Beaslai in his *Life of Collins* gives a good picture of the situation.)

- P. 64. *The Constitution of the I.C.A.*

R. M. Fox claims more for this document than a reading of it will convey. It left much to be desired and much to be explained. (See text p. 64 of *History of I.C.A.*) ("See Comment on p. 184 *Green Banners*")

- P. 67. "The next issue of *The Irish Worker* (April 1914) began a series of

notes . . . signed S. O'C. The first stressed Larkin's advice *to have nothing to do with the Irish Volunteers.*"

Comment unnecessary!

- P. 69. "*The Dublin Trades Council—representing the organised workers of the city—officially approved the Citizen Army on April 6, 1914.*"
(Date on which it wanted to evict the I.C.A. ? See p. 101, p. 124 of *History of I.C.A.*)

- P. 70. "The Volunteers . . . had their left wing of the I.R.B., who stood for a Republic, and their right wing owing allegiance to Redmond, with the immediate and limited aim of Home Rule."

Comment :

No dates are given here, but, judging from matter on p. 69 and p. 70, the alleged Right Wing and Left Wing were in evidence in *April-May, 1914.*

The fact is that there was no such segregation at this date. The Irish Volunteers as such owed no allegiance to Redmond. He had opposed the organisation until its rapid advance in strength impelled him to seek its control. The I.R.B. had no occasion to intervene until Redmond, by dictatorial methods, achieved control of the I.V. governing Committee. It was only during the three months of Redmond's control that a Right Wing and a Left Wing may be said to have existed.

The influence of the I.R.B. in maintaining the Left Wing and in the expulsion of Redmond's nominees from the I.V. Executive Council Committee remained a secret until Easter, 1916.

- P. 70. "*The Citizen Army was not satisfied with them—Right, Left nor Centre. It was separatist and Republican.*"

Comment :

I wonder if through frequent repetition he himself now believes that this is a correct picture of the I.C.A. in the Summer of 1914, or that said attitude (as of a later date) of the I.C.A. to the Left Wing of the Irish Volunteers and the men behind it is justified. I DOUBT IT.

- P. 71. Captain White's unauthorised offer to the Volunteer executive of "two companies of fully uniformed and equipped men of the I.C.A. if the I.V. executive would allow them to remain an independent and affiliated body."

Comment :

This was ridiculous from my point of view. The "full equipment" of the I.C.A. at this date (May 1914) included just ONE RIFLE. (Even though, technically, the term "full equipment" may not include rifles, the average reader would, I hold, deem "full equipment" to include

them.) At this date Tom Clarke wrote John Devoy "Larkin's people for some time past have been making war on the Irish Volunteers."

- P. 72. "Connolly wrote in *The Irish Worker* (30th May, 1914) 'We believe there are no real Irish Nationalists in Ireland outside of the Irish Labour Movement.'"

Well, well!

- P. 72. "Here is the key to all Connolly's later activities and to the activities of the Irish Citizen Army. *He is completely and militantly national.* Believing that Labour alone fully expresses that view, his aim was to put Labour in the forefront of the national struggle. Then—given a crisis—he relied on all sincere national elements coming in on the same side."

Comment:

"All out of step" but—Connolly and the I.C.A.

- P. 73. Comment:

Here again Fox proceeds to show that the continued hostility of the I.C.A. was because of the grip Redmond got on the Volunteers in June 1914—which grip was of short duration.

O'Casey continued his relentless hostility to the Volunteers—going so far as to endeavour to compel Madame Markievicz to sever her connection with the Irish Volunteers or else clear out of the I.C.A.

The majority of her colleagues on the Citizen Army Council had the decency and common sense to vote down O'Casey's contemptible effort (p. 73).

- P. 74. (Memo). Howth Gun running. 26th July, 1914.

- P. 76. (Memo). William O'Brien (I.T.U. Congress)—(an old I.R.B. man).

- P. 77. (Memo). Some of the Volunteers were criticised for riding home on "Murphy's trams" which had been used to bring the military out to Clontarf!!

- P. 77. "At the time of the Howth Gun running (26th July, 1914) Connolly . . . was in Belfast. His daughters, Nora and Ina . . . helped to dispose of them (the rifles) at safer places in the city. As a reward for their services they were given two to take back to Belfast. Connolly was most enthusiastic over the gun running. . . He was even then considering the use of arms."

Comment:

The last sentence is particularly noteworthy.

- P. 78. "At once he (Connolly) began his propaganda through *The Irish*

Worker (8th August, 1914) for a united front of the Citizen Army and the Volunteers."

Comment:

And at last the hostility of the I.C.A. to the Irish Volunteers ceased (August, 1914).

- P. 80. "Make up your mind to strike before your opportunity goes." (*Irish Worker*, 5th September, 1914).

"The last sentence was Connolly's guiding thought. He hammered it home continually until The Citizen Army became the embodiment of that idea, the spearhead of the movement for an armed rising."

Comment:

Here we have the same old repetition that the I.C.A. was the spearhead of the Rising—in the effort to propagate the idea that the I.R.B. had not made up its mind to strike before the opportunity passed.

The records show that it not only had made up its mind to that end but used every effort for the preparation to strike.

Two years later the Proclamation of Easter Week, 1916, read:

"Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisation, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself. She now seizes that moment . . . She strikes . . ."

- P. 81. (25th September, 1914. Asquith meeting at Mansion House. Citizen Army demonstration at Stephen's Green).

"The main body of the I.C.A. carried rifles and bayonets." "Except for revolver bullets there was little ammunition." "The great difference between the two armies was that the R.I.C. men had ammunition while the Citizen Army men had none." (P. 82).

- P. 83. "The Citizen Army had brought the rebel movement out on the streets and Connolly must have felt a thrill of satisfaction with the way in which this had been accomplished."

Comment:

The Citizen Army was not alone in this. From the inception of the Irish Volunteers in November, 1913, its members had purchased arms and ammunition whenever and wherever possible and carried their rifles and ammunition openly. Did he not consider that the landing of rifles and ammunition at Howth and Kilcool and transportation of them therefrom by the Irish Volunteers (and I.R.B.) brought the rebel movement out on the streets?

P. 84. (Memo) Redmond's Woodenbridge Speech, 20th September, 1914. (Memo) The original I.V. Prov. Com. seized Vol. Hqrs. on 24th September, 1914.

P. 85. *Irish Worker*, 10th October, 1914 suggested certain things for which the Volunteers might at once initiate a campaign:

"Pledge the Irish *National* (sic) Volunteers to remain in armed service in Ireland and to resist all attempts of any other Nation to deprive Ireland of their services."

Comment:

What did he think the Irish Volunteers broke with Redmond for except to do exactly what he suggests? The "*National Volunteers*" was the title by which Redmond's Volunteers were known *after the Split*.

P. 85. Connolly also suggested (*Irish Worker*, 10th Oct., 1914).

"Pledge the services of their armed forces in Ireland to enforce the repeal of all clauses in the Home Rule Bill denying to Ireland Powers of self government now enjoyed by South Africa, Australia and Canada."

P. 85. Mr. Fox comments:

"It is clear that he (Connolly) would never refuse co-operation with the Volunteers in a *forward policy* . . ."

Comment:

But the above suggestion did not represent a *forward policy* for the Irish Volunteers. This Dominion Home Rule policy was a *backward* one from the I.R.B. (and Volunteer) standpoint.

P. 85. "This statement, it should be emphasised, in its practical proposals, does not represent Connolly's own aims so much as the irreducible minimum upon which he thought the Volunteers could agree."

Well! Well! *Comment would be superfluous.*

P. 86. "Connolly's articles at this critical period (October, 1914—when the Citizen Army had very few rifles and *no ammunition*—D.L.) indicate his thought and the programme which he later worked out through the Citizen Army."

Comment:

Mr. Fox also recognises that the foregoing explanation (p. 85) of Connolly's "*Dominion Home Rule*" policy did not explain it away. He resorts once again to "big drum tactics" to emphasise Connolly's impetuosity for "action" and to throw odium on the I.R.B. "secret conspirators," thus:

P. 86. "He (Connolly) stresses the need for action and the danger of delaying too long. He refused to regard a *rising* as something to be *whispered*

about behind closed doors. It was part of his democratic faith that an *open appeal should be made to the masses* before whom it should be possible to justify any given line of policy."

"All this does not mean that Connolly was ready to reveal military plans to the enemy. But he saw no reason for concealing his aims from the mass of the people. In this he struck a new line, for the tradition of Fenian activity was one of secret conspiracy tinged on occasions with contempt and distrust for the ordinary people. Whenever a revolutionary movement is on the upgrade its solidarity with the aspirations of the people is stressed, but when it grows distrustful of its own strength and buoyancy, it retreats into *secret conspiracy and whisperings, portentous headshakings, and all the trappings which accompany pompous futility*."

"When Connolly came forward impetuously demanding action, it was a sign that there was a rising wave of revolt which was bursting through all the little coteries that were satisfied with secret conspiratorial talk."

Comment:

This interpretation merely indicates that Mr. Fox is not aware of, or has failed to appreciate, the facts in the public record of the revolutionary movement over many years prior to 1914, as well as other facts pertaining to the I.R.B. which came to public knowledge only with the promulgation of the Proclamation of Easter Week 1916. Compared with others of his generation, Connolly was, in 1914, but a novice in the broad national Republican movement.

Those who were experienced in the revolutionary movement over, say, the period 1900-1914—and who had intimate knowledge of public feeling throughout the country—knew:

(1) That the I.R.B. through *The Republic* (Belfast 1906)—which was shortlived through lack of support—and through *Irish Freedom* from 1910 to the date of its suppression in 1914, preached the doctrine of Republicanism and the establishment of an Irish Republic; that Pearse in *An Barr Buadh* openly advanced "the political independence of Ireland" and preached the elementary political truth that the liberty of a people can be guaranteed only by its readiness and ability to vindicate it in arms. The I.R.B. through the Wolfe Tone Memorial Committee lost no opportunity to *openly* preach the doctrine of Republican independence.

But the I.R.B. did *not openly* advocate a "*RISING*." It used common sense in planning and preparing in secret for a *Rising* and "Easter Week" was the outcome.