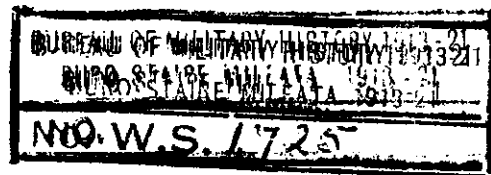


ORIGINAL



ROINN



COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1725.

Witness

Pádraig Ó Caoimh,
3, Leinster Road,
Rathmines,
Dublin.

Identity.

General Secretary, Sinn Féin, 1917 - 1922;
Member of 2nd Dáil Éireann, 1921 - 1923;
Assistant Clerk, Seanad Éireann, 1938 - 1947.

Subject.

Reorganisation of Sinn Féin, 1917.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

File No S. 95.

Form B.S.M. 2

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 1725

STATEMENT BY PÁDRAIG Ó CAOIMH,

3, Leinster Road, Rathmines, Dublin.

On the 17th February, 1917, Arthur Griffith re-started 'Nationality', with the financial aid (£200) of Mr. James O'Mara, later T.D. for South Kilkenny (1918). Needless to state, none of us, that is the prisoners released from prisons and internment camps, had any money and very few jobs. Some of us used to meet a few times a week in No. 6 Harcourt St. One night somebody suggested that we should reorganise Sinn Féin and carry on the policy. This was agreed on at our next meeting. Seán Campbell and I were appointed Honorary Secretaries; Seán Milroy, Director of Organisation; Dan MacCarthy, Director of Elections, and Seán Fitzgibbon, Honorary Treasurer; all now deceased. The work went on quietly, and in about a month we had sufficient money collected to pay a Secretary and I was appointed to the position. Seán Campbell was back in his position in Messrs Dollard & Co., Printers, but continued on as Honorary Secretary. I was paid £1 per week, and later on Seán Milroy was paid £1 per week, and Dan MacCarthy was paid later on, about the end of May. He was also paid £1 per week, plus travelling expenses. At this time we had a good share of money collected, about £500, I think, made up of affiliation fees and subscriptions.

The Lewes prisoners, as they were then called, were released on the 17th June, 1917, and on the 10th July Mr. de Valera was elected, at a bye-election for East Clare, as M.P., but not as a Sinn Féin nominee; but as can be seen from the list of subscriptions for the bye-election

published in 'Nationality' at the time, we collected a considerable sum of money, and all our prominent members worked for Mr. de Valera in East Clare. At the next meeting of the Standing Committee, after the election, I was ordered to write Mr. de Valera and invite him to attend the next meeting of the Committee. Mr. de Valera duly attended. This, as far as I am aware, was his first contact with the Sinn Féin organisation. The date would be about 26th July, 1917.

The Standing Committee met weekly, on a Thursday, at 8 p.m. One evening, about the 11th October, 1917, after the meeting of the Standing Committee, Mr. Joe McGrath and Mr. John O'Mahony (Seán Mór) came into No. 6, Harcourt St. and had an interview with Mr. Cathal Brugha. Eventually Mr. Cathal Brugha, Mr. E. de Valera, Mr. A. Griffith, Mr. Joe McGrath and Mr. John O'Mahony left the building and, as I learned after (the following morning), went to Cathal Brugha's private residence, Ros na Ríogh, Fitzwilliam Terrace, Upper Rathmines Road, Rathmines. The following morning (Friday), at about 11 a.m., Mr. Griffith handed me a slip of paper, on which was written a working agreement signed by Messrs Brugha, de Valera, and Griffith, with a request from Mr. Griffith that I bring it before the next meeting of the Standing Committee. This I did, and it was passed without amendment by the Standing Committee. At the next meeting of the Standing Committee, when the meeting was over, I got Mr. Brugha, Mr. de Valera, and Mr. Griffith to initial the agreement. The organisation worked smoothly until the Árd Fheis of the 25th and 26th October, 1917.

I was arrested on the night of the 17th May, 1918, (German Plot mar dh'each) by British soldiers and Dublin Castle detectives. No. 6 Harcourt St. was raided on the 18th May, 1918, by police and military, and they took away

books and records. I believe they took in the raid the Minute Book of the Standing Committee. In any case, I have not seen the minute book since. I have no interest in the minute book now, except that it may be of some historical value. It may be in the Crimes Section, Dublin Castle, Detective Branch, or it may be in the possession of some private person.

Signed: Patrick O'Brien

Date: 9 Jan, 1958.

Witness: M. Dawson
Secretary,
Bureau of Military History, 1913-1921.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 1,725

CABINTEELY HOUSE,
CABINTEELY,
CO. DUBLIN.

27th February, 1958.

Mr. P. J. Brennan,
Secretary,
Bureau of Military History 1913-21,
26, Westland Row,
DUBLIN.



Dear Mr. Brennan,

I have read Pdraig O'Keeffe's Statement, and take it my corroboration of the following portion of the statement is required:

' The Standing Committee met weekly, on a Thursday, at 8 p.m. One evening, about the 11th October, 1917, after the meeting of the Standing Committee, Mr. Joe McGrath and Mr. John O'Mahony (Sean Mor) came into No. 6, Harcourt Street and had an interview with Mr. Cathal Brugha. Eventually Mr. Cathal Brugha, Mr. E. de Valera, Mr. A. Griffith, Mr. Joe McGrath and Mr. John O'Mahony left the building and, as I learned after (the following morning), went to Cathal Brugha's private residence, Ros na Riogh, Fitzwilliam Terrace, Upper Rathmines Road, Rathmines.'

I regret I have no recollection of the particular incident; but this does not mean that it is not correct, as I find my memory sadly failing me in respect of periods not quite so far back as 1917.

I can say, however, that I did take a very active part in the period mentioned, in doing what Pdraig O'Keeffe has mentioned, but, as I stated above, I can't just remember the exact incident quoted.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Joseph McGrath'.

Joseph McGrath.



Telefón 61018.

ROINN COSANTA.

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

(Bureau of Military History 1913-21),

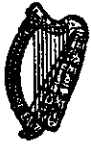
26 RAEDH NA NIARTHARACH,
(26 Westland Row),

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH.
(Dublin).

The attached letter and enclosure which I addressed to Mr. de Valera on 10th January, 1958, was returned to me on 15th May, 1958, through his A.D.C., Lieut.-Colonel Sean Brennan.

Colonel Brennan told me that Mr. de Valera had no comment to make on its contents.

Brennan RÚNA Í
15.5.1958.



ROINN COSANTA

Telefón 61018

S. 95.

ROINN
10 Eanáir 1958
RÚNAÍ

BUREAU STAIRÉ MÍLEATA 1913-21

(Bureau of Military History 1913-21.)

26 RAEDH NA NIARTHARACH,
(26 Westland Row),

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH.
(Dublin).

10 Eanáir, 1958.

Personal Secretary to the Taoiseach,
(Miss O'Kelly).

I enclose herewith copy of a statement dated 9 Eanáir, 1958, which has been placed on record in the Bureau by Pádraig Ó Caoimh (Paidín), 3, Leinster Road, Rathmines, Dublin.

Mr. Ó Caoimh was General Secretary of the Sinn Féin organisation during the years 1917 - 1922.

He has requested that a copy of the statement be submitted to Mr. de Valera for his consideration and comment in so far as he, Mr. de Valera, is concerned.

P. J. Brennan RÚNAÍ.
(P. J. Brennan)



STATEMENT BY PÁDRAIG Ó CAOIMH,

3, Leinster Road, Rathmines, Dublin.

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Signed: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____