

**DUPLICATE**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1,766

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,766.

Witness

William O'Brien,  
89, Pembroke Road,  
Dublin.

Identity.

President, Trades Union Congress, 1913, '18, '25 & '41;  
Director, Central Bank of Ireland;  
Member, Dáil Éireann, 1927 & 1937-38.

Subject.

Irish Citizen Army, 1913-16;  
Easter Week, 1916;  
Irish National Aid & Volunteers' Dependants'  
Fund, 1916-18;  
Mansion House Anti-Conscription Conference, 1918.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

File No. 8.153.

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STATEMENT OF Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN,

44, Lansdowne Road, Dublin, now 89 PEMROKE RD.,  
Chapter I.

April 24th., 1916: The last words said to me by James Connolly just before he left Liberty Hall were "Go home now and stay there; you can be of no use now but may be of great service later on." In accordance with this instruction I went to my home, 43 Belvedere Place, and stayed there all that day. In the early afternoon a lady friend of my mother called and told us that she had been in the Phoenix Park early on Easter Monday forenoon and had seen the attack on the Magazine. Later in the evening a number of friends called and told me what the condition of the City was. They said there were no police or soldiers to be seen anywhere. As a result of that communication I decided to investigate for myself on Tuesday morning. I went down O'Connell Street about 10 a.m. I enquired at one of the windows of the G.P.O. in Henry Street if James Connolly was available and a short time later I saw him coming up from the direction of Princes Street. He walked up to the corner of Henry Street and spoke to me for some time. I asked him how things were going and particularly about the Citizen Army. He said they had done badly in Stephen's Green and that a large number of them were killed. I expressed surprise and concern at this and asked how it happened. He said mainly through a machine gun mounted on the roof of the Shelbourne Hotel. After a little further talk there appeared to be some commotion in the direction of O'Connell Bridge and I drew his

/attention

attention to this and suggested perhaps it would be better for him to return to the Post Office, which he did. I asked him were the girls with him (his daughters, Nora and Ina) and he said "No, they are gone to the country". I said "They went like that." "Oh," he said smilingly, "they are in the Army and must obey orders." He made no reference to the general situation, but to me he seemed rather depressed.

I sat about in Upper O'Connell Street for some time, and saw a small contingent marching down O'Connell Street into the Post Office, and I was told they were from Maynooth.

About noon I met Francis Sheehy Skeffington who spoke to me about looting and was very concerned to adopt measures to prevent same. He showed me a notice which he had written calling a meeting for Westmoreland Chambers, Westmoreland Street - rooms occupied by the Irish Women's Franchise League. The meeting was for some time in the afternoon - 4 o'clock, I think. I made no comment on this because prior to Easter Week I had mentioned to James Connolly that as soon as the insurrection started I thought there would be widespread looting and his reply was merely "That will be one more problem for the British". Skeffington told me that a cruiser and two gun-boats were landing British troops in Kingstown and I agreed to pass that information into the G.P.O. I went to the first window of the G.P.O. in Henry Street and asked there for an officer. Diarmaid Lynch, with whom I was acquainted, came and I gave him the information.

/Skeffington

Skeffington said he was going down to Mrs. Wyse-Power's to see if he could get something to eat. I accompanied him. The gate of Mrs. Wyse-Power's shop was closed but we made some noise and Mrs. Power herself came to the door. Skeffington asked her if she could give him something to eat and she said she had very little in the house and that all she could give him was some tea and an egg. Skeffington said that would do fine, and then Mrs. Wyse-Power asked him if he would go to Hamilton-Long's in O'Connell Street to get some medicine which she wanted for her eldest daughter who was ill: she had arranged that a messenger could get this in Hamilton-Long's although the place was closed. Skeffington agreed to do this and that was the last I saw of him.

In the evening of that day, Tuesday, I saw a good many of the shops in O'Connell Street being looted. I saw a young fellow standing on the ledge of McDowell's Jeweller's shop at the Pillar, breaking the window, taking out fistfuls of watches and chains and throwing them to the crowd. Later, a number of fires started; one, particularly, in Laurence's shop in the block between Earl Street and Cathedral Street. Amongst the crowd I heard talk of fires in other directions. The Fire Brigade appeared but went away after a short time, making no attempt to stop the fire in Laurence's. I saw no uniformed police or military anywhere about O'Connell Street.

On Wednesday, 26th., a number of soldiers appeared near my residence and were, apparently, taking up positions along the North Circular Road,  
/down

down by Russell Street and Portland Row. At about 11.30 two men, whom I did not know came to my residence with Roderick Connolly, son of James Connolly, aged 15 years, who had been in the G.P.O. from Monday, with a request to my sister that she should look after him. At this time the soldiers appeared to be moving up Belvedere Place towards my residence and my sister and I thought that young Connolly might be safer in some other house than ours. I got my sister to cross the road to a friend's and ask this lady if she would take Roderick Connolly. The lady agreed to do so, but reluctantly, and was apparently alarmed at the situation. In view of that I decided that it would, perhaps, be safer to keep young Connolly with us, and he remained.

While discussing with my sister the position of Roderick Connolly, I decided that if the British military searched the house, it would be undesirable to give the name of Connolly and so I arranged that he would give the name Cearney with the Belfast address of Miss Winifred Cearney who was in the G.P.O., so that if there was a check-up on the address in Belfast it would look alright. I also coached him to say that he had come to Dublin to look for work and that he was lodging in 43, Belvedere Place and did not know me personally. A number of the houses in Belvedere Place were searched, including the houses on both sides of mine, and one or two houses opposite. As soon as the soldiers had got into position, all the residents in Belvedere Place, and I presume in adjacent streets also, were told to keep all windows completely closed and not to open any front

front doors.

This state of affairs continued on Thursday; many of the soldiers sat on the door-steps and on one occasion, when I opened the door, I was told immediately to keep it closed.

On Friday the position was not so bad; in fact many people came out of their homes and moved about the immediate vicinity. The soldiers were evidently very tired and many of them slept for periods on door-steps and on the pavement.

On Friday Mrs. Margaret McGarry of 31, Upper Fitzwilliam Street and her son, Milo, came to our house. I knew Mrs. McGarry's appearance, having often seen her at meetings of the Socialist Party and Irish Women's Franchise League of which she was a member, but I was not personally acquainted with her. She told me that she had taken a dispatch for the Military Council to Limerick to which she had travelled by the early train on Easter Monday accompanied by her son, Milo. She found considerable difference of opinion, she said, in Limerick where they complained of the contradictory messages which they had received. She met Sean Ó Muirthille there and he expressed himself as being strongly in favour of action in accordance with the message which she had brought. Mrs. McGarry explained that when she returned from Limerick on Tuesday or Wednesday she was unable to cross the City and so she stayed in No. 11, Mountjoy Square. - She told me that it was her son, Milo, who recognised me and accordingly she came to our residence and explained what she had been doing.

/Late

Late on Friday night, as it appeared fairly easy to travel some distance, Roderick Connolly and myself went down Dorset Street to the corner of Dominick Street where there were a good few of the buildings burning around the G.P.O. While there we heard the conversation of a group of tenement dwellers from that district who were obviously hostile to the insurgents. After listening to them for some time I could not stand it any longer and gave them a bit of my mind.

On Saturday afternoon great numbers of people came into the streets and everyone of them was talking about peace, but there was no definite information available as to what the position was. Many people passed our house with loaves of bread in their hands.

On Sunday, April 30th., I decided to go down the City and see for myself, so Roderick Connolly and I left our residence about 10.30. In Mountjoy Square I met Sean T. O'Kelly who told me that he had been a prisoner from Wednesday or Thursday in Tom Clarke's shop; that all Saturday afternoon there was a good deal of excitement as a result of which his guards went into the street and he availed of the opportunity to walk away. I then saw Mrs. Wyse-Fower in the window of No. 3, Mountjoy Square, occupied by ex-Alderman W. L. Cole, and I spoke to her. She told me she had come there when her own residence in Henry Street became untenable. We travelled down Rutland Street, Buckingham Street, Amiens Street, Stores Street and Beresford Place as I was anxious to see what damage the bombardment had done to Liberty Hall. Crossing Beresford Place, a military  
/Corporal

Corporal approached me and asked me to stand. I stopped but did not look around. A man in civilian clothes, whom I afterwards learned was a policeman, approached. Apparently he had signalled to the Corporal to stop me. This policeman approached and said "What is your name?" I replied "O'Brien". He turned to the Corporal and said "He is an enemy." The Corporal said "Left turn! quick march!" and I walked into the Custom House. Roderick Connolly was not questioned or spoken to but he followed me in. We were brought before a military Corporal - an elderly man - who sat at a desk in one of the rooms. He took our names, addresses and occupations and directed the escort to bring us to some other part of the Custom House docks. We were brought into a room obviously used for tea-testing. The guard was composed of a Trinity College O.T.C. There were 33 prisoners in the room and another prisoner was brought in after us, making a total of 38. The last prisoner was drunk. He was an ex-soldier type and used very bad language. He talked a good deal and at this time the guard was changed and a guard of the 16th Lancers took over. This would probably be about noon. The drunken man asked the Corporal in charge several times for a match. Finally the Corporal told one of the guard to tie him up. There was an iron pillar in the room and one of the guard tied this man, starting at his neck and winding the rope around him right down to his ankles. The rope was not tied very tightly, consequently the man wiggled himself out, fell on the floor and went to sleep. After a very short time he got up and appeared to be

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completely sobered. I was walking up and down the floor and I saw him looking at me as if he knew me. Eventually he spoke to me and said he knew me. I felt it would be desirable to ask him not to tell the others who I was and I spoke to him accordingly. He was profuse in his promises not to give me away but I had reason to think afterwards that he did so. There was a decent fellow there named William Kelly who also knew me and told me that several of the prisoners there were arrested on the previous Thursday. The guard of the 16th Lancers were quite friendly to us; one of them said we were not prisoners, we were refugees, we had been taken for our own protection. They said "You don't think we would be looking after you if we believed you were rebels. You would be out in the yard with the others who are there." There was no food. Shortly after the Lancers took over we heard doors being broken open. The Corporal in charge was a young man and was quite pleasant. He said that they had no food for themselves and they would like to do what they could for us. As a result of the smashing of the doors the Corporal came in with a tin of currants. He said they would try to get some biscuits for us but we could have the currants to be going on with. He allowed each one of the 36 prisoners to put his hand into the tin of currants and take all that his hand could hold. Later on they made coffee and gave us some biscuits. Then, apparently, some drink was discovered and each prisoner was offered a drink of whisky. Things became very noisy. Songs were sung

in the inner room where the bulk of the guards congregated. We were allowed to go out into the yard from time to time facing on to the Quays. Two or three women passed up and a young boy, who was amongst the prisoners, spoke to them. The Corporal said "Do you know those women?", and the boy answered "Yes, they live near me." "Well" continued the Corporal "go over and talk to them." I saw an opportunity in this. I wanted to warn my sister if there was any enquiry about Roderick Connolly to remember that he was 'Oearney' and I also wanted to let my sister know where I was. So I asked the Corporal if I could ask them to take a message home and he said "Certainly". I scribbled a note on a card "Boy Oearney is in Custom House" and gave it to one of the women with some money. The card was delivered immediately. As a result of the whisky and the songs the atmosphere was considerably changed. One of the troopers, an old and dissipated individual, had been eyeing me for some time and he asked me a number of questions. I could see he was anxious to pick a quarrel and I answered as civilly as possible. Finally he said "Do you know what I think?" I replied I did not know what he was thinking. He continued "I think you know a good many of the men who are at the back of this business." I saw that he had been posted and as the Corporal seemed a very decent fellow I called him and complained of the attitude of the trooper. The Corporal told him to go into the inner room and not to leave it without his permission. He then turned to me and said not to mind him, that he had no authority to put any questions to me.

/Later

Later in the evening I got into conversation with one of the troopers and I asked him what was the position outside. He said the rebels had surrendered, that Pearse was killed and Connolly was wounded. I asked him if there were many casualties on the British side. He replied "About 800", and that they were nearly all killed as the German dum-dum bullets did their dirty work every time. He added that there was a Battalion crossing to Britain that night with 500 uniformed blokes. I spoke to the Corporal with a view to getting more information and he told me that he had spent Tuesday, the 28th, in plain clothes going around the City seeing the positions held by the rebels. "Ofcourse", he said "I had a revolver in my pocket but that wouldn't be much use to me if I had been discovered".

About 9 or 10 o'clock at night an officer came the rounds and when he had left one of the troopers spoke to me. I did not fully realise at first what the position was but, apparently, a number of the troopers were under the influence of drink. While the officer was in the inner room the trooper at the door where I was said "Too familiar with the prisoners, too familiar with the prisoners." The officer then passed out and a short time afterwards the guard was changed. The Corporal and the old trooper who had tackled me were led out as prisoners. The old trooper was hardly able to walk and the Corporal was arrested, presumably, for permitting that state of affairs. It was a terrible night. There was not

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room on the floor for the prisoners to lie on it. I sat on the corner of a counter and of course sleep was impossible. In the morning each prisoner got a small piece of bread and some water to drink. About 10 o'clock we were brought outside and lined up in Beresford Place at the side facing Liberty Hall. In addition to the 36, there were a number of other prisoners in the yard - some of them for some days. I saw a few whom I recognised. There was a heavy guard outside the Custom House. We were lined up 14 deep, a double row of soldiers each side. The O/C. was referred to as 'Major'. When he gave the order to march he said "Now men, you know your orders, no nonsense." We passed over Butt Bridge into Tara Street. The inner guard kept close to us; the outer guard spread out towards the footpath, thus keeping the entire street clear. A small number of people were in Tara Street. They seemed completely cowed. There was not a sound except our feet marching. We traversed College Street, College Green, Dame Street and Cork Hill. I was anxious to see some one I knew so that a message might be brought home that I had left the Custom House. As we passed the City Hall, where the street is narrow, there was a considerable crowd on the footpath outside the City Hall. I saw a man named Cooke that I knew. He was a member of the Tailors' Society. I knew that I could not say many words to him but if he could see me I thought of a few words that would suffice. Eventually I caught his eye and I said "Tell Lawler", Lawler being the Secretary of the Tailors' Society. A guard beside me

/wheeled

wheeled around with his bayonet at the 'ready' the moment he heard me speak. We passed up Christchurch Place and High Street. There was a fair number of people at the doorways in High Street and a girl standing in one doorway said "Cheer up boys, you are not dead yet." These were the first words that were uttered since we left the Custom House. We continued marching via Corn Market and Thomas Street. At the Fountain in James' Street we turned right, down Stevens Lane, up St. John's Road and Islandbridge to the Royal Hospital. This seemed to be for the purpose of avoiding passing the South Dublin Union. Being lame, I found the journey fairly exhausting. As we arrived at the gate of Richmond Barracks there was a considerable crowd assembled, made up mainly of separation allowance women who booed and hissed us vigorously. The day was very warm. Many of the prisoners had been without food for several days. When we were lined up in the Barrack Square some of them asked for water to drink. Some of the British soldiers drew water and threw it on the ground. Many of the prisoners were unable to stand and lay on the ground.

There were a number of detectives and uniformed policemen there. A military Sergeant approached me saying "Are you William O'Brien?" I replied "Yes". He added "You are to stand out here". He brought me to two detectives, one of them said "We must search you O'Brien". I said "Alright". A third  
/detective

detective approached and said "Take every scrap of paper in his possession: take everything out of his pockets." I was then searched and everything removed from my pockets. My watch and haversack were handed back but everything else was retained.

We were then put in rooms in "L" Block, 40 to each room. The total that came from the Custom House would be about 120 to 150. There were about 40 in the room including 5 Volunteers, Roderick Connolly and myself; the remainder appeared to be nondescript who were picked up. The man, William Kelly who was in the same room with us in the Custom House, was in this room. A short time after we came into it a military Sargeant came in. I saw him speaking to some of the prisoners and I thought he looked in my direction. After some time Kelly came to me and said "Do you know that Sargeant?" I answered "No". "Well", he continued, "he seems to know you." I asked "How is that?" "Well", he replied "when he came in he said to a few of the fellows over there" pointing to an archway "that's O'Brien, a leader of the Sinn Feiners; he'll be for a shooting party." Kelly said the crowd were very hostile to the five Volunteers and myself and that they talked of doing us in saying we were responsible for all the trouble. I communicated this to the Volunteers and said that we should do what we could to protect ourselves if we were attacked. There was no furniture of any kind in the room. There was a number of iron racks fixed to the walls, apparently for holding the soldiers' baggage. There were also a few loose boards on these iron racks. I suggested

/to

the Volunteers that we should unobtrusively take these boards as if we were going to use them as pillows at night, that the seven of us should congregate in a corner and if we were attacked we should do what we could with the boards. I did not know any of the five Volunteers. I think the five of them were in uniform, certainly several of them were. I remember one man's name was McDonnell and in 1942 I made his acquaintance. His name is John McDonnell and he is a member of the D.T.P.S., now employed in the Irish Independent.

We did not get any food that day except the small piece of bread we got in the Custom House in the morning. About 7 p.m. a bucket of tea was brought into the room and left there without any drinking vessels or food.

The next morning, that would be Tuesday, we had a bucket of tea, a few drinking vessels, three Army biscuits and a tin of bully beef each. About 9 a.m. we were removed to the gymnasium, a large oblong building without any furniture except a vaulting horse and an empty wooden box. There was a guard at the door and 25 or 30 soldiers in a gallery near the end where the door was. I think those who came from the Custom House on the previous day were brought there. When we entered the gymnasium there were 14 prisoners in the top left-hand corner, most of them were in Volunteer uniform. There were Thomas McDonagh, Eamonn Ceannt, W.T. Cosgrave, Philip Cosgrave, Major John MacBride, George Plunkett, John Plunkett, P.S. Doyle, Seamus Hughes, Thomas

Thomas Hunter, P.E. Sweeney, Michael O'Hanrahan, Henry O'Hanrahan, Richard Davis. I was later told by somebody that P.H. Pearse had been there earlier and had breakfast with the other 14. It was understood that he slept in Arbour Hill. Just after we arrived in the Gymnasium, a guard took out Thomas McDonagh. As he left the room the other 13 'stood to attention' and saluted him. He was brought back in the afternoon and halted in the centre of the gymnasium, apparently so that one of his guard would take his bag and rug. Obviously he was not to be permitted to speak to the other prisoners. Realising this, Major MacBride grabbed the bag and rug before the guard arrived for it and rushed over with them to McDonagh and I saw that a few words passed between them.

The rest of us were lined along the right-hand side of the gymnasium and a number of police, military and detectives scrutinised us. Patrick O'Keeffe, Gerard Crofts and myself were picked out by one detective - I understand his name was Inspector Love. An officer then stationed himself near the door porch and the prisoners were brought down singly to give their names, addresses and occupations. O'Keeffe, Crofts and I were placed in the centre at the top end and kept apart from the rest. When I was giving particulars to the officer at the door I noticed that the names of Crofts, O'Keeffe and O'Brien were written on a separate piece of the sheet with the word "Leaders" written over them. When all names had been recorded the rest of the prisoners were taken away, leaving us three behind.

/The



The Sergeant of the guard told us not to speak to or approach the 13 at the top left-hand corner.

Some time later a contingent of about 60 arrived and were lined up at the right-hand side. They were the contingent from Ashbourne. I was well acquainted with Tom Ashe and I also knew Frank and Seamus Lawless. They were viewed in the same way by military police and detectives, and Ashe, Dr. Hayes and the two Lawlesses were picked out, the remainder being removed. During the afternoon and late evening other contingents were brought in in the same way; they were viewed, their names taken and a few retained, the remainder being removed. Late that night, right up to midnight, there were numbers of prisoners being brought in but they were not viewed or their names taken.

At 1.25 a.m. on Wednesday a guard arrived and took out the 13 remaining prisoners at the top left-hand corner. As I thought it might be important I took a note of the exact time they were removed. They returned in 10 or 15 minutes. Seamus Hughes came over to me and told me that each one of them had been served with a copy of the charge on which they were to be tried.

On Wednesday and Thursday the same procedure was followed of bringing in numbers of prisoners and having them viewed and picked out. There was apparently a great deal of confusion on the British side as they were continually looking for particular prisoners, not knowing whether they were in the gymnasium or in other /rooms

rooms occupied by prisoners. By Thursday evening all the 13 prisoners in the top left-hand corner had been removed and none of them returned to the gymnasium after being taken out for courtmartial.

While Crofts, O'Keefe and myself at first were not allowed to speak to the other prisoners, this changed on Wednesday and Thursday and I had several talks with some of the prisoners in the top left-hand corner, particularly with Eamonn Ceannt, W.T. Cosgrave, Major John MacBride and Seamus Hughes. Amongst those brought into the gymnasium on Tuesday morning was Noel Lemass who was wounded in the leg and unable to walk. His wound was dressed once or twice a day by an R.A.M.C. Corporal. I think the name of this Corporal was Chambers.

During Wednesday or Thursday when crossing the Barrack Square I saw Sean MacDermott who waved his hand to me but he was not near enough to speak. Thomas Foran, General President of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, who was brought into the gymnasium late on Tuesday night, told me that when he was crossing the Barrack Square on Wednesday or Thursday, he passed fairly close to Major John MacBride who was, apparently, returning from his courtmartial. Foran said he looked at MacBride with whom he was acquainted and MacBride drew his finger around his heart indicating that he expected to be shot.

On Friday morning, about 10 o'clock, Michael Mallin was brought to the gymnasium on his way to courtmartial.  
/and

and I had a short talk with him. He showed me his *hat* hip in which there were two bullet marks and he said he expected to be executed. About noon Eamonn De Valera was brought to the gymnasium. I was not personally acquainted with him and I did not know his appearance. I had a long talk with him and we discussed the events preceding Easter Week. He said he was glad that he had no responsibility for deciding anything and that he simply obeyed orders given to him. Discussing the action taken by John MacNeill he said that he was going up the stairs of Volunteer Headquarters on the afternoon of Saturday, April 22nd, and met MacNeill coming down. As they passed, MacNeill said in Irish "God speed the good work to-morrow!"

By this time a good number of the prisoners in the gymnasium were of a nondescript type, having no connection whatever with the Movement. Three times a day we were given food; in the morning a bucket of tea to each 20 prisoners with a tin of bully beef and 3 Army biscuits to each prisoner. About 1 o'clock in the afternoon and 6 o'clock in the evening there was a further supply of tea and Army biscuits. The biscuits were emptied on the floor from clothes-baskets; a guard stood about to see that no prisoner took more than three. I told De Valera of this procedure and how humiliating it was. He discussed with me what might be done to improve this and suggested, as there were about 60 prisoners there, that he and I would form two sections of about 20 each. We did this and when next the tea was brought in De Valera marched

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over, took two buckets, brought one to my section, another to his own and left the nondescript individuals to take the third bucket.

Conditions in the gymnasium were very bad. Most of the prisoners were without overcoats. The windows were broken, weather had become very cold and it was impossible to sleep at night because of this and also for the reason that most of the prisoners were so cold lying on the floor that there were always some of them marching around to warm themselves. On Saturday morning most of them were in a state of collapse.

On Saturday morning in the gymnasium we noticed one of the guards in the gallery reading a newspaper. We were very anxious to see it and I suggested to one or two prisoners that we would stand as near the gallery as we could and when the guard appeared to be finished reading the paper we would ask him for it. We did this and got the paper but we had only enough time to read the headlines which said something like "Another rebel executed, Major MacBride pays the penalty", when the Sergeant of the guard shouted to hand back the paper. That was the first knowledge we had that anyone had been executed. It was a Dublin evening newspaper.

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On Friday evening a person/plain clothes inspected the gymnasium. We did not know who or what he was, but it was suggested that he was either a Doctor or a Sanitary Officer. I spoke to him and pointed out some of the conditions and he said he had

/very

very little authority. However, on Saturday, about noon, all prisoners were cleared out of the gymnasium. De Valera, Foran and I, together with five other prisoners, were brought to Room 4 in "L" Block. There we found 15 or 18 other prisoners. These included Count Plunkett, Alderman Laurence O'Neill, John O'Mahony, Josepa Murray, Batt O'Connor, Sean O'Connor, Douglas French-Mullen, Sean F. O'Kelly, Frank Thornton, Diarmuid Lynch, Patrick Mahon and Con Collins. John O'Mahony was looked upon as the leader in this room and he put in a request for blankets and renewed the demand later on. As a result, we got blankets late on that Saturday night.

In the course of the next few days prisoners were offered a printed form containing a number of questions. One of the questions was "Were you a member of the Irish Volunteers or Irish Citizen Army?" Although I was not a member of any military organisation I did not wish to say so and declined filling up this form. Any prisoner who did not sign this form was later offered another form, the heading of which said something like this "Form to be filled by prisoners who are not members of the Irish Volunteers or Irish Citizen Army." As I did not wish to apply for release on these grounds I refused to fill up this form also.

Officers were coming to Room 4 "L" Block several times each day looking for particular prisoners, and one day, when an officer entered, Darl Figgis - who at this time was in the room - had a long conversation with him. When the officer left Figgis told us that

he was Lieutenant Robert Barton who had been connected with the Irish Volunteers prior to the outbreak of the War and who was now an officer in charge of Prisoners Effects. Lieutenant Barton told Figgis that if there was any urgent reason for communicating with him they should ask for the Officer in charge of Prisoners' Effects and not for him by name.

On one occasion we were lined up and a British officer carefully scrutinised everyone of us. He withdrew to the lobby and conversed with somebody whom we did not see. He came in a second time and looked at us all again. Somebody made a joking remark when he immediately picked Diarmuid Lynch saying "You were in the G.P.O." Lynch had a gold tooth and, apparently, when he laughed the officer recognised him. Lynch told us that this officer was a prisoner in the G.P.O. and that, in fact, when the G.P.O. was being evacuated he himself had released this officer who was a prisoner in the G.P.O.

I remained in Richmond Barracks up to June 8th. On June 1st., there was a big clearing out when some 200 were deported to Hantsford, Wakefield and Wandsworth Prisons. After their departure a number of the prisoners were transferred to Room 4 "L" Block. These included Austin Stack, Sean Milroy, Seamus Quigley - County Engineer, Westmeath.

I was not previously acquainted with Austin Stack but he knew of my connection with James Connolly. He

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had been supplied with a copy of the evidence to be used against him on his trial and he showed me this. It contained a copy of a letter found in his possession after his arrest. This letter was from James Connolly to Stack stating that Connolly had been informed that there was some talk of starting a section of the Citizen Army in Tralee and that he wished to assure Stack that that was not being done with his consent, as he thought there was no need for it being confused, that the position was quite safe in his hands as Commander of the Volunteers.

I saw Mr. Asquith, the British Prime Minister, visiting the Richmond Barracks, but he did not enter the room in which I was confined.

On June 8th., I was removed, with about 40 other prisoners, to Knutsford Prison and by that time only a very small number of prisoners remained in Richmond Barracks.

About the third week of May a soldier in the 18th Royal Irish, stationed in Richmond Barracks, called to the room I was in and introduced himself. His name was Sheehan and he was a Corporal in the 18th Royal Irish. He said, I understood, that I was a particular friend of James Connolly and that he would like to tell me something about his last days. He said his Company Captain was Captain Stanley and that the latter was very partial to him, Sheehan, and anxious that he should get on in the Army. In consequence of this he, Captain Stanley, had got Sheehan to train as a Cook-Sergeant and the latter was engaged on that work when the Insurrection broke out. Then he was required to resume ordinary duty and was so engaged during Easter Week. After the surrender Captain Stanley asked him if he could select twelve very reliable men in the Company for a particular job. Sheehan answered, of course he could, and Captain Stanley then said that he required him to take charge of and guard James Connolly who was a prisoner in Dublin Castle. Captain Stanley instructed him that the twelve men were to be continually on duty, eight on the lobby outside Connolly's room, that no one was to enter the room unless Captain

/s/Stanley



Stanley was present or had a written order signed by Captain Stanley.

Corporal Sheehan said he was present in the room where Connolly was a prisoner. During Connolly's courtmartial the officers sat around his bed. On Thursday afternoon, 11th May, Corporal Sheehan stated an officer arrived from headquarters and informed Connolly that he had been sentenced to death but that the date of his execution had not been fixed. A few hours later the same or another officer arrived with a message for Connolly. The Nurse in charge informed the officer that Connolly was asleep and that as he had got very little sleep recently owing to the pain of his wounded leg she deprecated his being disturbed. The officer said it was imperative that he should be disturbed as he had an urgent message for him. Connolly was then awakened and informed that he was to be executed early the following morning and that he could send for relatives that he wished to see. Corporal Sheehan said Connolly asked him to shift him in the morning, which he did. *Shave* Captain Stanley attended and supervised the removal of Connolly to Kilmainham Prison.

He was taken on a stretcher to a military ambulance.

Captain Stanley sat next the driver. Corporal Sheehan and one or two of the Church Street Fathers travelled in the ambulance with Connolly.

When the ambulance arrived at Kilmainham, Captain Stanley came around to Corporal Sheehan and told him to blindfold Connolly. Corporal Sheehan said he told Connolly his instruction was to blindfold him and Connolly said "Alright". The stretcher was then brought from the ambulance to the prison yard where there was a chair. The stretcher was laid down beside the chair and Corporal Sheehan then told Connolly that he was going to lift him so that he could stand on his uninjured leg. Corporal Sheehan then pressed him towards the chair and Connolly asked "What is this?" Corporal Sheehan replied "It is a chair for you to sit on, Mr. Connolly". Connolly then sat on the chair and held the arms of the chair tightly and held his head very high until he was executed.

When I was arrested I had no overcoat with me, as the weather was fine, and while in Richmond Barracks I suffered considerably for want of a coat as no blankets were supplied.

We had a family friend in the 18th Royal Irish - a Sergeant-Major Brady - and my sister saw him with a view to getting a coat into me. Sergeant-Major Brady was not anxious that it should be known he was friendly to me, so he did not pretend to know me when he delivered the coat. He told my sister that there was a photograph of a large group of people in the Officers' Mess and that I was included in the photograph as were a considerable number of the leaders of the insurrection. I am satisfied this was a photograph of the O'Donovan-Rossa funeral committee taken in October 1915. It seemed to be clear that the prisoners in Room L. Block were picked out for some very particular purpose and we had certain information that there was going to be a prosecution of a number of them on a general charge of conspiracy. This, however, was not proceeded with. One of the British officers was heard to refer to the room as "The Leaders' Room".

On 7th June, 1916, I arrived, with about 40 others, at Knutsford Prison. We reached Knutsford Railway Station about 7.30 in the morning. A number of people, obviously going to work in the local factories, looked at

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us in a hostile manner. One lady spoke to the guard and asked "Why don't you drop them overboard?"

When we arrived there were about 500 prisoners in Knutsford. It was an old prison with very thick walls and it had been used as a Military Prison up to the arrival of Irish prisoners, and some British military prisoners were still in one of the wings. There were no civilian warders, all the warders being soldiers. Those prisoners who had been there for some time told us that conditions at first were very severe, that they had only one hour's exercise in the day and some days were not allowed out at all. However, at the time of my arrival there were about five hours' exercise between forenoon and afternoon. Knutsford being near Manchester and visitors being permitted we had a considerable number practically every day. The visitors were allowed to mix freely with those prisoners who went to the front of the building to meet them, and I remember observing to a few friends that if there was any prisoner who, for special reasons, it was desired to get out, that it would be easy enough to substitute a visitor for a prisoner. On the following day after making this remark the prisoners and visitors /were

were divided by a rope. Evidently there was a spy in our ranks. I was not aware then that it was a recognised custom to place spies amongst the prisoners of war. This practice was followed extensively, I understand, during the war then going on, 1914 - 1918. Also I had evidence that I was being particularly watched. I had a visitor some days after this incident and when he was leaving the prison he was brought into the Governor's Office and thoroughly searched.

About the middle of June a number of prisoners left Knutsford and it was understood that they were removed to an internment camp but we got no further information about it. On 24th June I was one of a party of about 150 who were brought out to the front of the building and served with Internment Orders and transferred to Frongoch Internment Camp.

(Insert copy of Order).

Our journey from Knutsford to Frongoch was very pleasant as we passed through some beautiful country in North Wales.

On arrival at Frongoch we found we were bound for a newly constructed camp consisting of 25 Regulation Army Huts and one Y.M.C.A. large Hut used for meals, concerts, etc. The North Camp was newly constructed and more attractive in every way than the South Camp which was formed of an old gloomy distillery building interspersed with poles. The camp was surrounded by a barbed wire entanglement 12' or 15' wide. There were 8 elevated platforms about 28' from the ground with an armed sentry on each. There were irregular electric lights on at night and every half hour each sentry in turn sang out the time and number of his post, winding up "All's well!" Until we became accustomed to this we found it difficult to sleep. The conditions on the whole were not bad. At 5.45 we were roused by a hooter and at 6.5 by a second hooter when we were to be lined up for counting, which was done by an Orderly officer, Camp Sergeant-major and Escort. At 9 o'clock each morning the Camp sergeant attended to see fatigue work performed. At 11 o'clock the Colonel visited the Camp for inspection and in the evening there was another count. Apart from these

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visits, the running of the Camp was in the hands of the prisoners who were required to do all the cooking, cleaning and so forth. There was an exercise field in which the prisoners could spend four or five hours a day and engage in games, drilling and so on. The food was poor but could be supplemented by a dry canteen where prisoners could purchase some supplies.

On Monday, 26th June, I was taken from Frongoch and brought to London in charge of a Welsh policeman, and lodged in Wandsworth Prison, London, in order that I should take part in certain arbitration proceedings in the Board of Trade in connection with the Dockers' Strike in Dublin. I did this in charge of a prison warder, and on Wednesday, 28th June, I was brought back to Frongoch with a party of 61 Cork prisoners, all from the South Camp, who had been brought down to London for attendance at the Advisory Committee presided over by Judge Sankay. I did not know any of the prisoners but one of them was a brother of Dermot Lynch whom I knew well.

When I returned to Frongoch I was put into No. 7 Hut. I had been in No. 3 Hut where Captain Seamus Murphy was a  
/hut

hut leader. A day or so after a contingent arrived from Stafford Prison and Michael Collins, Michael Cowley, Denis Daly, Seamus Robinson and others came into my hut. I did not know any of them previously but found that Michael Collins knew a number of friends of mine in London. Collins and I were associated with certain work in Frongoch. The terms of the Internment Order which each prisoner received set forth that the prisoner was entitled to appeal against his internment, but most of the prisoners declined to avail of this. There were some, however, who did and it was learned that some damaging statements were being<sup>made</sup> by those prisoners who benefited, one prisoner stating that he had nothing to do with the Insurrection and that he was a loyal and devoted servant of His Most Gracious Majesty King George V. As a result of these statements the Camp Commandant appointed Michael Collins and myself to visit all the huts and inform the prisoners that no statement was to be put in until the two of us had seen it. Michael Collins, Gearoid O'Sullivan and myself were also appointed to draft a statement to the Home Office concerning certain conditions in the Camp.



When the first batch of prisoners came to the North Camp, the Camp had not been properly completed and there were no roads in it. The British military recruited a number of prisoners to make these roads, holding out, as an inducement, that they would be paid while so employed at a rate of 1/4d. per hour. A number of the prisoners agreed to do this and most of us were horrified at seeing the prisoners pulling a four-wheel lorry with ropes over their shoulders bringing material for the roads from the South Camp into the North Camp, which was on a considerable slope. This caused a good deal of discussion and as the Camp Commandant declined to interfere it was decided that a meeting of two delegates from each of the 25 huts should be held to consider the matter. As a result of this meeting it was decided that the prisoners should refuse to continue doing this work. When this decision was conveyed to Captain M. W. O'Reilly, Prisoners' Camp Commandant, Captain O'Reilly raised some objection to conveying this decision to the British Military, arguing that he would be held responsible. It was then decided that the number of men required for this work would inform the British Military Sergeant in charge of this work

/that

that they would not do the work. Accordingly, on the following morning the British Military Sergeant came in as usual seeing fatigue work started and informed Captain O'Reilly that he required eight men. Captain O'Reilly produced the eight men who thereupon informed the British Military Sergeant that they would not work unless paid trade union wages. The British Military Sergeant retired to report this development and subsequently returned requesting Captain O'Reilly to come with him to see the Commandant. On Captain O'Reilly going to the Commandant's Office he was placed under arrest, brought before the British Military Colonel and sentenced to seven days' cells and also ordered to remove his Military uniform which O'Reilly, like many other prisoners, had been up to then wearing. The eight men, who refused to work, were given four days in cells. It was understood bread and water was the sole diet while in cells. This development caused a great commotion in the Camp. Captain Eamon Moran was appointed to take Captain O'Reilly's place and he informed me that there was to be a meeting of the hut leaders with the Adjutant, Lieutenant Burns, the Adjutant, British Commandant, having gone to London.

I pointed out to Captain Moran that as I was not a hut leader I would not be entitled to attend and he replied he would make it alright. I attended. The British Adjutant addressed us and said we apparently laboured under a misunderstanding regarding the circumstances in which prisoners could be employed. He read from a book from which it appeared that prisoners could be employed as craftsmen at 1/2d. an hour, but tradesmen could be given 1/3d. an hour. He added that they were giving all those employed 1/3d. an hour so that he could not see that they had any grievance. When he had finished speaking he invited questions. As very few seemed disposed to ask a question, I spoke. One point I was anxious to establish was as to whether or not we were regarded as prisoners of war. As the Adjutant was reading from a printed book, I surmised it dealt with the conditions of prisoners of war and I asked him a question with a view to bringing this out as to whether we were prisoners of war but he dodged the question and did not give a direct answer. When the meeting finished and we were leaving the hall, the Adjutant came over to me and said "O'Brien, you are an agitator, I am a soldier 29 years in the Army. . . . ."

/I

I never had any time for politics. When you return to Dublin you can make as many speeches as you like in the Phoenix Park, but while you are here you will have to obey Camp regulations".

A short time afterwards, on Monday 24th July, I was notified by Captain Moran that I was required in the office. I asked him what it was about and he said he did not know - perhaps I was being released. I asked him if he were looking for anybody else and he said that he had numbers in addition to mine on a slip. I looked at the numbers and identified one as being that of Seamus Robinson. I found the others required were Captain O'Reilly, J.J. O'Kelly of London, and Thomas Craven, all of whom had been connected with the dispute about the work. Arriving at the office, five of us were marched to the railway station where we found Sean T. O'Kelly and W. L. Cole from the South Camp and with them we travelled to Reading gaol under a guard of the Liverpool Rifles.

In Reading Gaol on 24th July, 1916 when Sean T. O'Kelly, W.L. Cole, M.D. O'Reilly, Thomas Craven, J.J. O'Kelly (London), Seamus Robinson and myself arrived, we found Arthur Griffith

/Pierce McCann

Pierce McCann, Terence MacSwiney, Thomas McCurtin,  
 Padraic O'Malley, Cathal O'Shannon, Dr. Edward Dundon,  
 Peadar O'Hourihan, Darrell Figges, P. de Burca, Eamon  
 O'Dwyer, Ernest Blythé, Denis McCullagh, Liam Langley,  
 Conor Deere, Peter de Loughrey, George Nicholas, Michael  
 Brennan (Clare), Michael Brennan (Roscommon), Peter  
 Sweeney, J.J. O'Connell, P.T. Daly, Herbert Pim, Sean  
 Milroy, Alfred Cotton, Joseph MacBride, Sean Keenan and  
 Joseph Connolly.

On arrival in Reading, Captain Morgan addressed us  
 as "Gentlemen", the first time we had been so addressed  
 while we had been in custody. He was a Welshman and was  
 extremely nice and considerate to the prisoners. The  
 treatment in Reading was pretty good and it was understood  
 that the prisoners there were given officers' treatment,  
 that is the treatment accorded to officers who were  
 prisoners of war. I was only one week in Reading.

On Monday 31st July, Pierce McCann, Joseph Connolly,  
 Peter de Loughrey, Michael Brennan (Roscommon), H.M. Pim,  
 Conor Deere and myself were called to the Governor's

/Office

Office and informed by the Governor that he had been directed to acquaint us that we were being released.

He gave us travel warrants to bring us to any portion of Ireland we wished to go to and gave us, I think, 2/6d. each as travelling expenses.

Early in July I was brought, with about 70 other prisoners, to London and lodged in Wormwood Scrubbs prison where, on the following day, we were brought before the Advisory Committee presided over by Judge Sankey. Each prisoner was brought before this Committee separately and questioned. The purpose of the Committee was to convince each prisoner that they knew all about his activities. When he was brought in Judge Sankey told him whatever they knew about him with a view of getting some additional information but, as far as could be seen, the decision as to whether the prisoner was to be released or not was usually arrived at beforehand. The prisoners were lined up in the Prison Yard near the office where the Advisory Committee sat. There was a chair outside the door where the next

/prisoner

prisoner in charge sat waiting to be called in. One prisoner from Galway, Stephen Jordan - an old I.R.B. man while he was sitting waiting his turn after the previous prisoner had been finished, heard a discussion about himself, as through carelessness the door had been left ajar. Jordan heard the Secretary read to the Committee the police report on his activities in his native town and heard Judge Sankey say that evidently he (Jordan) was a troublesome fellow and had better be kept in.

One of the prisoners, Michael Murphy, aged 18 years of age, had joined the Volunteers on their establishment and was very keen on his duties as a Volunteer. He was a bakery apprentice employed in Rourke's Bakery, Store Street. On turning out on Easter Monday he had full equipment, including a trench coat with a collar that he could button over his head to sleep in. He had a rifle, bayonet, revolver, plenty of ammunition and leather and nails to repair his boots. He looked younger than his years and had a very attractive appearance. The usual method with Judge Sankey was to address the prisoner by his christian name and be as pleasant as possible with a

of getting him off his guard. When Murphy went in Judge Sankey said "Good afternoon, Michael; wont you take a seat". Michael replied, clicking his heels and giving the military salute, that he preferred to stand. Judge Sankey appeared very embarrassed and then went through the usual routine. "Your name is Michael Murphy; you live in such and such a place; you were a member of the Irish Volunteers; you were fighting in Easter Week and you surrendered in Marlboro' Street". Then he said "Well now Michael, we have been considering your case and we have been thinking that we might be able to recommend your release. Wouldn't you like to go home, Michael?" "I would" said Michael, "if I could do so without compromising my principles". "Oh, certainly" said Judge Sankey "we would not ask you to compromise your principles. Now, Michael, have you anybody that would speak for you and give you a good character?" "Oh", said Murphy "I don't want anybody to give me a good character". "Well, you know" said Sankey "what I mean is, is there anybody to say you are a steady, good workman and that kind of thing?"

"Well



"Well" answered Murphy "I should think my employer would be the proper person to speak on that".

"Certainly", said Sankey, "nobody better. Now, what is the name of your employer?" "James Rourke of Store

Street, Dublin", answered Murphy. "Oh", said Judge Pim, who was a member of the Advisory Committee, "why, he is a Fenian".

James Connolly, in the course of an article in "The Irish Worker" October 25th., 1913, said - "We know our duties as we know our rights, and we shall stand by one another, through thick and thin, prepared, if necessary, to arm and achieve by force our place in the world, and also to maintain it by force."

On November 1st., 1913, George Bernard Shaw, at the Albert Hall, London, in support of the Dublin strikers, said - "I suggest you should arm yourselves with something which would put a decisive stop to the proceedings of the police."

On November 13th., 1913, James Connolly, at a meeting in Beresford Place, said - "I am going to talk sedition. The next time we are out for a march I want to be accompanied by four battalions of trained men with their Corporals and Sergeants. Why should we not train our men in Dublin as they are doing in Ulster?" He went on to say that every man who was willing to enlist as a soldier in the Labour Army should give in his name when he drew his strike pay this week-end, and he should be told when and where to attend for drilling.

They had got competent officers ready to instruct and lead them, and they could get arms any time they wanted. Larkin did not speak. Stated "he was indisposed".

In the "Evening Telegraph" for 14th November, 1913, a big report of this meeting appeared with the following headings :- "Larkin's viceroy calls for Battalions - Drilling a la Carson - No vote for the strikers - Their duty is to obey".

"The Evening Telegraph", 15th November - "James Connolly said he did not see why they should have all the drill to themselves up in the North. Sir Edward Carson might happen to pass this way on his road to Cork, and they ought to be ready to defend such rights as were left to them. Besides, if they had a disciplined body of men there would be less danger that any of them might fall against a policeman's baton. He hoped to see them on their route marches in the future "with their pikes upon their shoulders", as the old song said.

20th November, 1913: Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, in the "Daily Herald" report - "The scheme for drilling the Citizen Army of locked-out men is developing. Captain

White, D.S.O. (Son of the defender of Ladysmith) has offered his services as drill instructor. Last night, at a meeting in Trinity College, Captain White advised the students to go on strike from lectures and parade the streets as a protest against the action of the police."

21st November, 1913: "Daily Herald" report - "Connolly went on to express their confidence in Captain White and the drilling scheme".

22nd November, 1913: An article by Sir Francis Vane on "The Labour Army".

25th November, 1913: Francis Sheehy Skeffington - "Large numbers of men gave in their names yesterday for the Transport Union Citizen Army. Two companies were formed, and preliminaries were gone through. The drilling will start during the week at Croydon Park."

December 12th., 1913 - "Forward" Scotland. James Connolly, Irish Correspondent. In the course of his letter Connolly said - "As a protection against the brutal attacks of the uniformed bullies of the police force, as well as a measure possibly needed for future eventualities arising out of the ferment occasioned by

Carsonism in the North, we are organising a Citizen Army, and are drilling every day".

8th December, 1913: Telegram - Captain White to McKeowen, Liberty Hall - "Will be at Croydon Park eleven o'clock Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, on confirmation from you will drill all comers.

White, Standard Hotel".

(McKeowen was clerk to the General Secretary of the I.T.G.W.U.)

~~Attack on Irish Volunteers at Rotunda.~~

13th December, 1913: James Connolly, in an article in the "Irish Worker" entitled "Arms and the Man" described how the Citizen Army came to be established and the effect which this action created.

(Republished in "Socialism and Nationalism", pp 91-4).

18th December, 1913: "Daily Herald". Article by Captain White. In the course of an article, Captain White wrote - "The supreme object of Labour at the present day I take to be, emancipation from wage slavery and organisation into co-operative industries owned and /managed

managed by the workers; and the first step towards its realisation is a high state of discipline and organisation on the part of the workers, the habit of acting in concert, and the emergence from their own ranks of their own natural leaders. Drill is nothing but the science of natural combination and, especially in the case of unskilled workers, whose standard of education is not high, it is the best, and perhaps the only foundation on which to build the capacity for mental combination in an industry or other enterprise.

A military or semi-military organisation, with its accompaniments of order, punctuality, and willing obedience, is the best possible basis for industrial organisation.

An efficient citizen army would be good for Ireland. There are Nationalists who think nationality is a thing too refined to embrace the needs and aspirations of the worker. Their nationalism is all soul and no body, and, as always, where soul and body are divorced, their soul is sick and likely to grow sicker. Irish nationality, to be worth anything, means

a nation of Irishmen, proud of their nationhood, because as free men they are helping to maintain it. No country can be free while a great mass of its citizens are slaves.

And so, I would make this appeal through your columns to the Dublin workers: 'Throw yourselves into this drill like men determined to advance patiently and steadily to a sure goal; whether the first fruit of your labours be the freeing of yourselves or the freeing of your country, time will show. But ultimately Ireland cannot be free without you nor you without Ireland. Strengthen your hands then for the double task'.

24th January, 1914: "Daily Herald" Dublin Corporation (F. Sheehy Skeffington): "A big display will be given by the Transport Union Citizen Army in Croydon Park on Sunday. The Army has been steadily drilling under Captain White, and this is its first public display. 'All are welcome, even the police', says the posters".

26th January, 1914: "Daily Herald" Dublin Corporation. "The Transport Union Citizen Army gave a fine public display this (Sunday) afternoon in Croydon

Park. It is astonishing to observe the progress made under White's instructions within the past six or eight weeks. The Companies who paraded went through the most complex military evolutions, and showed admirable discipline, order, and regularity. There were also tug-of-war competitions, and exhibitions of dressing wounds. The steady daily drilling has wrought wonders with these men whose work points the way to Labour's emancipation from police tyranny."

The Dublin Strike petered out at the end of January, 1914 and the Citizen Army, in consequence of the men having returned to work, dwindled to a mere handful. In March, 1914, a re-organisation took place. A constitution was adopted and an Army Council and Officers appointed.



"Irish Worker" 28th March, 1914.

Irish Citizen Army,

Constitution adopted, Army Council elected,  
 Chairman, Captain J.R.White, D.S.O., Vice Chairman -  
 P.T. Daly, Jim Larkin, Councillor W.P. Partridge,  
 T. Foran and F. Sheehy-Skeffington. Hon. Treasurers -  
 Countess Markievicz and R. Brannigan, Secretary -  
 Sean Ó Cathasaigh.

Committee - Messrs. T. Healy, S. Mullen, J. Bohan, T.C.,  
 P. Morgan, T. Burke, T. Blair, J. McGowan, C. Poole,  
 P. O'Brien, T. Kennedy, F. Moss, P.J. Fox, J. Shelly,  
 P. Coady, P. Fogarty.

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This name is given as Bradford on the membership  
 Cards. The correct name is Braithwaite. He did not  
 use his correct name because he might be dismissed  
 from his employment.

Of the above, four fought in Easter Week :-

Countess Markievicz, Councillor W.P. Partridge,  
 Christopher Poole and James McGowan.

An old colleague in the Socialist Movement, Con Lehane, who was active in Cork in the Socialist Movement in the early years of the century, came from London to Dublin and saw me on the morning of Sunday, March 29th., 1914. Lehane was active in the Socialist Movement in Great Britain and contemplated starting a Citizen Army there. He came to Dublin for particulars of the Citizen Army here and told me he was anxious to meet Captain White and James Larkin. James Connolly at that time lived in Belfast and was not available. I brought Captain White, James Larkin and Lehane together in Croydon Park and after Lehane had explained what his object in coming to Ireland was the following conversation took place :-

Lehane: "How many men are in the Citizen Army?"

Capt. White: "About 50".

Larkin: "Oh, we have more than that!"

Capt. White: "No, rather less".

At the meeting in the Rotunda Rink in November, 1913, at which the Irish Volunteers were formed, a number of people went from Liberty Hall and interrupted

the proceedings, attempting to justify their action by contending that some of the provisional committee of the Volunteers were associated with or supporters of the farmers in County Dublin who, at that time, had their members on strike. From this period until James Connolly took charge of the Citizen Army in October, 1914, those in charge of the Citizen Army showed considerable hostility to the Irish Volunteers, and in April, 1914, the Citizen Army wrote to Eoin MacNeill challenging the Volunteers to a debate on the respective merits of the two organisations. As a result of this and other matters Captain White resigned from the Citizen Army and published a letter in "The Evening Telegraph" of May 5th., 1914, giving his reasons.

John Devoy, in his "Recollections", page 395, quotes from a letter which he received from Tom Clarke, dated May 14th., 1914 -

"Larkin's people for some time past have been making war on the Irish Volunteers. I think this is largely inspired by a disgruntled fellow named O'Casey. By this

/attitude

attitude they have antagonised the sympathy of all sections of the country, and none more so than the advanced section. Liberty Hall is now a negligible quantity here."

"Evening Telegraph, 4th May, 1914 -

Capt. White, The Citizen Army  
and The Irish Volunteers."

The following is a copy of Captain White's letter to the Editor of the above paper -

"Dear Sir,

With reference to a paragraph which appeared in some of this morning's papers, connecting my name with a challenge issued by the Citizen Army Council to the Provisional Committee of the National Volunteers, I wish to state that I had nothing to do with it; in fact, I resigned from the chairmanship of the said Council a week ago, doubtful of my power to prevent, and determined not to become involved in, such a policy. In my opinion the all-important point is the speedy formation and equipment of a volunteer army implicitly or explicitly determined to achieve the independence and maintain the unity of Ireland, and I will not lift a finger to embarrass any body likely to work for this end.

For an 'Army Council' which has not yet created an appreciable 'army' to issue a challenge to the organisers of a strong and growing movement seems to me little short of absurd; nevertheless I believe that the predominance of Trades Unionism over Unionism is the line of least resistance to the unification of Ireland, and I shall work along that line myself whenever and wherever I get the chance."

Following the resignation of Captain White at the end of April, 1914, James Larkin was elected Chairman of the Army Council in May and there followed considerable activity in recruiting members during the summer months and in drilling in Croydon Park. Friction between the Irish Citizen Army and the Irish Volunteers continued, and each week attacks on the Irish Volunteers appeared in the "Irish Worker". Sean O'Casey, Michael Mullen and others bitterly attacked and ridiculed the Volunteers in prose, verse and cartoons. Some articles in opposition appeared signed "Granuale" and these were written by Desmond Ryan.

An attack was then made on Madame Markievicz by O'Casey who moved her expulsion from the Citizen Army, describing her as a spy for the Irish Volunteers and his motion was defeated by 8 votes to 7 at the Army Council. As a result of this a general meeting of the Army was held which upheld Madame Markievicz and O'Casey then severed his connection with the Army. This would be about August or September, 1914. James Connolly took charge of the Army in October, 1914.

Towards the end of 1915 James Connolly interviewed each member of the Army individually and stated that he did not desire any man to remain in it who was not prepared to respond to the call to arms which might come any day and any man who was not so prepared should now drop out and there would be no hard feelings about it. He then had a fresh register made out of all who remained in and this register has been preserved. There are 339 names on it. Some of these only joined a short time before Easter Week.

Mr. O'Brien has in his possession the following :-

1. Three Pass Books containing the names, numbers and addresses of the members of the Irish Citizen Army.
2. Irish Citizen Army membership card of Thomas Kain from April to October, 1914, bearing the initials of Robert de Cour to whom the subscription was paid.
3. Irish Citizen Army: Smoking Concert Card. Concert to be held on Thursday 15th April, 1915 in large concert room, Liberty Hall, in aid of Equipment Fund.
4. Irish Citizen Army Dramatic Class. - Card for concert and dramatic performance to be held at 41 Parnell Square at 6 o'clock on Sunday, 21st October, 1917.
5. Irish Citizen Army Dramatic Class - Card for concert and dramatic performance to be held at 41 Parnell Square at 8 o'clock on Sunday, 21st October, 1917.

Chapter 1V.Controversy as to the origin  
of Irish Citizen Army.

At the time of the formation of the Irish Citizen Army, the circumstances of its formation were known to all those in close touch with Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. James Connolly was, at that time, Irish correspondent of the Glasgow socialist paper - "Forward" - and contributed a weekly report to it. In the course of his article in "Forward" dated 30th May, 1914, he wrote :-

"The writer of these notes established a Citizen Army at Dublin in connection with the Irish Transport Workers' Union".

The paper, "Forward", at that time, had a fairly good circulation in Dublin. In the "Workers' Republic", dated 30th October, 1913, James Connolly wrote :-

"The Irish Citizen Army was founded during the great Dublin lock-out of 1913-14 for the purpose of protecting the working-class and preserving its right of public meeting and free organisation."



After the insurrection of Easter Week 1916, the Irish Citizen Army and its connection with the Irish Volunteers attracted a good deal of attention, mainly because of the part which James Connolly occupied as one of the signatories to the Republican Proclamation and the fact that he was Commandant General of the Dublin Division.

James Larkin, who had been Commandant of the Citizen Army from May, 1914 to his departure for the United States in October of that year, contributed an article to a monthly journal published in New York, i.e. "The Masses" for July, 1916. This article purported to give an account of the various factors that produced the insurrection alleging that he was working for the establishment of an independent Ireland in 1907 when, in fact, he was an organiser of a British Trade Union - the National Union of Dock Labourers. He made a number of untrue and extraordinary statements in the course of this article actually stating that James Connolly and himself wrote the Proclamation of Easter Week. He also

/stated

stated that the Citizen Army was organised in 1908 in Cork City. The object of this latter statement is apparent. Larkin wanted to claim that he was responsible for starting the Citizen Army rather than James Connolly, and if he could establish that it was started in Cork in 1908 it would completely out out Connolly, as the latter did not return to Ireland until July 1910. In fact, James Larkin had nothing to do with the establishment of the Irish Citizen Army. Larkin was sentenced to a term of imprisonment arising out of the Dublin Strike on October 27th., 1913, and was released on the morning of Thursday 13th November. He spoke from a window in Liberty Hall about noon. His speech is fully reported in the Dublin papers and it contains no reference to <sup>drilling</sup> or an Army. He did not speak that night in Parnell Place, and it was stated by James Connolly, in the course of his speech, that Larkin was ill. Larkin left Dublin on the following evening, Friday, for England and remained away a considerable period so that for some weeks before Connolly first mentioned on the night of Thursday,

/November,

November 13th, about forming an army and for some weeks after that James Larkin was not on duty in Liberty Hall, James Connolly being in command for that whole period, during which the Citizen Army was first mentioned.

The term "Citizen Army" was used for a considerable number of years prior to 1913 in the Social Democratic Federation, a socialist organisation in Great Britain of which James Connolly was a member for four or five years before his coming to Dublin in 1896. The establishment of a Citizen Army was one of the planks in the programme of the Social Democratic Federation and was advocated as an alternative to Conscription and as an antidote to imperialism. There were frequent references to it in "Justice", a weekly organ of the Social Democratic Federation and the editor of that paper, Harry Quelch, published a pamphlet on the subject entitled "Social Democracy and the Armed Nation" which was published in 1900. In addition, Mr. Will Thorn, M.P., a member of the S.D.F., who was elected a

/Labour

Labour Member of Parliament in 1906, introduced into the British Parliament a private member's Bill in 1908 in favour of establishing a Citizen Army.

In recent years various statements have been made as to the origin of the Irish Citizen Army, one being that it was established in the rooms of Professor R. M. Gynne in Trinity College. During the 1913 Strike there was in existence a body entitled "The Dublin Peace Committee", of which the Lord-Major, Councillor Loran Sherlock, was chairman. This body was formed for the purpose of bringing about a settlement of the existing dispute. Having made a number of efforts in this direction, the body decided to disperse, having failed in its objective. Certain members of this committee, who were favourable to the workers' side in the dispute, left the meeting and went to Professor Gynne's rooms in Trinity College and formed a body known as "The Dublin Civic League", and confusion has apparently arisen confounding this with the Citizen Army which was formed at the same time. The "Daily Herald" for \_\_\_\_\_ has an account of the establishment of "The Dublin Civic League" written by

/Francis

Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, its Dublin correspondent,  
which makes this quite clear.

~~Statement of Mrs. Kathleen A. Ryan,  
441 Innes Road, Daltrybridge.~~

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Chapter V

Regarding the absence for three days of James Connolly in January 1916, an account of which I have given in the introduction to the collection of Connolly's writings entitled "Labour and Easter Week", published in 1950, that statement was compiled in 1937 and printed in the Labour paper, "Labour News", and reprinted without revision as an introduction to the foregoing collection of Connolly's writings. Since then, various inquiries have been made into this incident as there is a considerable difference of opinion as to what happened. Desmond Ryan informs me that he had a long talk with the wife of Dr. Tom Dillon, a professor of University College, Galway, sister of Joseph Plunkett. She states that on an occasion early in 1916 she remembers her brother, Joseph, telling her that he was absolutely exhausted as he had spent two days and nights almost continuously

/discussing

discussing the situation with James Connolly, before Connolly was finally persuaded to agree to act with him. When asked about the kidnapping, Mrs. Dillon said she did not know anything about it and she doubted that it took place. She understood that Pearse, MacDermott and Joseph Plunkett had called for Connolly with a taxi and that he had gone<sup>away</sup>/with them apparently to discuss an important proposition and that he had remained with them until a conclusion was arrived at. Desmond Ryan stated to me that when the "Workers' Republic" of January 29th., 1916 appeared containing a note by James Connolly on column 1. of page 1., Pearse said to him (Ryan), "I am greatly afraid Connolly has said too much this week". Ryan asked Pearse what he meant, and Pearse said that Connolly now was acting with him, and that is what the note meant and he was afraid that the British military would interpret that note in that way. Pearse then went on to say that it was very difficult to convince Connolly that he should work with them, and that when he eventuall.

/agreed

agreed he was very disappointed.

Regarding my own connection with this incident, on the Thursday following Connolly's disappearance I got a telephone message from Thomas Foran, President of the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union at my place of employment, asking me if I could go to Liberty Hall on a very urgent matter. I told him it would be impossible for me to leave immediately but I could get to Liberty Hall about 1 o'clock or shortly after it. When I arrived I found Foran with Madame Markievicz and I was then informed that on the previous day, Wednesday, James Connolly had left for lunch about 1 o'clock or so, and had not returned. He had one or two engagements in the afternoon but they were not important and his absence did not excite any uneasiness. He did not come to Liberty Hall at his usual time on Thursday morning, and an hour or so later Madame Markievicz arrived and informed Foran that he had not come to her house where he stayed on the previous night. The three of us

/were



were discussing the position when my brother, Dan, and Michael Mallin arrived and joined in the discussion. Very shortly a telegram was handed in addressed to James Larkin who had been absent from the country about 18 months. It was strange that a telegram should be addressed to Larkin who was known to be out of the country. This telegram was signed 'Wardell' and sent from Lucan, County Dublin. It mentioned about missing the tram, saying, "Meet me to-morrow, 2, sure". This seemed extraordinary and we discussed the possibility of it being a message from Connolly indicating that we were not to do anything and that he would turn up the following day at 2 o'clock. Foran, Madame Markievicz, Mallin and myself agreed this was likely but my brother, Dan, stoutly maintained that it was not so. At any rate, we decided not to do anything until the following day, Friday, at 2 o'clock. We met again at 2 o'clock on Friday and there was no word of Connolly. We then decided to go to Lucan Post Office and see if we could get any information as to

the description of the person who handed in the telegram. Dr. Lynn drove Helena Moloney, Commandant Mallin's wife who was a native of Lucan, and myself to Lucan on Friday evening. Helena Moloney and I went to the Lucan Post Office and stated that we were from the firm of Larkin & Company, Dorset Street, and that this telegram had been sent to us from Liberty Hall and that as we had a client named Wardell we were anxious to know if he had sent it. The girl who took the telegram gave us a description fairly like Connolly and described his handwriting as shaky, "but", she said, "he arrived in a pony-trap and had a little girl with him", which seemed to contradict the rest of the evidence. She had not the original telegram as that was sent to the G.P.O. 24 hours after being handed in. Having discussed the matter before we went to Lucan, we thought of the possibility of Connolly going to Belfast where his home was but we did not like communicating with his wife as, if he were not in Belfast, she would be alarmed at his absence. Accordingly, it was decided to send a messenger to

/Belfast

Belfast to see Connolly's eldest daughter, Nora.

Mrs. Mallin said she would get one of her boys to do this and, accordingly, Percy Reynolds was dispatched to Belfast with a code based upon numbers of Union Cards to let us know by telegram whether or not Connolly was in Belfast. The following day we got a telegram addressed to Foran indicating that there was nothing known of him there. In the meantime I saw Sean MacDermott and told him about Connolly's absence. The former said he was unaware of Connolly's absence; he seemed very much concerned about it, stating that he would assist me in any way possible and that I was to keep him informed.

At our meeting on Friday, Madame Markievicz had mentioned that there was a pact or understanding between the leaders of the Citizen Army that they would not permit the arrest of any of their leaders and that if this happened they would start the Insurrection on their own. Although I was acting closely with James Connolly I had nothing to do directly with the Citizen Army and I was alarmed at

this statement and did what I could to prevent Madame Markievicz taking any such steps. Commandant Mallin did not intervene in the discussion between Madame Markievicz and myself but I got the impression that he agreed with my point of view. There was no news of Connolly on Saturday afternoon and I went to Tom Clarke's shop to see MacDermott. On my way there, outside Findlater's, O'Connell Street, I met MacDermott with Arthur Griffith coming from the direction of Tom Clarke's shop. We stopped and I did not care to mention the Connolly absence in the presence of Griffith, but MacDermott asked me was there any news of Connolly and apparently Griffith was fully aware of the position. I said, "No", and MacDermott again asked me to let him know if there was any news. I asked him where I could get him on Sunday and he said he would be out of town on Sunday but he would not be very far away and could see me in the evening. He said he expected to be back about 7 o'clock and we arranged that he would call to my residence, 43, Belvidere Place, at 7 p.m. on Sunday.

/Mallin

Mallin, Madame Markievicz and myself had a talk about 6 o'clock on Saturday in Liberty Hall. Madame was very irritable and talked about being held back. Her remarks were clearly pointed at me and I said that if Connolly did not appear within 24 hours I would draw out of it and allow the leaders of the Citizen Army to take any action they wished. In saying that, I had in mind that this would likely ensure that no action would be taken for 24 hours.

Later on Saturday it became known that Madame Markievicz's residence, "Surrey House", Leinster Road, had been raided by the British, and I went there about 10 o'clock or so on Sunday morning to learn the details. When I got there the maid informed me that Madame was out but that Mr. Connolly was upstairs. I went up to Connolly's bedroom and found him dressing. He made no remark when I entered which I thought strange. I said something to the effect about us being in a great sweat about him for the last few days and he replied dryly,

/"Is

"Is that so". I was rather surprised at this and it occurred to me, as a probability, that Madame had complained of my interference and that Connolly agreed with her point of view, so I did not make any further comment. A few minutes later there was a knock at the door, which was ajar, and Connolly said, "Come in". Helena Moloney entered and said to Connolly, "Is that you?" He replied, "That's me". Helena then said, "And where were you?" "Oh", he said, "that would be telling". In "The Rising", by Desmond Ryan, this incident, as described by him, contains an error and is not as reported by me to him. This is important, I think. What Connolly said in reply to Helena Moloney's question, "That would be telling", Ryan gives as "That would be telling you", which alters the sense of the reply. I never discussed the matter again with Connolly and did not regard it as of any great importance in view of the other happenings at the time.

A considerable time after Easter Week I first heard of the suggestion that Connolly had been

/kidnapped

kidnapped by the I.R.B. or some section of it.

The story, as told to me by Thomas Foran, was that in Frongoch internment camp some of the Citizen Army and Irish Volunteers were discussing the Insurrection and the Citizen Army men were contending that Connolly's actions were more responsible for the Insurrection than those of anyone else. This was contested by the Volunteers, one of whom said that they knew how to deal with Connolly, as they had taken him prisoner and kept him until he agreed to act with them. I was very surprised at this and made considerable inquiries about it. I could not find anyone for a long time who knew anything about it. Some years afterwards in a volume entitled, "The Voice of Ireland", an article by Liam O'Brien of University College, Galway, who was an Easter Week man, appeared containing a statement that Connolly had been arrested by the I.R.B. I wrote and asked him about it, and in his reply he said that he did not know anything about it but regarded it as a statement

/that

that was generally accepted as being true. I then made fresh efforts to trace the matter but found great difficulty in locating anyone who could assist me. Finally, I made contact with Pádraic O'Keefe who said he never heard of the statement himself. I spoke to Batt O'Connor who also said he never heard of it, but he promised to make inquiry for me. A few days afterwards, Batt O'Connor saw me and told me he discovered it was a fact. I said I would like to discuss the matter with his informant. He replied that he was afraid that was impossible as he was not a friend of mine.

Following the publication of "Labour in Easter Week" in 1950, I had a talk with Denis McCullough about the statement in my introduction that Connolly was kidnapped by the I.R.B. or by a section of it. McCullough was most emphatic that, that was not so. He stated that a meeting of the Supreme Council of the I.R.B. was held in the Town Hall, Clontarf, on Sunday, 23rd January and at this meeting it was reported that Commandant Mallin of the Citizen Army



and Madame Markievicz had stated that they had a pact with James Connolly that if any of the leaders were arrested they would start the Insurrection and that in view of the absence of James Connolly they intended to do this. Sean MacDermott reported this and was very concerned about the possibility of the Citizen Army taking action. McCullough stated it was decided by the Supreme Council that every effort was to be made to prevent the Volunteers joining in, "But", he added, "we all felt that our efforts would be unsuccessful and that once the fighting started nothing would stop the Volunteers from joining in". McCullough was positive that MacDermott knew nothing about Connolly's whereabouts, and had nothing to do with kidnapping him.

From my intimate knowledge of James Connolly, extending over nearly 20 years, I would imagine that if he were kidnapped by the I.R.B., as suggested, he would resent it very much and would refuse to discuss anything with his captors.

A short time before Easter Week, Tom Clarke asked me to go to his house as he wanted to have a talk with me. I agreed. I thought well of mentioning this to Connolly as I had no idea what the talk was to be about. The latter said he had an idea, but went on to say that he had been telling the Volunteers about the Citizen Army and their strength and that he thought it likely enough that Clarke would want to know from me about the support that would come from our side and Connolly added that he hoped I wouldn't "let him down".

When I went to Tom Clarke's house, he said to me, "You know what's going on". I said, "Yes". "Well", he continued, "we have done wonderful things. We have made preparations. There has been no serious hitch of any kind, but we are not sure there won't be at the last moment. Now", said he, "I am very nervous about Madame Markievicz". "Why"? said I. "Well", he said, "she is too talkative. She cannot keep a secret. I would get anything out of her I wanted in ten minutes. I have not the slightest

doubt", he said, "when the fight starts she'll be in the thick of it. I don't doubt her courage, whatever, but I think Connolly trusts her with information too much". I said, "I wish, however, Connolly would act with discretion". "Well," continued Clarke, "Connolly has very important papers. These papers are hidden in the clothing used by Liberty Hall printers. That clothing is in a press in a room entered from the left-hand top corridor of Liberty Hall and the key is in the room that Connolly uses as his office. How do I know that! I have it from Madame Markievicz!" I was very non-plussed at this statement and then Clarke said, "I want you to talk to Connolly about it and ask him not to let her have information of that kind". I did not relish this mission and I said, "Why don't you talk to him yourself". "No", he said, "I could not think of doing it. He is not a man I know very well, but you are a friend of his and you can talk to him". I very reluctantly agreed in the circumstances to do so but, as I anticipated, as soon as I mentioned the matter to Connolly he

didn't take it very well, so I said very little.

Connolly never told me that he had become a member of the I.R.B. I assumed the reason was that members were prohibited from revealing their membership to non-members and he never told me that he was going to be commander in Dublin. He mentioned the Post Office as being the Headquarters and said, "That's where I will be", but it didn't convey to me at the time that he was going to be the Commander in Dublin. Perhaps he expected me to question him, I don't know, but that was the position.

Connolly was describing the line from the North Dublin Union and the Broadstone Station up towards Finglas and he mentioned something about a retreat if necessary, but I am not very clear about it. I am clear he did say these things but the rest of the things were not stated. He just talked about a retreat to Finglas or North County Dublin. I am not positive that he mentioned Finglas. He did not definitely mention Maynooth.

/Blessington

Blessington and Finglas are in the same general direction, of course. He made no reference as to how long Dublin was to be held. I did not ask any questions in that connection. It was only that he introduced these topics himself. You followed up those articles he had in the "Workers' Republic", I presume, on street fighting. Colivet told me he was at one of Connolly's lectures and when he was speaking about street fighting he was explaining about barricades, that they need not be so strong as people thought and that if nothing else were available they would have to procure furniture from houses which would not make them very popular. Some officer present said it would make them very unpopular and would put the local people against them. He said, "If we succeed, all our sins will be forgiven; if we fail, all our virtues won't save us from the gallows". He had a great sense of humour. Some of the Citizen Army, however, were alarmed to think he was talking about digging trenches and positions which they could defend, and a young man

of 15 or 16 said, "Well, Commandant, if one of these high explosives lands beside me in these trenches, what am I to do?" "Don't worry", said Connolly, "it will never trouble you. As Robinson Crusoe said, 'If the lightning had touched the tower I would never know what killed me'".

If Dublin were completely taken and in the hands of the Insurgents the occupation of the Castle would become a different proposition. I am a bit vague on the Castle but I discussed the point with Connolly. I think Connolly was Commander-in-Chief. He gave Paul Galligan instructions to go to Wexford. I think Pearse was only nominally Commander-in-Chief. I am positive about Connolly's position. Pearse had no capacity for that kind of work. He never decided anything in the Post Office. Connolly was in charge of everything. People from the country went to Connolly and discussed things with him.

There is something that has not been explained and perhaps never will be explained in connection

/with

with the last day or so. Mrs. Clarke is positive that Tom Clarke was President. She would be a little prejudiced perhaps, but on this particular thing I think why Tom did tell her he was President was that before Easter Week they insisted he should sign the Proclamation first, hence he told her he was President. The signatories on the Proclamation are Clarke first in a line to himself and the others in two threes underneath, and it could be that his name was intended to be followed by the word, "President". You will remember in my introduction where I spoke about MacNeill in relation to Connolly. Madame Markievicz states, though I wouldn't consider her very reliable, that MacNeill's name was on the Proclamation and that it had to be printed a second time. That is not so: it was not printed a second time, but there may be something in the remark that MacNeill's name was going to be used. If MacNeill's name was going to be used on the Proclamation, Tom Clarke might very well have been

/made

made President, but if MacNeill's name could not be used and a change had to be made, the best known man next to MacNeill in the Volunteers was Pearse. If Connolly was being appointed Commander-in-Chief without the MacNeill name it would probably have fooled all outside Dublin but wouldn't have any influence and his name might be resented as Commander-in-Chief. <sup>fore,</sup> There/ Pearse was made Commander-in-Chief as well as President. That is all theory on my part but I have thought over it as a possibility. Something happened in the last few hours that no one seems to know. There is a bit of a mystery. You may take it from me and you can discuss it with others who were in the Post Office that Pearse never exercised any military authority in the Post Office.

Connolly told me that the question of the occupation of the Castle was very carefully considered and rejected because it was a big, straggling building requiring a large number of men



to hold it and commanded in some places by higher buildings which overlooked it. That is almost word for word what he said. He emphasised it was very easy to take but difficult to hold. I then asked him would it be possible to reconsider the matter and he said he was afraid not and very careful consideration had been given to it. It is as clear in my mind as if it were yesterday because, he not only told me, but we discussed it.

Supposing they were going to take the Castle, would it be that necessary to take the Municipal Buildings and the Mail Office and the City Hall? Yes, but they wouldn't have enough troops. The words he (Connolly) said were that they would occupy buildings that would command the gates, and the Municipal Buildings was one of those. Then there was Ship Street where there was a small party consisting of Oman

/and

and his brother, George. I think there were only three of them there. The Olympia Theatre was to be taken but I think nothing was done there - I have not heard of it anyway. They would occupy buildings that would command the gates.

On the 1st August, 1916, I arrived home from internment. My brother, Dan, was ill but he was able to talk and I had several discussions with him regarding the events of Easter Week; in particular I discussed with him the occupation of Stephen's Green and asked if this was not a blunder. He said, "No", and asked me if I remembered on Good Friday morning when I came to Liberty Hall I opened the door of Connolly's room and found Connolly, Madame Markievicz, Michael Mallin and my brother, Dan, sitting at a table. Connolly said, "I will see you later, Bill", and I withdrew. "Well", said my brother, "we were then going over the plans and we discussed the occupation of Stephen's Green fully".

I found on my arrival a considerable change of feeling regarding the insurgents. From the early days in Easter Week opinion had, apparently, changed very considerably. We were aware of this change in the various people through correspondence but anybody I came in contact with had no idea as to what should be done regarding the Movement. Martial Law and other restrictions prevented, of course, much being done but I could find no ideas in any quarter as to what the next step should be.

Larry Ginnell, M.P., who was very sympathetic to the Movement, convened a conference a few months later in Vaughan's Hotel which was attended by Thomas Farren and myself. A number of those in Northern Ireland who were supporting the anti-partition movement were present. After listening for an hour or so to Mr. Ginnell making a long speech, Farren and I decided that we would retire, and nothing resulted from the conference. A little later I got an invitation from Herbert Moore Pim to

to a conference at Fleming's hotel but as I never had any use for that gentleman I did not attend it. There was a great deal of confusion about Sinn Fein and the Insurrection. At the time of the Volunteer split in September 1914, the Freeman's Journal and Evening Herald labelled the Irish Volunteer Movement The Sinn Fein Volunteers because the Sinn Fein party was very largely discredited, and continued to so describe the Volunteers during 1915. When the Insurrection took place this label was used and the Insurrection was largely referred to as "The Sinn Fein Rebellion". After the Insurrection, Sinn Fein was continually confused with The Irish Volunteers. Herbert Moore Pim had been editor of a monthly literary paper, entitled, "The Irishman", started early in 1916. After his release he re-issued this paper as a political organ and continually wrote in it of the Sinn Fein Movement as being synonymous with the Irish  
/Volunteers,

Volunteers, and that added to the confusion.

Following the Insurrection, a National body was established called "The Irish National Aid Association", which made an appeal for funds for the dependants of those who were executed or were in prison. This body was formed of a number of people who were supporters of The Irish Parliamentary Party and this fact gave offence to the supporters of the Volunteer Movement, and so a second body was formed with the title, "The Irish Volunteers' Dependants' Fund". This caused some confusion, particularly in the United States where considerable subscriptions were being collected, and as a result a delegation of two was sent from the United States to deal with the situation. The delegation consisted of John Archdeacon Murphy and John Gill. Mr. Murphy was an old member of the Clan na Gael and a close friend of John Devoy, and so was Mr. Gill, but he was a much younger man. They succeeded in

/bringing

National Archives Act, 1986, Regulations, 1988

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**Form to be completed and inserted in the original record  
in place of each part abstracted**

- (i) Reference number of the separate cover under which the abstracted part has been filed: WS 1766/A
- (ii) How many documents have been abstracted: 19
- (iii) The date of each such document: 2. February 1959

(iv) The description of each document:  
WS 1766 William O'Brien witness statement p85  
name of individual

(Where appropriate, a composite description may be entered in respect of two or more related documents).

- (v) Reason(s) why the part has been abstracted for retention:  
(c) Would or might cause distress or danger to living persons on the ground that they contain information about individuals, or would or might be likely to lead to an action for damages for defamation.

( These will be the reasons given on the certificate under Section 8(4).)

J. Moloney

Name: (J. Moloney.)

Grade: Col.

Department/Office/Court:

Date: 7 March 2003.

bringing about an amalgamation of the two bodies and removed from the new Executive almost all the objectionable people with the exception of .

It was also decided that there should be five representatives of the Labour Movement elected by the Dublin United Trades Council and I was selected as one of the five. Mr. Joseph McGrath was appointed Office Manager of the United Organisation. This body took a very important part at the time, but had to be excessively careful so that no excuse would be given which might result in the disrapture of these considerable funds. Father Boden, Administrator, Pro-Cathedral, was chairman, but after a short time he resigned. As it was considered very desirable that he should continue as chairman he was prevailed upon to withdraw his resignation, but he stipulated, in doing so, that he would not attend any meeting. He, therefore, remained a nominal chairman. Mr. P.T. Keohane, Manager of Messrs. Gills, O'Connell Street, who was Vice-Chairman,

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acted as the chairman from that period on. I did not know Mr. Keohane previously but I found that he was a first-rate nationalist and had a large circle of nationalist friends. He was an early member of the Gaelic League and of the Celtic Literary Society. Towards the end of 1916, a vacancy occurred in the West Cork Constituency and discussions took place in Cork as to contest in the election on behalf of the Republican Movement. There was strong objection to this course and ultimately a candidate was selected by William O'Brien's All for Ireland League. This candidate was Frank Healy, a barrister, who had a good reputation in nationalist circles. Prior to Easter Week he had defended a number of Defence of The Realm prisoners, including Terence MacSwiney. He was President of The Ancient Order of Hibernians Irish American Alliance which acted closely with the Clan na Gael in the United States and Mr. Healy, himself, was a close friend and correspondant of John Devoy. The Cork Volunteers

opposed



opposed his candidature and as a result a nominee of the Irish Parliamentary Party was elected. At Christmas 1916, the remaining interned prisoners - about 600 - were released and this altered the situation considerably. On January 8th., Arthur Griffith called on me and spent two hours discussing the position and what might be done. On the day on which I was notified in Redding prison that I was being released, Griffith called me aside and gave me his advice as to what he thought could be done outside. He said that he thought the only thing now to be done was to start a movement to organise a demand for representation at the Peace Conference. He took the same line with me on 8th January, 1917 and suggested that a Council should be formed consisting of three each from The Irish Volunteers, <sup>and</sup> The Irish National League; Labour and Sinn Fein to organise a Movement to demand that Ireland be represented at the Peace Conference and to contest North Roscommon with Count Plunkett as candidate. I /expressed

expressed the opinion that the Labour Movement would not join such a body and that in view of the attitude of the Volunteers in Cork, it was not likely that the Volunteers would agree to contest the bye-election in Roscommon. Sometime afterwards Mr. Keohane sent for me and asked me what I thought about contesting North Roscommon. I said there were a number of difficulties and he said, "What are they?" "Well", I said, "there is the question of finance: no one has any money". "Well", he rejoined, "don't mind about that: I think if we decide to contest we can get the money. What are the next points?" I said, "Well, there is the question of a platform and a candidate". He said, "What would you think of Count Plunkett as candidate?" I said, "If there was going to be a contest he would be an excellent candidate as he would not require any platform - he could be described as the father of Joseph Plunkett." "Well", said Mr. Keohane, "I was just waiting for

/your

your opinion. The position is - Father O'Flanagan has been all over the constituency and has found a great feeling in favour of a contest." Continuing, he said, "A priest in County Meath is willing to put up £200 and I am prepared to advance a similar sum". I agreed that in the circumstances it seemed desirable to go ahead. I should say The Irish National League mentioned by Griffith was a body formed out ~~formed out~~ of the Anti-Partition Movement in Northern Ireland and although it had issued some appeals I did not regard it favourably, being practically a second edition of The Irish Parliamentary Party.

Late in the evening of January 31st, Mrs. Kitty O'Doherty, who was a member of the Executive of the National Aid Association called to the Trades Hall to see Thomas Farren and myself with a message from Keohane which surprised us very much. Mrs. O'Doherty stated that there was hopeless confusion in North Roscommon and no

/adequate

adequate preparations were made or could be made in the locality for continuing the election.

When we expressed surprise at this, Mrs. O'Doherty said that posting and so forth had been done satisfactorily, but the local people knew little or nothing about the arrangements that should be made on the day of the poll and unless help could be sent from Dublin there was no hope of winning.

When Mrs. O'Doherty called I was engaged at a meeting which I could not leave until it was finished and when I was free it was close on 11 p.m.

After discussing the position Farren and I accompanied Mrs. O'Doherty to Count Plunkett's house and saw the Count. Rory O'Connor was with him. We told him what we had been informed and he asked us what advice we would give him. We advised that a team should be organised to go to Roscommon composed of people who had experience in conducting elections and suggested Daniel McCarthy and Joseph McGrath as the two best men we could think of.. The Count agreed with this, and the

/question

question of money arose. Neither Farren or myself had any. The Count said he had £5. (five pounds) and if that was any use we could have it. He also asked Farren and myself would we go to Roscommon and we agreed to do so. We took the Count's £5 and went to Denis McCarthy's residence, presented him with the £5., and as a result he agreed to leave for Roscommon by the first train the following day. Later, we saw Joe McGrath, and he followed by the evening train. On 2nd February Thomas Farren, Sean Rogan and myself with a Dublin motor car travelled to Roscommon. On the previous day Mrs. O'Doherty asked me if we would have any room in the car, and I said we would have room for one person. She said to call to her house at 32 Connaught Street as there was a man there who would give a hand. We duly turned up at the appointed place and the man proved to be Michael Collins. I knew Collins fairly well as we occupied the same hut in Frongoch. On our way down to Roscommon we had a puncture, and while it

/was

was being mended we were overtaken by another car, the occupants of which were Arthur Griffith, Thomas Cullen, George Nesbitt and Stephen O'Meara (junior). A little later we had further motor trouble and discovered that a back spring of the car was broken. We had to stay in Longford town and have a repair made, which detained us four or five hours. While waiting in Longford we heard a rumour that Phillips, the local Member of Parliament, was dead and we discussed what might be done about a contest there if we were victorious in Roscommon. Some time afterwards it was learned that Phillips was not dead, but he died a month or so later, causing the vacancy in South Longford.

As a result of our delay in Longford, we did not arrive in Boyle until about 1 a.m. and went to the hotel of Mr. Patrick Bowles which was the local headquarters. Everywhere the ground was covered with snow which made the

/campaign

campaign very difficult. Early in the morning of 3rd February it was again snowing very heavily. Larry Ginnell, M.P., called to Bowles's hotel and had breakfast. He had done a good deal of speaking in the constituency and I asked him what he thought about the prospect. He said there was no doubt they would win. Stephen O'Meara and I were stationed in Boyle all day and as far as I could see Plunkett got little or no support there but it was generally understood it was a stronghold of the Irish Parliamentary Party. In the evening as workers came in from outlying parts they all expressed confidence in the result. I received this with caution, knowing how optimistic workers in elections can be, until I got an opinion from Griffith. He was extremely pleased and said he had no doubt that we had won the election. I left for home at 11.45 p.m. and arrived at Broadstone at 6 a.m. on the following morning. It

/was

was the 5th of February when we got the result of the election: Plunkett 3,022, Devine 1,708 and Tully 687. There was great enthusiasm in Dublin when the result came in and a huge crowd met Count Plunkett at the Broadstone Station when he arrived. On the following day, 6th February, the Freeman's Journal stated the result was a blow to the Irish Party and the Home Rule Cause.

Appendix to Minutes.

The Minute Book of Dublin No. 1. Branch of The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union contains minutes of meetings held on Wednesday, 12th April and Thursday 13th April, which deal with the reactions of some members of the Committee to the announcement which appeared in the "Workers' Republic" to the effect that the

/Green



Green Flag would be hoisted over Liberty Hall on Sunday, 16th April, 1916. These Minutes were written by John O'Neill, Secretary of the Branch, a member of the Irish Citizen Army who was in the G.P.O. during Easter Week.

(The relevant pages of the Minute Book referred to above have been photostated and they are attached herewith as Appendix \_\_\_\_\_).

On February 11th., I met Laurence Ginnell, M.P. at the residence of Mrs. Eamon Ceannt and had a long talk with him about Easter Week, before and after, and also future prospects. He said Bulmer Hobson told him that James Connolly was the author of the so-called bogus document read by Alderman Kelly in the Dublin Corporation a short time before Easter Week.

/On

On the way to North Roscommon on 2nd February, Michael Collins told me that he was an applicant for the position of Secretary of the National Aid Association and asked me for my support. I told him to come round to my office after the election and we would discuss the proposition. He did so and as a result of a talk I promised to get him the Labour votes. Mr. Keohane, Mr. John Murphy and some other influential members of the National Aid Association were supporting Mr. John Cotter for the Secretaryship and the Volunteer Organisation was understood to be backing Collins. As a result of the support I was able to obtain, Collins was elected on 13th February.

Count Plunkett convened a conference in his own house, 27, Upper Fitzwilliam Street on 15th February to consider the next step after the North Roscommon victory. There were present:-

/Count Plunkett,

Count Plunkett, Arthur Griffith, Alderman Tom Kelly, Father Michael O'Flanagan, Michael Collins, Laurence Ginnell, M.P., Rory O'Connor, Seamus O'Doherty, Darrell Figgis, J.J.O'Kelly ("Sceilg"). Michael O'Callaghan (Limerick), George Murnaghan (Omagh), F.J.O'Connor, Solicitor (Omagh), Thomas Farren and William O'Brien.

Count Plunkett explained that he had called the meeting for the purpose of having an exchange of views as to what action should be taken following the victory in Roscommon. Very early in the proceedings the question of the abstentionist policy was mentioned and when Count Plunkett stated very definitely that he had contested the election on the understanding that, if elected, he would not attend the Westminster Parliament, this was contested by Mr. F.J.O'Connor who had taken a considerable part in the election campaign. Others of those present, including Arthur Griffith, expressed the opinion that an

/abstentionist

abstentionist policy would not be popular, but they regarded it as a matter of tactics rather than principles. Mr. O'Connor would not accept this point of view and most of the discussion that took place was concerning this subject. Count Plunkett did not give any particular lead or announce any definite policy himself and on the whole was rather unhelpful as a chairman of a meeting. Messrs. O'Kelly, O'Callaghan, Murnaghan and O'Connor were representatives of the Irish Nation League and it was clear from what was said on their behalf that they were not prepared to agree to an abstentionist policy. After a long and unsatisfactory discussion it was ultimately agreed to appoint a small committee to go into the matter further with a view to submitting a concrete proposal to a further meeting. Count Plunkett, Arthur Griffith, J.J. O'Kelly, Seamus O'Doherty and myself were appointed as members of this committee. I

/explained

explained the position of Thomas Farren and myself, that while we were both members of the Executive of the Irish Trades Union Congress of which I was Vice-Chairman and of the Executive of the Dublin Trades Council of which I was acting Secretary, we were acting in our individual capacity because of our sympathy with Easter Week and the Movement resulting from it, and we could not influence the Labour Movement in any way to take a part in any new party that might be formed.

On February 25th, Michael Collins, Seamus O'Doherty and Michael Staines had a long talk with me. They said that Arthur Griffith was following the old organisation of Sinn Fein and seeking to convince people who had no personal knowledge otherwise that Sinn Fein was responsible for Easter Week and the Volunteer Movement objected to that and wanted a Movement having the Republic as its objective. I was sympathetic to their

/views

views and promised to assist in any way I could.

The Committee appointed on February 15th. having met, failed to agree on a recommendation. Griffith clung tenaciously to the idea of a Council representing a number of organisations such as he had outlined to me on January 8th., while Count Plunkett, Collins, C'Connor and others wanted a new organisation and when Griffith would not give way they started an organisation called "Liberty Clubs". They did not get very far with this organisation, being largely inexperienced and being unable to counter the widespread feeling that Sinn Fein was responsible for Easter Week. On March 2nd., the resumed conference was held in the Mansion House chambers, Dawson Street. There were present :- Count Plunkett, Arthur Griffith, Father Michael O'Flanagan, Alderman Tom Kelly, Michael Collins, Rory O'Connor, Daniel McCarthy, Joseph McGrath, Thomas Farren and William O'Brien.

/At

At the outset it was mentioned that no National League representative was present. There was a further discussion regarding the policy of abstention from Westminster Parliament. Griffith said the country was not ripe for it. There was opposition from Cork and Limerick against the policy. After a long discussion it was agreed that Count Plunkett, on his own responsibility, would issue a manifesto addressed to public bodies and societies, inviting them to endorse his policy and if so to appoint delegates to a conference to be held in the Mansion House, Dublin, on April 19th. to appoint a National Council, the main issue to be representation at the Peace Conference. This was, to a considerable extent, a victory for Griffith but there was a good deal of dissatisfaction in Volunteer Circles against it. The Freeman's Journal and Evening Telegraph, as the organs of the Irish Parliamentary Party, were

/fighting

fighting hard against a new Movement and were very critical of Count Plunkett as an nationalist. A photograph of the Count in Court dress was published and a statement made that the Count had applied to be appointed Under-Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant when C'Doherty retired. After that attack appeared, Count Plunkett spoke at a concert in the Mansion House on March 5th., but did not deny the Freeman's Journal charge or make any reference to it.

On March 23rd., I attended a small meeting in the Mansion House convened by Councillor Lorcán Sherlock and Alderman Alfie Byrne to consider supporting an Amnesty Movement on behalf of the political prisoners. I don't know who else was invited, but Alderman Tom Kelly, Thomas Farren and myself were the only ones present in addition to Sherlock and Byrne.

/The



The three of us refused to have anything to do with an Amnesty Movement and made it clear that if Sherlock and Byrne attempted to support one that we would denounce it. Our view was that as Byrne was a member of the Irish Parliamentary Party and Sherlock its most prominent leader in Dublin that it was an attempt to exploit the sympathy existing for the prisoners on behalf of the Irish Parliamentary Party who were conscious of the growth of a new Movement.

Phillips, the member of Parliament for South Longford, having died, a meeting was held on April 4th. to consider the vacancy. There were present :- Count Plunkett, Arthur Griffith, Michael Collins, Rory O'Connor and William O'Brien.

It was proposed to select Joseph McGuinness, one of the penal servitude prisoners, and most of those present were in favour of that.

/Arthur

Arthur Griffith expressed the opinion that South Longford was a very different constituency to North Roscommon, that it was a stronghold of the Irish Parliamentary Party, that a record number of recruits for the British Army had been secured in that district, and that in consequence there was a very large number of separation-allowance women who would be strong supporters of the Parliamentary Party candidate and that they would require a very strong candidate to win. He suggested J.J. O'Kelly (Cecil) and urged that his description as editor of the Catholic Bulletin would be one that would be likely to get good support there. The rest of us were strongly in favour of McGuinness and he was, accordingly, selected. A couple of days afterwards we were called together again and informed that it was understood the penal servitude prisoners had decided that none of them would stand as a Parliamentary candidate. We were very disconcerted at this announcement and

/after

after considering what was best to be done we decided to send someone to the town in which McGuinness was confined and attempt to get a message through to him by the Chaplain. Michael Staines was selected for this job and it was subsequently learned that the statement was correct but when our message reached McGuinness the matter was re-discussed and it was decided to leave each prisoner free to accept or reject any invitation he might receive to contest a parliamentary constituency, and so we went ahead with McGuinness as candidate and decided that the election should be fought mainly on the question of McGuinness as a prisoner, the slogan of "Put him in to get him out" being adopted and used at this and subsequent bye-elections.

When Count Plunkett's circular was considered by the Dublin Trades Council, it was decided not to send delegates but to appoint a deputation to express sympathy with the aims of

/the

the conference and to make it clear that while, for domestic reasons, we were not sending delegates we were whole-heartedly in support of the objects of the Convention. The delegation appointed consisted of Thomas Boyle, President of the Council, with Thomas Farren and myself.

Arthur Griffith called to my house about this period and surprised me by the description of Count Plunkett which he gave me. Griffith said Plunkett knew nothing whatever about present day political circumstances, that it was useless talking to him and that he would be hopeless as a political leader. I was very surprised at this. I knew very little about Count Plunkett. I never regarded him as a nationalist. I had seen his name in connection with various projects supported by people of the Unionist type. About 12 or 15 years before this period he was connected with a body called, "The Irish Reform Movement" which was an Irish

edition of Joseph Chamberlain's Tarriff Movement and I remembered that at the time of the exhibition in Cork, about 1902 or 1903, the Lord-Lieutenant was shown over the Exhibition by Count Plunkett. During the North Roscommon election very little concern was given to Count Plunkett's own views or record, he being simply accepted and supported because he was the father of Joseph Plunkett, executed after Easter Week.

The Plunkett assembly took place on April 19th in the Mansion House. It was mostly well attended and there was a good deal of enthusiasm displayed. Count Plunkett opened it with a statement in general terms to which no exception was taken, but as the conference developed it was apparent that there was a clash between Griffith and Plunkett as to what was to be decided. Griffith still fought for the establishment of a Council on which a number of organisations would be represented, but the individual organisations would remain. This view was supported by Griffith

/and

and Sean Milroy and some others and at one stage in the meeting Griffith protested against the line that Count Plunkett was taking and as a result the conference almost broke up in disorder. The Count sat in the chair without making any attempt to deal with the situation. Actually the whole conference did not know what was taking place although it was a most painful experience for those around the platform. I was seated on the edge of the dais of the platform and Griffith was on the opposite side. I saw Father O'Flanagan speaking to Griffith and evidently trying to persuade him of something. Griffith seemed disinclined to agree. Father O'Flanagan was writing something and after some time he rose and moved a resolution that a committee be appointed to draft a policy for the new Movement. He said that he would ask Griffith to second this proposal. He named seven as a committee and from these names it was

/clear

clear that three represented each side with himself as the seventh. When Griffith rose to second the motion he said he thought that there had to be a representative of Labour on the Committee and he proposed that I should be the eighth member. When he sat down, Father O'Flanagan got up and said smilingly that Mr. Griffith had taken steps with his proposal to add Mr. O'Brien's name to which he had no objection at all, but added that he thought if Labour was to have a representative that the women ought to be represented also and he would add the name of Countess Plunkett, and so it was agreed. The names then were as follows :- Count and Countess Plunkett, Father Michael O'Flanagan, Arthur Griffith, Dr. Thomas Dillon, Stephen O'Mara (Junior), Cathal Brugha, Sean Milroy and William O'Brien.

I was not a delegate to the conference and, therefore, was not eligible to be allowed on this committee; neither was I willing to be elected on this committee and when Griffith mentioned my name I spoke to a few of those on the platform saying that I could not possibly agree to act but they pleaded with me that the situation was very critical and that if I intervened to say that I wouldn't act the whole thing would break down. Very reluctantly I agreed not to say anything.

Following the election of this committee I tried to make it clear that I could not act on it. Griffith had a long talk with me and I still maintained that I could not act. I said I intended to write explaining my position but I got an invitation to the first meeting of this committee for 3rd May in the Gresham hotel, and Griffith sent Sean Milroy to me about it. When I told Milroy that I intended to

/write



write in explaining why I could not act as a member he said Griffith would like me to attend in person and explain my position and as a result of the pressure from Griffith I reluctantly agreed to do this. When I attended the meeting in the Gresham hotel I found all the other members assembled in the lounge. As soon as I arrived, Father O'Flanagan said, "We are all here now. We had better go upstairs". As we went upstairs I found Griffith opposite to me. He nudged me and said, "We want you to preside at this meeting". I said, "Oh, that is quite impossible: I can't act on the committee". "Oh", he said, "you ought to act for the present anyhow. There is no way out: Stephen O'Mara will propose you". When we entered the room upstairs, Father O'Flanagan said, "Now, we want a chairman". Count Plunkett, I think, looked surprised. Frank O'Mara immediately proposed me.

/Father

Father O'Flanagan seconded it and before I knew where I was I found myself in the chair. Instead of taking up the question of constructing a policy or programme for the new Movement, it was suggested that the most urgent thing we could do was to make plans to have Ireland represented at the Peace Conference and various details of this proposal were considered. In view of I began to think that possibly I could remain a member of the committee, at any rate for some time, and did not announce that I would withdraw.

The Longford election took place on 9th May and as a result Joseph McGuinness was returned by a narrow majority of 37 votes. I understand that this was the result of a second count when it was discovered that a bundle of 50 votes was counted as 100 for McKenna, the Irish Parliamentary Party candidate, and that the mistake was discovered by Joseph McGrath.

On May 11th a further meeting of the Plunkett assembly committee was called, but as only Dr. Dillon, Sean Milroy and myself attended, no meeting was held.

On May 12th., the first anniversary of the execution of James Connolly, a sign which had been displayed on Liberty Hall was removed by the police, but flags which had been put up were allowed to remain. It might be well to explain here that a good deal of friction existed between the officials and committee of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union and members of the reorganised Irish Citizen Army at this period. The cause of this was that the Citizen Army had no suitable premises associated with James Connolly and the individual members of the Citizen Army, most of whom were members of The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, took up an attitude that they could make use

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of Liberty Hall in any way they liked.

Drilling, of course, had been resumed and this was done in a "very open manner calculated, in the view of the Union officials, to draw the attention of the authorities on what was going on. The Volunteers also had resumed drilling but it was done in a different manner and in less public places than Liberty Hall. This attitude came to a head about May 1917 and as a result on May 15th., an order to close Liberty Hall was served on Thomas Foran, the President of the Union. The Union had made good headway in reorganising in the previous 8 or 10 months but the closing of Liberty Hall would have been a very severe blow and might have had very serious consequences. Foran and I consulted about the position and decided to keep the information to ourselves for a little while. As a result nothing was done towards complying with the order and in a very short

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time the British Government announced a new policy in setting up the Lloyd George Convention and no action was taken by the police to enforce the order to close Liberty Hall which, I think, was never made public.

In April 1917, we got word that Councillor W.P. Partridge, a penal servitude prisoner, was very ill and as a result of the resolution passed by the Dublin Trades Council I sent telegrams to the British Chief Secretary and others demanding his release. On May 2nd., I had a letter from Partridge stating that he was very bad and longing to come home. On May 18th there was a further meeting of the Plunkett Assembly Committee, all members being present. A further discussion took place regarding the method of taking a plebiscite demanding representation at the Peace Conference when it was agreed that the basis would be the Poor Law Union as the unit. In addition, the

/proposed

proposed Lloyd George Convention was  
considered and a public statement, as follows,  
issued :-

"Convention 'Pitfall'".  
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(Irish Independent dated 21/5/1917)

Statement by Sinn Feiners.

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The following statement is issued from the  
Committee of the Mansion House Assembly,  
convened by Count Plunkett :-

'Our disastrous experience of the English  
Government in Ireland, which after 750 years  
stands confessed before the world as an abject  
failure, compels us to view with distrust its  
proposal to summon a Convention for the alleged  
purpose of settling the Irish question. The  
English Government has already pledged itself  
to support a small section of the Irish people  
in their refusal to abide by the decision of the  
majority of their fellow-countrymen, thereby

/precluding

precluding the possibility of any settlement being arrived at through the medium of such a Convention.

'The failure of the Convention, thus assured beforehand, would give the English Government the opportunity of declaring to its Allies, to the U.S. and to neutral Powers that England had left the solution of the Irish question to the Irish themselves; that the Irish were unable to solve it, and that, therefore, England's continued occupation of Ireland was justified. We warn the people of Ireland against such a pitfall.

'A Convention to have the right of formulating a system of government for Ireland must be freely chosen for that special purpose by the people of Ireland, upon a basis of adult suffrage, free from English influence, and free, if it so decide, to declare for the complete independence of Ireland.

/'If

'If the English Government accepts the principle laid down by the President of the United States that Governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, we challenge it to agree to such a Convention of the Irish Nation'.

Wm. O'Brien, Arthur Griffith, Cathal  
Count  
Brugha, G.N./Plunkett, Sean Milroy,  
S. O'Mara, Josephine Mary Plunkett,  
Michael O'Flannagain, Thos. Dillon".

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A somewhat similar statement to this was arranged and published by the Sinn Fein Organisation a couple of days afterwards.

to the Bureau representative  
(Mr. O'Brien handed/a copy of a Closing Order made under The Defence of the Realm Acts by a Magistrate of the Dublin Metropolitan Police, dated 15th May, 1917. A typed copy of this document was made by the Bureau and the original returned to Mr. O'Brien).



C O P Y/

DEFENCE OF THE REALM ACTS,  
Metropolitan Police Courts,  
Inn's Quay,  
Dublin.

Police District of  
Dublin Metropolis  
to wit.

Whereas I, being a Justice of the Peace and one of the Divisional Justices for said District, am satisfied by information in writing upon oath laid before me on this day by one William P. Bannon being an officer of Police of a rank not below that of Inspector, to wit, a Superintendent of the Dublin Metropolitan Police, that the house and premises known as Liberty Hall, Beresford Place, and the house and premises known as 31, Eden Quay, together with the passage connecting such houses and premises, all within the City of Dublin, and within said District, are being used for the purpose and in a way prejudicial to the Public Safety and the Defence of the Realm by persons suspected of attempting to cause sedition among the civil population. Now I, by virtue of the powers conferred upon me by Regulation 51c of the Defence of the Realm Regulations duly made under Defence of the Realm Acts, do by this order require such houses and premises, and such passage connecting the same as aforesaid, to be closed altogether.

Dated this 15th day of May, 1917.

(SGD). T.C. Drury.

(Mr. O'Brien handed telegrams to the Bureau representative to have copies photostated, and the documents described hereunder were also made available by Mr. O'Brien for photostatic reproduction).

(1). Copy of printed circular dated 17th March, 1917, signed by Count Plunkett, addressed to the Local Government bodies and political organisations inviting them to approve of his policy and if so to appoint delegates to attend an assembly to be held in the Mansion House, Dublin, on the 19th April, having attached a form to be filled in on the appointment of the delegates.

(2). "Twenty plain facts for Irishmen", giving reasons for joining the <sup>Irish</sup>Volunteers and particulars of the organisation in the City of Dublin, showing the portions of the City operated by the 2nd Battalion and giving particulars of when the different Companies met. Printed on one side.

(3). Pamphlet entitled "To the manhood of Ireland". Extracts from the first manifesto of the Irish Volunteers promulgated at the Rotunda meeting on 25th November, 1913. Printed on other side "Join the Irish Volunteers", and giving particulars of the four Dublin

Battalions and the time and place where the Companies of each Battalion met. The address of the Irish Volunteer Headquarters is given as 2, Dawson Street.

(4). Document issued by Fianna Eireann, headed, "Will you also", and appealing for honorary members who would subscribe to the organisation.

1st telegram: This was received in Liberty Hall on Thursday, 20th January, 1916, when James Connolly's absence was being considered.

2nd telegram: This was sent by A.P. Reynolds from Belfast, Saturday, 22nd January, 1916, to Thomas Foran, President of the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union, the word "nine" indicating in code that there was nothing known about James Connolly's absence in Belfast.

/The

The issue of this statement caused some discussion in Trade Union circles in Dublin, as a result of which I decided it was desirable that I should retire from the Committee. Accordingly, I addressed a letter on 28th May to Dr. Thomas Dillon, Secretary, explaining my position and tendering my resignation.

(A photostatic reproduction of the letter referred to above is attached).

The proposals made by Lloyd George for representation at the Convention included representation from the Dublin, Belfast and Cork Trades Councils, but the National Labour organisation in the Irish Trades Union congress was not invited to appoint delegates. The Dublin and Cork Trades Councils rejected the invitation to appoint delegates. I received a letter from my colleague, Thomas Johnston, then residing in Belfast, saying he thought it was unwise to reject the

/invitation

invitation, and at a subsequent meeting of the National Executive of the Irish Trade Union Congress he strongly urged that that body should ask for an invitation to send delegates to the Convention. The National Executive, of which I was chairman, was evenly divided on the question, hence no decision to ask for representation was adopted.

The peculiar event of the early part of 1917 was the Russian Revolution which swept away the Government of the Czar at the end of February. After a few months the new Provisional Government in Russia favoured the holding of a Conference of the International Socialist Movement at Stockholm to which representatives of all nations were invited for the purpose of laying down terms likely to bring about the end of the war. The National Executive of the Irish Trade Union Congress decided, if possible, to be represented at this conference and Mr. D.R. Campbell of Belfast and myself were appointed as delegates. The British Socialists and Labour /Movement

Movement decided to convene a conference to welcome the new Russian Government and the Socialist Party of Ireland, of which I was a member, decided to send me<sup>as</sup>/a fraternal delegate for the purpose of raising the Irish question there with particular reference to the penal servitude prisoners. The conference was held in Leeds on 3rd June and on arrival there on the previous day I saw the officials in charge. They were friendly but said that fraternal delegates were not provided for and I could only attend as an ordinary delegate. I did not like this because as a matter of principle I had never been a member of a British Socialist organisation and I wanted to emphasise the independence and separatism of the Socialist Movement in Ireland. However, in the circumstances, it was all or nothing and I thought well of giving way on this point when the local officials promised they would do their best to see that I got a hearing.

/Otherwise,

Otherwise, I would stand a poor chance as there were about 1,200 delegates. The agenda of the conference contained four resolutions and I decided I would make an attempt to get in on the second resolution. The first resolution was to be moved by Mr. Ramsey MacDonald, M.P., afterwards Labour's first Prime Minister, and the second resolution by Mr. Philip Snowden, afterwards Chancellor of the Exchequer. The conference was very enthusiastic and the platform a very representative one, Mr. Robert Smilie, the Miners' leader being chairman. After the second resolution had been moved and seconded I rose with about 100 others and at that stage I had very little chance of being called on, but when I announced my name and district, as all speakers had to, 'O'Brien, Ireland', I found it taken up by a large number all over

/the

the hall and after a short pause the chairman called on me. I commenced to speak and I got a very good reception and when, in the course of my remarks, I referred to the shooting of James Connolly, a number of those present stood in their places and as a result practically every delegate stood as a tribute to Connolly's memory. One of the daily papers, reporting the meeting, stated that Ramsey MacDonald half rose from his seat and then sat down quickly. A summary of my speech appeared in a number of the London daily papers and the official report of the conference contains this paragraph :-

"In Ireland you have a small nationality at your doors which is demanding its right to live its own life in its own way. We in Ireland were never humbugged by that chaff about the 'rights of small nationalities'. I gather, from reading some of the capitalist newspapers, that revolution is popular nowadays. Twelve

/months



"months ago you had a revolution in Ireland. The papers and the politicians that acclaimed the revolution in Russia did not acclaim the revolution in Ireland, where the leaders were taken out and shot like dogs . . . one of them some of you knew - James Connolly. I appeal for you to help us to obtain the release of the 127 political prisoners who are men, and for the one woman who is also imprisoned. She belongs to the aristocracy of Ireland; but she left her class and her family in order to fight with the working class. The men have one privilege, inasmuch as they can talk to one another for an hour a day. She has no one to talk to; she is alone, and is treated as if she was one of the worst of criminals. I ask you to help to obtain her release. The Russian Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates say they want to hear the voice of every section in every country, but will the voice of Ireland be heard? Will the Government allow it? I think this conference will do a good deal to help us in getting there."

Since his release at Christmas, Arthur Griffith had been working steadily to build up the old Sinn Fein organisation and as a result of the confusion regarding the supposed connection of Sinn Fein with the Insurrection of Easter Week, the organisation made fairly steady progress. Griffith's paper, "Nationality" was re-issued in February a couple of weeks after the North Roscommon election and was a powerful aid in pushing the Sinn Fein organisation. Count Plunkett, acting in consort with the Volunteers, was pushing the Liberty Clubs and this gave rise to a good deal of confusion and dissatisfaction, particularly outside Dublin. On 5th June a delegation of Cork Volunteers called on me and explained that there was very acute dissatisfaction in Cork regarding the situation and they had been sent to Dublin to interview a number of parties. As a result, they had been advised to see me and ask my advice. I told them that in my opinion neither Griffith nor Count Plunkett counted for very much personally and that the only body in the country that could establish an organisation standing for the ideals

of Easter Week was the Irish Volunteers and that if the Volunteers wished to have this done they had only to make their views clear to both Count Plunkett and Arthur Griffith adding at the same time that if an agreement to establish such an organisation was rejected they should brush both parties aside and start one themselves. A short time afterwards I learned that an agreement had been reached whereby the Executive of Sinn Fein would be reconstructed. It was agreed the new Executive would be formed of the members of the Mansion House Assembly Committee (less myself who had resigned), with six members representing Sinn Fein and six representing the Irish Volunteers.

On 19th May, following the South Longford election, a meeting of the election committee was held when the position was reviewed. In the course of the discussion, Griffith raised the question of the status of the committee when it was proposed to establish the committee as a

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permanent organisation under the title of, "The Irish Freedom Election Committee". Although he did not say so openly, it seemed clear that Griffith was opposed to the proposition. However, he left early and the decision to establish the Committee was approved of.

On 21st May, a huge meeting was held in the Mansion House to demand that the penal servitude prisoners should be treated as 'prisoners of war'. The meeting was organised by a small committee, of which I was one, mainly composed of members of the National Aid Association. The meeting was very well attended and great enthusiasm prevailed. There was also an overflow meeting in the Supper Room. Mrs. Wyse-Power presided at the former meeting and Mrs. Ceannt presided at the overflow meeting at which all the speakers spoke a second time. The speakers were - Count Plunkett, Miss Madge Daly, Cathal Brugha, Dr. Kathleen Lynn, Sean Milroy, Alderman Tom Kelly and myself.

A further meeting of the election committee was held on 30th May at which Griffith again raised the question of status of the committee on which there was a long discussion. In the course of this there was a sharp exchange between Arthur Griffith and Count Plunkett. As I had another engagement, I had to leave before the meeting finished.

It was decided by the same group who organised the Mansion House meeting to have a public meeting at Beresford Place on 10th June. Following the announcement of this, the meeting was proclaimed and I received a note from Eamon Price telling me it had been decided to postpone the meeting in view of the proclamation. As a result, I was much surprised to learn that Count Plunkett and Cathal Brugha, on their own initiative had attempted to hold the meeting. When the

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police proceeded to break up the meeting they were attacked, in the course of which Inspector Mills was killed by a stroke of a hurley.

When a vacancy occurred in the constituency of East Clare, as a result of the death of William Redmond, M.P., the election committee considered the position and decided to contest it. The candidate favoured by most of the committee was Eamon de Valera who was looked upon as the leader of the men in prison as it was thought essential that the candidate, like McGuinness in South Longford, should be one of the prisoners. Arthur Griffith suggested Eoin MacNeill. As a doubt was raised as to whether or not De Valera would accept the nomination a decision was deferred to a future meeting. On 14th June, this meeting was held. There were present - Arthur Griffith (for a short time only), Michael Collins, Rory O'Connor, Daniel McCarthy, Joseph McGrath, Joseph McDonagh, W.L. Cole, Martin Condon, Liam Slattery and myself.

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De Valera was selected as candidate and it was decided that Daniel McCarthy should go to Clare and look after the local arrangements. It was reported that Sean Milroy had already gone there.

On the following day, 15th June, it was announced that all prisoners were to be released.

This arose out of the decision to convene the Lloyd George convention. The prisoners arrived on 18th June and were given a huge reception. There was a march through the city headed by the prisoners which was most imposing and the police were powerless to interfere with it. Countess Markievicz arrived on 21st June and was given a very big reception also. She came direct from Westland-Row station to Liberty Hall where she was given a great reception. The East-Clare bye-election was fought with great vigour. A considerable number of the released prisoners took part in the campaign and as a result De Valera received 5,010 votes as against 2,035 for Patrick Lynch. In the course of the election campaign,

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there was a very sharp division between the speakers. De Valera proclaimed his objective to be the Republic, stating that personally that was the only objective he could stand for. Griffith, Milroy and others took the point of view of the old Sinn Fein organisation and Griffith, who had a good deal to do with the literature issued, re-printed much of the old literature including some that was issued in the Leitrim election nine months before. As a result of this, and the large majority obtained by De Valera, there was strong dissatisfaction at the acceptance of the Sinn Fein organisation as representing the Republican Movement and I gathered that most of the released prisoners were dissatisfied at the compromise that was effected early in June. This led to further talks which resulted in a compromised arrangement that there would be a new constitution for the Sinn Fein Party giving as the objective the recognition of the Republic proclaimed in Easter Week. This compromise was arrived at in Cathal Brugha's house and the terms of it were

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drafted by De Valera. They were subsequently embodied in the new constitution adopted in October of that year.

I had become very well acquainted with Cathal Brugha from the end of 1916 and we had many talks about the situation. He was very much opposed to the views of Arthur Griffith and it was from him that I learned of this latest compromise. I was surprised when he told me of it as I had thought that Griffith was so much opposed to having the objective of the Republic that he would never agree to it. When Cathal Brugha told me of it, I said, "Do you mean that Griffith has accepted the Republic?", and Brugha replied, "He had to or walk the plank". I said, "And is Griffith to continue as President?". "No", said Brugha, "De Valera will be President, that is settled."

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THE IRISH REBELLION(From The Masses  
July, 1916).

Jim Larkin.

The Irish Rebellion was brought to birth by men who had given service to the working class in all quarters of the globe. James Connolly, who has sealed his belief in the principles of eternal justice and the cause of the common people, worked as an organizer for the Socialist Party in Scotland, and for many years in America. In 1907, when I found the work, which I had set my hand to, required of me more than I could give it, worn out in brain and physically unfit, I appealed to Connolly to co-operate. I explained the desperate nature of the undertaking, pointing out to him that not only would he have to sacrifice his position, the welfare of his wife and children (six of whom were girls, one a boy, and they were young in years and unable to work), and also make clear to him the possibility that it might mean the sacrifice of his life.

Connolly, who knew only too well what the call meant to him, never hesitated for a moment; he broke

up his home and upon landing in Ireland in 1908 found that the man who had invited him home was lying in jail, the movement had got a smashing blow, the organized employers, the so-called Nationalist Party, controlled by John Redmond, in collusion with the British Government, not forgetting the Clerical reactionists, determined to destroy the movement body and soul. No householder would give us shelter, the police were ordered to batter to death the men who wore the Union Badge, our children in some cases were refused entrance into the schools, priest and parson fulminated against us in their pulpits, some of the more intolerant Sinn Fein leaders denounced us as tools of the English Government. Connolly never failed us, even in that hour of trial; waiting until I was released from prison, he gathered the remnants of the army together, supported by a group of the most intelligent, loyal and determined comrades a man over had the honour to associate with, or a movement ever produced; and so we set out to walk in the footsteps of those who had

gone before us. We know that to preach economic determinism without having an industrial and social organization behind it, and an armed force, if necessary, to protect this organization, would be futile. Therefore, we designed a plan and method of organization, which I submit, given a reasonable time to develop, will yet prove the only successful method of over-throwing the capitalist system. Organizing the workers into industrial unions in the several industries, linking them up into one homogeneous whole, connecting the agricultural workers through the co-operative movement with the urban worker, providing the members of the organization with the means of social intercourse through the various activities we had on foot - dramatic societies, orchestras, choirs, bands, football clubs, medical clinics, billiards, boxing, wrestling, and all the other concomitants of the social life of communities, but all directly linked up with the industrial organization; never forgetting at all times to give them instruction as to the real purpose of their existence. Saving them from the fetid atmosphere of the slums into healthy recreational pursuits, we took them mindward into the realm of art, literature and science, always pointing on

to them a belief and consciousness of their class. After many educating struggles on the industrial field, which brought with them sometimes tribulations, but always experience and knowledge, we found out that we had also to give them an opportunity to exercise their military ardour, as a counter attraction to the recruiting officer and the call of militarism, and as a means of self-protection against the onslaughts of the hired assassins, soldiers and police of the capitalist class. We organized the Citizen Army, every member of which was a class-conscious member of the working-class, and of necessity had to be a member of his union.

This is the army which gave the world pause some few days ago and in association with their fellows of the Sinn Fein and National Volunteers, held the City of Dublin for seven days, though badly equipped. Let me say here that the statement that the revolutionary movement was financed, organized, or controlled from any German source, is a deliberate and calculated lie. The Citizen Army was organized in 1900, in Cork City.

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It was driven out of existence by persecution and the jailing of its members, including myself, in 1909. It was reborn during the big Transport Strike in England in 1911. The uniforms, arms and equipment which they possessed were owned and controlled by the unions with which they were affiliated, but were paid for by the weekly contribution of the members of the organization. The officers were elected by the rank and file. Our First Adjutant was Captain White, the son of General Sir George White, who commanded the forces at Ladysmith during the Boer War. I presided over the court martial which compelled White to present his resignation under penalty of dismissal because we found him propagating the idea among the rank and file that the working-class could not produce men who could guide them out of the cursed system of capitalism into the co-operative commonwealth, but ever insinuating that the middle class and aristocrats should be appealed to, to save them. It is true, of course, and no apology is necessary, that the Irish revolutionary movement in America did open negotiations through Roger Casement with the German government. And it is quite within the bounds of

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probability that if the Irish revolutionary movement at head could have held its position for some time longer, it too would have opened up negotiations with any ally for the purpose of getting arms and equipment to carry their venture to success. Why apologise? Some day the organised workers of the different nations that go to make up the universe will take advantage of the experience and practice of the capitalist governments, and will appoint their ambassadorial staffs, connect up their organisations and be prepared to act in assisting each other, whenever attacked by the capitalist class in their several countries. With such an organization and in such a day and hour, will we possess a real international working class movement.

It is also necessary to state that each member of the Citizen Army took an oath upon joining that he would not fight outside the boundaries of his own nation, except to assist the struggling revolutionary working class of another country, that he would take no orders from King, Kaiser nor any capitalist government, but would march and fight only by instruction of the common

people and to preserve the rights of the common people. They refused to be conscripted, preferring to die in Ireland than to serve as hired assassins to shoot and kill members of the working class of any country.

From letters which I have received it is plain to me that the premature rising in Ireland was forced upon them by the knowledge the insurgents possessed that the British Government were determined to conscript them. The ultimate aim of their work and endeavour, as set down in the declaration they signed, and which Connolly and myself drafted, was to set up a co-operative commonwealth in Ireland, based on industrial democracy. The cuts that have appeared in the papers of Liberty Hall, labelled the headquarters of the Sinn Fein movement, were so labelled with the purpose of confusing and misleading those who saw such photographs. Liberty Hall, Dublin, was the headquarters of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, of which I am the General Secretary, and of which James Connolly, now dead, was the General Organizer. That building was bought and controlled by the members of that organization. It was also the headquarters of the Irish Socialist Party.



No organization other than Socialist and Labour organisations, except the many activities connected with the social and educational features of that movement, was allowed to function there. The Sinn Fein headquarters, on the contrary, was at Number 8 Harcourt Street, close unto a mile and a half away, in the centre of the city. The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union owned and controlled three other halls in Dublin, Emmet Hall, Inchicore, the Pintan Lalor Hall, Aungier Street, and the Workers' Hall, High Street, Dublin. In addition to these they had the Workers' Hall, Corporation Street, Belfast, Liberty Hall, Lynne Place, Sligo, Liberty Hall, Ingleton (Dunleary), Workers' Hall, Oxford, Liberty Hall, Waterford, the O'Neill-Crowley Hall, Merchant's Quay, Cork, and several other halls in different towns throughout Ireland, which they rented. Liberty Hall, Dublin, which was blown to pieces by the shells from the British gunboats, cost us £30,000, and the property destroyed therein in the way of co-operative goods another £10,000. It must be understood that the union carried on a co-operative business, had its own clothing stores, hair dressers, shoemaking shops,

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and a free food distribution centre for the poor.

To go into the detailed work of this movement would take up too much space, and I want to close by assuring your readers that the men who founded this movement, some of whom have been honoured by being permitted to seal their belief in it in blood, who lived for it and who were honoured in dying for it, have left behind them comrades who are determined to bring it to fulfilment. Though fate denied some of us the opportunity of striking a blow for human freedom, we live in hopes that we, too, will be given the opportunity. Out of the fourteen men who were shot to death, five were members of the Irish Socialist and Labour movement. All of the others, while not affiliated with our movement, were men imbued with a deep love of their fellows. I would like to have the privilege in your next issue of attempting to interpret their work. I cannot close, however, without mentioning that heroic soul the Countess of Markievicz, who for years has been associated with James Connolly and myself, and who helped materially in assisting my

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sister, Miss Larkin, to found the Irish Women Workers' Union. Many of the members of this Union fought with their brothers, and some of them have had the privilege of dying for the cause they espoused. Connolly and his colleagues, nearly all of them, were married men with large families dependent upon them, Connolly having seven children and a wife, six of these children girls, one only of whom was able to work, being a factory worker in Belfast. The responsibility of providing for these families is a heavy one.

It is possible that amongst your readers there are men and women who may, though thinking the rebellion an unwise one, cherish the ideals these men and women lived and died for, and it must be admitted that the most glorious thing that has happened during this carnival of blood lust in Europe was the self-sacrifice and devotion of these men to a cause which they believed in. Is it not possible, therefore, that the call of these women and children may receive an echoing response? Knowing the Board of Editors of The Masses, I feel sure they will be only too pleased to accept on behalf of these women and

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children any material help your readers any wish to offer. The woes of Belgium have been depicted in song and story, but Ireland and her people have been crucified for seven centuries. To Connolly's old comrades in the Socialist movement in this country, I leave the case of his wife and children. I hope to have the opportunity of speaking more fully of these matters at a meeting in New York City, and any one who desires to get copies of Connolly's books and pamphlets, may write me at 1046 North Franklin Street, Chicago.

"Seed a word, a word in season, for the day  
is drawing nigh,

"When the Cause shall call upon us, some to  
live and some to die,

"No that dies shall not die lonely, many a one  
hath gone before,

"No that lives shall bear no burden heavier than  
the one they bore.

"E'en the tidings we are telling, were the same  
for which they bled,

"E'n the Cause that our hearts cherish, was the  
same for which they fell".

James Connolly and his comrades heard the call.

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