

AN T-ÓGLÁC

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS.

Vol. III. No. 49.]

MARCH 31st, 1922.

[Price Twopence.

THE I.R.A. AND THE PEOPLE.

THIS is a time when we all should remember, and ever keep in mind, what the people did for every individual Volunteer, and for the Army as a whole, during the War when times were dangerous.

We are soldiers, but we have come from the people, and we should never forget their heroic loyalty and the never-failing generosity shown to us by the people when the penalty of such support was death or ruin. It is easier to fight than to be rendered homeless, and to see one's life work destroyed.

Every man who worked in the Flying Column will not forget the ready and generous welcome the Column was given night after night in every countryside. The Active Service man in the city knows, too, that it was the support and the encouragement of the people that made fighting possible at all. The enemy attempted but could never break that tie of devotion and friendliness between the Army and the people. In Martial Law areas the penalty of death was imposed for giving our Active Service Volunteers shelter, but common suffering drew the people and the I.R.A. into still closer comradeship.

It was courage of a different kind to the courage of the fighting men which sustained the people in their support of the I.R.A. and in their resistance to terrorism—but who can say it was a lesser courage? The people faced the enemy defenceless. They waited for the night raid, and the ensuing terror, perhaps murder, with steady heart. The superb courage of the people had so much to say to our victory as the Army.

Day after day the sacred union of the Army and the people became closer. Out of the common

struggle and suffering were born great mutual understanding and great mutual affection.

It would be a criminal act to break this sacred alliance between the Army and the people, and no good Volunteer would be guilty of such an act. During the War the people stood by the Army, and it is now the Army's turn to show that it will stand by them and respect their rights.

THE SECTIONAL CONVENTION.

On March 26th, 1922, a Sectional Convention, composed of a minority of the members of the I.R.A., was held in the Mansion House, Dublin, against the orders of the G.H.Q. Staff of the I.R.A. and the Minister of Defence, acting for Dáil Eireann—the Sovereign Government of the Irish people. What does the holding of such a Minority Convention mean? It means that certain units and members of the I.R.A. have gone against the will of the Irish people, as expressed through Dáil Eireann, and the will of the G.H.Q. Staff, and assumed the position of Military Dictators. The only inference possible is that by so doing these members of the I.R.A. refuse to recognise that they owe any allegiance or responsibility to the Government or people of Ireland. There can be no doubt about it. The action taken by this Sectional Convention was an act of military despotism. Its promoters have acted as the masters, and not as the servants, of the Irish Nation. All Volunteers and all good citizens should understand that in a democratic State no body of men can constitute themselves the masters of the people. Such a claim is a form of tyranny, no matter from what quarter it comes, or no matter what persons make it. This is exactly what the English did in Ireland, and we characterised such a claim and such a system as a tyranny, and we fought against it for centuries because it was a tyranny.

We do not believe for a moment that all those who attended last Sunday's Convention at Ogligh

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consciously or deliberately against the Government of the people. We do not believe that the best men will be participants in this scheme to set up a Military Dictatorship, to overthrow the National will, and to treat Irish citizens as if they had no rights. We cannot believe that many of the good Irishmen who attended last Sunday's Minority Convention even thought for a moment of entering on such a path as a Dictatorship directed against the people of Ireland, but by this time their eyes must be opened. Every man present is aware of the extreme proposals which were advanced at the Convention, and those who were not present have been furnished with a report of the proceedings, the accuracy of which is vouched for by G.H.Q.

Every Volunteer with a sense of responsibility to the Nation, whether present at this Minority Convention or not, will, we have no doubt, dissociate himself from its programme. No true soldier of Irish Freedom will ever assist or connive at the suppression of the liberty of the citizen, and all true soldiers will be as faithful in their services to liberty now as they were in the hard days of the past.

It is the duty of every Volunteer to make himself acquainted with and to have his mind perfectly clear on the present Army position. With this purpose we give a summary of the origin and course of events leading up to last Sunday's Minority Convention.



THE PROPOSAL OF A CONVENTION.

All Volunteers should study carefully the sequence of events, whereon it will be clear to them that the object of the promoters of the Minority Convention was to establish a Military Dictatorship, which was not to be responsible either to Dáil Éireann or to the people of Ireland. In standing by G.H.Q., every Volunteer, therefore, will be standing by Dáil Éireann, the elected Government of the Irish Republic, and by the people of Ireland.

A. On the 11th January, 1922, a Memorial was addressed to the Minister of Defence by certain Officers of the I.R.A., requesting that a Convention of the Army be called for the purpose of considering the resolution which they proposed to move, and for the purpose of visualising the National position from the Army point of view.

B. The Minister of Defence at this stage made it clear that the Dáil, as a whole, was the elected Government of the Irish Republic, and that the supreme control of the Army was vested in it, and signified his willingness to accede to the request for a Convention, provided that these principles in the relationship of the Dáil to the Army were acknowledged. It followed from this that the Minister of Defence could not sanction any attempt to remove the Army from under the control of Dáil Éireann.

C. The Minister of Defence had a definite policy to put before the Convention, which would ensure the maintenance of the I.R.A. as such. As the responsible Minister of Dáil Éireann, however, while going to the utmost limit to meet the signatories' application for a Convention, the Minister of Defence was bound by his Executive's responsibility to safeguard the authority of the Dáil. The Minister of Defence, therefore, imposed but one condition on the Convention, that it could not be released from its allegiance to Dáil Éireann, the elected Government of the Irish Republic. In effect, the Convention could not set up a Military Government as opposed to the Government elected by the people. Short of this, everything possible was done to reach an agreement with the signatories of the Memorial. We give below the resolution which the Minister of Defence proposed to put before the Convention:—

“(1). Agreeing to appoint by election from among serving Officers a Commission to frame and place before a subsequent Convention, to be held after the general election, proposals for associating the I. R. A. with whatever Irish Government was then in authority.

“(2) Disclaiming any intention of setting up a Military Government as opposed to any Government elected by the people.”

In view of this, and of the implications of the general agitation with regard to the Army, the Cabinet unanimously decided that the proposed Convention should be forbidden.

D. However, recent events and recent statements made by the promoters of the Convention made it clear that they did not intend that the resolution given above. This could have only one meaning, that they intended, if necessary, to establish a Military Government as

opposed to the Government elected by the people.

E. The Minister of Defence, therefore, in consultation with the Cabinet of Dáil Éireann, on March 15th, had to admit that he could not guarantee, if the Convention were held, that there would not be set up a Military Dictatorship, and Dáil Éireann, as the guardian of National authority and the defender of the rights of the people, therefore, had but one course open to them, and that was to forbid this Convention. Dáil Éireann refused to sanction an Irish Military Dictatorship, just as it refused to accept an English Military Dictatorship.

F. Consequent on this decision of the Dáil in regard to the proposed Convention, on the 23rd March the Minister of Defence addressed a letter to the Chief of Staff, in which he considered the general Army situation in the light of the decision taken by Officers of the Army to proceed to the Convention against the orders of G.H.Q., and the expressed ruling of Arthur Griffith, President of the Irish Republic, in the matter. Attendance at this Convention was regarded as such a serious offence being both a denial of the authority of Dáil Éireann and the authority of Army Headquarters, that the Chief of Staff was directed by him to suspend all those who attended the Convention.

G. On last Sunday a minority of the I.R.A. attended a Sectional Convention against all orders, and thereby repudiated G.H.Q., Dáil Éireann, and, through Dáil Éireann, the Irish people. The consequence of doing so is that each and every Officer present at that Convention thereby severs his connection with the I.R.A.

H. All ranks should understand that they are relieved of the responsibility of obeying orders issued to them by any superior Officer who has severed his connection with the I.R.A., owing to his attendance at the irregular Convention held on Sunday, 26th March.

I. In due course Officers will be appointed acting with the authority of G.H.Q., and in the meantime all ranks should continue to work only under those who had no part in the irregular Convention held on Sunday, 26th March 1922.

We give below letters from the Minister of Defence and Chief of Staff, dealing with the events prior to, and subsequent to, the irregular Convention. All Volunteers should read these letters carefully, as they contain the instructions of G.H.Q. in regard to the Convention.

MINISTER OF DEFENCE ORDERS THAT THE CONVENTION BE NOT HELD.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE,
23rd March, 1922.

To Chief of Staff.

All ranks will understand the intensity with which, in the face of our very grave National position, means have been sought to avoid any definite breach in the solidarity and the organisation of the Army, and in that wonderful brotherhood of the Army which has been its true solidarity and the real framework of its organisation.

The calling of the Sectional Convention against the orders of G.H.Q. Staffs breaks definitely, to some extent, this solidarity and this organisation, but it does not, and must not, break to any degree the brotherhood of those who in the past have worked and borne responsibility together.

Any officer or man attending the Convention will thereby sever his connection with the I.R.A. O/C.'s will regard each case for the present as one of suspension, and each case should be reported on separately. In dealing with all such cases O/C.'s concerned should take the greatest pains to avoid any actions or expressions that would tend to create antagonisms amongst those who have been in the Army.

Political friction has been forced into the Army from outside, but in face of the grave issues before our country we must anticipate that this friction will pass, and that the fundamental unity of the Army will re-assert itself.

(Signed) RISTEARD UA MAOLCATHA.

THE ADVICE OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE.

No Irish soldier is entitled to be listened to with such respect and attention as the Minister of Defence, the late Chief of Staff. The Minister of Defence has watched and assisted in the creation of the National Army since its beginnings in 1913. As Chief of Staff he held the wheel and steered the Army through the recent war with England. No one who knows the history of the Republican Movement from the inside will gainsay the fact that the present Minister of Defence is the outstanding directing brain of its military development. No soldier in the Republican Army knows better the possibilities as well as the limits of our resources. Bearing all these things in mind, every Volunteer should weigh well every phrase and sentence in the letter of the Minister of Defence to the Chief of Staff. They should remember that the advice and views given in this letter are the fruits of five years' experience of army organisation such as no other Irishman has had.

INSTRUCTION FROM THE CHIEF OF STAFF IN REGARD TO THE PROPOSED CON- VENTION.

24th March, 1922.

To :

Adjutant-General, and to each Divisional and
Brigade Commandant and O/C. Barracks
In Ireland.

I attach herewith letter from the Minister for Defence, which is to be transmitted to all Units, and read to the men on parade.

All Officers and men who attend the Convention on Sunday next, the 26th instant, automatically sever their connection with the I.R.A. You are simply to regard them as suspended, and report on each case separately to G.H.Q.

You will deal with any such cases in your command in the spirit and in the letter of the Minister's communication to me.

(Signed), CHIEF OF STAFF.

All Officers in attendance at the irregular Convention are by virtue of this instruction suspended, therefore, and Volunteers should work only under Officers who do not come under the order given above, and who took no part in the irregular Convention.

Direction by the Chief of Staff in regard to suspended Officers. The position of Volunteers belonging to Units whose Officers have been suspended :—

"All Officers and men are hereby relieved of the responsibility of obeying orders issued to them by any superior officer who has severed his connection with the I.R.A. by reason of his having attended at the irregular Convention held on Sunday, 26th March, or of recognising the 'Executive Council' elected at that irregular Convention.

"Where in any case as a result of such severance of any superior officer, subordinate officers or men find themselves cut off from any immediate superior command, they should communicate at once to the Adjutant-General, Beggar's Bush Barracks, Dublin."

NEW APPOINTMENTS.

The following appointments have been notified by General Headquarters, Beggar's Bush Barracks, Dublin :—

Director of Engineering.—Comdt.-Gen. Sean O'Kelly, late Divl. Engineer, 1st Western Division. Comdt.-Gen. O'Kelly was attached to an active service unit in South Galway from April, 1919, to July, 1921, and later served with a flying column of the East Clare Brigade for several months.

Director of Purchases.—Comdt.-Gen. Joe Vize. Comdt.-Gen. Vize fought in the G.P.O. in 1916, and subsequently served under various commands.

Director of Munitions.—Comdt.-Gen. Joe Furlong (Wexford), late Assistant-Director of Munitions. He saw active service in the G.P.O. in 1916, and since then served in various commands.

Director of Chemicals.—Comdt.-Gen. Joe Dunne. The position was formerly held by Comdt.-Gen. O'Donovan.

2d EASTERN DIVISION.

DUBLIN City Brigade and South Dublin Brigade have been combined into one Division under the command of Comdt.-Gen. Tom Ennis. Following are members of the Divisional and Brigade Staffs :—

O/C. TOM ENNIS.—Divisional Comdt. Ennis joined the Irish Republican Army in 1913, and fought in 1916. He became O/C. 2nd Battalion, Dublin Brigade in 1920, and took part in every engagement in which his Battalion was concerned. The burning of the Custom House was

carried out under the command of Comdt.-Gen. Ennis. In the engagement with enemy forces which followed he was wounded in the hip and foot. Prior to his promotion to the command of the 2nd Eastern Division, Comdt.-Gen. Ennis was O/C. Beggar's Bush Barracks.

Adjutant. C. O'MALLEY.—Col.-Comdt. O'Malley fought in Jacob's Factory in 1916, and saw active service all through the war. He was one of the four Dublin men, including the late Comdt. Peadar Clancy, who effected the rescue from Strangeways Jail, Manchester, of Pierce Beasley, Austin Stack and other Irish prisoners. Col.-Comdt. O'Malley was Adjutant of the Dublin Brigade.

Quartermaster. B. BYRNE.—Col.-Comdt. Byrne belonged to the Old Guard, and took part in many engagements about Dublin, including the attack on an enemy armoured car at Phibsboro'. He was interned in the Curragh Camp, from where he succeeded in escaping through the tunnel made by the internees.

Transport Officer. PAT M'GRAE.—Col.-Comdt. McCrae saw many years' active service with the Irish Republican Army. He joined in 1916. During the war Col.-Comdt. M'Grae fought with the Guards, taking part in the principal engagements about Dublin. Col.-Comdt. M'Grae was one of the party who captured an enemy armoured car at the City Abattoir, and later drove the car into Mountjoy Prison, when a daring effort was made to rescue some prisoners. He was Transport Officer of the 2nd Battn., Dublin Brigade, and later Brigade Transport Officer.

Assistant Div. Transport Officer.—BOB O'NEILL.

BRIGADE APPOINTMENTS.

1st Dublin Brigade.—O/C., Jim Slattery ; Vice-Comdt., J. Shiels ; Adjutant, C. Saurin ; Quartermaster, J. Dunne ; Transport Officer, S. J. O'Reilly.

1st Battn.—O/C., Frank Bolster ; Adjutant, M. O'Donnell ; Quartermaster, W. Ashton.

2nd Battn.—O/C., T. Kilcoyne ; Vice-Comdt., W. Byrne ; Adjutant, Hugh Thornton ; Quartermaster, P. M'Grath.

3rd Battn.—O/C., Sean M'Mahon ; Vice-Comdt., Sean Guilfoyle ; Adjutant, Sean Quin ; Quartermaster, C. Farrell.

4th Battn.—O/C., F. Coghlan ; Adjutant, H. Murray.

5th Battn.—O/C., Michael McEvoy ; Vice-Comdt., Sam Irwin.

2nd Brigade.—O/C., Nial MacNeill ; Vice-Comdt., J. Curley ; Adjutant, J. Flanagan ; Quartermaster, Turloch MacNeill ; Director of Training, H. Doyle ; Transport Officer, J. Coughlan.

O/C. of the Barracks for Dublin District, with rank of Col.-Comdt.—THOMAS KEOGH.

Further appointments made by G.H.Q. will be announced in next issue.

Brigadier Slattery who commands the 1st Dublin Brigade, fought in Jacob's Factory in 1916, and was one of the first men who volunteered for service on the subsequent renewal of the war. He took part in the principal engagements about Dublin, including the Mount Street battle and the raid on the Custom House. He lost his left hand as a result of the latter engagement.

Comdt.-Gen. Keogh, the new O/C. Beggar's Bush, fought in Stephen's Green and Jacob's Factory in 1916. All during the war he took a foremost part in the fight, being associated with the Mount Street and Custom House engagements, and the attack on an enemy armoured car at the City Abattoir. Following the attack on the Custom House, he was interned in Kilmainham Jail, until the general amnesty.

Comdt. Frank Bolster also took part in the attacks on the Custom House, and the armoured car on the N.C.R., Dublin. He is well known as a fighter.

Comdt. Kilcoyne was associated with many notable Dublin engagements, including the attack at O'Connell, in which Martin Savage was killed.