

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. **W.S.** 1,724

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. **W.S.** 1,724.

Witness

Michael McDunphy,
25, St. Lawrence Road,
Clontarf,
Dublin.

Identity.

Asst. Secty. to the Gov., Jan. 1922 - Dec. 1937;
Secty. to the President of Ireland, 1937 - 1954;
Clerk to Council of State, 1937 - 1954;
Director of Bureau of Military History, 1947 - 1957.

Subject.

The Cabinet of the 1st and 2nd Dáil Éireann,
1919 - 1922.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

File No. **S. 1,600.**.....

Bureau of Military History, 1913-1921.

STATEMENT BY

Mr. Michael McDunphy, B.L.,

Address.....
25, St. Lawrence Road,
Clontarf, Dublin.

Date..... 31st December, 1957.

ORGANISATIONS WITH WHICH ASSOCIATED.

Irish Volunteers
Sinn Féin.

POSTS OR RANKS HELD.

Assistant Secretary to the Government, Jan. 1922 - Dec. 1937.
Secretary to the President of Ireland, 1937 - 1954.
Clerk to the Council of State, 1937 - 1954.
Director, Bureau of Military History, 1947 - 1957.

PERIOD COVERED BY STATEMENT.

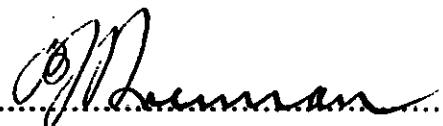
The Cabinet of the 1st and 2nd Dáil Éireann, 1919-1922.

COMMENTS OF INVESTIGATING OFFICER.

This statement was dictated personally by Mr. McDunphy, Director of the Bureau, following conversations between him and General Diarmuid O'Hegarty and correspondence with the Department of the Taoisigh, the head of which is Mr. de Valera, both of whom are referred to personally in the statement.

The original draft was submitted by Mr. McDunphy to Mr. de Valera for his consideration, and the attached statement as signed has been agreed to by Mr. de Valera as a correct record in so far as he is concerned.

A copy of Mr. McDunphy's letter of 6th December, 1957, submitting the draft to Mr. de Valera, is attached.



Signature of Investigating Officer.
(P.J. Brennan)

Secretary of the Bureau of Military
History, 1913-1921.

Date..... 31st December, 1957.

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1724

THE CABINET OF THE 1st AND 2nd DÁIL ÉIREANN

1919 - 1922.

STATEMENT BY MR. MICHAEL McDUNPHY.

1. I had hoped to get from Lieutenant-General Diarmuid O'Hegarty, Chairman of the Commissioners of Public Works, who was Secretary to the Cabinet of Dáil Éireann and acted as Clerk of Dáil Éireann, the Irish Parliament, in 1919-1922, a statement for the Bureau regarding that Cabinet and other phases of the national movement with which he had been intimately associated. But, so far, all efforts, including repeated personal approaches by representatives of the Bureau, have been unsuccessful. He is now seriously ill, and the prospect of getting anything substantial from him has receded still further.

2. In my capacity as Assistant Secretary to the Government, 1922-1937, I saw and frequently handled, in the course of my examination and arrangement of a number of records of Dáil Éireann which had been acquired by the Government, the Minute Books of the meetings of the Cabinet of the 1st and 2nd Dáil Éireann. Although the information which I can give on the matter is limited to the information derived by me from the examination of those books then, and recently supplemented and clarified by General O'Hegarty on certain points discussed by me with him in hospital on the 5th instant, I am setting down here, with the permission of the Taoiseach,

Mr. E. de Valera, Head of the Government, who was President of Dáil Éireann during the period covered by this statement, a brief note on the subject.

3. The first formal assembly of Dáil Éireann as the Parliament of Ireland, the Members of which had been elected at the General Election of the previous December, took place on the 21st January, 1919, and at a meeting on the following day a temporary Government or Cabinet was appointed, being recast in the following April, with various other changes from time to time as recorded in the published proceedings of Dáil Éireann.

4. The first person to be appointed Clerk of Dáil Éireann was Diarmuid O'Hegarty, who had fought in the Rising of Easter Week, 1916, and who had been dismissed from the British Civil Service in the Department of Agriculture, Dublin, in December, 1918, on his refusal to take the oath of allegiance to the British King.

5. General O'Hegarty informed me that the first Secretary to the Cabinet was George Gavan Duffy, who was subsequently Irish Envoy to France and, at the date of his death on 10th June, 1951, was President of the High Court of Justice in Ireland. He cannot have held the post of Secretary to the Cabinet for very long, and at most for the few months' lifetime of the temporary Cabinet which was appointed on 22nd January, 1919.

6. He was succeeded as Secretary to the Cabinet by Diarmuid O'Hegarty, who attended in that capacity at the first Cabinet meeting which is recorded in the books referred to, and which was held on 25th April, 1919.

7. Sometime later during the year 1919, Colm Ó Murchadha, who was Clerk of Dáil Éireann from 1922 to the date of his death on 14th December, 1939, was taken on as Assistant to Diarmuid O'Hegarty in the latter's dual capacity as Secretary to the Dáil Cabinet and Clerk of Dáil Éireann. This relationship continued until Diarmuid O'Hegarty was appointed Secretary to the Provisional Government on the setting up of that Government on 14th January, 1922, under the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 6th December, 1921, whereupon Diarmuid O'Hegarty relinquished the post of Secretary to the Dáil Cabinet and the post of Clerk of Dáil Éireann, being succeeded in both posts by Colm Ó Murchadha.

8. During the treaty negotiations in London between Ireland and Great Britain in the latter part of 1921 which led to the Treaty of 6th December, 1921, Diarmuid O'Hegarty was one of the Secretaries to the Irish Delegation, and, during that period, his place as Secretary to the Cabinet was temporarily taken by Colm Ó Murchadha.

9. As far as General O'Hegarty could remember, in the course of his conversation with me on the 5th instant, the meetings of the Cabinet of Dáil Éireann were held at various places in Dublin, including, inter alia, the home of James or Stephen O'Mara,

(General O'Hegarty was not quite sure) somewhere on the south side; the home of Mrs. Humphreys, Ailesbury Road; Fleming's Hotel, Gardiner's place, later the property of John O'Mahony; the home of Walter Cole, Mountjoy Square; and the house of a man named Geraghty, a Local Government Official, in a narrow street running from Drumcondra to Jones Road, the name of which General O'Hegarty could not remember, but which, from its description, is obviously Fitzroy Avenue. As far as he could recollect, no meetings of the Cabinet were held in Vaughan's Hotel, Parnell Square, where meetings of the Irish leaders frequently took place.

10. I have been informed by the Assistant Secretary of the present Government, with the authority of Mr. de Valera who was President of Dáil Éireann and Prime Minister in the Dáil Cabinet from 1919-1922, that he has been informed by Mr. de Valera that most of the Cabinet meetings over which the latter presided - he was on a mission to the United States of America from June 1919 to December 1920 - were held at one or other of the following places:-

Thomas Montgomery's house at 14 Shrewsbury Road,
Ballsbridge;

Mrs. Humphreys' house at 36 Ailesbury Road,
Ballsbridge;

Madame Neans O'Rahilly's house at 40 Herbert Park,
Ballsbridge;

and

The Mansion House, Dublin (after the Truce of
July, 1921).

It is possible that some such meetings were also held at -

Walter Cole's house at Mountjoy Square, Dublin;
And, after the Anglo-Irish Truce of 11th July 1921,
at Mrs. McGarry's, 5 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin.

Mr. de Valera has no recollection of any meetings, over which he presided, being held at -

James O'Mara's house at 43, Fitzwilliam Place,
Dublin;
Fleming's Hotel at 32 Gardiner's Place, Dublin;
Mr. Geraghty's at Fitzroy Avenue, Dublin, or
Vaughan's Hotel at Parnell Square, Dublin.

11. In the intervals between the meetings of the Cabinet, the Minute Books were held by Diarmuid O'Hegarty in his personal possession, admittedly a very risky practice, not only to himself and others, in view of the circumstances of the times, but the hazards of which were, apparently, fully realised and accepted by all concerned.

12. The Minutes were kept in manuscript in four note-books. The earliest, beginning on the 25th April, 1919, was a volume, approximately $4\frac{1}{2}$ " x $6\frac{3}{4}$ " in size, a little over a quarter of an inch thick, covered with flexible glazed black paper cover. The other three were post octavo volumes, each about an inch in thickness, bound in stiff cardboard, covered on the spine in drab-coloured canvas.

13. The periods covered by these four books, and the number of pages in which the entries were recorded in each, were as follows:-

<u>Book No.</u>	<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>Pages occupied by the Entries</u>
1	25th April to 19th September, 1919.	50 (double)
2	26th September, 1919, to 15th September, 1920.	183 (double)
3	24th September, 1920, to 8th December, 1921.	184 (double)
4	11th January, 1922, to 28th April, 1922.	147 (single)

14. The Minutes of each meeting of the Cabinet were set out in the form of an agenda, with brief notes opposite the individual items where decisions were made. In the early stages, and for a considerable time, initials were used instead of full names, and many of the entries were of such a nature that they were intelligible only to those by whom they were intended to be read. The object of this procedure was to act as a safeguard in the event of books falling into the hands of the British. The attendance was not recorded.

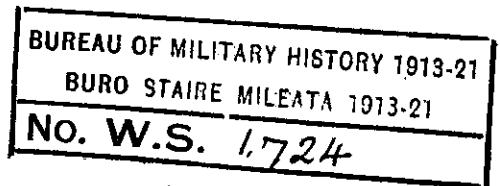
15. Although generally referred to as the Dáil Cabinet Minutes, the contents of, at least, the first three volumes of these documents are not minutes in the strict sense of the term - they would more accurately be described as the records made by the Secretary to the Cabinet; at that time, it was

not the practice to have the record of the proceedings at a meeting read at the next meeting of the Cabinet and signed by the chairman at the latter meeting, if found correct. A few of the earlier records contained in the fourth volume of these documents were signed.



M. McDunphy.

DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY,
1913-1921.



31st December, 1957.

6th December, 1957.

Dear Moynihan,

With reference to our conversation yesterday, I called on General O'Hegarty at the hospital immediately afterwards. Although very weak, I found him quite willing to talk on the matters in which I was interested and he was most helpful and co-operative.

Our past associations and the close parallel between certain portions of our career, including the fact that we entered the Civil Service by the same examination, served together in the same Department - the Department of Agriculture - for six years, were dismissed from the Service at the same time, in December 1918, and for the same cause, were reinstated in January, 1922 and served again together for a further ten years, contributed, no doubt, to the readiness with which, notwithstanding his weak condition, he gave any information which I sought.

The annexed is a draft of the statement which I propose, with the permission of the Taoiseach, to put on record for the Bureau and I would be glad if you would submit it for his consideration.

2 copies

The Taoiseach is, of course, personally familiar with most of what is set down in the draft, and if there are any statements in it, which, in his opinion, are not strictly accurate or which could be supplemented by information from his personal knowledge, it would be of great value, from a historical point of view, if he would agree to indicate any necessary revision or contribute any further particular which may have been overlooked or forgotten.

In paragraph 2. of the draft, I have included certain statistical information regarding the minute books, as it is possible that errors may have crept in in transcription. I would be grateful if you would check the figures to ensure that they are accurate.

Yours sincerely,

(N. McDunphy). DIRECTOR.

N. Moynihan Esq.,
Secretary to the Government,
Merrion St.,
DUBLIN.