IE/MA/CP/6/2/6(i)

30th April, 1921

To:
Mr. Meagher
Australia.

A Chara,

I find it rather difficult to give in precise detail a summary of what you require, but the following will serve as general heads :

GENERAL ELECTION of 1919

British Government repudiated.
People choose their own Government.
DAIL EIREANN convened.

British Government determines to get rid of the newly elected Government, and to break the peoples' allefiance to it and to re-instate their own rejected government. Persuasion being useless; Force is to be resorted to.

Force begins comparatively mildly at first (E.C's pamphlet)

C.C. Elections: show force ineffective. People re-assert their support of their own Government.

Sterner measures decided on by British Government.

Sterner measures prove unsuccessful Urban and Rural D.C Elections show still greater adherence of the people to their own Government.

(All this time Government of the country more and more in hands of DAIL, British police and law courts give place to Republican)

British decide that drastic steps must now be taken. Policy of terrorism deliberately considered and decided upon in British cabinet (leading article in London Times - Nov. 1st) (A.G.G. D.N Nov. 6th)

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Terror to be under three heads :-

(a) Removal of leading men.
(b) Imprisonment of minor persons.
(c) Terrorisation of populace to break their allegiance and ? prepare the ground for acceptance of Partition Act)

To excuse this violence to English people and the world "Murder Gang" invented. Every violent act against the people of Ireland excused on plea of getting rid of murderers (English Liberals and Labour fall into trap and their campaign against British Government violence in Ireland therefore ineffective)

The more powerful the men in the way (of their destruction of the national movement) the more desperate the efforts to remove them under the pretence of their being "murderers"

A number of questions were submitted to myself personally recently. Some of the answers appeared in the "Freeman's Journal" I give you the full think as that also would be an indication of the thing that is required.

If it is possible to have a talk to you on the points raised in both the memorandum and answers, it would be the best way of getting the whole story exactly.

Do Chara,

MC /E L.

Q. 1. Granted that force has failed to settle the Irish question will the War cease if the Black and Tans are withdrawn ?

Ans: The Black and Tans are only part of the English forces here. They are, so to speak, the left wing of the enemy army of occupation. Their withdrawal would only be one step. It would, of course, be a step in the right direction.

Q. 2. Now that Sinn Fein have decided to contest the elections under the new act is this not a recognition of the act and of the Authority of the British government in Ireland ? What will Sinn Fein do AFTER the elections when, as is generally anticipated, the elections result in a complete victory for Sinn Fein ?

Ans: The fact of Sinn Fein contesting the elections under the partition act does not constitute a recognition of the authority of the English government. Cardinal Mercier in one of his messages to the Belgians advised them to make use of whatever laws imposed by the Invader they (the Belgians) found useful for their purposes. We merely do the same and provision has been made for all such eventualities in the declaration of Policy adopted, as follows, by the DAIL in Session on the 16th April, 1919:-

> "The sole authority in this country is the authority
> "of our own government, the authority of the elected
> "representatives of the Irish nation ..... The
> "acts of the usurper have in themselves no authority,
> "and such of those acts which affect the general
> "interests and to which we may give ratification will
> "have authority only in virtue of such ratification,
> "which alone gives them juridic value"

Q. 3. The British contend that they cannot and will not grant Ireland a Republic outside the British Commonwealth of Nations. You say that your terms are only a Republic. How are these differences to be adjusted ?

Ans: The English contention is based upon might not upon right. If they abandon might and take their stand on right there will, I think, be little difficulty in finding a solution. It is not conceivable that a free Ireland can encroach upon any of the national rights of a free England. All Nations are justly entitled to safeguard their rights, and if on either side a geuine right is threatened it will, I am sure, be found easy of adjustment, and any safeguards required on one side or the other can undoubtedly be readily arranged.

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Q. 4. In regard to the question of fiscal autonomy, if complete fiscal autonomy were offered to the whole of Ireland and separate courts and police, in other words if you were given complete control of Irish affairs, would this be a basis for a settlement. ?

Ans: Complete control of Irish affairs involves the complete disappearance of English interference. This is a good deal more than fiscal autonomy. Complete control of Irish affairs will settle the question. We have no desire to control or interfere in any way in the affairs of any other people. On our side that is all we ask for ourselves. It is a simple and reasonable stand.

Q. 5. Is there any truth in the report that Sinn Fein is controlled by the I.R.B and the I.R.B is controlled by the Irish Leaders in the United States ?.

Ans: To make such a suggestion is to show an entire misconception not only of the relative positions of these separate organisations but of the whole Irish situation. The I.R.B was first established over sixty years ago and has continued through all the intervening years. From its age, from its accomplishments, and from the continuity of its Policy it may be called the parent of all present day Irish Ireland organisations. It was the parent of the Clan Na Gael, and such it remains. There is no control or interference from outside, and there is no difference within. The position is that the hub is here at home in Ireland and all activity radiates outward from that. The effort to show that a secret coterie in U.S.A. pull the wires from behind the scenes is entirely an English effort and the circulation of the story is English propaganda. It has no foundation in fact. Ireland itself is the pulse, and all organisations outside of Ireland and all effort on behalf of Ireland in Foreign countries must be directed by and subject to home considerations. It has to be borne in mind that our organisations abroad have to work in accordance with the allowances granted, or the restrictions imposed, as the case may be, by the laws of the particular country in which the organisation operates. No such limits exist here at home. The only considerations which we have to consider are those affecting the success of our aims and objects. In this regard as in all others, one body only has the right and authority to speak - it is the body brought into being by the freely exercised will of the Irish people. It is DAIL EIREANN. That is the Governmentbof Ireland, and to it all national organisations within Ireland give allegiance, and all organisations outside Ireland having regard to the above mentioned facts will give obedience.

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Q. 6. If a safe conduct were granted for you and Mr. De Valera to meet Sir James Craig and a meeting could be arranged would you accept the invitation ?

Ans: I have had an opportunity of comsulting the President on this question. He and I are perfectly willing to meet any representative Irishman and discuss with him ways and means of advancing the interests of our nation. For such a meeting we need no safe conduct from any outsider in our own country.

Q. 7. The British Military authorities declare that the use of force by Sinn Fein has failed. You say that the Policy of England by terror has failed. If it is acknowledged that the British have failed and the campaign is stopped will S.F stop its campaign ?

Ans: The Sinn Fein campaign is entirely a campaign of self defence. Our position is that we are protecting ourselves against the attacks of an enemy. If the English campaign of aggression stops there will nó longer be any need to defend ourselves. In other words when the English withdraw their armies of occupation we shall be free.

Q. 8. Will you agree to a truce ?

Ans : The best answer I can give you to this question is to refer you to the meetings of Archbishop Clune with the various parties on bothbsides in December last. At that time a formulae was practically agreed upon but the English Leaders (thinking they saw through the too hasty frankness of some of our people a weakening in our resistance) with characteristic English craftiness altered their position to one of insisting upon complete surrender. The root of the question is English aggression. The cessation of that aggression will constitute a truce in itself.

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