

# AN T-ÓGLÁC

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## A NEW ENEMY POLICY

The enemy's consciousness of his failure is growing steadily, as evidences accumulate of the futility of all his military and other devices against the Irish Republic. A striking light is thrown upon his realisation of the failure of his campaign of terrorism by a Secret Order addressed to the units of the British 18th Infantry Brigade, attached to a letter signed "H. O. Hutchinson, Lieut. Colonel General Staff, 6th Division," which has been intercepted by our forces. The document was dated May 12th and the statement that it emanates from the Commander of the 6th enemy Division, implies that the policy outlined in it is one favoured by the enemy Commander-in-Chief, and presumably sanctioned by the British Cabinet. The statement in the second paragraph reproduced below will rouse many a hearty laugh among the soldiers of the Irish Republican Army. When the General of the Sixth Division finds it necessary to issue a document containing so many damaging admissions, a document which is a record of the complete failure of his plans and policy, it is no doubt natural that he should try to let himself down as lightly as possible. Consequently the fact that the organisation of the Irish Republican Army has been improved and made more effective by the development of Flying Columns is admitted by him in the formula that "the old I.R.A. organisation is broken up and we are now dealing with wandering gangs." The next paragraph in which he admits that they have not enough troops to deal with our forces, gives the lie to this assertion. We have italicised some striking phrases in the Order which is worded as follows:—

"Secret."

To O.C. 2nd Royal Scots, 1st R. War. Regt, 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers, 1st Oxford and Bucks L.I. 1st Northant'n Regt., Dep. Leinster Regt., 1st Machine Gun Corps, Auxillaries Division R.I.C., Killaloe, Auxillaries Division R.I.C., Templemore, D. Company R.I.C., Limerick.

1. With reference to the attached report on the operations lately carried out by a mobile company, the Brigade Commander calls attention to the following extracts from a letter he has received from the G.O.C. the Division:

2. We have arrived at a stage when the old I.R.A. organisation is broken up, and we are now dealing with wandering gangs.

3. One method of dealing with them is to hearten up all loyal people and waverers, and to depress those in actual sympathy with the movement. The chief means of accomplishing this is the presence of troops in as many districts as possible, either stationery or on the move. *As it is impossible to supply sufficient troops to carry out the former on as large a scale as to be effective*, recourse must be had to showing the flag by the movement of troops through the country.

4 and 5. Although it may be said that in many districts the attitude of the inhabitants is hostile, yet in many cases the inhabitants will be only too glad to see the troops among them and to realise the advantage it confers upon them.

6. Where the inhabitants are inclined to be neutral or even friendly it is more than probable that by proper treatment many advantages will be gained.

7. The main thing to be borne in mind with columns of troops moving through the country is to adopt such an attitude that their mission will not appear to be a hostile one from the outset.

8. It must not be looked on as the normal procedure for troops arriving in a village immediately to search it and see who they want interned, but in the absence of any definite information pointing to the fact that extremists are located there, or arms are known to be concealed, they should *adopt a friendly attitude towards the inhabitants and give no ground for suspicion.*

9. If this policy is adopted in every area, within a short time there will be but few parts of the country through which troops have not moved or are not stationed, and the effect cannot but be a good one.

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either as a deterrent to those who wish to avoid us and as an encouragement to the neutrals and loyalists all of whom require all the support it is in our power to give them both morally and physically to assist them to cut themselves adrift from the terrorism from which they are now suffering.

10. The bodies of troops marching through the country will require no mechanical transport. The moves should be carried out on the lines of company marches.

11. If properly handled, these columns might well in time *become a source of reliable information* provided all ranks approach the matter in the right spirit and do not show aggression unless there is ample reason for it.

12. Intelligence is a very good factor in these marches, and an officer who knows the country and is capable of making the best of his opportunities should be present with every party. They will obviously be incapable of covering very long distances to carry out immediate operations as a result of information, but with patience they will *cultivate such relations with the inhabitants that information regarding the immediate district in which they are operating will become available.*

13. At the present time it appears that most of our strength is devoted to *searches and drives on a large, scale the results of which only in a few cases justify the force used.*

14. The marches of the nature described by the Divisional Commander have already been carried out in the 18th Infantry Brigade area.

15. The tactics of the rebels have somewhat changed. Attacks on barracks are highly improbable, and provided troops have their arms readily available, are not the least likely to be successful if attempted.

16. *It is highly desirable on political grounds to endeavour to improve relations with the inhabitants.*

17. The Brigade Commander hopes that Commanding Officers will arrange such marches where sufficient men are available. The value as regards training is great and the existence of Martial Law give such exceptional advantages as regards billeting and manoueuvering that it seems a pity not to take advantage of them."

This document is an admission that the enemy campaign of terrorism has failed, that it is "impossible to supply sufficient troops" to carry it out effectively, that the "searches and drives on a big scale" have also proved futile, and that the people of Ireland generally

are solid in their support of Ireland's fighting men. The suggestion that the Irish people will be induced to fraternise with enemy forces, to forget the outrages of the past and forswear their allegiance to the Republic by this new policy of "friendliness" as a substitute for "frightfulness" will give hearty amusement to Volunteers. The idea that this new policy will result in the obtaining of "information," which bribes, threats, torture and the prospect of death have failed to elicit is equally amusing. The hope expressed that "in many cases the inhabitants will be only to glad to see the troops among them" is an example of almost pathetic hopefulness. That the Irish Republican Army will be glad to see these marching ambassadors, of course, goes without saying. No effort will be spared to give them a warm reception. The dispensing with "mechanical transport" proposed by the Divisional General is of course rendered necessary by the shortage of cars, and trenching of roads due to the activities of the Irish Republican Army. Enemy forces who travel on foot will be in a still more vulnerable position and the officers and soldiers of the Irish Republican Army may be trusted to take full advantage of the fact.

The document is addressed to both military and R.I.C. A month has elapsed since it was issued but the effects of its instructions are not yet visible. Volunteers will peruse the "Secret Order" with interest and amusement, will note its confession of failure and defeat and will get on with their work of waging war against the invader with all the energy at their disposal.

## GENERAL NOTES

The following has been issued for publication by the Commandant of Cork No 2 Brigade:—

"It is reported that four citizens of the Irish Republic have been condemned to death by a British Court Martial on the Grounds that they took part in the successful raid on the enemy military barracks at Mallow on 28th. September 1920. Their names are John Murphy, Fair Street, Mallow; Denis Barter, Kilquaine, Mourne Abbey; Owen Harold, Bank Place, Mallow; and Daniel Mac Carthy, Lahakineen, Mourne Abbey.

"As the Officer in charge of the operation in question I desire to state publicly that none of these four men had any part in it.

"Furthermore I wish to state that I alone am responsible for all that was done on that occasion. The raid on the barracks was carried out as a military operation on my orders by a body of Republican troops acting under my direction, and I acted by virtue of my commission as an officer of the Irish Republican Army, under the authority of my superior officers and the Government of the Irish Republic, in accordance with the laws of regular warfare."

(Signed):—

Liam O Loingsigh,  
O.C. Cork No. 2 Brigade.

The following report has been received from O.C. 5th. Battalion Tipperary No. 1:—

"Six R.I.C. from Rearcross Barracks visited the house of Mrs. Ryan (widow) Foilduff, Newport, Tipperary, two miles distant from Barracks at 2 a.m. on the morning of the 6th. instant. Without giving notice to the occupants they set fire to the house. One of the widows two sons, Pat Ryan, made a dash to escape from burning house and was shot dead crossing yard; the other James who was an invalid and who could only walk with the aid of crutches was seriously wounded getting away. There were also in the house another woman named Ryan (Lacken) and her daughter, whose house was burned some months ago and who since then had been sheltered by this widow. The female occupants narrowly escaped injury from the burning. Nothing whatsoever occurred in this particular district or for a radius of 8 miles from the scene of this outrage, to afford a pretext for this cowardly action."

The Mid Limerick Brigade reports that on the 12th May four bales containing 400 suits of R.I.C. uniforms which were being despatched to Dublin were captured and destroyed. On the night of the 20th. one arch of Annicotty Bridge was blown up. In an operation in the city 4 Black-and-Tans were wounded.

The May report of the Drogheda Battalion states:—"The enemy report regarding the capture of arms is entirely exaggerated. The only things of importance captured were 18 grenade cases and about 14 lbs. gelignite."

In a recent article dealing with a successful operation at Kilrush on April 22nd it should have been stated that the attacking party consisted of 32 members of the East Clare Brigade and a dozen members of the West Clare Brigade, and not exclusively of East Clare men as implied.

The May report from Inishowen mentions the following items:—"There were two mail raids on the L. & L. S. Rly. Extensive road cutting has been carried out over the whole area twice weekly, including four important bridges in the Buncrana Battalion area. These were completely demolished. 3 P.O. bikes were

seized, 4 telephones captured, a large quantity of railway tools were seized. The police do no patrols. Telephone and Telegraph lines are completely destroyed, poles in each Company area cut down. One motor bike seized from an enemy Officer."

The enemy motor repair depot in Dublin known as the "Shell Factory" was destroyed by the Dublin Brigade on the 3rd of June. The amount of damage done, besides the destruction of the building, was six armoured cars completely ruined, 67 motor bicycles fitted for carrying 2 machine guns completely destroyed and also a very large number of cars of different makes and large supplies of other war material.

Two men of the Dublin Brigade held-up three soldiers in a lorry in Dorset Street and destroyed the lorry by fire, taking petrol from a passing taxi. The enemy officially reported the hold-up as done by "ten armed men."

The following passages from a report of the officer in charge of a patrol carrying out a Dublin ambush, in which only seven men tackled more than four times their number, are typical:—"I personally inspected the patrol at 3.30 and had arrived at Wellington Quay when I observed a lorry travelling in the direction of O'Connell Bridge. When it was gone about 10 yards beyond Swif's Row it pulled up. One soldier fired towards Swif's Row and the remainder dismounted. I instructed the men at Fownes Street to get to the river wall and open fire across the river which they did emptying their revolvers. The enemy got into position at opposite wall and returned fire vigorously. At Swif's Row the attack had been launched by the bombers who landed one bomb in the lorry, the other passing over it. They then retired, but neither bomb exploded. Volunteer No. 2 came to the corner to continue the attack with his revolver drawn, and found himself confronting four soldiers on the roadway who opened fire. He replied to the fire and prepared to make his last stand when Volunteer No. 6 coming into action and forcing the enemy to deploy gave him an opportunity to retreat. Meanwhile two lorries containing about 40 soldiers arrived in Abbey Street from Capel Street threatening to cut off the retreat of Nos. 1 and 2, when fire was opened on them by No. 5. The enemy dismounted and replied to fire. My men retreated through Capel Street one of them being slightly wounded. Meanwhile the bombers succeeded in retiring. Another lorry arrived via Mary Street and Stafford Street. Enemy Black-and-Tans who were in Parliament Street joined in pursuit in Capel Street. Two armoured cars arrived on Ormond Quay and enemy lorry and Black-and-Tans held up and searched the South Quays. Though only seven of my men including two bombers took part in the fight, over 30 enemy riflemen were in action; and four times that amount took part in the pursuit."

## ANTI ROUND-UP MEASURES

### "PROPER PROTECTION"

A recent order from one of our Southern Units further emphasises the need of proper Protection Measures. It says: "Non-protection from enemy surprise is about the only danger we will be in for the future . . . Proper protection measures will keep the enemy on a fool's errand and waste the time and energy of his forces on operations which are useless to him from a military point of view." It must be clearly grasped that a big, sweeping movement which results in securing only a small number of men is an enemy reverse. Such drives involve for the enemy a really serious expenditure of effort, and latterly he has been making them simultaneously in several places. His efforts up to the present have not met with any outstanding successes, and with the adoption by us of proper counter-measures he should meet with still less success in future.

It must be clearly understood that in meeting the enemy round-up tactics our aim is not merely defensive. It is not simply a question of saving our own skins: the real object is to leave the enemy so worn-out and disheartened, that they will be in a poor position to meet our counter strokes at a later period. If the enemy spends the summer months in fruitless searches his sting will be drawn and he will not have much power of resistance. It is because this is so that he is crying out for reinforcements.

For purposes of meeting these round-ups it is necessary to organise our entire force very thoroughly for purposes of information. For this object every man—and naturally every officer too must regard himself as a scout. This means that we can have the entire country dotted over with scouts, because our men live everywhere. Local Officers must pay special attention to this point, because if it is thoroughly seen to it would ensure that no move of the enemy could take place without our knowledge.

This principle of complete organisation applies to *all* areas—not merely those containing enemy stations. It is even more important in areas where the enemy only goes on raids. In the latter cases his mere presence is a clear indication of his intentions, and should be instantly reported on. Speedy and widespread reporting of enemy activity is a matter of local organisation: where local organisation is good very useful results have invariably been obtained.

For example, one effect of local organisation would be that local units—companies or outposts—would at once get busy to snipe rounding-up parties. A few shots fired will in all probability result in an hour's delay, and the hour's delay in turn would mean that all chance of surprise by the enemy was gone—and possibly that a severe counter-stroke could be prepared for him.

## ENGLISH FORCES IN IRELAND III

In the first article of this series there was explained the general disposition of the English in Ireland: in the second article the disposition of his left or southern wing, which was treated of first because it was where he was acting most on the offensive at the moment. In the present article we shall consider his opposite flank in Ulster. This is much weaker numerically than the left, because in this case the enemy depends on the friendly population from among which he can recruit large numbers of specials—thus setting free large numbers of Regular troops.

The English Army maintains in Ulster the 1st Division having its Headquarters at Belfast. This Division consists of two Brigades—the 15th Infantry Brigade having Headquarters at Belfast and the Londonderry Infantry Brigade having Headquarters at Derry. In addition to the Infantry there are Engineer units at each Brigade Headquarters and there are two Batteries of Artillery at Dundalk.

The Battalions of the 15th Brigade number five:—one at Belfast, one at Carrickfergus, one at Hollywood two at Ballykinlar. It is instructive to note that the prisoners at Ballykinlar 'contain' two battalions. The battalions of the Londonderry Brigade are stationed three at Derry, one at Strabane, one at Finner, thus encircling Donegal along the land side. Of course, there are detachments and sub-divisions of these battalions; but these do not affect the disposition as a whole.

It will be noted that this English Division is disposed in two equal portions of a Brigade each, and that the two Brigade centres are pretty far distant from each other—Belfast and Derry. Hence the communications between these two centres are of outstanding importance, and interference with them tends very effectively towards breaking up his cohesion. There are two main lines of enemy communication here running East and West: Belfast—Ballymena—Coleraine—Derry and Belfast—Portadown—Dungarvan—Omagh—Enniskillen. These are joined by two lateral lines Coleraine—Magherafelt—Dungannon and Derry—Strabane—Omagh. These are the railway lines and the road routes run parallel to them. Lough Neagh and the Sperrin Mountains form notable breaks in the area as a whole and greatly reduce the number of routes possible.

As has been said previously, attacks on enemy lines of communication are of paramount importance. Both his main routes, his lateral routes, and every small link in his communication system should be struck at. Where he is already dispersed he should be hammered hard, where he is not dispersed he should be induced to split up and divide his forces. His communications supply us with the key as to what methods to adopt.