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## The Military Situation

### Reviewed by Minister for Defence

At Tuesday's meeting of Dail Eireann,

General Mulcahy (Minister of Defence) said he disliked going back into past history, particularly in view of the fact that the different groups in the House had very definitely given assurances that they were going to see that the Treaty was secured, and that on that particular point that Parliament, as fully representing the people, was simply one great group (hear, hear). It was worth going back a little, although they had to get forward, realising that they were in a very dangerous situation. It was worth saying what the policy of the Government was with regard to the Army after the passing of the Treaty and after setting up a Ministry committed to seeing that Treaty through. Differences arose in the Army. Hot-headed men wanted to pull one way, and others another. The position was that the English were clearing out of the country; they were evacuating their barracks, and they had an opportunity of coming from these camps in the country and little corners on the hills where during the period after the Truce they trained for any danger that might come again for their country. They had the chance of coming into proper military barracks, and of strengthening themselves in a very much better military equipment and organisation than they were in at any time.

#### TO AVOID SPLIT.

##### Appeal to Army to Wait for Definite Issue.

The Army was appealed to not to raise questions upon which they could split in this particular atmosphere, to wait until there was something definite to decide for or against, to wait until the Constitution was definitely produced, as it would be in three or four or six months, and when they saw the actual effect of the Constitution, then they would have before them something upon which they could say: "We will not take this, or, in all the circumstances, we will take it."

Continuing, General Mulcahy said they would then be able to arrive at a decision with greater strength. Heads would be clearer, and if there were a number of heads clear enough, and a number of hearts strong enough, and if there were elements of dishonour to this country in the Constitution, then they would have at any rate as much military strength as they would be able to gather in the country; and if there was a voice able and strong enough to speak to the country, they would have weapons to get the answer they wanted.

#### THE CORRECT POLICY.

He felt absolutely assured that the policy put before the Army was correct. If men left the Army it was men who took up a different attitude. The point had been raised as to the conversations which had taken place between different sections of the Army, and what transpired at these conversations. Conversations did take place. The President, in his statement yesterday, read a document worth reading again in this connection. It was the final vote on which these negotiations broke down; and the memorandum was handed in on June 25 by Rory O'Connor and Ernest O'Malley. The question then arose, he continued, what was the general position on the day that notice was served? Generally the position with regard to the Army and the result of the efforts to bring about unification were that five members of the agreed Army Council of seven were in favour of unification on the lines indicated in the following memorandum:—

#### UNIFICATION.

##### Scheme Agreed to by Army Council.

- (1) All ranks and positions to be as on 1st December, 1921, except where objection is held to any appointment on the grounds of—
  - (a) Inefficiency.
  - (b) The officer being so unacceptable to his command that he cannot reasonably be expected to make a success of it.
  - (c) Re-organisation proposals.
  - (d) Bad record.

Special cases and appeals to be gone into by the Director of Organisation and recommendations submitted to the Staff.

(2) Ex-soldiers of other armies to be employed ordinarily only in the training or advisory capacity; only those whose record and character stand scrutiny to be so employed (this rule not to apply to men who fought with us).

(3) Re-organisation Staff to be appointed under L.L. as D.C.S. to re-organise the Army, with instructions that all inefficient officers be dispensed with.

(4) Divisions shall be recruited and controlled locally.

(5) Appointments.—Promotions shall be based on war record, personal character and ability, and individual records be compiled forthwith under a scheme to be outlined by G.H.Q. Staff.

(6) No man to be victimised because of honest political views.

(7) The Army ideal to be looked for shall be the training militarily of the youth of Ireland. All men of military age to have an opportunity to be trained as soldiers. The standing Army to be as small as possible.

(8) The training syllabus shall be drafted as such with a view to giving men a Gaelic outlook as to making them efficient soldiers. A mercenary army must be avoided.

(9) Members of the Army shall not ordinarily be concerned with the maintenance of law and order except in so far as all good citizens should be.

(10) The Committee engaged in finding a settlement basis must take cognisance of the fact that as extremely bitter feeling obtains between both sides in many areas, and that it may be found impossible to get either side to work under the command of officers from the other side, this may be got over by drafting in officers native to the area, who are at present serving in other districts.

(11) In some of the much-disturbed districts there seems to be no Volunteer organisation. An effort should be made at once to get a number of men from these districts into barracks for a severe course of training. Those elements which make disorder might, if properly handled, develop into first-class Volunteers.

#### GENERAL PROPOSALS.

"These," said General Mulcahy, "as I say, were the general points on agreement, and they indicated something of what was in the minds of both sides. The next are general Army proposals submitted to us by the Four Courts people. They are:—

(1) With regard to the Army a periodical Convention to elect an Army Council of say 7.

(2) Both the Minister for Defence, who shall be appointed in the ordinary way by the Government, and the Chief of Staff, who shall be appointed by the Minister for Defence, shall require the approval by a majority vote of the Army Council.

(3) Each member of the Army Council to be full-time senior military appointments attached to G.H.Q. Staff or to be O/C's of a division.

(4) After a certain period when our Military Schools of Instruction have been properly set up, no person to be eligible for election to a membership of the Army Council without possession of certain defined military and general educational qualifications.

(5) All appointments to commissioned ranks shall be recommended by the Chief of Staff and confirmed by the Minister for Defence.

(6) Divisional areas to be enlarged and number of divisions reduced. Both troops in barracks and ordinary Volunteer units to come under the Divisional Command, with the exception of the Curragh training establishment, or any of its adjuncts.

#### ARMY CONTROL.

##### Appointment of Temporary Council.

The immediate proposals with regard to the control of the Army, Mr. Mulcahy continued, were an agreed Army Council, to be composed of R. J. Mulcahy, E. O'Duffy, G. O'Sullivan, F. O'Donoghue, Liam Lynch, Sean Moylan, Liam Mellowes, and Rory O'Connor.

That was to be a temporary Council. The chief Executive officers of G.H.Q. Staff were:—Chief of Staff—Eoin O'Duffy. Deputy Chief of Staff in Charge of the Special Reorganisation—Liam Lynch. Deputy Chief of Staff in Charge of Training Operations—Liam Decies.

Adj.-General—G. O'Sullivan. Quartermaster-General—S. McMahon. Director of Intelligence—F. O'Donoghue. A convention was to be held when the Director of Organisation was satisfied that the reorganisation of the Army was fairly satisfactorily complete. That was when a fairly stable condition had been restored in the Army.

Now, proceeded the Minister, he would not recommend any young Government to organise its army along these lines. But, considering the circumstances, and what they were faced with in order to get an agreement with men who wanted to set up a dictatorship, they allowed themselves to be dragged from what would be the lines of organisation of an army properly subject to a Government—from lines that would command them if they were formed by pressure that was brought to bear upon them.

#### "DICTATORSHIP."

Five out of the Army Council of seven agreed to that. The proposals came before the Executive meeting held on the 14th of June, and they were turned down for this reason, that the remaining two members of the Council and he took it—some following in the Executive and in the Convention—decided that the man who would be placed in complete control of the Army from the military point of view would be the man who had a very short time ago recommended the idea of a dictatorship, and thought it should be introduced gradually, and that he was out for the suppression of the Press at once, the stopping of the elections, and said that that should be done before anything about it would leak out. This was the man who also, time after time, had assured them in very close and intimate conversation that he would not allow the Treaty to be worked.

Whatever affection they might have for this man, due to their long association with him, and due to their appreciation of his very sterling character, as people of responsibility before the people of the country, and as people in the eyes of the English with whom they had made a pact—as a Government they could not have put as chief military head of the Army a man who had publicly taken up that stand. They could not recommend it to the Government. The Government of the time, he should say, with very many misgivings, simply gave in to himself and the late Commander-in-Chief as knowing more about the people they were dealing with. "As a matter of fact," he went on, "we were dealing with little bits of mercury that slipped from this side to that side whenever we came to anything like grips with them."

#### THE FOUR COURTS.

##### Action Taken as Coup was Meditated.

"Before the new Government was formed," he continued, "and before Parliament met on the following Saturday, the Government took action against the people in the Four Courts. We took action because a coup was meditated, and because so far as it was possible for us as human beings to foresee, we foresaw that if we did not take the move we did that this Parliament would never meet."

"It has been stated that the Executive people planned an attack against the English. Well, this is a document in the handwriting of one of the members of the Executive, and it reads [it is a draft resolution]:—

"That this Executive Council of the I.R.A. hereby decides that in our opinion the only means of maintaining the Republic is by giving the English 72 hours' notice to evacuate the country. In view of this Pact we hereby decide that the general headquarters of the Army Council be directed to carry out the suggestions contained in the sub-connected report."

"This report," said General Mulcahy, "is headed, 'Report of Executive Sub-Committee,' and it goes on to say:—

"In accordance with the decision of the Executive requesting a report on the general situation, as affected by the impending war with the English forces in this country, we wish to place the following statistics and suggestions before the Executive under the following heads."

#### CAMPAIGN OUTLINED.

Then followed the details of the comparative strength of the British and Irish forces, and then it said:—

"Activities: Twenty-six Counties.—Destruction of all barracks occupied by our troops; attack the present post and positions held by the English troops; the striking at English forces should be made wherever possible in an area where pro-Treaty troops occupy, so that they may be brought into collision with the English; clearing out the English from Dublin Castle; action to be taken against the English General Staff and members of the Cabinet; reprisals in England for shelling."

"Six-County Area.—Boycott; destruction of warehouses; activities against Oranges lodges, and as much activity against the English as possible, but don't suggest sending any reinforcements from Southern Ireland, as the strength of our forces will not allow it."

"That general information from this particular document was not in their hands when they took the decision they did, but they had the information. And with that information they found that a raid for a large number of motor cars was made in Dublin, and the Government

practically decided that the occupants of the Four Courts were to be proceeded against.

"That decision was practically taken, though not formally taken, before Lieut.-General O'Connell was arrested on the same night. Those of them who were responsible for the decision felt that they were justified in it, and that they could not run the risk of allowing the people in the Four Courts to move against the British.

#### PEACE ESSENTIALS.

##### Sword Must Give Place to Constitutional Ways.

"The question has been put to the Executive," the Minister of Defence continued, "as to what the Government's intentions are in regard to the war. We have been asked is there no way in which a word may be uttered from the Ministerial Benches, which will give some hope to the country that nothing less than a grinding into dust is going to satisfy the powers that be? There are certain essentials for peace in this country, and the

1st is, in my opinion, that some body representing the people be allowed to work the Treaty, and

2—That they be allowed to work with the best Constitution that they can get under it.

3—That the sword must not be again thrown into the situation by anybody with a view to imposing thereby the demand of moulding any particular clause in the Constitution into a particular form against the expressed vote of the Parliament.

4—That opposition to the Government working the Constitution framed in accordance with the Treaty must be along Constitutional lines.

5—That the army must be the people's army and responsible absolutely to the National Government (cheers).

6—That the Government shall control by its regulations all arms held in the country (cheers).

These were details, he added, that to-day and to-morrow they might have difficulties about, but if they got them accepted generally throughout the country, and if they had no body of people challenging any one of these six points in arms, then they could have peace and they could settle all the other details in time, at any rate.

#### SOURCES OF OPPOSITION.

"My opinion," he continued, "is that certain points of these are not unchallenged in the country by force of arms, and I have gone as deeply and closely into the matter as it has been possible to go. And here is the attitude that I find. There is opposition to these fundamental principles by three classes, who are for the moment all in one whole. There is the opposition by people who may be classed as politicians; people who may be classed as honest soldiers, and people who may be classed as criminals (cheers). And the honest soldiers have been misled, and they are waiting for a word from the politicians to say that they are travelling the wrong road.

"And the politicians are in this particular frame of mind:—'We signed a Pact with those who support the Treaty, and we signed it in order to avoid a terrible state of things. We were led into signing that Pact by the light of reason, and in signing it we bowed our heads in the light of reason,' but men of Faith arose and took action, and they dropped their hands by their sides, and they say to themselves, through pure lack of moral courage:—'After all, perhaps, it is better to be led by faith than reason.' That is the attitude of the politicians of the day to whom the soldiers look, and with that attitude of the politicians, and with the soldiers' soldiers, and with the criminals' criminals, every one of these six points that I mentioned as fundamental for peace in this country is challenged by force of arms. That, I say, is my impression of the situation."

#### VIGOROUS ACTION.

##### Government's Duty to Check Armed Opposition.

Failing a statement to that effect, the work that was before the Government was to vindicate its authority, because if they weakened in any of those ways all security in the country and all stability was gone. Those points were necessary to any long-established Government. He did not want at that moment to go into details of how the armed forces opposed to them was to be met. But they had to be met vigorously, and whatever squeamishness they might have about taking life, they could not be squeamish about jeopardising the lives of the people who threatened the lives of the people. If they could get rid of that force without taking life—if they could capture them and put them in gaol they would try to do it. He was satisfied that the House would go forward at once and constructively in the future. The point was raised as to who would be responsible in the future for keeping order in the country.

The Army, he said, must be responsible, because there was no other force or organisation to do it. But there was a way of challenging it and saying that because it was called upon to deal with law and order in any particular area it did its work in the only way that an army could do it, and there was no use in saying, "Oh, this is militarism." It must be remembered that there were people in the army who would insist upon the fact that the civil administration must take its place. If there had been weaknesses in the past they were attributable to the fact that some people responsible for the civil side were not in sympathy with people responsible for the army because the army side did not feel that the civil side were working as vigorously and con-

structively as they should, and the army was weakened and exposed because it had to do what particularly should have been done by the civil administration, and not only that but the civil side was weakened and prejudiced in the eyes of the enemy.

#### A CREDIT TO THE ARMY.

When they spoke of indiscipline in the Army they asked for some sympathy, realising the position of the Army at the present moment. If some young men in the Army pushed up against individuals here and there in a rough and tactless way, then it was a great credit to the Army as a whole, and the young men of the country who formed it, that there was not more complaint along those lines. They realised the danger of indiscipline in the Army and the danger of awkwardness in dealing with public matters on the part of Army Officers, and the greatest factor that would help them in getting rid of those would be a sign in the country of a return to civilisation. Let them see their courts in operation and the police exercising their proper authority, and then the Army would soon find its place (cheers).

The point had been raised as to whether the Government did not consider that the national position was that the people only accepted the Treaty because they should do so, and that they accepted as something short of their ultimate demand. He accepted the Treaty as giving them a position short of what he would wish their national position to be, and he accepted it as against the state of things they were emerging from; he accepted it as giving them a position from which they might look forward to the highest pinnacle of their national dignity and national honour, and so that the nation-killing irritation between nations, that they had suffered from up to the present, and of which they had some very sad examples, might end.

#### RECONSTRUCTION.

##### Army to Offer its Measure of Assistance.

He would prefer to deal with the work of construction, and he did not sympathise with the spirit that put forward the amendment to the original resolution (hear hear). The state of military affairs that existed and the split in the Army had retarded dealing with the question of unemployment. Coming to the time when the Treaty was signed, and when, if it had been generally accepted, or accepted without any clash of arms in the country, the question of demobilising the men who had been withdrawn from the work of the country for military reasons and returning to their homes, men who though not on active military work were prevented from being in their homes by military operations, had been engaging the attention of the heads of the Army. They thought they might turn round when the military work was done and give some small contribution in the construction of the country in that spirit of service and co-operation that distinguished them in the Army, and that spirit of service and co-operation that Deputy Johnson spoke of on Saturday. They proposed to put one or two things to the Government: they were going to suggest that from amongst the men that would be free from the Army, but organised in civil works companies, should act under men who would act as volunteer officers and offer their services to the Government, and putting a few suggestions before them.

##### DAMMING UNEMPLOYMENT.

They intended to point out the importance of having some kind of a dam in the country into which they could drive unemployment in order to deal with it. There were certain public improvements, which were economic improvements, that was, that the money expended on them would return to the country in one way or another.

There were three particular matters in which they might offer their services in the beginning—first, better roads; second, drainage, and third, building.

They required better roads in certain parts of the country; they required them radiating from certain ports, also trunk roads. If roads of a proper type were made in the districts in which they were wanted, the money spent on the road-making would be saved to the country in two or three years. Motor transport would be developed as against railway transport, and if some of the unemployment at present were put to work on these trunk and radial roads from the ports, the method of dealing with unemployment would strengthen and enrich the country in the future. They also proposed as an experiment a small area of the river Blackwater, near Fermoy, by working a scheme that the Department of Agriculture had before it for a number of years. They had proposed to offer themselves as a gang of drainage workers to drain that area and let the Government and the people profit by the lesson.

##### QUESTION OF HOUSING.

Then the question of housing arose, and they felt that with better wages and greater leisure on the part of the workers that bad housing might give rise to as serious a situation of social unrest as bad hours and bad wages (hear, hear). They felt that if the housing system was tackled in a systematic and economic way, the money spent would not be wasted, and they need not be careful of the amount of money then put into it. They hoped that these schemes that they had in mind for utilising the loose end soldiers of the Anglo-Irish war would reappear very soon, when either the Government had put down the armed challenge to its authority or somebody had found that what he said about the authority being challenged was not true.

## Day by Day

SEPTEMBER 7.—A sweeping movement started over a wide area Tipperary mountains. Many prisoners taken.

Comdt.-Gen. Hogan, with three men and the armoured car, "Dan Boy," surprised a column of Irregulars in the village of Toor and took nine prisoners with their arms and ammunition.

Hearing that Kinnegad Barrack was to be burned, a party of troops proceeded to that district. They came across a party of Irregulars at Killucan crossroads, and after a short engagement made the prisoners. The remainder of the party got away in the darkness.

Athboy Police Barracks attacked by a large force of Irregulars. After an hour's fighting, the garrison, though small in numbers, beat off the attackers. One of the garrison, Volunteer Joseph Smith, was killed.

A party of troops returning from Miltown-Malbay were ambushed between Cooraclare and Kilmihill. Machine-gun and rifle-fire was opened on them by a large body of Irregulars. The troops vigorously replied to the fire. After a fight lasting about two hours the troops routed the ambushers, capturing four with their arms and ammunition. Two of the troops were slightly wounded.

SEPTEMBER 8.—A party of four troops ambushed at Ballinaboy near Clifden. The troops drove off the attackers, taking four prisoners with a quantity of arms, ammunition and bombs abandoned by the retreating Irregulars.

Extensive searches in West Clare resulted in the capture of George Killoghrey, Denny Hasset and Michael Shannon, all prominent Irregular leaders.

A raiding party of troops visited 31 Temple Street, Dublin, and found ten mine detonators, five electric batteries, and eight incendiary bombs. An Irregular was arrested on the premises.

A motor car, with a party of seven men, was held up by a patrol at Castleknock. Two Lee-Enfield rifles, two revolvers, some hand grenades, and a quantity of food-stuffs were found in the car. All the occupants of the car, who were subsequently identified as Irregulars, were made prisoners.

SEPTEMBER 9.—During a big drive from Cork through Blarney, Coachford and Donoughmore, the troops, under Major-General Dalton, discovered fifteen land mines and ten machine-gun drums fully loaded. Many hand and rifle grenades were also found.

An attempt by Irregulars to isolate Blarney from Cork by blowing Lemount Bridge at Carrigrohane was frustrated by the troops.

An attack with bombs and machine-guns was made on the troops stationed in Dundalk. After a few hours' fighting the attackers were beaten off.

A convoy of troops proceeding along the Lucan road to Dublin was ambushed at Leixlip. The troops returned the fire from the cars and reinforcements soon arrived. Three armed Irregulars and one woman were taken prisoners. One of the captured Irregulars had a bullet wound in the leg. Three of the troops were injured, one seriously.

SEPTEMBER 12.—While a char-a-banc containing troops was passing through Blessington Street, Dublin, revolver fire was opened on them and a number of bombs flung. The troops dismounted from the car and engaged the attackers. Two of the troops were injured by shrapnel splinters in the legs. Two of the ambushers were captured.

A raiding party carrying out a search at the premises 34 Mountjoy Square, Dublin, found three Peter the Painter automatic pistols, five Parabellum automatic pistols in holsters, one revolver, some hundred rounds of revolver and automatic ammunition, and one silencer for an automatic pistol. An Irregular occupying the premises was made prisoner.

SEPTEMBER 13.—The town of Kenmare surrounded and taken by a party of Irregulars estimated at over 300. The garrison, numbering about 50, offered a stubborn resistance, but overwhelmed by numbers they were forced to surrender. Brigadier O'Connor, in charge of the troops, and his brother, were killed in the fight. Brigadier O'Connor had an outstanding record in the Army, being in charge of a flying column during the Anglo-Irish war.

A large body of Irregulars swooped down on Ballina while the greater part of the garrison were at a Requiem Mass for a comrade, and succeeded in capturing the post held by the troops in the town.

In an engagement between the troops and a party of Irregulars near Blarney, six Irregulars were killed and four wounded.

During a search by the troops in a house in Blarney Street, Co. Cork, the following were found:—Six rifles, a number of revolvers, detonators, and other military equipment.

Troops belonging to the 1st Eastern Division, operating around Wilkinstown, Co. Meath, captured ten Irregulars, one of whom was wounded, together with one Hotchkiss machine-gun, 19 magazines for same, 11 lbs. explosives, with 2 coils of wire, 6 Service rifles, 1 Mauser rifle, and 5,000 rounds of .303 ammunition.

## Letters of a Guardsman

A Thomás, a Chroi,

Cork.

I haven't had a line from you this ever so long, but had a short note from one of the girls informing me that you, too, had gone off South to an unknown destination. But, though I've been in several towns in this county, "trace, tale or tidings of my wandering boy" could not be had anywhere. And, mind you, I did hear strange news. 'Tis extraordinary what an amount of nonsense the people swallowed whilst the Irregulars were in control of the news dished out here. But all that in due course. I must finish the landing in Cork first. I think I broke off at Passage in my last note. We landed under heavy fire from both sides of the river, and, taking all available cover, returned the fire. The buildings in town were very strongly held, and the usual method of attack was adopted. Captain Friel fought his way on left, and rushed the buildings on that side of town. Commandant Kilcoyne's party disposed of the right in a similar manner. We advanced along the quays. The Irregulars put up a stiff fight from the granaries, but ultimately we rushed their positions, and captured large quantities of arms, ammunition, cars, etc. We took thirty-four armed prisoners here. We did not delay long. By evening we were again on the march. Our road for a spell ran close to the water, and then opened out into a wide stretch of arable country. The Irregulars were all the time fighting a kind of rearguard action with our advance, and as we were drawing near Doonstown the stiffening of their resistance and the number of mines exploding

fully negotiated clearly showed that they were prepared to make a stand at this point. It was now too late to open an attack, so we roused from my slumbers by "O'Brien's voice." 'Twas hoarse, it must have been with something akin to joy, for he was declaiming at his highest pitch our old friend—

"T'anam un Dia, but there it is,  
The dawn on the Hills of Ireland."

It was as good as any reveille. 'Twas a glorious sight, but Rochestown was in front, and Irregulars with machine-guns held all the approaches. No time for going into ecstasies about grey dawns and opal lushes. Rochestown is only a small place, consisting of scattered groups of houses, but it was very firmly held. The fortified buildings controlled the approaches by road, whilst all available points on its flanks were held. This disposition of the Irregular forces delayed our enveloping movement, and the battle opened on the flanks where our advance was strongly resisted. The battle continued for hours, and the continual fire of rifle and machine-gun fire was deafening. The big gun was brought into action and discharged four or five shells at the Irregulars' positions, and—well, that settled Rochestown.

The town was abandoned, the Irregulars falling back on Douglas. We had here a badly-needed rest before entering on the last lap. Next morning we resumed our advance. Captains Conlan and Friel were on the right, Comdt. Kilcoyne on the left. The country on our right was thickly wooded, affording excellent cover to the Irregular forces thrown out to check our advance. Every inch of ground was hotly contested on this side. We were frequently obliged to traverse open glades in face of very heavy fire from concealed positions, and from almost every farmhouse machine-gunners had to be dislodged. But we cleared them out of all the advanced posts, and forced them to retire on their prepared position in town.

At 9 a.m. next morning we resumed the assault on town. On this occasion the principal opposition was encountered on our left. The Irregulars brought an armoured car into action here to support their rifle-men; our double-turreted car countered, and a beautiful bit of scrapping followed, in which the Irregulars were compelled to retreat, leaving road to left free. As our right flank had already gained the right side of the town, we were now in complete possession. Elaborate preparations had been made for prolonged resistance. Houses were strongly fortified and loop-holed, and mines laid.

That evening we entered Cork. The armoured car was first to enter. Mines were exploded on Parnell Bridge, and one of them very nearly gave yours truly his dependant's allowance in earnest. That reminds me. Poor O'Neill is much worried over his D.A. He doesn't mind one bit about himself, but he's anxious about the kids. Of course, we all know there are considerable difficulties to contend with, and that things will right themselves in good time. But, for the love of Mike—Tom, will you see if you can do anything in O'Neill's case. Don't be rash, though. Don't do as the chap in the Four Courts Hotel did with—you know the story.

You might be able to broach the matter without using the term dependant's allowance. Won't you do your best?  
Remember me to all the boys.

SEAN.

## Self-Help

"Don't leave all the work to the Army; lend a hand yourselves." That is the advice we give to the civilian population in these days.

Now that the military power of the Irregulars is broken, they are concentrating their energies more and more on destruction, thereby setting the troops a harder task, in a way, than they had to face in the days of the fighting.

Obviously, when it aims at destruction, prevention is better than cure. But with our small Army, it is physically impossible to protect every bridge and every mile of railway in the country.

The people must help.

They cannot afford to stand by in patient indignation while their property is destroyed.

The people have been termed a flock of sheep. They must show the Irregulars that they are nothing of the kind.

Here and there a stand has been made. A few weeks ago we chronicled the uprising of the people of Mayo. Now the men of Clare have followed their example. Twenty-four counties have yet to take the step.

A small committee (the smaller the better, since actions not words are wanted) should get together in every village.

The men of the village should then be enrolled in a vigilance corps, divided into small sections, each with a leader.

## General Mulcahy's Speech

The military aspect of the Minister of Defence's statement in Parliament deserves the serious attention of every soldier.

Taking us back to pre-mutiny days, when attempts were being made to bridge the gap between the two sections of the Army, General Mulcahy showed how compromise was made impossible by the determination of the mutinous section to ride rough-shod over every principle that conflicted with their own domination. An independent army with a policy of its own would be a danger to any State, especially to a weak State disorganised by recent war. But an independent army with a policy directly opposed to that of the nation means inevitable civil war as the only alternative to submission to armed tyranny. That was the issue forced on an unwilling and too forbearing democracy by our would-be despots.

When the negotiations broke down—as they were bound to do under the circumstances—the mutineers attempted the greatest possible crime against their country: namely, to commit her, against her declared will, to war with England, thereby dishonouring her signature and involving her in inevitable disaster.

Such a plot against the honour and existence of the country had to be crushed at once, and so, even without the assistance of such outrages as the raid on Ferguson's and the kidnapping of General O'Connell, the war had to begin the day it did.

General Mulcahy then proceeded to lay the foundations of peace. Six conditions were essential: (1) The Treaty to be carried out. (2) The best possible Constitution to be secured under it. (3) Force must not be used in arguing any clause of the Constitution. (4) Opposition to the Government must be on Constitutional lines. (5) The Army must be responsible to the National Government. (6) All arms must be in control of the Government—in fact, the acceptance of principles of government which are undisputed in any civilised country in any part of the world.

Every one of these points, said the General, was now being forcibly challenged in Ireland, and so long as that went on they would oppose force by force. He concluded with a hopeful note for the future. When the fighting is done, the Army will co-operate in the work of reconstruction and relieving unemployment. Soldiers retiring from the Army will be employed in improving the roads, in drainage, in house-building, etc. If General Mulcahy's suggestions are adopted, our Army will be, unlike every other army, an economic asset to the country instead of an expensive necessity.

As many sections as are found necessary should be called up for duty for, say, one day, or three, or a week—and regularly relieved at the end of the period.

They need not be armed, though, if they are, all the better. Unarmed patrols must make scouting their strong point, so that they may scent the danger from afar and bring troops to their help.

Remember that every bridge and line destroyed means fresh immediate disorganisation, and a few more thousands on to the bill of costs that looms in the future.

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