

AN T-ÓGLÁC

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS.

Vol. II. No. 19.]

SEPTEMBER 15, 1920.

[Price Twopence.

THE WAR

Murder, arson and pillage of non-combatants are now the recognised methods by which the enemy has chosen to fight us. These things are now virtually officially recognised by the enemy authorities as the principal weapon in their campaign against us. An official propagandist organ is issued weekly to every R.I.C. barrack inciting the enemy's hirelings to fresh outrages, endeavouring to instil in them a spirit of venomous hatred to the majority of the Irish people. That he has to resort to such tactics is a proof of how badly he is beaten and how bankrupt of legitimate military strategy he has become.

This new "offensive" of murder and arson leaves the Irish Republican troops unterrified; rather our activities have increased under the stimulus of this campaign of savagery. The soldiers of the Irish Republic have a big account to settle with the cowardly brutes who murder unarmed boys and old men, and there is no danger of slackness among Volunteers situated in districts where these outrages have occurred. But there is one aspect of the matter which is dealt with in an article in this issue, which we wish to emphasise. The enemy's method of procedure in regard to the outrages which he qualifies by the word "reprisals" is now well known. A regular system has been adopted by enemy troops in dealing with a town in the neighbourhood of which an attack has been made on their troops. Every move of the kind by them can be and should be anticipated; and methods can and should be adopted to make these outrages a dangerous and costly undertaking for them. In one or two recent cases the failure to take precautions to deal with uniformed ruffians savoured of culpable negligence. A few lessons taught to the murderers, burners and looters while engaged in their work of destruction, would make the pastime of "reprisals" very much less popular among them. Volunteer officers who plan an ambushade should also at the

same time consider plans for dealing with subsequent enemy outrages. Furthermore, steps should be taken to ensure the safety of well-known Volunteers, even though unconcerned in the operation, from the subsequent murders and outrages of enemy troops.

The importance of increasing the area of Volunteer activity and consequently increasing the line which the enemy has to hold cannot be too often emphasised. Pressure by our troops on the enemy in the North, East and West will prevent the enemy concentrating his numbers and energies on the South. If the Volunteers in all areas were as active in the guerilla warfare as in certain portions of Munster the enemy would require a very much larger force than he has in Ireland at present to deal with the situation. Perhaps three or four times as many men would be required by him to enable him even to hold his own, and such numbers, through technically available, he cannot conveniently spare from elsewhere. He has his hands pretty full at the present time all over the world and it is our business to see that he gets as hearty and generous a contribution of trouble from Ireland as we can possibly manage.

There has been a regrettable increase of emigration from Ireland during the past few months, and while the majority of the emigrants were women, and a great many of the emigrants came from counties in Ulster where the Republican forces are not strong there can be no doubt that a considerable number of young men of military age were included among the emigrants. This cowardly desertion of their native land at a time when she is in the throes of a bloody struggle for freedom and her fate hangs in the balance deserves the sternest measures to deal with it. Steps will be taken to see that the deserters will have their offence brought home to them even on the other side of the Atlantic. It will be the duty of the Volunteers to deal in the severest manner with any young man who attempts to emigrate without a permit from the Irish Republic.



THE NEW ENEMY POLICY

The desperate expedients adopted by the enemy authorities to retrieve the lost morale of their once powerful arm, the "R.I.C." show pretty clearly the extent of our successes up to the present in the War of Independence. They have published a supplement to the "Hue and Cry," containing propaganda in the form of Press cuttings with notes. The Press cuttings contain the "News" of the War in Ireland in the best English Newspaper style and the notes indicate the "courage," "skill," "dash," "perseverance"—in fact a whole catalogue of the manly virtues—of the "R.I.C." and compare them with the dirty, skulking, cowardly, savage Irish. This "dope" aided by rum, they hope, will restore the morale of their "R.I.C."

Enemy documents recently captured show that all pretence of using the "R.I.C." as police is now abandoned. For instance instructions concerning the strength, formation and movement of patrols have been issued stating that patrols on foot should consist of not less than six men, and that they should move in skirmishing formation with scouts in front and on flanks, and with rifles always at the ready. Instructions for cyclist patrols state that patrols should consist of not less than 8 men who should cycle in pairs with intervals of from 30 to 50 yards between each pair. Instructions for night patrols state that night patrolling should be done in strong parties and through the fields. These instructions are just ordinary military operation orders and their issue by the enemy to the "R.I.C." shows that he regards as soldiers those whom he calls police.

The problem of dealing with these enemy reconnoitering patrols should be energetically tackled. The more of them that are captured and disarmed or driven back on their fortified post the better, and the easier it will be to reduce these fortified posts later, and gradually clear the country of all that remain of them. It will rarely be possible so completely to surprise a patrol moving in war formation as to be able to capture or disarm it without a fight; Consequently it will be necessary when setting out to deal with such to prepare plans for an encounter. The aim in preparing a plan should be to get the greatest possible amount of surprise at the beginning of the action and to close with the enemy in the shortest time. The initiative being on our side we can select the time and place of action. This power if properly used will secure success in all operations provided it is properly followed by vigorous action in actual engagement.

The following points are all important to a force about to engage an enemy patrol: 1. Information of enemy strength, formation, direction of march and position from which they set out. 2. Thorough knowledge of locality in which engagement will take place; 3. Perfect understanding by all ranks of the intentions of the O.C. Point 1. requires that the

force will contain a few reliable scouts who will be intelligently used by the O.C. Point 2. explains itself. Point 3. requires that the men are sufficiently well trained in the use of their weapons, and in the principles of skirmishing tactics to understand what is required of them individually and to be capable of fighting with mutual co-operation and under the direct control of their O.C. It should be the aim of an officer in charge of a force entering on a patrol engagement to attain his objective after a short, sharp and decisive fight. There should be no want of "go" once the fight begins. At the same time there should be no indiscriminate or uncontrolled or badly aimed shooting. Ammunition is too valuable to be wasted—so every bullet should find its billet.

So far no documents giving detailed instructions to murder gangs or incendiaries have been captured and it is safe to assume that the enemy will not risk putting on paper such instructions. Enough is known of their method in these things, however, to enable us to take steps to deal with them. Usually after the enemy has been beaten in a patrol encounter, he comes out under cover of darkness and "shoots up" a village, or burns houses belonging to Republicans or if he gets an opportunity, murders a prominent Republican in the locality. When so engaged he is usually strong in numbers, (for instance there were about 30 men engaged at the murder of Commandant MacCurtain) and feels *safe*. When gangs of murderers or incendiaries are expected in any place *a fitting reception should be prepared for them*. If they come by road the ordinary methods of dealing with enemy forces on the march may be adopted. If they are expected to operate in the vicinity of their fortified posts, small groups of snipers should be posted so as to cover their line of advance, ready, as soon as opportunity offers, to direct an effective fire on them. If possible they should be cut off from their base and annihilated. When it is brought home to them that there is danger in the work they will do very much less of it.

HINTS ON THE AUTOMATIC PISTOL

The following observations were made as the result of recent experiments with different types of Automatic Pistols, and should be noted by all ranks in possession of such.

The Bore: As in the case of rifles (all patterns) the bore should be cleaned dry of oil before firing, otherwise the result will be erratic shooting in the first few rounds, however good the aim taken. Besides, an oily barrel may betray firing position by giving off a flame which is easily observed especially on a dark night.

Stoppages: Owing to the delicate and intricate mechanism of the Automatic Pistol, stoppages (or

"jammed" as is the common expression), are of frequent occurrence in all types of Automatic Pistols, therefore a thorough knowledge of the mechanism and causes of stoppages will add to the efficiency of the weapon and will prevent in some cases and minimise in most, the "stoppages" which will be commonly met with in the use of the Automatic Pistol. Although numbered 1, 2, etc., stoppages may not occur in the order as set down here, viz:—1. Misfire. 2. Failure to extract empty cartridge case. 3. Failure to eject empty cartridge case.

No. 1., arises from one of the following causes—

- (a) Defective ammunition.
- (b) Broken or defective firing pin.
- (c) Broken or defective firing pin spring.
- (d) Broken or defective magazine spring.

No. 2., arises from,

- (a) Broken or defective extractor spring.
- (b) Dirty breech chamber.
- (c) Damaged base of cartridge case.

No. 3., arises from,

- (a) Weak or defective ejector screw or spring.
- (b) Sluggish ejection brought about by dirt acting on recoiling portions; weak explosion.

The position of the recoiling parts when a "stoppage" has occurred will generally indicate the cause of the stoppage. In the case of the No. 1 stoppage the recoiling portions (i. e., the portions that move back and forward when the explosion takes place) generally remain forward, that is to say, the breech remains closed, no recoil having taken place.

In the case of "stoppages" Nos. 2 and 3, the recoiling portions will be found to have moved back either partly or wholly, but cannot complete the action owing to one or other of the causes set forth above. With a little experience the cause of the stoppage will be easily observed.

Remedies: What may be called the "immediate remedy" should be used in the case of all stoppages, which consists in drawing back to the full extent with the right hand the recoiling portions, thus aiding extraction, ejection, and reloading. The pistol should be then fired and if the same or other stoppage occurs, a more detailed examination and remedy will be necessary.

Before proceeding with the more exhaustive examination and remedy, the magazine should be removed, thus averting accidents; then the recoiling portions drawn back at least twice as directed above, thus clearing the chamber; but if it is found a round remains in the chamber the recoiling portions must be locked back (in most cases the safety catch acts as a lock when the recoiling portions are back) and then cleared by means of a clearing rod: During the above process the finger should be kept off the trigger, and the muzzle of the pistol pointed to the front and slightly upwards.

In the cases of defective ammunition, damaged base of cartridge case, or dirt acting on recoiling portions, the obvious remedy is to remove the cause: but in all other cases it will invariably be found necessary to replace the damaged parts.

The following hints will be found of great service in the prevention of stoppages.

- (1) Keep your Automatic free from dust.
- (2) Use only the best oil—Rangoon if possible.
- (3) Do not put so much oil on as to lie and thicken round the recoiling portions, (Motto—"Oil often and slightly")
- (4) Clean from *Breach to Muzzle*, by cleaning the bore the reverse method, you draw the dirt into the chamber where it lies.
- (5) Keep your springs eased when occasion permits.
- (6) Keep inexperienced hands off your Automatic.
- (7) Don't use it as a plaything, your life may one day depend on it
- (8) Get to know every part and their uses.
- (9) Keep your ammunition clean.
- (10) Don't knock your ammunition about.
- (11) Use only ammunition of the proper calibre, and before loading make certain you have the right thing.

OBSERVING MARSHAL FOCH'S PRINCIPLES

Marshal Foch laid down twenty years ago when lecturing in the French War School four principles of guidance whereby to secure success in war. It will be encouraging to point out that the guerilla operations of the Irish War of Independence are in accordance with these principles.

The principles in question are:

- (a) Economy of forces.
- (b) Freedom of action,
- (c) Free disposition of forces,
- (d) Security.

we shall examine each in detail.

As regards (a) Economy of forces we can honestly claim to be making the most economical use of the men and means at our disposal. In carrying out our enterprises we do not use more men, nor expend more munitions than is warranted by the success shown. We have improved in this respect in the later period, for some of our earlier operations were more straggling and wasteful. The improvement is largely one to improve training which enables us to estimate a task more accurately.

As regards (b) Freedom of action what is meant is power to select our line of action. This also we possess both locally and in a general respect. In fact, guerilla warfare has this as its main advantage—thus affording a wide variety of operations, raids on posts, raids on stores, attacks on patrols etc.

Taken in conjunction with (b) the principle (c) Free disposition of forces constitutes the Initiative—the power to dictate the course of operations to the adversary and not be dictated to by him. This free disposition of forces we also possess to the extent that we are in the main able to provide sufficient men for an enterprise and to move them to the scene of action without interference.

The fourth principle (d) Security is the one required to give the finish to the others. Unless troops are protected during an operation neither Economy of force nor Initiative are of any avail. Our Service of Security has been on the whole satisfactory, though there have been a few minor incidents that went against us. Security is altogether a matter of careful training.

But though we can in a general sense say that our operations keep close to Marshal Foch's principles we must not get "swelled heads". It is a good thing to have so high an authority for believing we are on the right road, but we must by no means overlook the fact that we have a long distance further to go along that road. Consider a development according to the "Principles."

An increase of force—whether coming from increased numbers, improved armament, or improved training—means that with a similar economy of force more widespread operations can be undertaken. What is this but increased Freedom of action? For it increases the possible number of objectives—making enterprises possible that are not yet so. Again it means a freer disposition of forces, because it increases the strength of the reserve forces available. And finally it also increases the Security directly.

It should be remembered that every development of this kind is progressive: each step makes the next step so much the more easy, and a development in any one direction at once furthers progress in all the rest

GENERAL NOTES

Is follus ós na tuairiscí do sgriobh Cigiri Pileiri na namhad go bhfuil an sgeul go holc aca. Deir Cigire Conndae Phortlairge go bhfuil ganachúis fear ortha, go bhfuil fir ag éirghe as gach lã agus na fuil éin fhir nua ag teach isteach i n-a n-ionad. Sini an chúis go bhfuil siad ag tréigint an oiread son bearraici

Cases have been brought to the notice of G.H.Q. where persons have received threatening notices purporting to have come from the "Irish Republican Army," notices entirely unauthorised and in most cases, on the face of them, obvious concoctions. It is extremely improbable that any individual Volunteer would be guilty of such a gross offence as to send such unauthorised or fabricated notices. Volunteers should endeavour in all such cases to assist in tracing the offenders who will be severely dealt with.

It may be well to warn those who are paying visits to Volunteers in prison that a new system has been established of searching the visitors at their *departure* and not, as formely, on their admission.

One of the latest devices resorted to by "civilised" enemy officers has been the brutal torture of prisoners with a view to exacting information from them. Two Volunteer officers recently captured were subjected by their captors to fiendish and malignant tortures, with the result that one of them is now a physical wreck. Full details of the revolting story will be made public in due course. Volunteers may rest certain that such acts will not remain unpunished.

At the time of going to press the lives of Commandant Mac Sweeney and the Volunteer prisoners in Cork jail on hunger strike are trembling in the balance. There is no danger that Volunteers, who have shown such fine discipline and self-restraint under former brutal provocation will lose their leads in this crisis. Whatever action it may be necessary to take will only be carried out on instructions from G.H.Q. conveyed through the proper channels; and the orders received will be carried out by Volunteers with the coolness and quiet efficiency which usually characterise their work.

The enemy has abandoned all pretence of conducting his campaign against us in accordance with the rules of civilised warfare. He has evidently been studying the methods of the Turks in Armenia and he is able to better his instruction. The sacking of the nnresisting and helpless town of Balbriggan and the brutal butchery of two unarmed men on the occasion is an incident unparalleled in the history of warfare in Europe in modern times. Even more significant however than the orgy of murder and destruction by subordinates was the official murder of Mr. John Lynch of Kilmallock by an armed gang of murderers operating directly from Dublin Castle under the conduct of military officers of high rank. Volunteers may rest assured that the authors of these atrocities *will be adequately dealt with*. Sterner and more drastic action has been rendered necessary by these outrages, and the officers and men of the Irish Republican Army are determined to face every danger and difficulty with an unflinching determination to carry on the war relentlessly against the cowardly and brutal savages who are devastating our country, while at the same time to take very special and effective measures for the protection of the citizens of the Irish Republic.

WARNING

Do not use the Post Office on any account. The enemy is stopping all letters and reading them, and those containing money belonging to Republicans are being stolen. Pass this warning on to all your friends.

