

## IRISH NEWS

## IRELAND ROBBED.

Francis Hackett, associate editor of the *New Republic*, recently investigated conditions in Ireland, and published a detailed account of his findings and adventures. In his testimony he dealt mostly with the economic problems and possibilities of the country. He produced facts to show that Ireland paid 300,000 dollars over and above her allotted amount of revenue, from 1915 to 1919, to the British Government; and this same money, paid by Irishmen, is being used to keep British troops, armed motor-lorries, tanks, aeroplanes, etc., in Ireland.

Describing experiences in Ireland, he said:

"In the course of my travels last summer I visited Kilkenny, Waterford, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Dublin, Belfast, and Galway, in addition to many smaller places.

*I am now convinced that an independent Republic is Ireland's only hope. As a matter of fact, the de facto Sinn Fein Government has instituted reforms directly needed for a century.*

"The Royal Irish Constabulary is only nominally a police force, being actually a military force of occupation that has been kept in Ireland for a hundred years. As the police are compelled to evacuate, all fear of and all respect for the British Government goes with them. Once evacuated, a district is lost to them. They have never succeeded in returning, except under the protection of a considerable armed force. As soon as they go, the Volunteers who drive them out take over their duties, and police the country with the thoroughness of a 'new broom.' The Volunteers are marvellously disciplined: they never touch a drop of liquor: they are always on hand, cool and efficient.

## The Real Ulster.

"Working with Volunteers are practically all local Town and County Councils outside of Ulster, and many in Ulster: they recognise no police, except those of the Republic—the Volunteers. They have established their courts, and administer justice. I have been in the Sinn Fein courts, and have never seen a more democratic assembly."

The speaker stated that there probably are a hundred thousand British troops in Ireland, with about nine thousand police and six or seven thousand "Black-and-Tans." He said there had been twenty thousand raids in Ireland, before one of the hundred and twenty policemen (as claimed by the English House of Commons) had been killed; and that in almost every instance the policeman killed had been guilty of some great crime—most frequently murder. Mr. Hackett declared that 75 per cent. of the people in Ireland were Sinn Fein, 80 per cent. Labor, and 84 per cent. of the people in Ulster was self-government.

## No Religious Question.

"There is no doubt" (Mr. Hackett said) "that what religious situation exists is kept alive by employers in order to keep their workers apart. Religious differences that are found are purely political and economical. No theological basis for them exists. Most of this feeling, too, is confined to Belfast. There is practically no religious feeling in southern Ireland."

Mr. Hackett gave a picture of the Republican Government functioning quietly and efficiently underground, amid external confusion. British authority (he said) had dwindled to a handful of well-fortified posts.

## LINE UP BRITISH LABOR IN IRISH CAUSE.

A London message to an exchange, under date December 29, states:—

A movement calculated by its organisers to place the full weight of British organised labor in support of the Irish Self-determination claims began with a specially convened conference of the Parliamentary Labor Party in London to-day, after several members of the party's commission which investigated the situation in Ireland told what they had learned there.

A resolution was adopted unanimously challenging the Government to disprove the commission's accusations regarding reprisals and other outrages charged to the crown forces. The conference was held as a curtain-raiser for a campaign in behalf of self-determination and in opposition to the government's alleged policy of repression, to be inaugurated by the laborites in Manchester on January 17, and concluded in London on February 1.

## Serious Indictment.

A. G. Cameron, chairman of to-day's conference, in opening discussion on the commission's report, characterised it as "the most serious indictment against British methods in trying to govern Ireland ever placed before the British people."

"The manner in which Sir Hamar Greenwood (chief secretary for Ireland) has evaded questions in the House of Commons reflects discredit upon himself and the House," Mr. Cameron added. "As a result of her handling of the Irish question, Great Britain has not a friend in the world." The resolution adopted says: "This conference now challenges the Government to disprove the statements of the Labor Commission by such judicial inquiry and to deal with those proved guilty of such serious charges as their offences deserve."

## Call for Troop Withdrawal.

Another resolution, adopted at this afternoon's session, voices approval of the parliamentary labor party's declaration regarding "outrages conducted in the name of the Sinn Fein and reprisals by servants of the crown." Efforts of the labor inquiry commission to secure a cessation of all violent and provocative actions, with a view to opening peace negotiations between the Government and elected representatives of the Irish people.

This resolution suggests the following grounds as basis for settlement: First, withdrawal of all armed forces; second, placing of responsibility for maintaining order in each locality in Ireland on the local authorities, and third, provision for immediate election by proportional representation of a constituent assembly charged to work out whatever constitution for Ireland the Irish people desire, subject only to two conditions—namely, protection of minorities and guarantees that the constitution should prevent Ireland becoming a military or naval menace to Great Britain.

## SIR. PHILIP GIBBS ON IRELAND.

Sir. Philip Gibbs, the well-known war correspondent, in a preface to Mr. Hugh Martin's book "Ireland in Insurrection," describes it as evidence which cannot be disregarded by people who have any honesty of mind or any love for the reputation of their country.

"Official denials, evasions, and distortions," he says, "cannot stand against such a narrative. The details of English reprisals, cruelties and blackguardism are not only stirring up foreigners, but also the Dominions. Our warmest friends and our own relatives are filled with amazement and indignation that England, the champion of the small nations and the friend of liberty, has adopted a Prussian policy after the war in which hundreds of thousands of Irishmen fought for the Empire.

"The shame and guilt for this anarchy rests on the statesmen who have abandoned statesmanship. Thus it will not be the soldiers whom history will gibbet, but the statesmen who have sacrificed the lives of soldiers in a mean and unnecessary war."

Early in November, 1920, Mr. Hugh Martin, who was the *Daily News* correspondent at Tralee, related a sensational story regarding alleged overbearing acts by members of the Royal Irish Constabulary towards the correspondents in Ireland of leading London journals. He said that the police came to his hotel and said they were going to "do for" him, and that he saved his life by impersonating an absent journalist. Mr. H. W. Massingham, editor of the *Nation*, wrote a letter to the *Times* asking what action the Newspaper Proprietors' Association intended to take to protect Mr. Martin.

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