NOTES FROM MOUNTJOY.

By Liam Mellows.

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The author of the document printed below who signs 'L. O'M' and 'L. M.' is Liam O'Maoiliosa, Liam Mellowes, one of the real leaders of the Anti-Treaty Party. The document consists of three parts, written respectively on the 26th, and 29th of August and 11th September, the writer being a prisoner. It outlines and gives partly in detail a future policy, and plan of campaign for the Republic.

26th August, 1922.

GENERAL SITUATION—We are as much in touch with this as the 'newspapers' and 'Poblacht' and 'Bulletin' permit. I am strongly of opinion that the Republican political and military outlook be co-ordinated. No doubt this has been done, but I mention it because during the past six months we suffered badly because responsible officers in their desire to act as soldiers, and because of an attitude towards 'Politicians' acquired as result (in my opinion) of a campaign directed towards this end by old G.H.Q., could only judge of situation in terms of guns and men. Even from a military point of view it ought to have been apparent to such men that every situation and advantage—no matter of what nature—should be availed of to gain victory. However, I am not going to write an essay on this.

Naturally we are thinking hard here, though the place and atmosphere is not conductive to thought. However, the net result of my cogitations are:—

(1) A Provisional Republican Government should be set up at once even if it is unable to function, or to function only in a most limited way. This to be done apart from the question of the Dáil. The advt. in to-day's paper re postponement of Dáil is inserted by Provisional Government. The impression the Press and the Provisional Government want to create is that the next Dáil is the 'Provisional Parliament' called for by the

terms of the Treaty. If at meeting of Dáil this is not cleared up and it is accepted that it is a 'Provisional Parliament' and not the Government of the Republic—then the necessity of a Pro. Repub. Govt. is most urged.

(2) The programme of Democratic control (the Social programme) adopted by Dáil coincident with Declaration of Independence, January, 1919, should be translated into something definite. This is essential if the great body of the workers are to be kept on the side of Independence. This does not require a change of outlook on the part of Republicans or the adoption of a revolutionary programme as such. The headline is there in the Declaration of 1919. It is already part of the Republican policy. It should be made clear what is meant by it. Would suggest, therefore, that it be interpreted something like the following which appeared in the 'Workers' Republic' of July 22nd last:—'*Under the Republic all industry will be controlled by the State for the workers' and farmers' benefit. All transport, railways, canals, etc., will be operated by the State—the Republican State—for the benefit of the workers and farmers. All banks will be operated by the State for the benefit of Industry and Agriculture, not for the purpose of profit-making by loans, mortgages, etc. That the lands of the aristocracy (who support the Free State and the British connection) will be seized and divided amongst those who can and will operate it for the Nation's benefit, etc.*'

Regarding the last paragraph in above programme—land—it is well to note that the I.R.A. Executive had already taken up the question of the desmesnes and ranches and had adopted a scheme for their confiscation and distribution. This scheme was mainly the work of P.J.R. See F. O'M., Tomas O'Dearg and P.J.R. about this. In view of the unprincipled attitude of the Labour Party and because the landless and homeless Irish Republican soldiers who fought against Britain, it might be well to publish this scheme in whole or in part. We should certainly keep Irish Labour for the Republic: it will be possibly

the biggest factor on our side. Anything that would prevent Irish Labour becoming Imperialist and respectable will help the Republic.

As a sidelight on Johnson, O'Brien, O'Shannon and Co., it will interest you to know that when they called on us in the Four Courts last May they (particularly Johnson) remarked that no effort had been made by An Dáil to put its democratic programme into execution. In our efforts now to win back public support to the Republic we are forced to recognise—whether we like it or not—that the commercial interests so-called—money and gombeen-man—are on the side of the Treaty, because the Treaty means Imperialism and England.

We are back to Tone—and it is just as well—relying on that great body, 'the men of no property.' The 'stake in the country' people were never with the Republic. They are not with it now—and they will always be against it—until it wins. We should recognise that definitely now and base our appeals upon the understanding and needs of those who have always borne Ireland's fight. Even though the decision of the election of 1918 stands; even though the Declaration of Independence remains a fact; even though the declaration of 1921 re-affirmed that declaration; even though the election of June, 1922, was an 'agreed' election at which no issue was put or decided; yet because of the interpretation put upon it by the Treatyites (and used broadcast by the British) it is essential that the Republic be once again re-affirmed by the people by vote as soon as possible. When that may be no one can tell; but we cannot look too far ahead. In the meantime the Provisional Republican Government should endeavour to 'carry on.'

(a) **Propaganda**.—Imperialism.—What the rejection of it by Ireland means. What its acceptance by Ireland means. This should be fully explained. What Imperialism is; what Empires are; what the British Empire is; its growth; how it exists and maintains itself; Colonies (Irish Free State as a Colony), India. How oppression and possession of it is essential to maintenance of B.R. money, trade, power, etc.—(Curson on India). Extracts Roger Casement's articles on 'Ireland, Germany and Freedom of the Seas,' published first in 'Irish Review,' 1913 or 1914. What Ireland's connection with

Imperialism (however much the apparent material gain) means to future. No use freeing Ireland to set her up as a State following in the footsteps of all the rotten nations in Europe to-day—what Ireland's [?] of Imperialism means, etc., etc.

(b) Work of the Republic, to show it was—and is—a reality. This is an antidote to the hypocrites who now pretend that it never existed, some pamphlets have already been published by direction of Dáil last year, showing how Republic functioned—Courts, land settlements, etc., decrees. These were sold for 5d. each, I think. They could be reproduced or used again. The 'Bulletin' published by D/Publicity all through war up to signing of Treaty does, I think, contain heaps of dates.

(c) **Hierarchy.**—Invariably wrong in Ireland in their political outlook—against the people in '98. Frs. Murphy (2), Roche, Kearns excommunicated by the then Bishop of Ferns; against Emmet 'condemning outrage'; against Young Ireland, 'Godless young men'; support of Sadlier and Keogh, against Fenians: Dr. Cullen, Bishop Moriarty: 'Hell not hot enough or eternity long enough'; against 'Plan of Campaign'; against Sinn Féin (early days, when it was milk and water); against Irish Volunteers—support England in European War—morally to blame for the deaths of thousands of Irish youths in France, Flanders, Mesopotamia, Gallipoli, Macedonia, etc. Nothing can condone this. European war a hideous holocaust on altar of Mammon; a struggle between Europe for power—Irish Hierarchy blood-guilty. Hierarchy against Easter Rising, 1916; denunciation of Pearse, etc. (Pearse the great example of Christian idealism.) Hierarchy only opposed Conscription when forced to do so by attitude of the people. Against the I.R.A. during Terror. Bishop Cohalan's excommunication decree of December, 1920. Hierarchy's abandonment of principle, justice and honour by support of Treaty. Danger to Catholicism in Ireland by their bad example—their exaltation of deceit and hypocrisy, their attempt to turn the noble aspect of Irish struggle and bring it

to the level of putrid politics, their admission that religion is something to be preached about from pulpits on Sundays, but never put into practice in the affairs of the nation; their desertion of Ulster, etc.

'Sceilg' could, I think, do the above best. Excuse change of writing. I had to get the above copied by someone else from a letter I am sending to Sighle, lest anything happen this one. I will close up now, but will continue ideas on propaganda and other things to-morrow.

Regards,
(Signed) L. O'M.

29th August, 1922.

Continuing mine of the 26th inst. (No. 1). Before doing so, however, I wish to point out that the matter of establishing a Pro. Repub. Govt. has become imperative because of the probability of the English taking a hand sooner or later. No doubt they will continue to make use of Irishmen as long as the latter can be duped or dazzled by the Free State idea; but even to this there will be an end, and then the British will, by using the arguments against Republicans that F.S. now use, cloud the issue greatly. For the British to calumniate Republicans and belittle their cause by besmirching them is one thing; but for F.S. (and supposed potential Republicans) to do it is another—and different, and worse thing. Because the British will not use British arguments to cloak their actions, but Irish ones, 'out of our own mouths,' etc. Therefore an object—a target—must be presented for the enemy (F.S. or British) to hit at—otherwise it becomes a fight (apparently) between individuals. Hence the necessity of getting the Provisional Republican Government established at once.

(d) Dev's Work in America.—The time has now come for informing the Irish people what miracles De Valera accomplished there. The attempt to belittle his work for Éire, both here and abroad, must be defeated. Dealing with America is a stupendous work, and tons of data is needed, but it will be labour well worth performing. Show how it was the Republic (and the Republic only) that gained such sympathy for us

there; that no other cause would have got the slightest bearing—that De V. changed an ignorant and either apathetic or hostile people into genuine sympathisers in two years. He made the name of Ireland respected where it was despised, and the Irish Cause an ideal where it had been regarded as political humbug. Father Magennis could do a very fine opening chapter describing the state of the Irish movement in America and attitude generally of America and Americans towards Ireland at the time of Dev's coming.

(e) **Life of Cathal Brugha**: A brief (but not scrappy) account of above would, I think, do a lot of good. The account in Bulletin (Catholic) by Sceilg is splendid, but not detailed enough. The underlying idea should be that of 'Principle'—a word, that at one time meant everything to (and conveyed everything of) the I.R.B.

(f) **Cardinal Mercier**: As an offset to their lordships a fine pamphlet on the example set for Ireland by Cardinal Mercier—his acts and his words—could be written.

(g) **South Africa**: The danger to Ireland of the Irish allowing their work to be patterned on example of South Africa. After the Treaty of Veer and later formation of United South Africa—(all Boers still saying they were Republicans at heart) the real Republicans found an obstacle stood between them and the British—their own. Parallel with Ireland Smuts and Botha—Collins and Griffith, De Larcy,—H. Boland and Cathal Brugha, De Wet, etc., 'five years' fallacy of F. S. Republicans.

(h) **Courts**: Except for the Supreme Court, the Republican Courts should be maintained. Nothing conveyed proof in America of the existence of a Republic here so much as the establishment and work of Courts.

(i) **Fianna**: We must concentrate on youth—salvation of country lies in this—both boys and girls. Fianna never got proper help or encouragement. Fianna ideal can save future. The reason for so many young soldiers going wrong is that they never had a proper grasp of the fundamentals. They were absorbed

into movement and fight—not educated into it. Hence no real convictions.

(j) **Food Control**.—Food supply will present a serious problem soon. The obstruction of roads, railways and communications will be intensified; towns will feel it the worst. Some plan of rationing will have to be thought out and some person (a labour man for preference) put in control. If the Republic is to win out against the Free State and British we shall have to face the idea of people suffering many privations. If scheme worked out ahead, it will not be so bad; in fact, it would compel a change from present wretched economic outlook and make them rely on own resources. Many things that are now looked on as necessities would have to be done without—tea, sugar, foreign flour, etc; but oatmeal, oatflour, barley and other wholesome foods would be used. As a matter of fact, Ireland has suffered nothing (comparatively speaking) either during Great War or our War. English people (and English women) cheerfully put up with severe deprivations, and we Irish think our cause worth putting up with anything. But do we? Judging by the whines and grumbles one is tempted sometimes to say 'Certainly not.'

(k) **Communications**: (a) Abroad: Routes and men must be sought out and maintained at all cost for the following:—England, Scotland, America, Germany, Belgium, France, Russia, Italy. (b) Home: Very essential.

(l) **Foreign**: India.—Isn't the time approaching when we should be in closer touch?

(m) **Bye-Elections**: Don't suppose these can take place under present conditions but we must have our eyes open.

(n) **Bishops**: Can anything be done by a number of clergy coming together?

11th September, 1922.

A.S.

A Chara.—Apropos to what I wrote to you some time ago, the events of the past few days have, I think, made it more clear that what I suggested should be done: It has done more—it has made it imperative. The F.S. have shown by Saturday's performance that it was the Provisional Parliament provided for by terms of F.S. Act, and not the third Dáil that met. Therefore, the question arises at once: Where is the Government of the Republic? It must be found. Republicans must be provided with a rallying centre, and the movement with a focusing point.

The unemployment question is acute. Starvation is facing thousands of people. The official Labour movement has deserted the people for the flesh-pots of Empire. The F.S. Government's attitude towards striking postal workers makes clear what its attitude towards workers generally will be. The situation created by all these must be utilised for the Republic. The position must be defined.

FREE STATE—Capitalism and Industrialism—Vr. Empire.
REPUBLIC—Workers—Labour.

In haste,
L. M. (L. O'M.).