

SPECIAL POWERS ACT TIGHTENED IN SIX COUNTIES

Irish Government's warning on Border Raids "Civil War Danger" is Stressed Army and Gardai swoop in Monaghan

FOLLOWING last week's cross-Border raids, the Irish Government on Friday night issued warning "to the organisations concerned" that they meant to end activities "which involved the danger that civil war might ensue."

Immediately afterwards, Gardai and members of the Special Branch moved into the Border areas of Monaghan and Cavan, and on Saturday Irish Army units were also sent to take part in a comb-out of farmhouses and buildings for young men known to be absent from home in other parts of the country.

Early on Sunday morning in a surprise swoop on a disused farm-house at Knockavillion, ten miles from Monaghan, detectives rounded up thirteen young men believed to have lived there for some days. The men were later released after giving an undertaking to return to their homes.

In the Six Counties, at the week-end, a company of the Warwickshire Regiment moved to Enniskillen, and the Stormont Government announced the re-introduction of a regulation under the Special Powers' Acts providing for the arrest, detention and, if necessary, internment of suspected persons.

THE statement issued by the Government Press Bureau in Dublin said: "In the course of the statement on the unlawful use of force which was made in Dail Eireann on November 30, 1955, the Prime Minister pointed out that the right to raise and maintain military or armed forces is vested by the Constitution, exclusively in the Parliament and that Constitution expressly forbids the raising or maintaining, for any purpose whatsoever, of any military or armed force other than the forces raised and maintained by the Parliament. "He stated that unlawful activities are a challenge of the gravest kind to the democratic right of the Irish people and to the rightful authority of Parliament and of the Government, and that the duty of ending such activities devolved upon the whole nation. "In concluding his statement, the Prime Minister said that, if his appeal to the members of the organisations concerned met with no response, it would be the clear duty of the Government to assert and vindicate the people's right to determine national policy, and the right of Parliament and the Government to maintain and uphold the authority that reposes in them. "For some time, it appeared that the Prime Minister's appeal and warning had been heeded by the organisations concerned.

"Since, however, that is no longer the position, and since those organisations have again arrogated to themselves powers and functions that belong to the duly-elected representatives of the people, and to those representatives alone, the Government have now determined to take, in conjunction with the police and the defence forces, such steps as the Government consider necessary and appropriate to prevent activities which, if they were allowed to continue, would inevitably cause loss of life and involve the danger that civil war might ensue."

DETECTIVES QUESTION SUSPECTS

Special Branch detectives from Dublin Castle, who moved in at the week-end, brought lists of known members of illegal organisations to be checked against men detained for questioning in towns and villages close to the border. At Knockavillion, ten miles from Monaghan, detectives rounded up thirteen young men who are believed to have lived there for some days. The farm-house was surrounded and detectives ordered the men to come out. They offered no resistance. They were brought to Monaghan Police Station, interrogated, and released after giving an undertaking to return to their homes. All belonged to the Twenty-six Counties. No arms or other incriminating material were found in the farm-house. Supt. Michael Gill, of the Dublin Special Branch, is in charge of police operations in the border area. Hundreds of Irish troops are helping police, heavily reinforced from Dublin, to guard the Twenty-six-County side of the Border. Moved from Dublin, Mullingar, Athlone, Galway and the Curragh, they are not stationed immediately on the border, but have been strategically positioned at Dundalk, Cavan, Longford, Sligo and Bundoran, County Donegal. They are motorised units, and are in 24-hour contact with Gardai officers in charge of Border operations. After the farm-house raid troops, moved into the district to support the police in the operation, returned to Drogheda. MEN LEAVE Men believed to have taken part in the raid on Lisnaskea

police barracks, on Friday, left Swanlinbar, Co. Cavan, less than half an hour before Gardai swooped on the area. They had lived in houses in the area for several days.

On the northern side of the Border heavily-armed police and "B" specials were patrolling the roads, but a spokesman for the British Military Authority said troops had not yet been used on patrol.

The presence of troops on both sides of the Border, ready to cooperate in operations against raiders, is believed to have upset the plans of an illegal organisation to carry out further attacks.

It is believed in Dublin that several units of the organisation had been mobilised and sent to the border area, where they were living in derelict houses and out-buildings. Police operations on the Twenty-six-County side of the border are aimed at discovering and dispersing groups of men still in hiding.

A company of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment moved at the week-end into the Territorial Barracks in Enniskillen (County Fermanagh), near the Border.

Some units of the 39th Independent Infantry Brigade—from the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers and the Royal Warwickshire Regt.—were co-operating with the British Air Force in

EMERGENCY REGULATIONS IN SIX-COUNTIES

No detentions have yet been made under the emergency regulations issued on Saturday, but the Special Branch of the R.U.C. have, it is understood, prepared lists of suspects. These regulations, re-introduced under the Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Act, provide for the arrest without warrant, internment of suspected persons. A statement issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs said: "These Regulations will be kept in force only so long as the necessity for them continues. "If it should become necessary to strengthen them the Government will, it stated, "not hesitate to take whatever action is necessary to safeguard the interests of the community."

"The situation," he said, "needs not so much a panic display of Suez-type force as a searching examination of Stormont stewardship over the past thirty years."

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The Six-County Premier, Lord Brookeborough, commenting on the Taoiseach's statement, said: "I welcome the news that the Twenty-Six County Government have decided to take action and I am quite sure they are sincere. However, I will await the outcome of this action and will believe the results when I see them."

Commenting on the Stormont Government's decision to revive the Special Powers Act, Mr. E. McAteer, M.P. for the Foyle Division of Derry and chairman of the Anti-Partition League, said:—

"The Stormont Government is the victim of its own folly, and can take full responsibility for the present tragic situation.

"They have been warned before by myself and others, that their continued repression of, and contempt for, the basic rights of the Nationalist minority will shatter everyone's faith in normal political action."

Mr. McAteer said he was greatly afraid that the revived Special Powers would again be used as a truncheon to beat the entire Nationalist minority in the Six-Counties.

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BARRACKS ROCKED BY EXPLOSION

Lisnaskea is scene of street battle

Police and raiders in several-minutes exchange of shots

LISNASKEA main street on Friday resembled a battlefield, with debris strewn over the footpaths and road, all windows smashed for several hundred yards, window frames hanging crazily from walls of buildings, bullet marks on the walls of several houses and the police barracks around the front entrance a shambles.

Police carrying Sten and Tommy guns, and rifles, were on the street in force, as a large crowd watched police and workmen clearing away the debris and effecting temporary repairs to the barracks. These were the Friday signs of the terrific explosion and gun battle which lasted for about twenty minutes, from two minutes past one o'clock on Friday morning, when a daring raid was carried out by a dozen men on this Six-County fort in the very heart of Fermanagh. To reach Lisnaskea, from whatever direction they came, the raiders would have to pass through a chain of police barracks and "B" Special patrols which have been on guard and active since the series of explosions began. Yet the men got through, made their attack, and got clear without any captures.

Immediately after the battle, police were out and about, and all Nationalist homes were visited and searched for a considerable distance in the town on either side of the barracks. The houses visited and searched included that of Very Rev. P. J. Canon Donnelly, P.P., V.F., eighty-years-old pastor of Lisnaskea, who suffered severely from shock in the explosion, which occurred within thirty or forty yards of his home, situated across the street diagonally from the barracks. Other homes visited and searched included those of Rev. G. Ferguson, C.C., whose house is next door to the barracks, and who was severely shocked also; Dr. Brian Henry, who was not at home, being on a visit to Dublin; Mr. John Carron, ex-Co.C., and prominent businessman in the town; the home of the late Dr. J. Cassidy, and many others.

One young man who lives on the Moate Brae, on the hill opposite to the barracks, saw the raiders leave in a green-colored lorry, which free-wheeled down Moate Brae, after the fight, started its engine at the junction of Moate Brae with the main street, within thirty yards of the barracks, drove up the street in Newtownbutler direction and got clear. Mr. Maguire's six-years-old son Brian, switched on a light and opened a window to look out, and Mr. Maguire heard a shout: "Put out that light" as he heard footsteps of running men pass his house. Later he saw the lorry go down the hill and make good the men's escape.

The explosion, which heralded the gun battle, awoke almost every resident in the town, tore out windows, cracked walls and ceilings, and caused severe shock to several people. Constables William Wilson and Kevin Clancy had a narrow escape in the explosion. Although police would not give our reporter any details of what happened, apart from saying that an explosion occurred, a fairly lengthy report appeared in a Belfast Unionist newspaper, in which it was stated that these two constables left the local barracks to mobilise the "B" Specials. "A few yards from the door of the barracks they saw a crowd of men approaching from a parked lorry. The two constables rushed back to the barracks and seconds later the front of the building was blown out by a heavy explosion. Sergeant William Scott, who was slightly injured over the left eye when flying glass splinters struck his face, was recorded by the Unionist Press as having paid tribute to Constables Clancy and Wilson "who stood in the bomb blasted hall of the barracks and fired on the raiders while he ran upstairs to grab a Sten gun." As far as our reporter could piece the stories of the night's events together from information freely volunteered by the people around, though not officially forthcoming, it appears that the raiders drove their lorry to the top of Moate Brae, whether from the town direction or in the back road was not clear. The lorry was parked some distance on the road from the house of Mr. Patrick Maguire, on the side away from the barracks, but pointing towards the barracks. It appears they then probably went down the Moate Road and laid their charges, and our reporter got the impression that Constable Wilson had just opened the barracks door when he saw the explosives and figures running silently away from the barracks. He had just time to bank the door closed when the explosion occurred, which rocked the building and sent him sprawling on his back away from the door. Behind him, it is believed, were Constable Clancy and Stan-

Lisnaskea Policeman Shot

CONSTABLE William John Ferguson (20), who is stationed in Lisnaskea, was wounded in the leg when an R.U.C. patrol car was ambushed by men armed with automatic weapons about 7.30 on Monday night.

The attack took place on a lonely stretch of road between Lisnaskea and Brookeborough, which is close to Lord Brookeborough's residence at Colebrook. When the car, which was on its way to investigate a report that a lorry load of men had been seen acting suspiciously in the district, had reached a point between Mullville Cross and Nutfield Cross, two bombs were hurled at it, and there was a burst of machine-gun fire from behind the high hedges. Police scrambled from the car and immediately returned the fire. The attackers made off in the darkness. Intense police activity followed, and R.U.C. and "B" Specials armed with Sten guns set up road blocks. British troops were rushed from Enniskillen in trucks along the ice-bound roads and immediately began a search of the area.

Earlier on Monday British troops in conjunction with the R.U.C. carried out extensive manoeuvres along the Border in Fermanagh. An Irish Army detachment went into occupation of Cavan military barracks on Monday evening. The barracks has not been occupied by regular soldiers since the emergency, but has been used by the F.C.A. STORMONT PREMIER'S REFERENCE Lord Brookeborough, the Stormont Premier, who announced during a B.B.C. television interview in London that, while he was speaking, a police car was being attacked near his home, added that he wanted to assure viewers that "the Ulsterman does not give way to threats." "We are Queen's men," he said, "and nothing whatsoever is going to shift us from that position."

The night's experience in Fermanagh would appear to have begun with explosions heard in Roslea district, which brought police out in a Land Rover from Lisnaskea. A telephone pole lying across the road delayed it, and a second alert went round from Enniskillen when the Lisnaskea Jeep radioed its experience.

Then the attack began on Lisnaskea, and almost simultaneously firing began on Derrylin police barracks from a party of raiders gathered on three sides. Reports that large numbers of raiders were engaged appear to be grossly exaggerated. Reports suggest that about a dozen were in the Lisnaskea affair, probably less in Derrylin and less still in Roslea.

The raiders free-wheeled their way to within thirty yards of the barracks in a lorry, started the engine and made their getaway. There was some talk about residents having allegedly heard groaning but they could not be reliably confirmed. Mr. Maguire, who apparently was nearest to them, heard nothing of that kind.

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Our photographer took this picture looking out from the barrack hallway and showing the opening where the door, door frame and porch with four pillars had been. The sloping pathway on the far side leads to the house of Mr. O. Reynolds, which suffered much damage. Further up this hill is Moate Brae, where the raiders stationed themselves when they exchanged shots with the police.

Moscow comment

THE Soviet Tass Agency reported that incidents showed the struggle in the Six Counties is continuing against English rule and for unification of Ireland. It said that "an underground organisation was fighting for the unification of Ireland." The Moscow newspaper "Soviet Russia," referring to last week's I.R.A. raids, said:—"It is true that only small separate groups are carrying on this struggle in Ireland openly and with the help of arms. "They have not succeeded in drawing the broad masses into their ranks. Therein lies their weakness; therein lies the reason for the failure of their actions."

Taoiseach's statement on present position

THE Taoiseach, Mr. J. A. Costello, stated on Tuesday that the illegal organisation which has recently carried out armed raids against police installations in the Six Counties has defied the authority of the Dail. He was replying by letter to a challenging telegram from Mr. Jack McQuillan, T.D., (Independent, Roscommon), who had telegraphed the Taoiseach urging him to "discontinue immediately the use of the army and Gardai as instruments of British policy in helping to maintain Partition. In a written reply to this message, Mr. Costello declared that Deputy McQuillan had completely misconceived the Government's position in relation to the present situation, and the action which the Government was taking to deal with it. "It indicates further," wrote the Taoiseach, "that your assessment of the probable effects on Partition of the recent incidents in the Six Counties is diametrically opposed to that of the Government." The letter added that the right to determine peace or war is vested in Dail Eireann. The Taoiseach added: "The organisation which is responsible for the unlawful use of arms or force has arrogated to itself the determination of policy as to the means that should be adopted to bring Partition to an end, and has dejected the authority of the Dail to withhold its assent to engagement in war. The activities of that organisation contravene the constitutional provision which vests in the Oireachtas alone the right to raise and maintain armed forces, and are contrary not only to the principles of democracy, but to the moral law, as



MR. BERNARD MCGAHAN, who lives opposite the Lisnaskea police barracks, was blown out of bed by "the desperate explosion" as he described it. His home was pock-marked by bullets. Mr. McGahan points out two bullet marks to our photographer. Behind are the corrugated doors of his garage. Several bullets penetrated these, one lodging in the rear number-plate of his car.

FUND FOR HUNGARIAN RELIEF

Splendid response in Clogher Diocese

HIS LORDSHIP Most Rev. Dr. O'Callaghan, Bishop of Clogher, has received the following contributions in aid of the Hierarchy's appeal for the relief of Hungary.

Shots fired at Clones Customs Station

SIX 303 bullets, believed to have been fired from a rifle, tore into the timber and corrugated iron structure of the Twenty-Six County Customs station at Clones on Friday at 5.55 p.m. The bullets, grouped closely together, shattered the front window and narrowly missed two Customs officers who were checking clearance papers, at the counter. No one was injured. "The shots are believed to have been fired from a bridge some 200 yards from the post and 50 yards on the Six-County side of the Border," said an Irish News agency report. Examination of the terrain at this point of the Border, the report added, indicated Clontivern Bridge, which spans a river just inside the Six-County area as the most likely place from which the shots were fired.

Table listing contributions to a fund for Hungarian relief, including names like MONAGHAN, CARRICKMACROSS, CLONES, ENNISKILLEN, etc., and amounts in pounds and shillings.

announced by the Catholic Hierarchy in their statement of 18th January, 1956. The Authority of the Dail and the Government has been flouted by the disregard of the statements that have been made by or on behalf of the Government."

Mr. Costello also wrote that the Gardaí and Defence forces are being used not as "instruments of British policy to maintain Partition" but for the purpose of safeguarding the institutions of the State, vindicating the authority of the Dail and the Government and preventing "the usurpation of the people's right to decide questions of national policy."

Mr. Costello also underscored his earlier statements that the use of force against the Six Counties would "create bitterness, resentment, would poison our natural life and would delay, not advance, the day of national re-union."

No real solution of the Partition problem could be found by force, which by whomsoever employed could have no other effect than to deepen the division of feeling between those who wanted to see Ireland re-united and those in the Six Counties who opposed re-union, he said. "A grave responsibility rests on us all in this matter," wrote Mr. Costello. "I trust that you will appreciate the great weight of this responsibility and the magnitude of the evil that could ensue if any elected representative of the people were to lend his support to activities that were based on defiance of the democratic institutions of this State."

BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO SOUND DUBLIN The Six County Prime Minister, Lord Brookeborough, told Stormont on Tuesday that the British Ambassador had been instructed to communicate with the Irish Government to express "the very grave concern" which recent events in the Six Counties had caused the British Government.

Next week's Fermanagh Herald will be issued on Monday Morning, 24th December. All Advertisements should be sent in as early as possible during this week, but not later than Saturday, 22nd December.