

"NO COERCION OF IRISH LANGUAGE."BRITISH PRIME MINISTER'S PIOUS DECLARATION.AND A LIST OF ACTS COMMITTED BY HIS TROOPS & POLICE IN IRELAND.

In the official report of the conference on the situation in Ireland held on June 18th 1920, between the Prime Minister of England and other members of the British Government and the Irish Railway delegates the following passages occur:-

Mr. Thomas: You have had evidence that even the language of the (Irish) people has been interfered with.

The Prime Minister: I should be the last man to sympathise with that.

Mr. Bonar Law: There is no coercion of opinion. It is coercion of crime.

The Prime Minister: There is no coercion of language either.

The following list is an exposure of the truthfulness of the British Prime Minister. It is a compilation of recent outstanding instances of as ruthless a suppression of a National Language as has occurred in any oppressed nation. The period taken is the nine months immediately preceding the British Premier's declaration. In these nine months it will be seen that the age long bitter war upon the revival of the Irish Language has been continued without any cessation whatever.

From September 8th 1919 to June 18th 1920 in addition to the wholesale suppression of the Gaelic League (declared an illegal association by the British Government over which the British Premier presides) in addition also to the suppression of the official organ of the Irish Language movement and the arrest of many girls and men for collecting funds for that movement, these further acts of aggression have been committed in nine months by the British Government against those seeking to make the Irish Nation Irish speaking:-

Eleven of the most prominent of the Irish Language revivalists have been arrested.

Seventeen Irish Language teachers and organisers have been arrested.

Thirty-eight Gaelic League classes and Irish Language festivals have been suppressed and dispersed by armed force.

Forty-two confiscations of Irish Language literature made by British police and military from Irish newsagencies and the residences of Gaelic League organisers and teachers.

It is significant that within a few days of the British Premier's declaration of "no sympathy" with "language coercion" and his denial that there was any language coercion in Ireland, one of the most famous of Irish Language Collegos was suppressed and occupied by British troops, and that on the very eve of the Prime Minister's statement the seventeenth Irish teacher to be arrested in nine months was taken into custody by British police.

The following is the detailed list of Language Coercion in Ireland:-

- Sept. 8th Irish Language festival at Fermoy, Co. Cork, attacked and dispersed by British military.
- " 9th Irish Language festival at Downpatrick, Co. Down, proclaimed by British Military Authorities.
- " 11th Gaelic League (the Organisation directing the revival of the Irish Language) declared illegal in Cork City and County by the British Government.
- " 13th Gaelic League Branches in 17 of the 32 Irish counties raided by British military and police: all literature seized.
- " 13th Messrs. E. Blythe and P. O'Keefe, Irish speaking Members of Parliament and prominent leaders of the Gaelic revival, arrested by British military and police.
- " 15th Irish language festival suppressed at Ballinasarriga, Co. Cork, by British Military.
- " " Irish Language Festival suppressed at St. Peter's Place, Dublin, by British military.
- " " Irish Language Festival suppressed at Kinsale, Co. Cork, by British military.
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