

Hammerfield,
Penshurst,
Kent.

Dictated.

Dear Mr Lloyd George

I note in this morning's Press that the task of promoting an amicable settlement of Irish differences has been committed to your capable hands. May I make the following suggestions for your consideration.

1. Any settlement must tend to foster the enduring and increasing unity of Ireland, so that any scheme for the disintegration of this unity, e.g. by the segregation of the whole or a part of the Province of Ulster, must a priori be ruled out of court.

2. If a provisional and experimental system of Irish administration by all parties interested can be set up for the period of the continuance of the War, the best methods for procuring an ultimate settlement could under the supervision of the Imperial Parliament be put to practical test and proof.

3. For this purpose let one or more notable administrators be appointed by the County Councils in each of the four Provinces assembled. Let an equal number of politicians be selected by Sir Edward Carson and Mr John Redmond from the Unionist and Nationalist M.P.s respectively. Supposing that two Notables (one Unionist and one Nationalist) were appointed to represent each Province, then four Unionist and four Nationalist M.P.s would bring the total of the New Government up to an aggregate of sixteen; in my judgment a sufficient number for the provisional purpose proposed.

4. At the same time Ireland should by common consent be brought under the provisions of the Military Service Act. This alone would convert Sinn Feiners into ardent Irish Imperialists, and coupled with Irish Home Rule would form the prelude to a prosperity, such as the

Island in its long years of travail has never known before.

5. Ireland governed by Irishmen according to Irish ideas, without regard to religious or political differences - this should be the keynote of the new policy of conciliation. To this end there should be committed to the New Administration the following powers:-

- a. Promotion of Agriculture.
- b. Creation of Industries.
- c. Extension of Fisheries and Administration of Congested Areas Board.
- d. Control of Railways, Canals, Roads, Tramways, and other internal communications.
- e. Control of Posts, Telegraphs, Telephones, etc., etc.
- f. Control of Irish Constabulary; a proportion of Imperial troops under Imperial control remaining in Ireland during the provisional period of the War.

6. FINANCE. Imperial taxation to remain unchanged, local taxation to be imposed as requisite by the New Administration. Any deficits incurred by the New Government during the provisional period to be borne by the Treasury of the United Kingdom. After all expenses have been duly paid, any surplus to be placed in reserve for the benefit of the New Irish Administration.

7. To gratify Irish sentiment the Viceregal Court should be continued, and H.R.H. Prince Arthur of Connaught might with advantage be invited to assume the Viceroyalty of New Ireland.

8. The present Home Rule Act could remain in a state of suspended animation whilst some sensible and practical system of autonomous government is being contrived to put in its place.

9. Any fresh powers that may be found to be required by the New Government to be applied for to the Imperial Parliament, and be granted as in their judgment may seem best.

In conclusion, please note that the keystone of this suggested arch of administration is to be found in the admixture of the administrative with the political element. It was for want of this balancing

Outside element, that the political and round table conferences of the last few years have failed and, in my judgment, will continue to fail until the crack of doom.

Forgive my troubling you with these suggestions, but in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom, and I can at all events plead a sincere desire to forward the wellbeing of Ireland, and the success of your own intervention into Irish affairs.

Believe me to remain

Yours sincerely

Arnold F. Hills.

P.S. It is scarcely necessary to point out that the system suggested above, if found to work well, would be equally applicable to England, Scotland, and Wales; such a devolution of the labours and responsibilities of Parliament would prepare the ground for the building of an Imperial edifice such as might well become the wonder and admiration of the world.