

# INTERCOURSE

BETWEEN

## BOLSHEVISM AND SINN FEIN.

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*Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.*

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[Cmd. 1326.]

## Intercourse between Bolshevism and Sinn Fein.

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT HAS BEEN CAPTURED IN DUBLIN.

(Official stamp of Dail Eireann.)

A Cham [My dear Friend],

Dublin, June 15, 1920.

I ENCLOSE copy of the draft of the proposed treaty between the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic and the Republic of Ireland, together with copies of observations thereon by the President and Dr. McCartan.

Mise le meas [I am with respect],

(Signed)

DIARMUID O. L. EIGCEERTIUGH [DERMOT O'HEGARTY]

[One of the Secretaries to Dail Eireann.]

D. FITZGERALD, Esq., T.D.

[Minister of Propaganda.]

### *Memorandum by the President on Russia.*

A message from Dr. McCartan re the R. [Russian] Mission, with a proposal which should be very carefully considered by the Cabinet, first as to its advisability at all, and secondly, if advisable, what terms should be included so as to give us the greatest advantage. The commercial terms, if they could be secured, despite the efforts of the British to render them nugatory, would be designed so as to use them as a lever to bring portions of the North—"Ulster"—to the side of the Republic. The Church mandate would also be useful and the idea of grouping a League of Nations round R. is capable of a good deal of development. Also the importance of having a centre for our eastern activities must be borne in mind.

I have not finally made up my own mind on the question of a published agreement, but I certainly am of opinion that the mission should go and that the whole question be taken up very seriously. When those who have it in hand have the proposed terms properly hammered out I will give my own decision and send forward such recommendations as seem advisable to me. The document which the doctor is sending and these comments of mine are merely preliminaries which will enable you to think over and discuss the matter in anticipation.

Besides the doctor you should arrange to have a strong labour man, for example, Johnson or O'Brien, with somebody whose tendencies are not so socialistic and who knows industrial conditions. Were Fawsitt available he would be the man that would occur to my mind. He suggests L. de Roisse. I wonder have we anybody who knows Russian?

The men at this side (i.e., the United States of America) representing R. may not have credentials at all entitling them to speak for their Government. This is a point which must not be forgotten. They may be simply self-appointed.

I fear you will find this despatch rather scrappy. It is written as I am rushing for a train with a number of people coming in and out. Remember it is only anticipatory.

### *Draft of Proposed Treaty between the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic and the Republic of Ireland.*

Desiring of promoting peaceful and friendly relations between all nations of the world, and especially between the people of Russia and the people of Ireland, and striving to co-operate in the interest of the advancement of the human race and for the liberation of all people from imperialistic exploitation and oppression, the Governments of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic and of the Republic of Ireland, by authority conferred upon them by their respective constitutions, and in the name of the people of Russia and the people of Ireland, agree as follows:—

1. The Government of the Republic of Ireland pledges itself, its resources and its influence, to promote the recognition of the sovereignty of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic by the nations of the world.

2. The Government of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic pledges itself, its resources and its influence to promote the recognition of the sovereignty of the Republic of Ireland by the nations of the world.

3. The Government of the Republic of Ireland pledges itself to exert its influence on all organisations and elements which are responsive to it in order to prevent the transportation of arms, munitions and military supplies intended for use against the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

4. The Government of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic undertakes to exert pressure on any nation, organisation or group of people with whom it has influence to prevent the shipment of arms, munitions and military supplies intended for use against the Republic of Ireland.

5. The Government of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic accords to all religious denominations represented in the Republic of Ireland every right accorded to religious sects by the Russian Constitution, and entrusts to the accredited representative of the Republic of Ireland in Russia the interests of the Roman Catholic Church within the territory of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

6. In any nation where only one of the contracting parties has diplomatic facilities these facilities will be at the disposal of the other contracting party.

7. The Government of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic undertakes to sell whatever commodities are exported from Russia to Ireland either directly or indirectly exclusively through the medium of institutions designated by the Government of the Republic of Ireland, and at prices and on terms agreed upon with that Government.

8. The Government of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic agrees to place orders for whatever commodities may be bought in Ireland only through the institutions designated by the Government of the Republic of Ireland so far as these privileges are applicable to such institutions.

9. The privileges outlined in the preceding two paragraphs (7 and 8) will extend to extra-territorial institutions controlled by the Government of the Republic of Ireland in so far as these privileges are applicable to such institutions.

10. The Government of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic will invite and accept the services of citizens of the Republic of Ireland in the reconstruction of Russian industries, and give special consideration to offers of services made through the Governmental agencies of the Republic of Ireland, and to persons and concerns recommended by the Government of the Republic of Ireland for the granting of concessions for the exploitations of the natural resources of Russia.

11. The Government of the Republic of Ireland pledges itself to facilitate by all possible means the efforts to bring sanitary and medical relief to the people of Russia.

12. The avowed purpose of the contracting parties being to end imperialistic exploitation, to ensure the freedom of the world's highways, to bring about universal disarmament, to make obligatory the arbitration of all international disputes, and to secure peace to the peoples of the world, they agree to enter into a league with similarly minded nations, each nation to be represented by delegates freely elected by their nationals.

13. Any disputes regarding the interpretation of any clause of this treaty will be referred to the league so constituted, and a majority vote of the States therein represented will decide the matter at issue.

14. As the warranty of treaties among free peoples rests ultimately upon the good-will and good faith of the peoples themselves, the contracting parties hereby pledge themselves each to foster among its respective nationals friendship for and understanding of the other.

15. The duration of this treaty will be ten years. Notice of intent to withdraw can be given only at the end of the ninth year, and, if not then given, the treaty will remain in force for a further period of ten years.

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*Memo[ra]ndum by McCartan re Russian Treaty and Mission to Russia.*

I enclose a draft of proposed treaty with Soviet Russia for your consideration. The President has merely read it, but so far has not had time to study it. We hope to discuss it with J. K., Joe and F. P. on Monday, and it may therefore be altered here and there. Fawsitt and I will discuss the commercial aspects of it to-night with a view of improvement if he can suggest anything for its improvement in this respect.

Wt. 7032/3 2000 6/21 P.O.P. (5142)

The President referred to the wisdom of publicity. I know they want publicity of it and, in principle, are opposed to secret treaties. There is no use in sending a Mission if we are afraid to take the consequences. I know from my talks with their representatives here that they would only laugh at us and treat us as well-meaning but cowardly fools if we proposed such a course. It seems to me therefore we have to go the whole way or not start at all. There is no middle course.

As to the personnel of the Mission the understanding at present is that I shall be in charge of the Mission, and that John T. Ryan, of Buffalo, who had to leave this country on account of his activities on our behalf, be another member. The President has suggested other names. Personally I think the mission should be small in the beginning, and additions made to it in the way of experts as occasion arises. The experts might be only temporary. The experts might not always be Sinn Féiners.

As far as I am personally concerned, I'll go only on condition that I get plenary powers, and that I shall have absolute authority no matter who is sent to make final decision in case of disagreement. This may seem at first sight an extraordinary demand, but it is the only satisfactory course. Franklin, when sent from this country to France, had no end of wrangles with his colleagues, and in the end had to take the bull by the horns and act as his own judgment dictated. Casement had not full powers from home with the result that Devoys was constantly undermining him from New York, and left him to an extent powerless and even suspected. It is the same in all such cases, and history is constantly repeating itself. I have not so far discussed this aspect of the question with the President, but will do so as soon as we reach that point.

### *The Treaty.*

As I have been working on this for the last few days I shall make a few notes on some of the clauses that may help when you are discussing it there. The notes may suggest improvements as well as explaining all that is implied in it as I read it:—

1. The word *resources* in clause 1 and 2 may mean—and to my mind do mean—that we may have to lend money to their representatives here for credit or gold in Russia, and that later we can under these clauses demand a loan of millions from them. They at present have difficulty in establishing credit here. The term *resources* was in their original draft, and I did not ask for an interpretation as it seemed to me we had more to gain by it than they had, so I pretended not to notice it. It does not come into operation until the treaty is signed, and perhaps we will be in a better position to judge its merits then. It is the one thing in this clause which requires careful consideration. If I am sent I intend on the strength of it to ask for at least 50,000 rifles, &c., to be run into Ireland. I suggested this to their man here and he agreed that it was a possibility.

2. Under clause 2—"to promote the recognition, &c."—they agree to strive for the recognition of the Republic of Ireland by the States with which they have or will make peace. We will probably get recognition from all or some of the nations at peace with them. They do not for the present hope for much in this respect from Poland.

3-4. Under these clauses we may be able to help them here, and they may be able to help us in England. The treaty itself is bound to effect both of us in this respect on account of the germ noticeable in all labour organisations.

5. Clause 5 gives us a good grip on the Vatican, and make them less impressionable by British agents. If the British threaten to squeeze in future we can threaten also. It is not necessary to dwell on this. I don't see how it can react against us in the North or elsewhere, but that is the sole danger. The advantages more than counteract the vistas.

6. This means that we will have the use of their diplomatic pouch and vice versa.

7. This clause makes it possible to organise a corporation for importing stuff. It should be directly or indirectly governmental, as we can under it control prices and make it a source of revenue. For instance, we could control the flax of the world, or at least get our teeth well into it. Lumber and wheat are the other big things under this clause.

8. Harland and Wolfe could not accept contracts from Russia under this without our permit. There are such contracts to be given out at present, but likely the Belfast firms have a full hand. A letter from our mission on the subject may, however, be good for propaganda after a little while.

9. This may not be of any service to us, but it might be possible to start things here which could be later transferred to Ireland.

10. This is pretty plain, but if I have anything to do with it I shall ask for privileges for soldiers of the Republic of Ireland to study any naval or military courses we may desire.

11. This is entirely theirs, and I'm not so sure what they have in mind. We shall go into it again.

12. This is the germ of a real League of Nations. It will appeal to the votaries of a real league here and will have a good effect on that account.

13. Same as above.

14. In case of a change of Government we want the people of Russia educated about Ireland, and hope that any succeeding Government may adopt a similar attitude to Ireland.

15. This is prevent any peace with England interfering with the relations with Ireland. They would not agree not to make peace with England until England recognised the Republic of Ireland, so that this is the best we could get for our protection.

In addition to this I shall discuss the question of hostages. That is if England murders any of our soldiers in or out of prison they will agree to execute a Britisher as a reprisal. They have them. We may get this, but I'm not sure.

Sign.

P.S.—In order to get quick action cable to Fawcitt, that is "Cavehill, New York." In case of full acceptance say "Are agreeable to accept agency." In case of reserved acceptance cable "Agency acceptable on conditions forwarded," in case of rejection cable "Agency terms unacceptable." The party to send these cables are the Irish Overseas Shipping and Trading Co., Ltd. In other words "Outlook." Cables have been coming from them."

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#### NOTE BY IRISH OFFICE.

*Dr. McCartan* is Sinn Fein M.P. for King's County. He was arrested February 1919 and deported to England. He escaped in June 1919 and went to America where he was head of the Washington bureau of Irish (Sinn Fein) information. In a letter of March 1921 from Dail Eireann Department of Foreign Affairs he is shown to be in Russia as diplomatic representative of the "Republic" of Ireland.

*Desmond Fitzgerald*, journalist, director of Sinn Fein propaganda, and also acts as private secretary to Arthur Griffiths.

Took an active part in organising the Irish Volunteers. Sentenced to ten years imprisonment for his part in the rebellion and released 17th June, 1917. Very active in Sinn Fein matters. Arrested in Cavan and deported to England May 1918. Elected as M.P. for Pembroke Division, Dublin, February 1919. Visited London October 1919 to get into touch with continental correspondents. Now interned.

*William O'Brien*, Secretary, Irish Trades Council. Alderman, Dublin Corporation. Dublin labour man. Socialist. Was defeated as Sinn Fein candidate for Mid-Armagh, October 1918.

*J. L. Fawcitt* calls himself Sinn Fein consul to United States of America at New York.

*Tom Johnson*, formerly English commercial traveller, now organiser of Irish Transport Workers' Union.

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