

negotiations broke down, the men who had struggled for Ireland's freedom were just as ready to do and dare and suffer as they were at the end of last year. (Cheers.) He had told them when they were beginning their aggression that force would never subdue the Irish people, and he repeated that statement now. (Cheers.) That night they had very grave, and, perhaps, alarming news. The negotiations were not yet broken off, but they did not know the moment when they might be broken off. If they were, he said again that force would never subdue the Irish, and, just as they had waded through blood for months back, they would wade through it again. British rule was practically unknown in Ireland. England pretended to rule Ireland; but it was unable to take a census of the Irish people. (Laughter.) They could depend upon President de Valera, in whom the Irish people had every confidence. The spirit of the Irish people was still unbroken, Ireland was baptised and regenerated in the blood of 1916. (Applause.) When months had passed, or perhaps years, in the end the British would still have to negotiate with President de Valera, or whoever stood in his place. (Hear, hear.) Even if force succeeded in securing peace, that would not settle the Irish question. But it would not succeed. He had told the British that the men they had to face in Ireland were not a gang of murderers. They did not listen, but had now eaten their own words. The negotiations might be broken off, and, if they were, the people of Ireland would stand behind de Valera, as they did before, for the Irish would never yield to force. It would be to the lasting disgrace of the British Government if the negotiations were to become fruitless. They could no longer, with any show of consistency, denounce men as murderers that they had sat with at the council table. The press, just now, had adopted a moderate tone; but if the negotiations would be broken off he had no doubt they would start again the old campaign of vilification.

Not Dominion Home Rule

They would be the same to-morrow as they were to-day. (Hear, hear.) They had been told that Ireland had been offered full Dominion Home Rule, like Australia, and that politicians or presidents from some of the Dominions had been calling on the Irish people to accept this grant—as they called it. They knew now that Ireland had not been offered Dominion Home Rule, because de Valera told them in his statement that Mr. Lloyd George had advanced a claim to interfere in Irish affairs, even when a settlement was arrived at. Mr. Lloyd George never thought of interfering with Australian affairs, and, if he did, would soon be put in his proper place. Apparently, too, de Valera, and Ireland, was asked to continue to take an interest in Imperialistic enterprises, and to pay for the wars, successful or unsuccessful, that England might wish to wage against civilised or uncivilised peoples. President de Valera now told the world that he wanted no more of that. (Cheers.) Ireland wanted to walk her own way, and the path of her progress was to be a clean one. If the negotiations failed, and he prayed God that they might not, Ireland would stand just where she stood before they began. The spirit of the people was unbroken. What the Irish people had set their hearts upon, they would eventually achieve. (Cheers.)

Message from de Valera

In conclusion, Dr. Mannix read the following extract from a letter, which he had received from Mr. de Valera before he left London: "Please convey to the people of Australia our appreciation of the sympathy and aid given to us in our struggle for freedom. It will be a bond of friendship between the two nations, which time will not destroy, and no enemy can sunder."

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