**NYPL Maloney IHP 34**

**Casement notes on his speech at Greencastle**

**June 1914**

Addressing the meeting at Greencastle Sir Roger said that he had little to add to what Professor McNeill had put so clearly and convincingly before them. They were met to form a corps of Irish Volunteers and he would like to state what the Irish Volunteers did not stand for. They were not endeavouring to form a sectarian army or an army to attack any section of Irishmen. On the contrary, they were endeavouring to appeal to the sentiment of all sections of Irishmen to unite in a common national army. If they continued the movement on those healthy lines in the end they would win Ulster to their side. Sir Roger proceeded to state that the people who said that the Irish Volunteers were a nationalist army in the sense of being a purely political or party force were not stating facts (cheers.) They were going to get Home Rule, however, and what they would get by law they would keep by manhood. (Cheers.) What they gained by Statute they would keep by Stature - the stature of an armed man. He hoped that the Irish Volunteers would be able to convince their Protestant fellow-countrymen that there was no truth in the statement that they stood apart, implacable and hereditary enemies. That was a lie that had been maintained by fraud, corruption and misgovernment after being started in another country. The only way by which the people of Ireland could be divided was by keeping one section of Irishmen armed and another section without arms. When one man was armed and the other naked and undefended there was a danger of conflict. When every man was armed in the ranks of the Irish Volunteers the fear of a conflict would pass away: the members of each force could look in each other’s face as equals. A foreign government pretended that the two people should be kept apart. He (the speaker) believed they should be kept together. When they saw their Unionist neighbours marching as Ulster Volunteers they should not be treated as enemies - they should be treated as comrades because in the end they would find that one section was as Irish as the other.

Sir Roger recalled the fact that he had listened to two speeches of Sir Edward Carson's - one at Dungannon and one at Cookstown. At those meetings no word of exclusion of one part of Ireland from another had been mentioned by Sir Edward. The first word about exclusion had been mentioned by Mr. F.E. Smith, an Englishman and an imported Tory who had been sent over to ferment strife in Ireland. He said at that meeting that there was no safety for Protestant Irishmen at the hands of an Irish Parliament and that if an Irish parliament was set up the “homogenous” portion of Ulster should be cut out. (Laughter.) At that Protestant meeting not one voice said “Hear. Hear.” Following Mr. Smith, Sir Edward Carson rose and said that he knew nothing about four counties, six counties, or twenty counties in Ireland; He would not have Home Rule. There was not talk of exclusion at that time. (Cheers.) The men who spoke about that were Englishmen and their idea was to divide the country into two hostile camps. The only way they could do that at the present time was by digging a trench between the Protestant and Catholic Irishmen that no man could cross. It was in the power of Irishmen to stop such a move in many ways. One of the ways was by means of the Irish Volunteers. (Cheers.) It was possible to stop it every day, every week and every month, by making it quite clear that under no circumstances would Irishmen have their country divided into Catholic and Protestant Ireland. (Cheers.) At the meeting to which he referred Sir Edward Carson said all government rested upon force. The Irish Volunteers had an organised force at the present time and they would see that the Government of the country rested on force and Ireland would maintain a National Army that would be at the disposal of a free and elected Government of the country. (Cheers.)

Sir Roger Casement when introduced at the Carrickmore meeting by Dr. McCartan as a Protestant Irishman, said he did not want them to thank him for being a Protestant but for being a lover of Ireland. The question which was so close to their hearts was not a question between a Catholic and a Protestant at all, but a very, very old question - that of a brave people fighting for their National life. The people who told them that because they were Catholics they were not fit to have control of their own affairs a few years ago went to war with another nation. He had taken part in that war on behalf of the greatest empire in the world against what was probably the smallest nation in the world. He was not very proud of the part he had taken in that war, but he had done his duty as a public official. That small nation - he referred to the Boers - had convinced then of the big empire that although they carried a Bible in one hand, they carried a rifle in the other, (cheers) and also that they could use one as well as they could read the other. (Loud cheers.) The big nation quickly learned to respect the smaller one, and it would likewise learn to respect the Irish people, when every man had a rifle and knew how to use it. (Cheers) He could any person to find in the world any country where the people were unarmed, and the same time free men. In other countries of which he had experience the men carried arms and knew how to use them. The only two peoples in the world who were not armed were the Indians and the Irish. It was rather a peculiar thing that both those countries were owned by the same master. That was a curious theory - that one country could own another, but it was the theory of imperialism (laughter). It was a false, treasonable, irreligious doctrine. (Cheers.) Irish people owed no loyalty to any land on earth but their own. He who had been a servant of the King, told as he would tell it to the King's face. (Loud cheers.) The right to rule in their own land was a divine right and came to them from God. In that movement which was being staged throughout the country, they had something that would not be finished in a few days. It would lead to a great national revival and all were becoming determined to unite and unify all classes of Irishmen in the defense of their land.