**NLI 17,025**

**Four sided manuscript to Dr Charles Curry of 3 April 1916 on Hotel Saxonia, Berlin headed notepaper. Casement attacks those plotting the Rising.**

**NLI - “Photocopy of a letter from Casement to Curry giving instructions on his imminent departure for Ireland and expressing his disillusionment with the German authorities April 3, 1916. Also photocopy of Casement's poem "Treason".”**

**(Attached poem and “Sketch of Volunteer Organisation’ is not in Casement’s hand.)**

Monday. 3 April 1916.

My Dear Dr. Curry,

Mr. Smith’s affairs are in a very bad way and he is in the greatest anxiety. He may not be able to write to you again – & if so you will understand the reason. Gaffney knows all about it & can explain to you when he comes if things go as bad as I fear they must go. I see no way out!

It is a hopeless and atrocious situation – and only an almighty Power superior to Kings & Generals & Armies knows what is the way out. One thing is sure – poor Mr. Smith, I see clearly, is a victim of a hopeless situation, brought about by others, without his knowledge and he must be sacrificed – or sacrifice himself.

He knows this. The one thing you can do is protect his name afterwards, show clearly later on – but much later on when the proofs can be put in the hands of his friends – how innocent he is – & how his action throughout if mistaken was based on unselfish regard for what he thought to be the welfare of his country. The “verses” prove that: they at all costs must never be got by any but his friends whatever be his fate – on that and the fidelity of their custodian he relies – but the custodian will have to be very careful & not leave them where they are – but bury them in oiled silk.

Goodbye and God bless you. I am overwhelmed with a load too great to bear – caught in the toils and being driven relentlessly to a shameful end. What happened since I came here is too dreadful – G knows all & M. but latter poor fellow is in the same boat with me. The others – no. I am putting my foot down on that – altho’ I am being urged by the most unfair pressure – infamous is the only word to apply to it – to put them in the same boat too.

I have refused once for all – but I am bound hand & foot and do not know what attempted action may be tried over my head. The thing is really a conspiracy – and I have some of the threads of it but not all. Completely without my knowledge the thing was arranged by others – & then I and the poor “others” are to be brought into it for quite other reasons & for other ends.

I have been ill since coming here – but am better today in body – but Oh! so sick in mind & heart.

The thing is a crime – a stupid, silly, crime & will recoil, I feel sure in my heart in the heads of those who plotted it – but it may involve others and bring about unmeasured misery – and all the blame & all the responsibility are to be put on me – the victim. No man was ever in a more dreadful position – if by taking, or giving my life I could save the situation I would do it – but even that means don’t offer because it would be too late – I can only hope, and at times pray. It is awful to think I am forced on like them and unable to learn even, anyone fully aware of all the facts – because you don’t know all – only part – Even I know only part but I see a great deal – It is the methods being used to force my hand & compel me to a course I disapprove that fill me with fear and scorn. They are vile – & if that is so, then who am I to think of the spirit animating the parties to the Enterprise here. I shall leave as much as possible in writing – but much will be buried with me.

I am in complete despair & so is M – he is loyal and staunch and splendid – true to the last. Keep absolute silence & and keep G silent at all costs. He had to be brought in; as things developed here after my arrival it was impossible for me not to consult someone & he was the only one I could. It was not for his advice; but to have a witness after I was gone.

Just one thing more. I may be able to see Father Crotty, the priest of Limburg Camp before I go – & if so he, too, will know all – so there will be another witness after I am disposed of. You know what all my motives and aims were – mistaken I see now because I relied on the wrong people.

They never meant to help me or the cause I came for – only to get value for themselves. That is absolutely clear to me. And they think the same may come from this last desperate enterprise & are utterly callous as to how it may affect me, “the others” or the far bigger number of others in the place we go to whose rashness may create a “diversion” in this form. They admitted all this to me – quite calmly – & said if I did not agree to lend myself to this project they would put me in an atrocious position with my own countrymen and damn my name. “Traitor” would be my epithet to all time. And remember this, in a matter arranged over my head, without my knowledge, where I had no voice – & now this awful responsibility of “fathering” it being thrust upon me by the most unspeakable form of blackmail ever attempted against a human being.

To them it is an “interest of State”, something they think may bring advantage to their cause and so they will force it on at all costs and use me as the chief tool in it. In this last they will surely fail – altho’ I go, & willingly for myself – I go with clean soul so far as a sinning human being can have one. In this, I am innocent and I go only because it is the best thing for my country – but I will not involve others in the fate awaits me – especially others who trusted me & acted as they did, on my word.

Remember I am trusting you absolutely – to the End. You must not betray me or go back on me – whatever happens. All that follows now is beyond my control. I shall do all I can to save the situation, but it lies far beyond a man’s power to do that – and in anything I do I shall be guided only by one consideration – what is the right thing’

The tangle I am in is largely of my own making at the start but the uses now being made of the tangle are wholly wrong and contrary to all the pledges and promises made me – & the end in view is a wholly selfish one and quite regardless of the interests & welfare of those being exploited or of the pledges given.

Goodbye – God bless you – I don’t know if we shall ever meet again – in this world or another – but as long as you are in this world I count on your faithful friendship. If by any act of providence I should escape & should be able to communicate with you so as to get the “verses” &c. then I shall rely on you sending them by the person I should send. Meantime have them in safety – for poor Mr. Smith’s sake.

Also this. You might open all the trunks – the two at Mrs. G’s as well as the others – & go through the letters. Never mind books & newspapers. Get the letters sorted. All official ones & my drafts of replies & all letters referring to the “Brigade” together. Private letters could be put separately – but all the “official” letters together. I will tell Mr. G. to let you have the trunks. Keep Mr. G quiet. Secrecy is essential. I will add more before the end comes. Today is going to be another dreadful day because they will make an attempt to force me to take the poor soldier boys with me & I shall not budge an inch. They will threaten again & try fresh forms of coercion. I know their methods now. I shall not budge. They want to get rid of the soldiers with me & the Agreement. & at same time have a good “diversion” at small cost to themselves & all the “moral” responsibility to be mine – so that if failure comes (as is certain) the whole blame rests on me. R.C.