

we cannot deny that the decision be theirs. For liberty is nothing else than the power to choose.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

Three different decisions are proposed by three parties in Ireland, and a fourth is in some danger of being imposed by the prime minister of Great Britain, these are unionism, home rule, republicanism, and partition. The first proposal is: "Maintain the present union with Great Britain." Most of the Protestants of Ireland, unlike their Irish ancestors of the time of Gratton and Wolfe Tone, want this legislative union with England. The handful of Irish Catholics who are opposed to democracy, agree with the Unionists. The union can be maintained only by bayonets, machine guns, tanks and aeroplanes. It is a denial of the principle of national liberty. The second proposal is: "Home Rule." Realizing the economic and other advantages that would accrue to Ireland had she, relative to the Empire, the political position of Canada or Australia, four-fifths of the Irish people during the past two generations worked for Home Rule. They were then willing to accept a meagre measure of Home Rule as a start, but today nothing less than Dominion Home Rule would be considered. The third proposal is: "An Irish Republic." There is nothing sinful or inherently wrong in this. The loyal and Imperialist Ottawa Journal wrote a month ago. "Any man whose ideal is the independence of Canada has an ideal noble enough to warrant allegiance and call for respect if he avows it." (Editorial of Feb. 18.) What is a noble ideal in Canada cannot be an ignoble ideal in Ireland. Both in Canada and in Ireland, it may, as I believe, not be the best practical policy for our generation—and this generation can speak only for itself. But others may hold a different view, and these Irish or Canadian republicans have as much right to their political views as Mr. Ross and I have to ours. In the General Election held after the War was won, Ireland, as a protest against the denial of her national claims, elected 78 Republicans out of a parliamentary representation of 105. That action, occurring when the victorious British Empire was at the zenith of its military power, was the greatest moral defeat the Empire has received since the American Declaration of Independence. That the majority of the Irish people consider a Republic preferable to the present union with its inevitable martial law, may be reasonably concluded. What proportion of the people of Ireland would consider the hypothetical possibility of an Irish Republic preferable to the practical reality of Dominion Home Rule, if they were actually offered the latter, is a question for which there is not sufficient data to answer correctly. The fourth policy—"partition"—is advocated by