

# National Irish Freedom Committee

## 2007 Easter Address

On this weekend ninety-one years ago, Padraic Pearse proclaimed, on behalf on the Irish people, the right of the Irish people to a free and sovereign 32-county Irish Republic. That historic Proclamation was read from the steps of the General Post Office (GPO) in Dublin at the onset of the military uprising against the British Empire's seven century long colonization of Ireland.

This is the 91<sup>st</sup> anniversary of that historic event. That proclamation and the subsequent uprising was a defining moment in modern Irish history. It is considered the most sacred of days in the Irish Republican calendar. Republicans have never missed an Easter commemoration since then either in Ireland or here in America

This is a particularly important anniversary that we commemorate here today because politicians in both the twenty-six and six county partitionist sectarian states are redoubling their efforts to maintain and safeguard the status quo, thus securing their own selfish interests as well as Britain's illegitimate occupation of the six county state.

The latest betrayal by the Provisionals, who abandoned republican principles in 1986, is by far the most insidious and blatant of all the betrayals to the 32-county sovereign Irish Republic proclaimed by Pearse on the steps of the GPO in 1916. Prior betrayals, although unforgivable, did not reach the level of deceit and treachery as did the Good Friday /St. Andrews Agreement embraced by the Provisionals.

Other erstwhile comrades who abandoned republican principles did not join forces with the British partitionist establishment to rule on their behalf. What they did instead was embrace the partition of Ireland created by British Government of Ireland enacted in 1920, establish their own ruling elite in the 26-county state and proceeded to rule accordingly. Although not intentional, they did not defile the Republican cause by holding on to the name 'Sinn Fein' as have the present-day Provisionals.

On the other hand the Provisionals became fully integrated into the British establishment, recognized and embraced Britain's governing institutions in the occupied six counties and paid de facto allegiance to the British crown. After 30 years of conflict and the loss of over 3,500 lives this was all the Provisionals achieved. The loss of so many volunteers and innocent citizens did not faze the Provisional leadership whose aim, all along, was to get, what they considered to be their rightful reward, a piece of the British controlled partitionist pie.

All of these erstwhile comrades including the Provisionals will continue to profess allegiance to the Proclamation of 1916 and will undoubtedly attend various commemorations to mark the anniversary. They will make speeches pontificating over the blood sacrifice of the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising and will, unashamedly, claim commonality with their cause.

How ironic that those who signed on the Good Friday /St Andrews agreement have the gall to claim allegiance to a 32-county sovereign Irish Republic that so many patriots died for over the centuries. Politicians who signed that agreement or any other agreement that supports or recognizes any British claim to Irish soil is akin to affixing their belated signature to the death warrants of Padraic Pearse and his sixteen comrades.

As their reward for embracing and promoting the Good Friday/St. Andrews agreement the British gave the Provisionals their piece of the pie which amounted to legislative and ministerial positions in their reconstituted Stormont puppet government. They were also

afforded personal protection by the British security forces, and a free hand to control opposition to the continued British presence in the six occupied counties

Pearse himself was well aware that everybody who claims to be republicans was not necessarily so. He wrote during Christmas 1915, mere months before the Easter rising;

“If we today are fighting for something either greater than or less than the thing our fathers fought for, either our fathers did not fight for freedom at all, or we are not fighting for freedom. If I do not hold the faith of Tone; and if Tone was not a heretic, then I am. If Tone said, ‘BREAK the connection with England’, and if I say ‘MAINTAIN the connection with England’, I may be preaching a saner (as I am certainly preaching a safer) gospel than his, but I am obviously not preaching the same gospel. Separatism, in fact, is the national position. Whenever an Irish leader has taken up a position different from the national position he has been repudiated by the next generation. ... The chain of the Separatist tradition has never once snapped during the centuries”

It is clear from Pearse’s prophetic words that now will be repudiated by future generations for embracing the occupier for the proverbial shilling. In spite of the many betrayals to the ideals of 1916 Proclamation there has been and always will be true Republicans on hand to safeguard the ideals of Easter Week.

We, the Irish Diaspora in America gathered here today reaffirm our commitment to these same ideals.

We will continue to support and publicize the plight of Irish republican prisoners in HM Maghaberry Prison who are engaged in an on going prison protest in conditions that are eerily reminiscent of the period prior to the hunger strikes of 1981 for political status

We will continue to promote the Eire Nua program that proposes a federal solution based on the four historic provinces of Ireland. This comprehensive Irish authored political program is designed to achieve a just and lasting peace in the context of a British withdrawal.