

INC NEWS

INC NEWS WINTER 2015

RECLAIM THE VISION OF 1916!

Put down this date in your diary for next year; April 24th 2016. It's a Sunday, and coincides to the day with the 100th Anniversary of the start of Easter Week 1916.

On that date next year, thousands and thousands of people will gather in the centre of Dublin for a major rally which is the culmination of a weeklong series of activities. To celebrate the event that led to the liberation of the majority of our nation from British misrule and which inspired millions throughout the world in the struggle against colonialism and oppression.

Next year's rally and other events are a peoples celebration (a citizen's initiative). These events are being organised by a non party committee "Reclaim the Vision of 1916", and the Irish National Congress is playing a significant role. The Chairperson for this initiative is Robert Ballagh, former INC chairperson and members of the current executive of the INC are involved in organising these events.

We would strongly urge all of our members and supporters throughout the country to make an effort to be in Dublin for next year's events. For our part we will endeavour to keep our members informed of the events and any changes will be posted on our website www.inc-cne.com.

These activities are an unapologetic peoples celebration of the rising and we stress the word celebration. The Irish State has no involvement whatsoever in our activities. The Government's official commemoration will be held on Easter Monday, March 26th 2016. By all means do go along to the official commemoration (if you are allowed to get near that is). We hope that the official events do us proud on that day (but don't count on it). Unfortunately the whole approach of the Government, political and media establishment has been rather less than enthusiastic. Their efforts maladroit and some of their actions truly bizarre such as their attempt to invite British Royalty. It is for that reason that it is important that our own parallel events take place to ensure that this important historical occasion is properly celebrated.



Remembering Rossa

One hundred years ago on the 1st of August 1915 Pádraic Pearse made his historic oration over the grave of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa in Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin. The words he spoke were as uncompromising as they were inspirational: "Life springs from death; and from the graves of patriot men and women spring living notions. The defenders of this realm have worked well in secret and in the open. They think that they have pacified Ireland. They think that they have purchased half of us and intimidated the other half. They think that they have foreseen everything, they think that they have provided against everything; but the fools, the fools, the fools! - they have left us our Fenian dead and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace."¹ But who was O'Donovan Rossa and why did the men of 1916 honour him so fulsomely? Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa was born in 1831 in Cork he joined the Fenian movement in 1858 by founding the Phoenix Society in Skibbereen. He acted as editor of 'The Irish People'. He was sentenced to penal servitude for life in 1865 and was released and exiled to the USA in 1871. He documented the hardships and privations experienced by Irish Republican prisoners in British jails including

¹ Collected Works of Pádraic H. Pearse, The Phoenix Publishing Co Ltd Dublin, Pages 136-7

flogging, starvation diets, solitary confinement, dark cells and prolonged handcuffing. Rossa campaigned and physically fought in prison for political status and segregation from other criminal prisoners. While still in prison he was elected as MP for Tipperary on 27th November 1869 but the result was annulled as he was a convicted felon! In a rerun of this by-election in February the Liberal candidate defeated the Fenian Charles Kickham by 4 votes!² The plight of Fenian prisoners in English jails, including the death in prison of John Lynch, compelled Britain to hold the Devon Commission to investigate conditions in 1870, which Rossa described as "a jury of butchers trying a sheep". The commission found that Rossa had spent 231 days on a punishment penal diet in a dark cell. For 123 days he was on a bread and water diet, and 28 days in an absolutely dark cell. He spent 37 days in handcuffs, 35 consecutively for throwing a half bucket of water into the prison governor's face.³ The controversy raised by his treatment, allied to John Nolan's amnesty campaign in Ireland, led to the release of 33 Fenian prisoners in January 1871. Rossa and many others were encouraged to flee to America.

Then as now Rossa was a divisive figure, obstinate and inflexible yet courageous and idealistic. John Devoy described him as the incarnation of the spirit of Fenianism while Pearse called him "one of the toughest and most stubborn souls that had ever been". Ironically having been elected an MP Rossa was one of the most implacable proponents of physical force. He opposed John Devoy's alliance with Devitt's Land League and Parnell's Home Rule party in the "new

² A Chronology of Irish History since 1500, Doherty & Hickey, Gill & Macmillan, Dublin, 1989, Pages 146-7

³ Irish Rebels in English Prisons, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa; Brandon Books, 1991, pages 262-3

departure" and in Pearse's words advocated "the left wing of extremism" backing the Fenian bombing campaign of 1881-5 which sought to terrorise British public opinion into granting Irish independence. Devoy accused Rossa of being a drunkard, an embezzler and that his organisation was riddled with British Agent provocateurs like Red Jim Mc Dermott and Major Le Corroir.⁴

But more than what other people believed and wrote about Rossa he is remembered for what he believed in and wrote about himself. For Rossa the famine was firsthand experience, not an episode of comic relief and consequently he despised "British civilisation" and its inherent hypocrisy. As a prisoner Britain had used hunger as a weapon to break him. In his first 5 months in Pentonville he had lost 81bs, other Fenians like Michael O'Regan had lost 30lbs.⁵ Most of Rossa's beliefs and experiences are outlined in his 1882 book 'Irish Rebels in English Prisons'. A native Gaelic speaker he wanted a Gaelic speaking Ireland and believed Irishmen morally and intellectually superior to their British overlords. Three times married, Rossa was also a staunch advocate of secularism. He wrote "I do not put my Country before my God but I do put it before the religious ascendancy of any particular denomination"⁶. Rossa was also a fierce critic of British Imperialism and staunch advocate of physical force. He wrote "Irishmen are learning that England has to be stricken to her knees before she will surrender anything she has once seized 'If it was only a barren rock in the middle of the trackless ocean,' said Lord Palmerston forty years ago, 'that England got possession of by force, she will never surrender it without being confronted by

⁴ The Fenian Movement, J.W. Moody Ed., Mercier Press, Dublin, 1985, Pages 89-95

⁵ Rossa, Irish Rebels in English Prisons, page 108

⁶ Rossa, Irish Rebels in English Prisons, page 19

force".⁷ Irish revisionists may argue that Britain has changed radically in the 100 years after Rossa wrote those words however Argentina's loss of 652 men in their failed 1982 re-conquest of the Falkland Islands would prove them wrong. Rossa proposed as his programme a document written by a Catholic parish priest for the Society of United Irishmen in New York "The freedom of Ireland implies the reduction of England to a position much inferior to that which she has occupied for centuries. It very probably would entail the loss of her Asiatic and African possessions, and the total separation from her of all her colonies. England is pre-eminently the hypocrite, the robber, the perjurer, the murderer, the pirate of the universe, but her well educated leaders have always been remarkable for their perspicacity, and for their devotion to the interests of a country that has shed enough blood to drown in one great sea all the English on this planet. These reflections make it plain that England cannot consent to Ireland's freedom and that violence alone must establish that freedom if it is to exist. These propositions I consider axiomatic. Ignorance is impotence. There never was a nation better acquainted with this fact than England; and she has used it to make Ireland incapable of resistance. She has not only darkened the intellects of the Irish people by reducing them to a state of gross ignorance, but has thereby made it easy for imposters to delude their consciences. The Irishman's property is in slavery; his conscience in the matter of his country is in slavery. England thoroughly understands that the emancipation of the Irish intellect and conscience would very promptly terminate that thralldom. Unable to keep the Irishman of the present day wholly illiterate, she represents the history of his own country as a farrogo of nonsense and barbarity and divers

⁷ Ibid page 292

him from inquiry into Irish matters to the study of her annals which she teaches him to regard as the inspirers of noble thoughts and the prompters of glorious achievements. No nation can become or remain free in which self reliance is not a notional characteristic. England... is daily repeating to the Irish people what she has been saying to them for centuries, that there is some radical imperfection in her character, and that by reason of it they are incapable of autonomy.⁸

The recent inept and embarrassing lounch of the Government's proposal to commemorate the centenary of the 1916 rising, allied to the attack by a revisionist confederacy of imbeciles led by John Bruton on the very need for a rising would suggest that the above quotation still has relevance in the Ireland of today. The state's half hearted, apologetic and farcical proposals to commemorate the 1916 rising, particularly when compared to their fulsome endorsement of the butchery of the British army glorified at the 'Mayo Peace Park', remembrance day ceremonies and proposal to invite British royals (including serving commanders of various murderous regiments) to the 1916 ceremony have convinced many that the Rising's commemoration should be wrestled out of the profane and bungling clutches of ministers who neither know, care nor understand the true significance of this globally historic event. How better to commemorate the heroes of 1916 than by the citizens of their immortal Republic demonstrating their self reliance by organising their own commemoration independently of the State. Let us honour those who died for our freedom by adopting their methods, if this commemoration cannot be organised in secret let it at least be a surprise. Let today's 'Fools' perspire in the knowledge that a commemoration is coming they know where,

⁸ *ibid* pages 293-4

they know when, but do not know exactly what is planned. If the leaders of 1916 could rock on empire with little time and less resources let us commemorate them by overcoming similar challenges.

To commemorate the centenary of the American revolution in 1876 the US government staged an Expo in Philadelphia which displayed the torch bearing arm of the yet unfinished Statute of Liberty. France celebrated the centenary of the French revolution in 1889 by staging an expo in Paris at which was unveiled the Eiffel tower. Our state's proposed 1916 commemorations are totally devoid of all imagination, passion and conviction. They appear to be more at home commemorating those who made up the firing squad in Kilmonham's stone breakers yard than those who were executed there. Nowhere in Dublin city centre can you find a statute to Patrick Pearse or many other of the 1916 leaders. O'Donovan Rossa's only memorial is an underwhelming plaque attached to a large rock in St Stephen's Green. Revisionists will argue that we should not honour a 'terrorist' like Rossa with no democratic mandate who sponsored a Fenian bombing campaign in England from 1881-85 which resulted in the deaths of 3 Fenian bombers and a child.⁹ However, the British state has no such qualms in honouring other similar Irishmen. In horse guards parade London stands a giant mounted statue to the Anglo Irish Field Marshall, Gornet Wolseley. Among his many crimes is his invasion of Egypt after a 10.5 hour naval bombardment of the city of Alexandria in July 1882, without the approval Gladstone's Government which levelled much of the city and left about 700 Egyptians dead. The subsequent British invasion left Egypt under British rule until 1922 the democratic wishes of the Egyptian people were never consulted. 2016 is on

⁹ Chronology of Irish History, Page 155-9

election year and we should pledge ourselves into pressurising all politicians and parties into signing a binding "covenant for a centenary commemoration" in which they commit themselves to spend at least €20 Million¹⁰, commemorating the Republican heroes of 1916 in a work of monumental architecture, a pantheon to all who sacrificed their lives for 'Our Immortal Republic'.

WHAT'S IN A NAME? DERRY/LONDONDERRY

The city of Derry was granted its first royal charter by Queen Elizabeth I in 1604 after the plantation of Ulster. In 1613 King James I renamed the city Londonderry and the name of the county from Coleraine to Londonderry. This was reconfirmed by a second royal charter in 1662.

In 2003 members of Derry City Council attempted to officially change the city's name from Londonderry to Derry. (The name of the council had been changed in 1984.) This action was challenged in the British courts. Justice Weatherup ruled in January 2007 that Derry City Council (the elected representatives of the people who actually live and work in the city of Derry) did not have the power to rename their city. The only body who could change a city name was the hereditary and unelected Queen on the advice of the arcane and unelected Privy Council.

The Privy Council is an archaic relic of the middle ages. It exists to advise the monarch and is called Privy because of the private nature of its decisions. Secretive and oath bound its 600 or so members contain the Lord Chamberlain, most senior cabinet members and party leaders, Church of England Bishops, supreme court judges and members of the royal family (its longest serving member is Prince Philip.) It meets monthly to confirm

¹⁰ The amount spent on the Visit by the British Queen to Ireland in 2011

'orders in council'. It has a minimum quorum of three and its meetings are conducted standing up to keep them short. Some of its better known members are John Taylor, Douglas Hogg, David Trimble and Viscount Cranborne.

To comply with this court ruling the members of Derry City Council petitioned the Privy Council in London and were asked to perform an "Equality Impact Assessment". The first part was an opinion poll conducted in 2009 which reported that in the city 77% of the Nationalist population, 75% of the Catholic population, 8% Unionist and 6% of the Protestant population wanted the name change. The next part of the process was to seek submissions from interested members of the public. The process received an avalanche of submissions from all over the North of Ireland and beyond, 9028 were opposed to any name change and only 3108 were in favour. At this point the process ground to a halt. That equality legislation has been abused in this way to deny the wishes of the overwhelming majority of people who actually live in the city to change the name of their city is nothing short of perverse. Equality and sensitivity to the wishes of the indigenous inhabitants was not high on the agenda of the colonial settlers and their unelected monarch who purloined the city and renamed it like thieves changing the number plates on a stolen car.

That 'equality' is being used by the British Establishment to barricade the road to progress particularly in Derry, the birth place of the civil rights movement and the city which put unionist sectarian gerrymandering on the world map must paint their faces with a sardonic smirk of satisfaction.

Many cities around the world have changed their name, usually as part of a decolonisation process. Constantinople became Istanbul,

Peking became Beijing and Bombay become Mumbai. In Ireland too after independence Kingstown became Dun Laoghaire and Queenstown became Cobh. Even in Britain cities have changed their name most recently in 1979 Great Grimsby in Lincolnshire changed its name to Grimsby without the need for a lengthy equality impact assessment.

Following the recent exchange of visits between the heads of state of Britain and Ireland there was much talk about gestures of reconciliation however there has been little action on this from the British side. Inquiries into the Dublin Monaghan bombings and the assassination of Pat Finnuane are still being frustrated by the British state. Even symbolic gestures such as renaming the city of Derry are being actively undermined. Clearly if the political good will existed in Britain the name of Derry City would be restored with simply one word from 'Her majesty'.

THE 1971 BALLYMURPHY MASSACRE



In the early hours of 9th August 1971 the British Government introduced Internment without trial. People will look back on this period as an interise mark in the history of the troubles. But what you will not find in the history books is the brutality, the murder and the bloodshed caused by the British Parachute Regiment over the three days in August 1971 in the Ballymurphy area. You will not find any history of the trauma and brutality that our

families suffered in what was to become known as the Ballymurphy Massacre

Fr Hugh Mullan, aged 38, was shot dead while giving last rights to a wounded civilian. Fr Hugh Mullan was waving a white handkerchief above his head while attending the man before he was murdered

Frank Quinn aged 19 was shot while going to help Fr Mullen, he died where he fell.

Joseph Murphy aged 44 was shot in the leg. Although injured he was taken from the field by the Parachute regiment to the Henry Taggart barracks where he received a severe beating from which he died of three weeks later

Noel Philips aged 19 was wounded when shot in the backside. He was then executed with a bullet behind each ear by the British Parachute Regiment that picked him up.

Joan Connolly aged 44 and a mother of 8 left her place of safety, after hearing the cries of young Noel Philips, only to be shot in the face. She was shot another three times and left lying in the field to bleed to death, even when other injured or dead were removed.

Danny Teggart, aged 44, was shot 14 times as he lay on the ground close to Noel Philips and was also severely beaten. Eddie Doherty aged 31 was shot in the back going home to his wife and three children.

John Laverty, aged 20, and Joseph Carr, aged 43, were both shot in the back by the British Parachute Regiment.

John McKerr, aged 49, was shot in the head as he left his place of work at Corpus Christy Church.

Pat McCarthy died of a heart attack after soldiers from the British Parachute Regiment brutalised him and fired a shot over his head. Friends and neighbours of the man were held back from trying to help him as he lay dying.

As a result of this Massacre 57 children were left with a single parent. 27 people in Belfast alone lost their lives in the three day period. 43 years on we are still waiting on the British Government to come clean on what happened.

To date there has been no police investigation at all. A member of the British Army took statements from his colleagues and released lies to the media claiming they had shot gunmen and a gun woman. However the families have collected evidence of the truth of what happened during those three days from over 100 witnesses.

When our cases went to the coroners court in 1972 the outcomes were recorded as open verdicts. No compensation was paid. In fact father of 13 children Danny Teggart's wife was told by the courts she was financially better off with her widow's pension and one less mouth to feed as her husband was unemployed at the time of his death.

Had this British Parachute Regiment been made accountable for the bloodshed in Ballymurphy in 1971 then 'Bloody Sunday' may have been prevented in January 1972; and the murders of the two innocent civilians on Belfast's Shankill Road in September 1972 by the same regiment.

Earlier this year British Secretary of State Teresa Villiers refused the Ballymurphy Massacre families an independent Hillsborough style panel to investigate the murders of 11 innocent civilians in Ballymurphy. To show the hypocritical nature of their decisions involving state violence in the North was the decision of British Home Secretary Teresa May to appoint Baroness Nuala O'Loon to head up an inquiry into the notorious unsolved Daniel Morgan murder case not only setting up the same Hillsborough type panel as we requested but also as we proposed, to have Nuala O'Loon chair the investigation of this man's death. This again is proof of the palky of this Tory Government to treat us as second hand citizens.

(Daniel Morgan was a private investigator who was murdered in Sydenham, south east London, in March 1987. He was said to have been close to exposing important police corruption. His death was the subject of several failed police inquiries and in 2011 was at the centre of allegations concerning the suspect conduct of News of the World journalists.

Many families such as our own, experienced not only the horrific loss of their loved ones when human rights violations took place but also experienced the double injustice of never having had those violations acknowledged or addressed by the British Government. The British State has finally acknowledged through its own Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary report "Inspection of the Police Service of Northern Ireland Historical Enquiries Team," that the Historical Enquiries Team (HET) was found to be performing its work illegally when questioning British Army soldiers involved in fatal shootings and now the HET has had even its inaccurate desk-top investigations suspended.

At present, there is no State mechanism in place to provide access to the truth about British State killings. There are on-going attempts to deal with the legacy of the past in the North of Ireland and last year US diplomat Richard Haass and Dr. Meghan O'Sullivan had tried to assist in those negotiations. These talks remain deadlocked.

In the absence of State responsibility for effectively dealing with the past, the Ballymurphy Massacre families have proposed the appointment of an independent panel to examine all documents relating to the context, circumstances and aftermath of the deaths of our loved ones. Its focus would include the investigation of the role of the British Government, British Army, criminal justice agencies such as the Royal Ulster Constabulary, Department of Public Prosecutions, the Coroner's Office and the significance of the media. The panel's work would reflect the same terms of reference of the British Government funded work of the

Hillsborough Independent Panel. Our proposal has received support from across the political spectrum: Sinn Fein, the Alliance Party, the Social Democratic Labour Party, former Police Ombudsman, Nuala O'Loan (who agreed to serve as its chair), the Catholic Church of Ireland, ICTU, TUC, UNITE Trade Unions and others including human rights NGOs.

We spoke before Helsinki Commission in Washington on March 16th 2011. This year we gathered support when we spoke at European Parliament in Brussels, Westminster in London and in Dublin where Irish Taoiseach Enda Kenny fully endorsed our campaign,

This cross community and international support from independent sources acknowledges the need to investigate the killings of our loved ones.

The British Government like to think they had the greatest legal system in the world. But if you were a member of the armed forces accused of murder of an Irish citizen the British system would do all in their power to cover up and prevent justice being served.

376 deaths were caused directly by members of state forces during the conflict. 76 of these were children 2 were Catholic priests. Only 3 soldiers were convicted of murder in the conflict. All were given very lenient sentences. All were released early and were accepted back into the army with promotion.

All sides in the conflict have blood on their hands. All sides need to own up to the truth and all victims need to know the truth of what happened to their loved ones by all those who played a part in the conflict. This has to include the British State for their part

John Teggart on behalf of The Ballymurphy Massacre Families 07512166867 (mobile)

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www.ballymurphymassacre.com/cms/.../Ballymurphy...Panel.pdf

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/teresa-may-appoints-baroness-nuala-oloan-to-head-up-inquiry-into-the-notorious-unsolved-daniel-morgan-murder-case-9581947.html>

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RAFFLE WINNERS

With this INC NEWS, you will receive a booklet of raffle tickets. Tickets are €2 each or €10 per booklet. Please send completed stubs and money to the INC at the above address for receipt by th December 2015. As ever, your support and donations are invaluable and greatly appreciated. The 1st prize is €100, the 2nd prize is €50 and the 3rd Prize is a book token. The winners of the last raffle were 1st Prize Mick Ryan, Charleville, Co Cork, 2nd Prize, Caoimhin O Caolain TD, Monaghan, 3rd Prize, Brendan Leeson, Shankill, Co Dublin. Thank YOU for all your support.

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