



# SEANAD NEWS

Senator Labhrás Ó Murchú, Seanad Spokesperson on Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht  
Fón | (01) 618 4018 Fax | (01) 618 4619 E-mail | labhras.omurchu@oireachtas.ie

## REMEMBERING OUR PATRIOTS IN 2016

**“The Government decision to officially commemorate the 1916 Rising is a positive and mature development for our nation. It is, in fact, in keeping with practice and precedent in all countries which value their own independence and sovereignty. To commemorate the heroism and sacrifice of those who won for us control of our own destiny is not only a selfless appreciation of those brave men and women but is essential to the wellbeing and morale of the nation.”**

**T**his was stated by Senator Labhrás Ó Murchú when he called for a sincere and authentic commemoration in 2016 of the 1916 Rising.

Senator Ó Murchú said that Ireland today enjoys a unique status in the world. In many ways, we are seen as a model for other countries which are travelling the same path of freedom and opportunity. Obviously, in the midst of affluence there must be time for reflection on the characteristics which make us and inspire us as a distinctive nation. Our cultural heritage in particular, which was a strong motivating factor for our patriots, is deserving of special attention. To this end the new-found official status for the Irish language, which is now enshrined in national and European legislation, marks our maturity as a nation. The unity of purpose which underpinned the campaign to achieve this status for Irish held huge potential for other areas of national interest.

I do not believe that this generation or future generations will thank us if we allow the dual opportunities of the 1916 Commemoration and the goodwill which exists for our native language to be squandered. Why should we underestimate the acquiescence of discerning Unionists when our State seeks to honour the memory of our patriots? Why should the ‘new’ Ireland have to be subservient to the lowest common denominator when it comes to national identity? It should not be presumed that young people in the education system or immigrants to our country expect the diminution of our history, native language or other distinctive cultural characteristics. They know from experience that it would not apply in any other country. We should assume that they will be generous enough to respond positively rather than negatively to the challenges which face them.



*A Sense of Place,  
Nation and Tradition  
Ag saothrú an chultúir Ghaelaigh  
agus ag obair ar son an Náisiúin*

# AN RÓD SEO ROMHAINN

*'We have done right. People will say hard things of us now, but later on they will praise us. Do not grieve for all this, but think of it as a sacrifice, which God asked of me and you.'*

Seo píosa as an litir dheireanach a scríobh Pádraig Mac Piarais chuig a mháthair. Nach fíor go raibh an ceart aige. Deineadh an-cháineadh ar na laochra ag an am. Ach diaidh ar ndiaidh tháinig athrú ar an scéal. Níos déanaí bhí meas agus omós ag Gaeil ar na laochra a sheas an fód in am an ghátair. Tá an meas agus omós sin fós ann.

Do spreag an tírghrá sin mar náisiún, ní amháin i gCogadh na Saoirse ach aon am go raibh dúshlán againn. Tugann ár stair misneach agus bród dúinn agus tá stair glórmhar ag ár dtír. Do bhí cos ar bholg déanta orainn ar feadh na blianta ach trí íobairt agus díograis do bhaineamar amach saoirse agus neamhspleáchas dúinn féin.

*'They and a few,  
In bloody protest for a glorious thing;  
They shall be spoken of among their people,  
The generations shall remember them,  
And call them blessed.'*

Seo píosa as dán an Phiarsaigh 'The Mother'. Tá seans againn i 2016, céad bliain i ndiaidh Éirí Amach na Cásca, fírinne an dán seo a léiriú agus ár meas ar laochra na Cásca a thaispeáint don domhain uilig go fonnmar agus le dignit.

Séard a bheidh againn i gcomóradh an chéid ná bród ár náisiún chun tosaigh sa bhaile agus ar fud na cruinne. D'fhéadfadh an bród seo sinn a spreagadh athuair agus go mórmhór anois os rud é go bhfuil lag-mhisneach le tabhairt faoi ndeara go forleathan. Tá misneach agus treoir ag teastáil go géar, rud a bhí fíor freisin i 1916. Is féidir linn an comóradh stairiúil seo a úsáid ní amháin chun chuimhneamh na laochra a bhuanú ach mar ábhar dóchais ar an ród seo romhainn.

Is iomaí eachtra i stair na hÉireann a léiríonn gur féidir linn mar chine gach constaic a shárú ach amháin a bheith aontaithe agus seasmhach.

## A People's Commemoration

The proposal of the 1916-1921 Club to have a community based commemoration nationwide is to be welcomed. To this end it is recommended that County Committees be set up to make preparations for 2016.

The 1916-1921 Club was founded in the 1940s in an effort to heal the divisions of the Civil War.

If you would like to be involved in a County Committee, please contact: The 1916-1921 Club, 27 Pearse Street, Dublin 2.

[info@the1916-1921club.org](mailto:info@the1916-1921club.org)

<http://the1916-1921club.org>



## EASTER RISING Landmark is saved

A house that the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising used as their last headquarters has become a protected structure. No. 16 Moore Street became the headquarters for the rebel leaders after they abandoned the GPO on Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 1916.

The Save The Moore Street Campaign, headed up by James Connolly Heron, great grandson of the 1916 leader James Connolly, has received a positive response from Jimmy Deenihan, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The campaign is supported by the relatives of the 1916 leaders and it is aimed at preserving and developing the complete battle site.

As part of a planning permission granted by Dublin City Council, this historic building was due for demolition. Senator Labhrás Ó Murchú, who raised the matter in the Seanad, said that it would be a national disgrace to destroy our historical heritage in this way.

At a subsequent meeting of Dublin City Council a motion recommending the preservation of No. 16 Moore Street was adopted. The building is protected with immediate effect. The leaders were in the historic building when they decided to surrender on Easter Saturday, 1916. Thomas Clarke, Joseph Plunkett, Seán McDermott, Pádraig Pearse and William Pearse gathered around the bed of the wounded James Connolly and eventually agreed on the surrender to prevent the 'further slaughter of the civil population'. Speaking in the Seanad, Senator Ó Murchú said that the 1916 building was the equivalent of America's Alamo and he hoped that reason and national pride would prevail.

# PEARSE'S ORATION AT THE GRAVE OF O'DONOVAN ROSSA

*It has been thought right, before we turn away from this place in which we have laid the mortal remains of O'Donovan Rossa that one among us should, in the name of all, speak the praise of that valiant man, and endeavor to formulate the thought and the hope that are in us as we stand around his grave. And if there is anything that makes it fitting that I rather than another, I rather than one of the greyhaired men who were young with him and shared in his labour and in his suffering, should speak here, it is perhaps that I may be taken as speaking on behalf of a new generation that has been re-baptised in the Fenian faith and that has accepted the responsibility of carrying out the Fenian programme.*

*I propose to you then that, here by the grave of this unrepentant Fenian, we renew our baptismal vows; that, here by the grave of this unconquered and unconquerable man, we ask of God, each one for himself, such unshakable purpose, such high and gallant courage, such unbreakable strength of soul as belonged to O'Donovan Rossa. Deliberately here we avow ourselves, as he avowed himself in the dock, Irishmen of one allegiance only. We of the Irish volunteers and you others who are associated with us in today's task and duty are bound together and must stand together henceforth in brotherly union for the achievement of the freedom of Ireland. And we know only one definition of freedom: it is Tone's definition, it is Mitchel's definition, it is Rossa's definition. Let no man blaspheme the cause that the dead generations of Ireland served by giving it any other name or definition than their name and their definition.*

*We stand at Rossa's grave not in sadness but rather in exaltation of spirit that it has been given to us to come thus into so close a communion with that brave and splendid Gael. Splendid and holy causes are served by men who are themselves splendid and holy. O'Donovan Rossa was splendid in the proud manhood of him, splendid in the heroic grace of him, splendid in the Gaelic strength and clarity and truth of him. All that splendour and pride and strength was compatible with a humility and a simplicity of devotion to Ireland, to all that was olden and beautiful and Gaelic in Ireland, the holiness and simplicity of patriotism of a Michael O'Cleary or of an Eoghan O'Growney. The clear true eyes of this man almost alone in his day visioned Ireland as we of today would surely have her: not free merely, but Gaelic as well; not Gaelic merely, but free as well.*

*In a closer spiritual communion with him now than ever before or perhaps ever again, in spiritual communion with those of his day, living and dead, who suffered with him in English prisons, in communion of spirit too with our own dear comrades who suffer in English prisons a place of peace, sacred to the dead, where men should speak with all charity and with all restraint but I hold it a Christian thing, as O'Donovan Rossa*

*held it, to hate evil, to hate untruth, to hate oppression; and, hating them, to strive to overthrow them. Our foes are strong and wise and wary; but, strong and wise and wary as they are, they cannot undo the miracles of God who ripens in the hearts of young men the seed sown by the young men of a former generation. And the seed sown by the young men of '65 and '67 are coming to their miraculous ripening today.*

*Rulers and Defenders of Realms had need to be wary if they would guard against such processes. Life springs from death; and from the graves of patriot men and women spring nations. The Defenders of the 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, 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 a peace.*

**Pádraig Mac Piarais**

## National Honours for VOLUNTEER THOMAS KENT?



There is widespread expectation that 2016 – the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1916 Rising – will see national honours accorded to Volunteer Thomas Kent.

Senator Labhrás Ó Murchú, who was active in the successful campaign to have the bodies of the 'Forgotten 10'

volunteers who were buried in Mountjoy Jail transferred to a more fitting location, has said that he is now hopeful that the remains of Volunteer Thomas Kent will be accorded similar honours. Senator Ó Murchú said that 2016, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Easter Rising, presents an ideal opportunity for the nation to honour this brave Irish soldier.

Volunteer Kent is buried in the grounds of Cork Jail. Thomas Kent, together with other members of his family, played a noble and heroic role in pursuit of Ireland's independence.

Thomas Kent, aged 51, was executed in 1916 in the Military Barracks, Cork. His last request was that no Irishman should be asked to shoot him. The firing squad was provided by the Scottish Borderers. He was attended by Fr Sexton before he died.



The Seven Signatories of Poblacht Na hEireann, all of whom were executed in 1916. From left to right; Patrick Pearse, Thomas J. Clarke, James Connolly, Joseph Plunkett, Seán MacDiarmada, Thomas MacDonagh and Eamonn Ceannt

# POBLACHT NA h EIREANN THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF THE IRISH REPUBLIC TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

**IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN:** In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment, and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory.

We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and government has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people. In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty: six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations.

The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.

Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishment of a permanent National Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women, the Provisional Government, hereby constituted, will administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust for the people.

We place the cause of the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose blessing we invoke upon our arms, and we pray that no one who serves that cause will dishonour it by cowardice, inhumanity, or rapine. In this supreme hour the Irish nation must, by its valour and discipline and by the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called.

Signed on Behalf of the Provisional Government,

THOMAS J. CLARKE,  
SEAN Mac DIARMADA, THOMAS MacDONAGH,  
P. H. PEARSE, EAMONN CEANNT,  
JAMES CONNOLLY, JOSEPH PLUNKETT.



The other nine leaders who were executed in 1916, from left to right, in order of their execution; Edward 'Ned' Daly, William Pearse, Michael O'Hanrahan, John MacBride, Michael Mallin, Con Colbert, Seán Heuston, Thomas Kent, Roger Casement