

Address of - JOHN E. FOGARTY, M.C.  
2nd District, Rhode Island  
At the Fourth Annual Banquet of the  
IRISH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION of the  
Panther Valley - at  
Coaldale, Pennsylvania on  
March 17, 1951

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be present here this evening and a distinct honor to be invited to address you on this St. Patrick's Day. I have often heard of the large number of grand Irish people in this section of Pennsylvania, but on this my first visit to this section of the State, I am amazed to find such an enthusiastic gathering.

We who are of Irish origin take great pride in the heritage which we possess. The love for Ireland never dies and wherever the Irish have wandered throughout the world, the memory of the land from which they have sprung remains vivid. This is particularly so each year when the Seventeenth of March approaches and we prepare to celebrate the patronal feast day of Ireland.

While I delight in hearing the many tales of Ireland and listening to the extolling of her ancient greatness, it seems more appropriate to me that we should turn our attention to the situation of Ireland in the present day rather than reminisce in her past. We glory in the heroic deeds of those who have risen through the centuries to help fight the battle

of freedom for Ireland. We like to recall the names of the O'Neills, Patrick Sarsfield, Theobald Wolfe Tone and his United Irishmen, of Daniel O'Connell and Charles Stewart Parnell. Catholic or Protestant, they all have fought through the centuries to regain, step by step, a measure of liberty for a people held for centuries under the rule of a foreign power.

However I would rather turn my attention to the later days of Pearse, MacDonagh and Connolly along with the others who were put to death as a result of the East Rebellion in 1916. I feel that it is from this event that the present story of Ireland begins, and from this period we are enabled to look forward to the day when all Ireland will at long last be entirely free. - The execution of the fifteen leaders in this uprising was but the laying of the corner stone in the present structure of the Irish Republic. "The shot Irishmen will now take their places" wrote George Bernard Shaw, "beside the heroes of Poland, and Serbia and Belgium; nothing in heaven or earth can present it."

Rightly do they take their places, for Ireland, relying on the empty promises of the British, had sent as volunteers over three hundred thousand men to fight in the First World War. They suffered greater casualties than did Belgium - in fact, percentage-wise, their casualties were the highest of any of the warring allies. The promise of Home Rule was broken at the end of the war, as the heroes of Easter Week well knew it would be. For in 1918, after

the elections were held, and seventy five per cent of the winning candidates were those who had stood for the immediate complete independence of the whole country, England's answer was to send the Black and Tans, a terrorist force which engaged in the reprisal burning of towns, shooting of hostages, torturing of suspects and the wanton assassination of civilian sympathizers.

In the whole world, especially in America, but even in Britain, public opinion was aroused, so that even the respected 'Unionist' General, Sir Hubert Gough stated that British rule in Ireland had become - "a brutal anarchy in which the armed agents of the Crown violate every law in aimless and vindictive and insolent savagery." Out of this came the Anglo-Irish treaty of 1921 which established a measure of freedom in the Twenty Six Counties of Ireland, although it partitioned the country and left the Six Counties of the northeast still under British control.

While the treaty was accepted, it was never considered as a final settlement of the Irish question. Instead the people of Ireland have persistently continued to achieve their true objective, the complete freedom of all Ireland and the integration of the whole country as an independent nation. Step by step the Irish people have regained more control over their own affairs. The Constitution of 1937 was adopted by the people and declared Ireland "a sovereign, independent, democratic state." That constitution, modelled on our

own American Constitution, was written to include the whole of Ireland and establishes the office of President of Ireland, who will be the President of all the nation when in due time the Six Counties of the Northeast are re-united with the rest of Ireland. Please God, the day may not be far distant.

Finally in 1948 the Irish Parliament passed the Government of Ireland Act, whereby the Republic was accorded international recognition as a free and independent people. Ireland demonstrated that independence, when she maintained her neutrality during the Second World War, even though possibly as many of her sons volunteered for service in the British forces as had during the First World War. Many Americans frequently ask why Ireland remained neutral in the war, overlooking the fact that the United States itself maintained its neutrality until the day of the Pearl Harbor attack. Ireland suffered no such attack, although she did give real co-operation to the Allies throughout the war in keeping with her neutral position.

Today we face a troubled world confronted with the constant threat of open warfare in every corner of the universe. In an effort to prevent the possible onslaught of war, the United States has given every effort to rehabilitating the countries of Europe, knowing that a prosperous country is not a fertile field for communist plotting. Furthermore we are endeavoring through the Atlantic Pact to bring about a coalition of the Western European powers which will stand

as a strong deterrent to open warfare. Unfortunately Ireland stands in an unique position in all this international planning.

Although Ireland sought admission to the United Nations, the veto of Russia denied them admission on the grounds that Russia - mark you this - did not believe that Ireland was a democratic country! Because of the conditions set forth in the Atlantic Pact, Ireland has been forced to refuse to join. The pact sets forth that each signatory nation recognizes the territorial integrity of each of the other signatories. In short, were Ireland to join the pact, she would in effect be acknowledging the claim of Great Britain to sovereignty over the partitioned area of Ireland. In fact, only last year Britain passed a new Government of Ireland Act in London in which she reasserted her claim to the six counties by declaring that she considered them a part of Great Britain.

Great Britain made that declaration following the action in the House of Representatives on the amendment which I offered to the Marshall Plan legislation. The amendment I proposed and which the House adopted would have denied to Britain all aid until partition was ended. I offered that amendment for one purpose - to call to the attention of the world the fact that Ireland is a partitioned country and that Britain is still holding a part of Ireland by force of arms alone and contrary to the wishes of the vast majority of the Irish people. I achieved my purpose when every English-language newspaper in the world carried the story for three continuing days.

When the chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs agreed to grant hearings on the partition resolutions before his committee, I consented to the withdrawal of my amendment, as it was not my desire in any way to adversely affect the Marshall Plan Program. Those hearings were granted, with witnesses coming from all sections of the nation to testify and not a single opponent appearing to oppose the Fogarty Resolution.

Unfortunately the Korean war broke out before the committee could take final action, and so the press of other business prevented the resolution from reaching the House Floor. This year however, I have again appeared personally before the committee and asked that they take action on my resolution protesting against Ireland's partition without further hearings. I feel quite confident that before the year is ended, the members of the House of Representatives will be given an opportunity to vote on H. Res 82, the Fogarty Resolution, and that it will pass the House by a substantial majority.

I am confident that the members of the House will vote that way, because I know that my colleagues will support the cause of justice and freedom. I know that they believe in the right of small nations to the self-determination of their own form of government and that they are opposed to any foreign government interfering in the affairs of another nation.

Only the people of all of Ireland have the right to decide whether a part of the nation shall be cut off from the rest of that nation. I know and you know that no true Irishman wants to see that country continue half enslaved under a foreign power and half free under their own independent government. We likewise know that only when the country has been re-united will all the people of the northeast be freed from disfranchisement, racial and religious discrimination, denial of their civil rights and the evils of gerrymandering and a despotic domestic government which is even alien to British custom and tradition. When at long last all Ireland is united, then we may rightly celebrate St. Patrick's Day and drink a toast to the memory of all her heroes, who fought and died that Ireland might be free.