

In Defence of the Nation

Newsletter of The 32 County Sovereignty Committee

Founding Document of the 32 County Sovereignty Committee

The 32 Sovereignty Committee was founded at a meeting of republican activists held in the Fingal area of Co. Dublin on Sunday, December 7th, 1997.

Why the conference?

Those attending the meeting shared a common concern regarding the failure of the current peace talks to tackle the key issue of 32 County Sovereignty. Indeed it was felt that the peace-talks, based on the Mitchell and Joint Framework documents which guarantee a unionist veto, will ensure an internal Six-County settlement and prohibit the possibility of an end to partition.

Conference Points:

1. Britain has denied Ireland's right to national sovereignty. This denial of National Sovereignty resulting in the imposition of partition and continuing British rule in the North Eastern Counties is the key problem in Ireland today.

Delegates decided that a committee, to be known as the 32 County Sovereignty Committee be established to pursue the ideal of 32 County Sovereignty as outlined in the 1919 Declaration of Independence.

2. This committee solely stands to uphold the Declaration of Independence as proclaimed by Dail Eireann on January 21st 1919.

3. To this end it was decided that the committee should call for:

- (i) Total British disengagement from Ireland.
- (ii) Opposition to any internal settlement in the 6 Occupied Counties or any settlement which provides for continued British Rule in any form..

(iii) Opposition to all groups who call for any such internal settlements.

(iv) The co-ordination of active opposition to the renewal of partition in Ireland.

(v) We declare null and void any documents which usurp the sovereignty of our nation as declared in the 1919 Declaration of Independence.

(vi) The immediate and unconditional release of all Irish Republican Prisoners throughout the world.

(vii) The encouragement/fostering of democratic debate within the republican family.

(viii) Opposition to the Mitchell Document and any document which provides for continued British rule in any form. By fostering a unionist veto, it subverts moves towards national sovereignty and can only lead to a partitionist solution.

(ix) The Committee re-affirms the right of the Irish people to armed struggle in pursuit of national sovereignty.

(x) Opposition to any attempt to subvert the spirit of the Declaration of Independence. Any attempt to amend or delete Articles 2 & 3 of the 1937 Constitution is a move in that direction.

(xi) We reject neo-unionist attempts to subvert the sovereignty of Ireland.

(xii) Non-participation in Westminster or Stormont in any form or any type of administration which copper-fastens partition - for such participation subverts the ideal of 32 County Sovereignty.

(xiii) The immediate withdrawal of all Irish representatives from Westminster. We call on them to adhere to the sovereign position as declared in the Declaration of Independence of 21st of January 1919.

4. **The Ceasefire:** We support the current ceasefire but we reject negotiations that are not based on the demand for Irish sovereignty

5. **Means:** After intensive discussion it was agreed that the committee should seek to achieve broad unity among the republican family on the single issue of sovereignty. Comparison was drawn to the successful mobilisation around the issue of the H-Block and Armagh prisoners and it was felt that that campaign should be a model for the committee.

Delegates were encouraged to form local committees, to engage in agitation and fund-raising. It is to be a priority of the Executive to establish and develop international links with republicans in the USA, Canada, Australia, England, Scotland, Wales and other countries.

6. **Membership:** Membership / affiliation to the committee is open to all who accept and sign the Declaration of Independence.

7. Executive:

Chairperson: Michael Ahern;

Vice-Chairperson: Bernadette Sands-McKevitt

Secretary: Fra Browne;

Treasurers:

(i) Val Lynch

(ii) Beatrice Ni Shearbhain;

P.R.O.: Joe Dillon;

Organiser: Mick Burke;

Committee: Rory Doogan, Art

O'Searbhain, Eamonn Flanagan., Pat Farrell, Julie Byrne-Ahern, Gerry McNamara., Pat O'Donnell., Phil O'Donoghue , Francis Mackey.

8. **Special Resolution:** The conference, mindful that it was meeting on the eve of the 75th anniversary of the execution of Liam Mellows, Dick Barrett, Joe McKelvey and Rory O'Connor passed the following resolution:

"We the 32 County Sovereignty Committee, mindful of this date, pay tribute to our forefathers who defended the Republic and as a result of their actions faced death by a Free State firing squad.

We inherit those ideals and aspirations. We re-dedicate ourselves to those ideals and beliefs. On to the Republic!"

9. The text of the Declaration of Independence:

Declaration of Independence

Whereas the Irish people is by right a free people:

And whereas for seven hundred years the Irish people has never ceased to repudiate and repeatedly protested in arms against foreign usurpation;

And whereas English rule in this country is, and always has been, based upon force and fraud and maintained by military occupation against the declared will of the people;

An whereas the Irish Republic was proclaimed in Dublin on Easter Monday, 1916, by the Irish Republican Army, acting on behalf of the Irish people;

And whereas the Irish people is resolved to secure and maintain its complete independence in order to secure and maintain the common weal, to re-establish justice, to provide for future defence, to ensure peace at home and good will with all nations, and to constitute a national policy based upon the peoples will, with equal rights for every citizen;

And whereas at the threshold of a new era in history the Irish electorate has in General Election of December 1918, seized the first occasion to declare by an overwhelming majority its firm allegiance to the Irish Republic;

Now therefore, we, the elected Representatives of the ancient Irish people in national Parliament assembled, do in the name of the Irish people, ratify the establishment of the Irish Republic and pledge ourselves and our people to make this declaration effective by every means at our command;

We ordain that the elected Representatives of the Irish people alone have power to make laws binding on the people of Ireland, and that the Irish Parliament is the only Parliament to which that people will give allegiance;

We solemnly declare foreign government in Ireland to be an invasion of our national right which we will never tolerate, and we demand the evacuation of our country by the English Garrison;

We claim for our national independence the recognition the recognition and support of every free nation in the world, and we proclaim that independence to be a condition precedent to international peace thereafter;

In the name of the Irish people we humbly commit our destiny to Almighty God Who gave our fathers the courage and determination to persevere through long centuries of ruthless tyranny, and strong in the justice of the cause which they have handed down to us, we ask his divine blessing on this last stage of the struggle we have pledged ourselves to carry through to freedom.

Dail Eireann, January 21st 1919.