

Ollscoil na hÉireann
THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND

TEXT OF INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS DELIVERED BY RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR ALFRED O'RAHILLY, M.A., PH.D., D.LITT., D.SC., APRIL 14TH, 1966 ON THE OCCASION OF THE CONFERRING OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF LAWS *honoris causa* UPON SENATOR NORA CONNOLLY O'BRIEN.

MR. CHANCELLOR AND COLLEAGUES:

Senator Nora Connolly O'Brien, while fully deserving recognition in her own right, is to-day proposed as the recipient of a posthumory tribute to her father, James Connolly.

Among those who died in 1916 he holds a unique position which calls for brief comment.

This is not only because he was the founder and the leader of the Citizen Army, but because his personal conception of nationalism was no vague or abstract emotion. For him Ireland meant the toiling masses, to whose cause he devoted his whole life with heroic self-sacrificing commitment.

There is indeed no use in attempting to disguise the fact that his views were to the left of any existing party. But much of the criticism to which he was subjected would be impossible in these days of Pope John and the Council.

When in 1915, with the late Professor Smiddy, I inaugurated adult education in University College, Cork, against a strong academic opposition, Connolly in letters gave me great encouragement. In the one interview I had with him, we both concluded that most of our differences were due to discrepant phraseology. In January 1916 he published the same comment on a lecture given by the Capuchin Father Laurence. "We are rejoiced," he concluded, "to find among the clergy so many whose hearts also throb responsible to those ideals." While, owing to his education, his vocabulary was largely Marxian, he upheld the integrity of the family, associational liberty against state monopoly and the autonomous freedom of religion. And so, in my first public controversy in 1918, I was able to defend his view of the social liabilities of property.

He died with the conviction that the struggle to death of a minority would rouse his fellow-countrymen, and in his heart a social ideal not yet fully realized.

Molaim go mbronnfaí an chéim Dhochtúir le Dlí—*paterni honoris causa*—ar Nora Ní Conghaile i gcuimhne ar a hathair a fuair bás ar son a thíre.

PRAEHONORABILIS CANCELLARIE, TOTAQUE UNIVERSITAS :

Praesento vobis hanc meam filiam, quam scio tam moribus quam doctrina habilem et idoneam esse qui admittatur *honoris causa* ad gradum Doctoratus in Utroque Jure, tam Civili quam Canonico, idque tibi fide mea testor ac spondeo, totique Academiae.