

CONNOLLY AND HIS LEGACY

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While the political ideas of Irish socialist leader James Connolly have been studied at length, few scholars, with the notable exceptions of William Anderson and Roger Faligot, have tackled the problems of his complex legacy. With the contention that these problems can be alleviated through a clearer understanding of the thought and action of this significant Irish political theorist, the first part of this paper shall explore the different stages of Connolly's political evolution diachronically by drawing on both his theoretical works and his political activities. From this perspective the central question arises how Connolly accomplished a union between the ideologies of socialism and nationalism. In the second part the various parties and organisations that claim to follow his ideas shall be analysed. In this way the paper will explore how Connolly's ideas have impacted, and continue to impact, the Irish left, and inquire as to whether there are elements in his thought and action that might explain why so many parties claim his legacy. To these ends, the distinction between "memory" and "history," as made by Pierre Nora in *The Sites of Memory*, should be kept in mind. "Memory," which is rooted in the concrete space, is a perception of the past as though it were not past and could be resurrected easily. "History," on the other hand, is the reconstruction of the past that destroys spontaneous memory and transforms it into "memory archives," "memory duty," and "memory distance." Nora further defines "the sites of memory" as belonging to both collective memory and historical memory (Ollivier, "Presence and Absence" 175). As we shall see, this definition may be profitably applied to Connolly's legacy.

James Connolly (1868-1916) was the third son of Irish migrants to Scotland. At the age of fourteen, Connolly enlisted in the 1st Battalion of the King's Liverpool Regiment and encountered the land of his ancestors for the first time when his brigade was sent to Ireland in July 1882. After returning to Scotland in February 1889, Connolly entered socialist politics. This new affiliation with the left was attributable, in part, to the influence of John Leslie, the secretary of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) of James Keir Hardie (Edinburgh section) and author of *The Present Position of the Irish Question* (1894), a Marxist study of Ireland. In May 1896, Connolly moved to Dublin where, with the aid of some fellow socialists, he founded the Irish section of the ILP under the moniker of the Irish Socialist Republican Party (ISRP). From the outset Connolly

was confronted with the seemingly incongruous dual aspects of his political ideology. On the one hand, as a Marxist he believed the proletariat, as a product and condition of the existence of the capitalist regime, to be the only revolutionary class. On the other hand, his political outlook was greatly influenced by the United Irishmen John Mitchell, James Fintan Lalor, and Wolfe Tone. In essays written during this period, such as "Socialism and Nationalism" (*Shan Van Vocht*, January 1897), "Socialism and Irish Nationalism" (*L'Irlande libre*, Paris, 1897), and "Erin's Hope: The End and the Means" (pamphlet, March 1897), Connolly attempted to demonstrate that the two currents "are not antagonistic, but complementary," as the struggle for the liberation of Ireland must be *both* social and national (Preface to *Erin's Hope* 1). Socialism, Connolly maintained, is impossible without nationalism and vice versa: "Nationalism without Socialism – without a reorganisation of society on the basis of a broader and more developed form of that common property which underlay the social structure of Ancient Erin – is only national recreancy" ("Socialism and Nationalism" 4).

In his party manifesto Connolly defined his political objective as the establishment of an Irish Socialist Republic based upon "the public ownership by the Irish people of the land, and the instruments of production, distribution and exchange" ("Irish Socialist Republican Party" 1-2). This programme is expounded in ten points: the nationalisation of railways and canals; the abolition of private banks, and the establishment of state banks; a graduated income tax on all incomes over £400 per annum to provide funds for pensions to the elderly, the infirm, widows, and orphans; legislative restrictions of hours of labour to forty-eight a week, and the establishment of a minimum wage; free maintenance for all children; free education up to university level; universal suffrage; gradual extension of public ownership to "all the necessaries of public life"; public control and management of national schools by boards elected by popular ballot; the establishment of rural depots for agricultural machinery. Although he was to have no electoral success, standing as a candidate for the Wood Quay Ward in Dublin municipal elections in 1902 only to be defeated, Connolly advocated the ballot box toward the establishment of such a Socialist Republic. In this aspect he differentiated himself from the Irish Republican Brotherhood, who advocated military action. "The immense difference between the Socialist Republicans and our friends, the physical force men," Connolly maintained, lay in the question of physical force, which he considered of "very minor importance" ("Physical Force in Irish Politics" 4).

In 1907, Connolly migrated to the United States, joining the Industrial Workers of the World (the infamous "Wobblies," which had been founded in June 1905)

and thus the union movement. He considered this emigration an error and upon his return to Ireland in 1910 joined the Socialist Party, which had been founded by William O'Brien and former members of the ISRP in 1909 and which merged with four Belfast branches of the Independent Labour Party and the Belfast branches of the British Socialist Party to form the Socialist Party of Ireland. The party's manifesto also advocated the use of the polling box, promoting the election of socialist representatives to parliament. As Home Rule appeared imminent, Connolly wished to link the party with the Irish Labour Party in Belfast, and entered into a controversy with party leader William Walker in the columns of the Glasgow newspaper *Forward* from May to July 1911. After the failure of this attempted fusion, mainly owing to Walker's conservative views and his hostility toward Connolly's nationalism, Connolly founded the Irish Labour Party at Easter 1912, which he conceived as the "political weapon of the Irish working class" (Ellis 20). At the Irish Trade Union Congress in Clonmel in May 1912, Connolly declared that the party should support the unions. The party entered into close communion with the Irish Trade Union Congress (ITUC), which in 1913 was renamed the Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party (ITUCLP). At this stage of his evolution, Connolly attached primary importance to the conquest of economic power by the workers, writing that "the real battle is being fought out, and will be fought out, on the industrial field" ("The Language Movement").

The explosive events of 1913, including the formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force in January and the initiation of the great Dublin Lock-Out Strike in August, gave Connolly the opportunity to radicalise his position on violence and redefine his relations with the Nationalists. When he became Commander in Chief of the Irish Citizen Army (ICA), created by Larkin in November 1913 as a workers' self-defence force against the police, he had at his disposal "a weapon he could fashion at his own use" (Lyons, 285). Political violence, now possible and tangible, became an integral part of his programme. Hostile to partition, which he viewed as a means of dividing the working class, he was in favour of collaboration with the Irish Volunteers, a military organisation also founded in November 1913. In August 1914, Connolly denounced "the imperialist war." His pacifism and his refusal of conscription brought him close to the minority of the Irish Volunteers who refused to fight among the ranks of the British. He hoped that a local insurrection for national independence could "set the torch to a European conflagration, that will not burn out until the last throne and the last capitalist bond and debenture will be shrivelled in the funeral pyre of the last warlord" ("Our Duty in this Crisis" 238). 1915 marked the moment of an intense preparation of the ICA and of a reflexion on various revolutionary

tactics.¹ His army was small but well-trained, and Connolly became a renowned strategist. After a secret meeting with members of the Military Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, it was decided that the IRB and the ICA would act together towards staging an uprising: the 1916 Easter Rising, in which Connolly would be severely wounded and, ultimately, executed by the British government in Kilmainham Jail on 12 May.

In the final analysis, then, Connolly's ideology was a blend of Marxist Socialism and Nationalism, his means towards establishing a Workers' Republic changing from the ballot box to the use of "physical force." Connolly thus hesitated between dual conceptions of the party. Roger Faligot contends that "he felt a contradiction between trade unionism and the struggle for a national liberation" that he did not know how to overcome (167). Historians are similarly divided on his attitude towards syndicalism after 1914. According to Marxist scholars, such as Greaves and Kolpakov, Connolly abandoned syndical action (Ellis 43), yet others paint a more complex picture of his post-1914 politics. For Ellis, Connolly advocated industrial unionism in *The Re-Conquest of Ireland*, published in December 1915, a few months before his death, in which he argued for considering the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union (ITGWU) as a union that was *both* an industrial and a military force (43). Kieran Allen further argues that "while certain tensions arose in the ITGWU about his role in the ICA, the striking fact is how he managed to operate in two virtually distinct spheres of influence" (138). Historians also disagree as to consequences of Connolly's involvement in the 1916 Easter Rising for a full analysis of his political ideology. For Morgan, it was at this moment that Connolly ceased to be a Socialist. Greaves, however, asserts that for Connolly the struggle for socialism would start after the creation of a free Irish State and that the alliance with the Republican Nationalists was only a temporary one. To Allen's mind, Connolly "liquidated his politics into the general nationalist movement" (159). It is the contention of this paper, however, that, like Patrick Pearse, Connolly went to a "blood sacrifice" (Pearse 91) for the love of Ireland. Without renouncing his socialist ideas, and aware that the Rising was doomed to failure, the revolutionary socialist joined the mystic nationalist and died for the cause of Ireland (Ollivier, "James Connolly" 114). Given these complexities in Connolly's political ideology, however, political activists who claim to be his heirs clearly inherit a difficult legacy.

1 Articles on the insurrections of Moscow and Tyrol, as well as on the 1830 and 1848 revolutions in France, were published from May to July 1915 in the *Workers' Republic*.

In the aftermath of his execution by the British in the 1916 Easter Rising, William O'Brien and Cathal O'Shannon revived Connolly's Socialist Party of Ireland (SPI), although their primary concern was the ITUCLP. Their leadership, however, was challenged by the party's left wing, which, in a report sent to the Amsterdam Sub-Bureau of the Third International, claimed that the party was "controlled by men who are Trades Union officials first, anything else second, last (and very least) Socialists" (Anderson 126). In September 1921, Roddy Connolly was elected Party President, and Nora Connolly Party Treasurer. O'Brien and O'Shannon were expelled on the grounds that "they did absolutely nothing to build a strong Socialist Party to direct the Labour movement" (Anderson 127). The SPI was reorganised and renamed the Communist Party of Ireland (CPI), a Comintern-affiliated Party that aimed to establish a Workers' Republic. Its party newspaper conspicuously bore the name of Connolly's paper, *The Workers' Republic*, although "by November 1923, the Party had made so little progress that it could no longer support the Workers' Republic and the paper ceased publication" (Anderson 129). The Comintern ordered that the party be dissolved and join the Irish Workers' League (IWL), created by the well-known militant leader James Larkin upon his return from the United States in 1923. In Anderson's estimation, this action indicated that the CPI was moving away from Connolly, as

although the CPI claimed descent from the ISRP and the SPI, it is clear from its response to the Comintern that a distinct qualitative change in the spirit of independence had occurred over the years. It is inconceivable that James Connolly would have meekly accepted an order from outside the Party – to dissolve any of the parties with which he had been involved. (129-130)

According to Mike Milotte, a specialist on communism in Ireland, the weakness of the CPI was due to

the ever-present tension within the party between those who saw the national question as the starting point for all activity and those who sought to concentrate on economic issues [...] neither faction seemed to have grasped James Connolly's point that the two aspects were inseparable. (69)

The Irish Workers' League became the Irish section of the Comintern. However, due to Larkin's chaotic leadership it never acted as a political party and eventually collapsed. In 1926, Roddy and Nora Connolly, along with P.T. Daly, founded the Workers Party of Ireland (WPI). The party declared in the first issue of its journal *Hammer and Plough* that it intended to re-publish Connolly's works and follow their central aim of destroying the capitalist system so that a republic controlled by the workers might be created. The Party was never accepted by the Comintern, however, and had disappeared by the end of 1927.

Jim Larkin Jr., who had studied in Moscow, became chairman of the Revolutionary Workers Groups, founded in 1929, which became the Communist Party of Ireland (CPI) in June 1933. This small party, consisting of only a few hundred members, opposed the Blueshirts and played an active part in the Spanish Civil War. International Brigade veteran Michael O’Riordan’s 1979 book *Connolly Column: The Story of the Irishmen Who Fought in the Ranks of the International Brigades in the National-Revolutionary War of the Spanish People, 1936-1939* would later be devoted to the activities of the “Connolly Column” in Spain. The CPI suspended its activities in 1941, while a Communist Party remained in existence in the North. It was re-established in the South in 1948 as the Irish Workers’ League and in 1962 as the Irish Workers’ Party, which was to merge with the Communist Party of Northern Ireland in 1970 to become the Communist Party of Ireland. The party went into decline at the end of 1980, only to be revived in 1990. It professes to draw its ideology from Connolly, sharing the goals of his 1896 party manifesto of collapsing capitalism and replacing it with a system in which the means of production, distribution, and exchange would be publicly owned. The party is against liberalism and the European Union and has had no electoral success to date. Since 1942, the party has owned the Connolly Books bookshop, which publishes Connolly’s works, and is linked with the Connolly Youth Movement.

After the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in December 1921, divisions grew in Connolly’s Labour Party between the Treaty’s supporters and detractors and between its left and right wings. In Larkin’s absence, William O’Brien became the dominant figure in the ITGWU and enjoyed great influence in the Labour Party. After his return from the United States in 1923, Larkin was expelled from the ITGWU. He then formed the Workers’ Union of Ireland, which was only accepted in 1945, and returned to the Labour Party in 1944. O’Brien denounced the communist influence in Labour, founded a National Labour party, and withdrew the ITGWU from the Trade Unions Congress. According to Anderson, these splits were damaging for the Labour Party,

but probably even more damaging was the fact that many, probably most, ITGWU members saw the union as a ‘mere wagegetting machine’ rather than as an organisation committed to an OBU economic and political strategy. Finally, although the union leadership cannot be accused of lacking intellectual commitment to the OBU, O’Brien, O’Shannon and the other leaders were dedicated to Connolly’s teachings and were moreover men of real ability and courage they lacked the revolutionary fire, the wild opportunism which might have allowed their beliefs to be translated into concrete form. (106)

The history of the Labour Party is marked by internal feuds and coalitions with Fine Gael and Democratic Left, such as the *Rainbow Coalition*, from 1994 to

1997. Democratic Left had its origins in a split within the Officials. A faction led by Proinsias De Rossa wanted to move towards the acceptance of free market economics. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, they thought that the communist stance was an obstacle at the polls. Moreover, they wanted to distance themselves from suspected paramilitary action, as the official IRA was suspected to remain armed. In 1999 the Labour Party merged with Democratic Left, and by the 2004 elections it stood as the largest party in Dublin and Galway.

Two other parties bearing Connolly's influence were formed in the 1930s. In 1931 Saor Éire ("Free Ireland") was founded, with the support of the IRA's left wing, with objectives "based on the writings of James Connolly" (Cronin 156). The party, however, was condemned by the Church and soon collapsed. 1934 saw the founding of the Republican Congress. Although its members professed their shared faith in Connolly's teachings, a split occurred at its first Congress in September 1934. Roddy Connolly, Nora Connolly, and Michael Price wanted the Congress "to be a tightly organised Workers' Republican Party" that would fight for a Workers' Republic (Anderson 127). IRA veterans, such as Peadar O'Donnelly and Frank Ryan, believed rather that a United Front could form "a republic." Their disunity led to the collapse of the Republican Congress, which finally ceased to exist in 1936. Thus, it can be seen in the fates of the communist, labour, and nationalist movements that followed Connolly that the tensions between socialism and nationalism that informed his ideology are irreconcilably echoed in those who claim his legacy.

This leads us to the question of whether Connolly's legacy is to be found in Sinn Féin. The name of Sinn Féin, coined by Arthur Griffith in 1905, was incorrectly applied to the 1916 Rising, which was referred to as the 'Sinn Féin Rebellion' despite the fact that the party was not involved. Sinn Féin won the 1918 general elections, and on 21 January 1919 thirty Sinn Féin MPs assembled at Mansion House to proclaim themselves the Parliament of Ireland. The Irish Volunteers, organised by Michael Collins, pledged allegiance to Dáil Éireann and became the IRA that was to take part in the War of Independence. Sinn Féin was split between opponents and supporters of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, and again in 1926 when Éamon de Valera left the party to form Fianna Fáil. Pro-Treaty Sinn Féin changed its name to Cumann na nGaedhael and merged with the national centre party and Blueshirts to form Fine Gael. In the aftermath of World War II, the IRA, recognising the necessity of a political organisation, decided to revive Sinn Féin, which had become marginal. In 1949, it ceased military action in the Republic to concentrate its activities on the North. After the failure of the IRA's 1956-62 "Border Campaign," the party

moved to the left. Cathal Goulding, Séan Garland of the IRA, and Tomás Mac Giolla of Sinn Féin, became associated with the Communist Party of Great Britain's organisation for Irish exiles, called "the Connolly Association." Their objectives were to shift away from the issue of partition, emphasise political and socio-economic questions, and engage Ulster's protestant workers in an anti-imperialist popular front. After the violent response of the state to the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA), in addition to the wave of riots and sectarian attacks, the leadership of Sinn Féin and the IRA decided not to follow the traditional nationalist approach. According to Agnès Maillot, their "language of reform was not necessarily incompatible with that of revolution," as "the type of revolution that they had in mind was probably one where the class struggle, and not the nation, would be placed centre-stage" (17).

At the IRA Convention in December 1969, and again at the January 1970 Sinn Féin Ard Fheis, the delegates voted to participate in the Parliaments. This caused a split in the IRA, which was soon followed by a split in Sinn Féin between the Officials and the Provisionals. The Official IRA declared an end to offensive action and refocused to build a revolutionary Marxist Party. It associated itself with Official Sinn Féin, renamed Sinn Féin the Workers Party, the name under which the party won its first seats in the Dáil. In the North they were organised under the name of Republican Clubs, which then became the Workers Party Republican Clubs. In 1982 the two sections became The Workers Party of Ireland, a party affiliated with the International Communist and the Workers' Parties that inherited the historic Sinn Féin Headquarters on Gardiner Street. It achieved its best electoral results in West Belfast, where it gained 1.26% of the vote.

On 3 December 1974, a coalition of former Official Republican Movement members, independent socialists, and trade unionists, founded the Irish Revolutionary Socialist Party, the name of the party founded by Connolly in 1896, and its paramilitary wing, the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA). Both were founded in reaction to the Officials who had "abandoned" the national struggle. Seamus Costello was the president of the party and the army's first chief, until he was expelled from the Official IRA and Official Sinn Féin after a court martial. In 1977, Costello was murdered by Official IRA member Jimmy Flynn. At his funeral, Jim Daly, one of the leaders of the IRSP, praised Costello for having understood the interrelations between national struggle and class struggle (Faligot 279). The INLA continued to be a presence, with three of its members dying in the Maze Prison hunger strikes, and the INLA's perpetration of the Droppin Well bombing in December 1982. In the nineties, however, most

members of the IRSP and of the INLA joined Sinn Féin and the IRA. The IRSP was against the Good Friday Agreement and the Peace Process. The INLA is currently on a cease-fire. At its 2000 convention the Party affirmed that it stands in the tradition of Marx, Engels, and Connolly. It advocates class conflict as the motive force in human history and asserts that a Socialist Republic can only be established through the mass revolutionary action of the working class. Its formula, "there is no socialism without national liberation, nor national liberation without socialism," echoes Connolly's exactly.

A third tendency was represented by the creation of People's Democracy (PD) by Michael Farrell and Bernadette Devlin, two Belfast students, in October 1968, during the Civil Rights Movement. PD moved towards Trotskyite positions in 1970 and was recognised by the reunified Fourth International as its Irish section in 1976. PD dissolved in 1996 and reconstituted itself as Socialist Democracy. This small Belfast-based party prioritises the struggle against imperialism over nationalism. For Michael Farrell, Connolly's legacy has been distorted both by the new dominant class that extolled Connolly as a nationalist hero and suppressed his socialism, and by syndical militants who left aside his struggle against imperialism. A real revolutionary party, Farrell maintains, must go beyond those two stances (9).

Under the leadership of Seán Mac Stíofáin and Ruairí Ó Brádaigh, the traditionalists formed the Provisional IRA in December 1969 and its political wing Provisional Sinn Féin in January 1970. The provisional movement advocated abstentionism and armed struggle, insisting on the failure of the Goulding leadership in defending nationalist areas (at the time the acronym IRA was read as "I ran away"). Gerry Adams, who comes from a strongly nationalist family, joined Sinn Féin at Fianna Éireann in 1964 at the age of sixteen, after the Divis Street riots during the general election campaign. Adams supported the civil rights campaign as it developed in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s and joined the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association in 1967. In 1970, he aligned himself with the Provisional wing and, in 1978, became the party vice-president, under president Ruairí Ó Brádaigh. In 1983, Adams became president of Sinn Féin.

The 1980-81 hunger strikes were a turning point for Sinn Féin. In late 1975, the British Labour government withdrew "the special category status that republican and loyalist prisoners had been granted in 1972" (Maillot 20), which had stipulated that they need not wear uniforms or do prison work, and by doing so assimilated them into criminals. The nationalist prisoners refused to conform to the new rules. They organised blanket, dirt and hunger strikes. In Bobby Sands the Republican movement had a near-mythical figure who le-

gitimated its ideas. The election of Sands and Kieran Doherty to the British House of Commons and Dáil Éireann further legitimated the struggle of the Republican movement. On 5 November 1981, director of publicity Danny Morrison announced that the Provisionals were going to employ a double strategy, with “a ballot box in one hand and an armalite in another one” (*An Phoblacht/Republican News*). From that point, the movement no longer focused on national independence but on a political agenda.

The change was made gradually. At the 1986 Sinn Féin Ard Fheis, the party’s constitution was amended to drop the abstentionist tactic in the Republic, a change the IRA Convention condoned. Sinn Féin was abstentionist because Republicans claimed that the only legitimate Irish State was the Irish Republic declared in the Proclamation of the Republic of 1916, and, as such, the legitimate government was the IRA Army Council, which had been vested with the authority of that Republic in 1938 by the anti-Treaty deputies of the Second Dáil. Sinn Féin won seats but abstained from taking them.

The politics of the ballot box, with electoral performances from 1982 to 1992, led to the 1994 IRA ceasefire. This ceasefire enabled negotiations between Sinn Féin and John Hume’s Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), which led to the famous 1998 Good Friday Agreement between the Ulster Unionist Party, the SDLP, Sinn Féin and representatives of loyalist paramilitary organisations, under which a Northern Legislative Assembly was created. Sinn Féin became an organised political party both in the Northern Ireland Assembly and in the Dáil, where a Sinn Féin candidate was elected in May 1997 for the first time in forty years. During the 2002 general election, Sinn Féin obtained 6.5% of the national vote, and five of its candidates were elected. These results were achieved while competing with Fianna Fáil for the republican vote, and with the Labour Party for the socialist vote (Maillot 100). The “armalite” strategy was abandoned before the legislative elections in Northern Ireland (the first day was on 5 May). On 6 April 2005, Gerry Adams asked the IRA to take the historic decision to stop the armed struggle. On 8 April 2007, the British Army withdrew from Northern Ireland after a thirty-eight-year presence.

On 1 May 2007, Sinn Féin leaders Gerry Adams, Martin McGuinness, and Mary Lou McDonald, marked the dual anniversaries of the death of the hunger striker and IRA Volunteer Francis Hughes and of the execution of James Connolly. At the event, which took place at Connolly’s monument opposite Liberty Hall in Dublin, Gerry Adams declared:

Today we gather to remember two brave Irishmen who contributed so much to this country – James Connolly and Francis Hughes. Although they died 65 years apart, they were united in their support for Irish freedom and justice. IRA

Volunteer FH died on this day 26 years ago after 39 days on Hunger Strike in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh.

Ninety-one years ago James Connolly left Belfast on Good Friday 1916 to travel to Dublin where he was in command of the GPO during Easter Week and was severely wounded. He was arrested and court-martialled following the surrender. At dawn on 12 May, Connolly was taken by ambulance from Dublin Castle to Kilmainham Jail, carried on a stretcher into the prison yard, strapped into a chair, and executed by firing squad. ("Sinn Féin leaders")

In his speech Adams is arguing for understanding the IRA's fight for a united Ireland, as well as the hunger strikes leading to the death of some of their members, as the continuation of Connolly's fight during the 1916 Rising. Adam's political progress, however, is the reverse of Connolly's, as Adams repudiated violence to engage in constitutional politics, whereas Connolly abandoned the ballot box he advocated in the 1890s and turned to armed action. Adams, moreover, has been cautious not to stress Connolly's socialist ideology. In a 1979 interview with the magazine *Hibernian*, Adams declared that Sinn Féin was not a Marxist party (Maillot 103), arguing rather that class struggle is revisionism, and as such he had never advocated public ownership of the means of production, exchange, and distribution. In this aspect, Adams differentiates himself from the Communist Party, the Trotskyite parties (the Socialist Party, the Socialist Workers Party), and from his main rival, the Labour Party, which he accuses of not defending the rights of the workers. On 10 December 1986 he said, "I don't think that socialism is on the agenda at this stage except for political activists of the left. What's on the agenda at this stage is an end to partition. You won't get near socialism until you have national independence. It's a prerequisite" (qtd. in Maillot 104).

Connolly's formula was different in so far as he viewed socialism and nationalism as "complementary." In the 2002 Sinn Féin manifesto, Adams declared that the economic growth of the country had worsened inequality and injustice, and, at the 2003 Ard Fheis, that "equality is the most important word in the Republican vocabulary" (Maillot 101). In 2007 Adams argued that

Connolly's core values and principles are what guides Sinn Féin today. Like Connolly, we believe that the measure of any society is how it treats its most vulnerable citizens. Irish society, North and South fails this test miserably [...]. Like Connolly, equality remains Sinn Féin's watchword. This means ensuring that all citizens have equality of opportunity and access to healthcare, education, housing and employment [...]. Connolly believed that a united, independent Ireland based on equality for all could set an example and be 'a beacon' to the rest of the world. That remains Sinn Féin's vision. ("Sinn Féin leaders")

Adams also advocates the defence of multiculturalism, such as the rights of asylum seekers and migrant workers, as the legacy of Connolly's ideas.

As we have seen, Connolly's legacy has been manipulated and divided into small pieces. Each party puts an emphasis on one or two elements of his ideology; the struggle against imperialism, the building of a system based on public ownership of the means of distribution, production, and exchange, class struggle, equality, independence. As to the means, which are never clearly defined, they vary from revolutionary violence to the ballot box strategy. Collective memory is common to all the parties mentioned above, yet historical memory varies, as each party wishes to build its own identity, reconstructing Connolly's writings at its own will and for its own purpose. By so doing, each party stresses the distance between its own ideology and Connolly's.

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