



THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL Seanascal Shaorstát Éireann

Beannacht, Éire.

On the 2nd of December, now dubbed the Christmas Rising, a loyalist paramilitary officer slaughtered several brave members of Óglaigh na hÉireann and Garda Síochána. I must be honest—this assault was not stopped by the Ulster Special Constabulary, and the violent assailant was standing among them. As a result, a remaining soldier, unaware of what had actually happened, opened fire onto the USC (mistaking them for the shooting) and what would become the darkest night in Irish history began.

I thank the valiant leaders who assisted myself, the Taoiseach and the Minister for Justice and Equality in responding to this conflict. As a result, we were able to restore order and peace to County Monaghan.

I want us to go forward stronger, smarter and without anger or bitterness polluting our path. There is no blameless side, though the shortcomings are not equal on both sides. I will be working with the Government to ensure that necessary reforms are finally embedded into our public services to ensure our response to crises like this do not contribute to the unnecessary violence that sadly happened. I do lament that our side mistook paramilitary fire for the Special Constabulary. I do admit this played a part in rising tensions. I am determined to ensure our forces do not make this mistake in the future.

It is clear to me that our agencies need more training, precision and skill. I know they already have the dedication, loyalty and love for a country that we so desperately are thankful for.

It would be remiss, however, for me to simply mention our soldiers and gardaí. The Ulster Special Constabulary made a grave mistake in not

stopping the violent terrorist from murdering our citizens and public servants bearing nothing but Irish flags. Furthermore, once violence broke out, their incursion into Ireland was illegal, immoral and a violation of our sovereignty. I am deeply troubled by this and the pain, anger and desire for avengement so many feel is not lost on me.

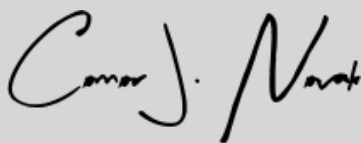
I beg our country to not yield to these feelings. We are a nation that was born of war and strife. We cannot give into more of it. We must be strong and seek healing. We must fix this problem, not exacerbate it.

It is clear to me that this event will finally be the spark to enact the reforms across the border once and for all. I will make it my commitment that these reforms are transparent and win your trust. The Government has informed me that they are committed to renegotiating the Dublin Agreement and all services on the border have committed to significant internal reform. We have a vested interest in ensuring that this is implemented across all four public bodies completely.

What happened is a shame. I will not excuse or look past an attack on our great nation. But I will remind our great nation that this cannot be a time for sectarianism. We must continue working on our own affairs, building a positive and constructive relationship with the North and ensuring unity and stability at home.

We must persist in wanting real, tangible reforms, but we must persist in ensuring our Free State is a home for everyone, too. We must continue to be one of the strongest nations in the community. We must remember that we are that because we are a home for loyalists and republicans alike.

Rath Dé ort,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Connor J. Novak". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Connor" and last name "Novak" clearly legible.

His Excellency, Sir Connor_Novak CIOM GCI KCMG KBE
An Seanascal Shaorstát Éireann