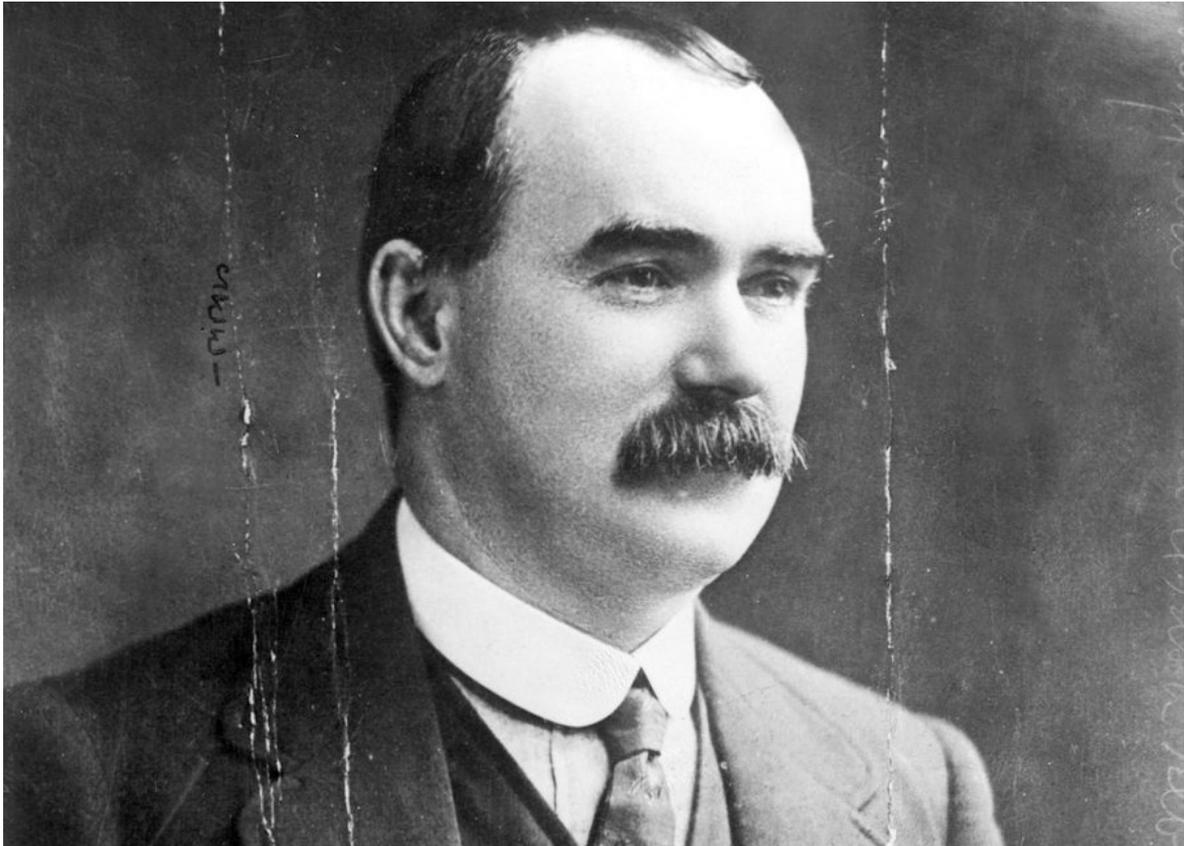


Eugene V. Debs: "James Connolly's Foul Murder"

Happy St Patrick's Day! Here's a 1916 article by Eugene Debs denouncing the British government for executing Irish socialist James Connolly and calling for a revolution to "sweep landlordism and capitalism and oppression from the Emerald Isle."



James Connolly, the commandant of the Irish Republican Army, was executed on May 12, 1916 for his part in the Irish rebellion. (Getty Images)

The British government has eternally disgraced and damned itself by the brutal and cowardly murder of the leaders of the Irish revolt. Granting all that can be justly charged against them their motive was of the purest and their attempt to establish a republic and liberate their people as brave and patriotic an act as ever sent heroes to martyrs' graves.

The Sinn Fein movement consisted of liberty-loving Irishmen who were brave enough and grand enough to offer up their lives to speed the day of freedom and self-government for their long-suffering fellow-countrymen. The leaders may have miscalculated in the making of their plans and been precipitate in executing them but they set the example of heroic self-sacrifice and paid the penalty with their lives. Pearse, the provisional president, was one of the most cultured of men and one of the bravest that ever gave his life to the cause of freedom. Skeffington was eminent as a humanitarian and though he had not even an active part in the outbreak, he was shot like a dog without even the semblance of a trial.

But one of the commanding figures of the Sinn Feiners, and one of the most heroic was our Socialist comrade, James Connolly, whose fate will make Great Britain blush for a thousand years to come.

James Connolly was well known to the Socialists and working people of the United States. He

addressed them by thousands and often they were stirred to enthusiasm by his eloquence and his inspiring appeals. He was a man of extraordinary ability and power, magnetic personality, and a natural leader of men, and his foul taking off, the eternal disgrace of his royal murderers, is an irreparable calamity to the labor movement.

In the first outbreak between the Irish rebels and the British soldiers Connolly was severely wounded and it was while he was in a semi-unconscious state as the result of his wounds that he was dragged forth to be shot. Limp and almost lifeless this heroic comrade of ours was propped up against a dead wall and while trying with glazed eyes to look his assassins in the face the firing squad riddled his great heart with bullets.

James Connolly is dead and yet does he live and speak to the oppressed and as he never lived and spoke before.

The seed that James Connolly sowed in the brains and hearts of his enslaved countrymen will germinate now that his precious blood has fertilized the soil and in due time the social revolution will accomplish what the Irish rebellion failed in, and sweep landlordism and capitalism and every other form of oppression from the Emerald Isle and from the face of the earth.