

# CONSTITUTION OF THE IRISH REPUBLICAN BROTHERHOOD SUPREME COUNCIL.

As delivered before the Special Commission on  
Parnellism and Crime on July 16, 1889.

1<sup>st</sup>. The Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and Government of the Irish Republic is and shall be composed of 11 members: seven of which said members shall be elected by the seven electoral divisions as marked out in the constitution of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and the remaining four shall be honorary members and shall be elected by the seven to whom alone their names shall be known, and the enactments of the Government so constituted shall be the laws of the Irish Republic until the territory thereof shall have been recovered from the English enemy and a permanent Government established.

2<sup>nd</sup>. The manner of election of the before-mentioned seven members of the Supreme Council shall be as follows: - The county or district centres shall be assembled in convention and shall elect a committee of five of their number who, under seal of an oath of secrecy, shall elect the member of the Supreme Council for the division whereunto they belong.

3<sup>rd</sup>. The term of office of the Supreme Council shall be two years, but any member may be removed at any time by a two-thirds vote of his constituents or a two-thirds vote of the Supreme Council; and any member of the S.C. wishing to resign shall give one month's notice to his constituents and to the S.C.

4<sup>th</sup>. There is and shall be an executive of the Supreme Council, composed of the president, secretary, and treasurer of that body, the decision of any two of whom shall be binding on all.

5<sup>th</sup>. The duty of the president of the Supreme Council shall be to direct the workings of the Irish Republican Brotherhood in all its departments, subject to the control of the Supreme Council.

6<sup>th</sup>. The appointment, suspension, and removal of all departmental officers shall be vested in the executive, subject to the approval of the Supreme Council.

7<sup>th</sup>. No member of the Supreme Council or officer in the employment thereof shall be in receipt of any salary from the funds of the Supreme Council or the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

8<sup>th</sup>. The authority of the Supreme Council shall be unquestioned by those who have become or may hereafter become members of the I.R.B., and the Supreme Council is hereby declared, in fact, as well as by right, the sole government of the Irish Republic, and has authority to levy taxes, negotiate loans, make war and peace, and do all other acts necessary for the protection of the Irish Republic; and the members of the Supreme Council shall be bound to this constitution and to one another by an oath of fidelity and inviolable secrecy; and every act or attempted act of any member of the I.R.B. to subvert the authority of the Supreme Council shall, in time of peace, be a grave misdemeanour, and punishable accordingly; and in time of war every such act or attempted act shall be treason and punishable with death.

9<sup>th</sup>. The Supreme Council reserves to itself the right of treating with all friendly Powers on all matters concerning the welfare of Ireland and the advancement of the cause of Irish independence.

10<sup>th</sup>. Executive power shall never be vested in one man, but shall be vested in the president, secretary, and treasurer of the Supreme Council.

11<sup>th</sup>. Every member of the I.R.B. and every member of the Supreme Council owes civil and military obedience to the executive of the Supreme Council, and the president thereof is, in fact, as well as by right, the president of the Irish Republic.

12<sup>th</sup>. In the event of the Supreme Council being unavoidably reduced in number, the remaining member or members shall exercise the authority of the Supreme Council until such time as the vacancies shall have been filled up, which shall be done as soon as possible, and the same for the executive.

13<sup>th</sup>. The military authority shall at all times be and remain subject to the civil Government and shall never be permitted to arrogate to itself the power of legislating or of restraining in any way

the constitution of the Irish Republic as promulgated by the Supreme Council.

14<sup>th</sup>. At each meeting of the Supreme Council the members thereof shall hand in a summarised statement of the receipts and expenditure of their respective divisions.

15<sup>th</sup>. The Supreme Council shall have power to award capital punishment only in cases of treason, and the crime of treason is hereby defined as any wilful act or word on the part of any member of the I.R.B. or of the Supreme Council calculated to betray the cause of Irish independence and subserve the interests of the British or any other foreign Government in Ireland, to the detriment of Irish independence.

16<sup>th</sup>. The Supreme Council shall appoint a secret court in each of the seven divisions of the I.R.B. for the trial of all members charged with the commission of treason or grave misdemeanours.

17<sup>th</sup>. The Supreme Council shall undertake the punishment of all minor offences committed by members of the I.R.B. Once the offending members have removed from the division whereunto they belong, and in cases where members unlawfully appropriate money entrusted to them for national purposes, such members shall be expelled from the I.R.B., and the Supreme Council shall draw up a list of the names of such members and circulate it through all parts of the I.R.B., and forward copies of it to representative Irishmen in every part of the world, in order that those who rob the treasury of their country may be held up to the execration of all honest men.

18<sup>th</sup>. In the Irish Republic there shall be no State religion, but every citizen shall be free to worship God according to his conscience, and perfect freedom of worship shall be guaranteed as a right and not granted as a privilege.

19<sup>th</sup>. The Supreme Council shall have power to alter or revise the foregoing constitution of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and of the Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and Government of the Irish Republic; but whenever it is contemplated to make any alterations it shall be necessary to give one month's notice of the meeting of the Supreme Council at which such alteration is

proposed to be effected; and it shall require a two-thirds vote of the Supreme Council to make the proposed change.

By order of,  
THE SUPREME COUNCIL.