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ON BEHALF OF	THAR CEANN
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The following statement was issued today by the Taoiseach, on behalf of the Government:-

The Government have decided that St. Patrick's Day should be set aside as a Day of National Commemoration; a day on which the State will solemnly commemorate all who died for Ireland, and all victims of civil strife in Ireland, as well as re-dedicating the people of Ireland, under St. Patrick, to the pursuit of peace.

St. Patrick's Day is a feast which has been celebrated by many generations of Irish people. The great event which it commemorates - the coming of Christianity to Ireland - has long been celebrated by Christians of all denominations and serves to remind us of a common heritage dating from long before our present divisions. It is a day, therefore, which all Irishmen can share, irrespective of their tradition, denomination or politics.

The decision will take effect from St. Patrick's Day 1974.

15 August 1973