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## American Irish Newsletter - May 2000

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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# AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation

Volume 25, Number 5

May 2000

## Mitchell: Northern Leaders Must Create Hope

By Sandy Carlson, *Editor*

CREATING an environment that embraces hope, opportunity, and equality is the key to peace in Ireland, former Irish peace talks chair George Mitchell told an audience at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury.

Before approximately 250 students and visitors April 13, Mitchell offered some insight into the Irish peace process. He spoke in general terms about the political culture of Ireland, some of the obstacles that the political leaders in the North have faced since the 1998 Mitchell Agreement, and the Agreement itself.

The Agreement proposed to restore a measure of local power-sharing, cross-border cooperation, and closer links between Britain and Ireland. It also recognized the significance of equality of opportunity and human rights in creating a stable society.

Despite the difficulties that have beset the political leaders who are attempting to implement the Agreement, Mitchell assured the audience that the compromises the Agreement embodies could succeed yet. He said the Northern party leaders' agreeing to a deadline to the negotiations so they

could get an Agreement was evidence that these men and women wanted to transform Northern society.

Mitchell added that none of the party leaders who endorsed the Agreement ever accepted everything that was in it but agreed to it as a way out of the violent political morass that has destroyed countless lives since the conflict began in 1969.

Clinton's former special advisor on Northern Ireland said he is not surprised by some of the difficulties currently besetting the peace process: "The Agreement made peace possible, but it requires political compromise. Disagreements have resurfaced on everything because in Northern Ireland there is no history of compromise."

Northern leaders also face the challenge of dealing with conflicting messages from their constituents: solve the problems facing the Agreement, but solve the problems on our terms. The situation engenders stalemate within parties because the compromises needed to resolve the impasse are often at odds with local needs and wishes of party members.

Change will likely continue to be

slow, he added, because political leaders in the North function in "difficult, dangerous circumstances. The wrong word could cost [them their lives]," he said, adding, "They deserve our encouragement and our continued support."

Despite the challenges of conflicting messages, conflicting interpretations of the Agreement, and conflicting political aspirations, political dialogue is the only alternative to political violence, Mitchell said. He pointed to the correlation between violence and poverty in the North, saying the lack of opportunity and hope lead to violence.

Mitchell refused to comment on Irish history and Britain's role in it, saying that as a negotiator he dealt with political reality rather than what could have been or should have been.

He also said he believed that Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern and British Prime Minister Tony Blair are keenly interested in resolving the Northern conflict and that their successors are not likely to be more interested.

The former senator said he would not return to the peace process to help break the latest impasse because he believed his presence could be counterproductive.

"People who won't talk will have to learn to talk to others to deal with their problems," Mitchell said. People aren't as forthcoming, he said, if they believe no agreement is final until a third party steps in for another stage of discussions.

Mitchell offered the audience--and, perhaps, the political leaders?--two tips to successfully negotiate: know when you're ahead and know when to quit.

## INSIDE

Peace Process Update .....	2
From the North .....	3
Newsbits .....	4
American Irish History .....	5
British Army Must be Decommissioned .....	6
Britain Plans Violence of Bloody Sunday, 1972 .....	7
Action Requests .....	8

## Our View: Stay Committed to Peace

*THE PEC has seen countless Americans over the years invest time and effort into ending the conflict in Northern Ireland. Concerned Americans have sought to highlight human rights abuses in the North, end employment discrimination, and bring an American presence to the peace process. At home, we have also sought to end anti-Irish racism and highlight the significance of the Great Hunger to all Americans, among other activities.*

*Our efforts have borne fruit. The White House is a key player in the peace process. MacBride legislation is on the books in cities and states across the country. Countless municipalities have commemorated the Great Hunger and included the subject in their public school curriculum. Indeed, issuing statements in support of the peace process has become run of the mill for several elected officials who likely would have seen the issue as irrelevant 25 years ago.*

*Nevertheless, 25 years after the PEC began its letter-writing campaigns out of a shoe box, members and other concerned Americans continue campaigning for justice for the victims of Bloody Sunday, 1972, as well as other victims of state violence. We continue to protest public figures belittling the conflict in the North. We continue to see unionists finding new ways to avoid sharing government with nationalists.*

*The PEC receives messages every month from people who ask how they can help end the conflict. Our work continues. Let the momentum of our success thus far--inconceivable 25 years ago--encourage us to continue campaigning for peace. Stay involved.*

## Peace Process Update

### March 3

President Bill Clinton will send two White House officials to meet with British and Irish officials in Belfast to try to overcome the latest peace process impasse.

### March 4

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams says he does not hold out hopes for the latest round of talks; Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern says IRA decommissioning might never happen if the British do not reinstate power-sharing.

### March 9

Irish Foreign Affairs Minister Brian Cowen says the British should scale down their military presence in the North to aid the peace process. Northern Secretary Peter Mandelson says there's no sense reviving the political institutions until the governments can be sure both nationalists and unionists will participate in them.

### March 10

Former talks chairman George Mitchell says he believes the current deadlock in the peace process can be broken if the parties concentrate on implementing all aspects of the Mitchell Agreement rather than focusing solely on decommissioning.

### March 12

Ahern says Britain should withdraw troops from the North.

### March 13

Garda Commissioner Pat Byrne says that he believes the IRA poses no threat but that there will be an armed republican element so long as Britain controls the North. Sinn Fein chair Mitchell McLaughlin and SDLP leader John Hume endorse Clinton's comment that the parties "should build on the silence of the guns." Hume says it is clear "the cease-fires are there" and that the political institutions should be reinstated immediately.

### March 17

RUC Chief Ronnie Flanagan says 500 British troops will

(continued on Page 8)

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## From the North: *Decommissioning Hurdle is key to a new Agreement*

By Robert Heatley, co-founder of the Campaign for Democracy, a predominantly Protestant organization, Belfast, Northern Ireland

TWO CATCHY observations emerged from the April Sinn Fein *ard fheis* [annual meeting]. They sum up the state of the Mitchell Agreement: "Ireland voted, and Britain vetoed" and "50 years of one-party (unionist) rule, 30 years of war, and 8 weeks of inclusive institutions."

Britain's Secretary of State for the North Peter Mandelson pulled the institutions down despite the wishes of the Irish government, the SDLP, and Sinn Fein; and he did so with great haste. He wanted to save David Trimble's leadership of the Ulster Unionist Party because, Mandelson assured us, the future of the Agreement depended on Trimble's survival.

Every other consideration counted for nothing. In fact, General de Chastelain, whose remit was to deal with the matter about which Trimble was having difficulties—IRA arms—had been able to report, admittedly at a late stage, progress on that very topic.

Nonetheless, Mandelson could not wait to begin flexing his muscles, and he pulled the institutions down. No matter that he violated international law and the British-Irish treaty of 1998 and that there had been no breach of the terms of the Mitchell Agreement on the matter of IRA disarmament.

He could not have foreseen what a mess he was walking into. The only good effect of his action has been to dispel the illusion some prominent members of the SDLP held that the Agreement "dispensation" had accorded self-determination to the Irish people on an all-Ireland basis. Ireland did vote, but Britain had vetoed that vote. Nothing had changed since Britain imposed partition in 1922.

Mandelson had found it easy to knock down what had been built up

over long, tortuous years of haggling, but now he is not finding it so easy to undo the damage he has done. He has passed up a golden opportunity to take British policy in a new, intelligent, constructive, direction.

Mandelson finds himself in a bizarre role reversal. He has become the factotum of what appears to be a fast-diminishing wing of the UUP, and there are signs that he is trying to extricate himself from this inglorious situation.

Here is the scenario. The UUP is governed by the Ulster Unionist Council, within which an anti-Trimble, anti-Agreement bloc of 43 percent exists. The Orange Order exerts great sway here. These people insist that Trimble's faction cannot permit the reinstatement of the Stormont institutions without their consent. They want IRA guns up front, or something very close to that, and they want the RUC name and symbols to remain, along with other watered-down Patten recommendations. They have hog-tied Trimble; if he wants to make a move, he has to get their approval.

This UUC faction, in its turn, is itself hog-tied by Agreement rejectionists who form a bloc outside the UUP and to whom the UUP is afraid of losing electoral support in upcoming elections. One unionist has categorized this group as being incapable of doing anything more than engaging in a "dialogue of the daft" with itself. It is comprised of the DUP, the happy-clappy Carsonite wing of Union First, the UKUP (Bob McCartney and a few others), and the mime faction that passes itself off as the Ulster Unionist Assembly Party. It takes only a few defections from this latter group to leave Trimble's supporters as a minority in any resurrected Assembly,

thereby disabling its workings. In short, the non-UUP rejectionists have the UUP rejectionists by the throat; they, in turn, have Trimble by the throat. Not a pretty sight.

This is the wagon-load to which Mandelson has hitched himself while telling us that he wishes to implement the Agreement in full. For the sake of credibility, he must detach himself immediately. How he will do this is his problem. He shouldn't have put himself in the situation in the first place.

As of April 11, he is said to be working hard with the Irish government to work out a plan whereby the Agreement institutions will be reinstated before, or very shortly after, Easter. The latest reports suggest that he is having difficulties in getting an accord with Dublin, however.

In addition, and as is only to be expected, the UUP is not helping him much, either. Deputy UUP leader John Taylor has said that Mandelson is fooling himself if he thinks that the UUP will go back into an Executive without greater reassurances (that is, IRA disarmament on the UUP's terms) than they had last time. Then there is that little matter of getting around the RUC blockage. Taylor is not worried. Along with all the other unionist rejectionists, he is playing it long and looking to the upcoming elections. If the Agreement fails, so what?

Like the other rejectionists, Taylor prefers a new, more unionist-friendly, agreement. This objective is what lay behind the decommissioning hurdle all along. What an appalling vista this kind of failed politics will open up. Is this to be the outcome of Mandelson's stewardship? It is easy to spin-doctor in the British context, but qualities greater than that are required in Ireland.

## Newsbits

**HARLAND & Wolff** shipyard in loyalist east Belfast could close with the loss of 1,745 jobs after a vital 400-million-pound order from Cunard was awarded to a rival French shipbuilder yesterday. Amid suspicions that the political instability in the North had a bearing on Cunard's decision, H&W management accused the British government of not offering enough aid to help it secure the contract to build the Queen Mary II superliner. Harland & Wolff's order book will be finished in June, and staff have already received 90-day redundancy notices. (RM Dist. 3/11/00)

The family of an unarmed IRA man who was shot dead by the RUC is taking its 17-year fight for justice to the European Court of Human Rights. Gervaise McKerr (31) was one of three Armagh men gunned down in a police ambush near Lurgan in 1982. The European court will look at the police investigation and the role of the DPP and coroners' inquests, particularly in deaths at the hands of the state. The European Court will also consider the SAS killings of six IRA men in Loughall in 1989, the 1992 police shooting of IRA man Pearse Jordan, and alleged security force collusion in the UFF murder of Patrick Shanaghan in 1991. The controversial killings of the unarmed IRA trio—Gervaise McKerr, Sean Burns and Eugene Toman—formed part of John Stalker's investigation into the alleged shoot-to-kill policy by the RUC. In 1984 three policemen from the RUC's antiterrorist unit were acquitted of killing Toman. No-one has been charged with McKerr's killing. A Belfast coroner was later forced to abandon an inquest into the men's deaths after failing to obtain vital evidence from the top-secret Stalker/Sampson report. Ironically, the McKerrs' lawyer was Belfast solicitor

Pat Finucane, murdered by the UFF 11 years ago. Metropolitan police chief John Stevens is heading a new investigation into allegations of security force collusion in the lawyer's death. (*Irish News* 3/25/00)

A man being questioned in connection with the murder of lawyer Rosemary Nelson was a member of the British Army's Royal Irish Regiment (RIR) at the time of the attack....The news has fuelled the widespread belief that elements of the British military/policing establishment colluded in the killing. Rosemary Nelson had received taunts and death threats from the RUC, who were furious at her successful court challenges on behalf of nationalist clients on civil rights issues such as harassment, intimidation, and wrongful arrest. The sophisticated booby-trap car bomb that killed Nelson was belatedly claimed by the loyalist Red Hand Defenders, but few believe they were behind the murder....The arrested man, who has yet to be named, has resigned from the RIR since the attack. He was arrested on Thursday morning at a house in Breezemount Manor in the mainly Protestant village of Hamiltonsbawn, five miles from Armagh city. A woman who was living with the man was also arrested. The couple were first questioned about an arms find, but members of the Nelson murder inquiry team, headed by East Anglian police chief Colin Port, were called in to question the couple. These are the first arrests in the case. (RM Dist. 3/11/00)

Police have still not notified some republicans whose personal details were among security documents discovered in an Orange hall—five months after the find. Around 300 military files containing information on people in the south Armagh and greater Belfast areas were uncovered in Stoneyford, County Antrim at the end of Oct. The documents had been

in the possession of dissident loyalist grouping the Orange Volunteers. One file lists a street address that has not existed since the 1970s. In other cases, detectives might have little more than a name to go on. Sinn Fein's Lower Falls representative Tom Hartley was told March 2 that his details were among the documents. The delay of five months before the RUC informed Hartley has raised fears that other republicans are being kept in the dark about loyalist assassination plans. (RM Dist. 3/4/00, *Irish News* 3/23/00)

A bomb made of British military explosives and planted at the rear of a row of shops on Belfast's Falls Road has been defused by an IRA Volunteer, according to a report in this week's *An Phoblacht/Republican News*. The bomb was of a type that was technically in advance of anything loyalists have used in the past, and as the explosives were C4 high explosives used by the British Army, a British dirty tricks operation is suspected. An IRA spokesperson outlined events leading up to and including the defusing of the bomb. "A local resident spotted a man acting suspiciously in an entry behind a row of shops which face onto the Falls Road. He watched the man leave the scene and followed him to a car, which then left the area. The resident then returned to the entry and noticed a black bin liner lying up against one of the buildings. It was bulky and obviously was wrapped around something. He removed the bag and saw a blue tool box. He took the tool box out, opened it, and immediately realized that it contained a bomb. He left it down and moved away." The resident then contacted an IRA Volunteer who confirmed that it was a primed bomb and cleared the area. Another IRA Volunteer, an experienced engineer, made safe the device and removed it from the scene for a closer examination of its component parts. (RM Dist. 3/14-15/00)

## American Irish History: Immigrants Aid Washington, Help Build DC

By Kevin P. Murphy, Massachusetts

DURING the American Revolution, George Washington tirelessly sought to achieve a nation free of British control. The British, in turn, tried several times to capture George Washington and thereby bring the colonies to their knees. Irish immigrant Hercules Mulligan played a central role in beating England at its espionage game and saving the man who would lead this nation to freedom.

Hercules Mulligan was born in 1740 in Coleraine, County Derry, of parents who were avid readers of Greek mythology. When Hercules was six, he and his parents immigrated to what is now Manhattan.

The Mulligan family fiercely opposed British tyranny both in Ireland and in America. As a result, Hercules and his brother Hugh became high-level members of the New York Committee of Observation, a group opposed to British rule of the colonies. Hercules became a close friend of Alexander Hamilton. In fact, the Mulligan family took in Hamilton when he immigrated to New York from Bermuda.

On July 9, 1776, Hercules organized his fellow patriots to tear down the King George statue in Manhattan. The statue was melted down to provide George Washington and his troops thousands of bullets. Hercules then became the chief of Washington's intelligence operations in New York.

In 1781, Mulligan learned of a British army plot to capture Washington as the general rode his horse near the Connecticut shore. Mulligan got the word to Washington just hours before the British arrived.

When Washington's troops liberated New York on Nov. 25, 1783, Washington dined at Mulligan's home and credited him with the victory.

As the capitol of the United States, Washington, DC, represents American influence and ideals. The American Irish played a key role in the development of the District of Columbia.

The American Irish family the Carrolls of Maryland owned much of the land that is now Washington. A patriotic family, its members signed the

Declaration of Independence and founded America's first railroad. The Carrolls donated the land to the new republic for its capitol.

Other American Irish landowners—including P. McMahon, Lawrence O'Neal, and John Casey—donated land to the new city. Likewise, Dominick Lynch, the owner of the most property in Washington, donated land.

American Irish people also shared in the design of the new city. Irish-born James Dermott in 1795 drew up plans for the streets of Washington. He and L'Enfant designed the avenues and parks of the city.

Kilkenny-born James Hoban became chief designer of the White House and the Capitol building. Hoban took up that task again in 1814 after the British burned down much of the city during the War of 1812.

For years, Washington and nearby Baltimore, MD, became the home-towns of many Irish immigrants.

Source: Library of Edward Kelley, Boston

## Rooney: Protestants and Catholics Behave Like 'Unruly Schoolchildren'

PEC MEMBER James Power reports that a national columnist and TV personality has compared the Northern conflict to a school yard squabble, trivializing a serious political problem that has cost thousands of people their lives and denied all the people of the North human rights and democracy.

Writing in a syndicated newspaper column, *60 Minutes* regular Andy Rooney recently compared the Protestants and Catholics of Northern Ireland to "unruly schoolchildren who ought to be spanked and put to bed without supper."

Rooney's column questions some Americans' interest in their nation of origin, criticizes the New York St. Patrick's Day parade for refusing to allow a gay organization to march under its own banner, and laments Harland and Wolff shipyard's failure to win the contract for the Queen Mary II.

Rooney also says everything in Northern Ireland is fragile because "the Catholic Irish are too proud and aware of being Catholic, and the Protestants are too proud and aware of being Protestant." The "hateful state of affairs" between people who are divided by "not much else but religion and superficial cultural differences is inexcusable," he adds.

Although Rooney opens his column with an explicit statement of his disinterest in his Irish ancestry, he presumes to diagnose a solution to Ireland's political crisis. Worse yet, he suggests that some great paternal hand—Britain's?—reach out and swipe Ireland on the bottom for its poor behavior. Clearly, such a diagnosis says more about Rooney than Ireland, but such commentary from such an influential personality could undermine American support for the peace process. (*See Action Request, Page 8.*)

## British Army Killers Must be Decommissioned

By Stuart Ross (*Ross has worked with the Pat Finucane Center since 1996*)

SEVEN years ago, a record crowd braved the cold to watch Syracuse's 11th annual St. Patrick's Day parade. A bittersweet tie to the Emerald Isle marked the 1993 parade, however; it was dedicated to the memory of Peter McBride, a Belfast teen whom British soldiers murdered months earlier.

Peter was one of the many alumni of Project Children. The program brings Irish children to the US to spend six weeks with American families. Peter spent the summers of 1985 and 1986 with the family of William and Rita Sopchak of Liverpool, New York. He was 10 years' old on the first visit.

After Peter returned to Ireland in 1986, he spent the last six years of his life in the New Lodge district of his native Belfast.

The early 1990s were not stable years in Ireland. Political violence was on the rise. Loyalist death squads stepped up their campaign against Catholics. So did the British army.

On Sept. 4, 1992, two members of the British Army's Scots Guards shot Peter dead after he ran away from their foot patrol. The soldiers had already stopped, questioned, and searched the teen. They knew who he was and that he was unarmed.

Such shootings were not uncommon in the North. After 25 years of conflict in Ireland, the British Army and RUC had killed nearly 400 people; more than 60 of those were children. Though many of these killings were controversial, few soldiers and RUC members had faced prosecution. James Fisher and Mark Wright, did.

The Guardsmen's case came before Belfast Crown Court in the spring of 1994. Months earlier, two Royal Marines had been cleared of all charges relating to the Dec. 1990

shooting of unarmed Fergal Carragher in Cullyhanna, County Armagh.

During the trial, Lord Justice Kelly branded Fisher and Wright as "untruthful and evasive." Months later, the Guardsmen were convicted and sentenced to life in prison for Peter's murder. The men were the third and fourth soldiers ever convicted of murdering a civilian while on duty in Ireland.

A subsequent appeal on behalf of the soldiers was dismissed in Dec. 1995. An appeal to the British House of Lords was denied in March 1996. Nevertheless, things were far from over for the two soldiers; the British government had already set dangerous precedents in cases such as this one.

In 1984, Private Ian Thain was convicted of the murder of Thomas Reilly of Belfast. Thain was the first British soldier to be convicted of such a crime in Ireland. Thain served fewer than four years of his life sentence.

Nearly 10 years later, Private Lee Clegg of the Parachute Regiment was convicted of the murder of Karen Reilly. Clegg also spent fewer than four years of his life sentence behind bars; his murder conviction was later overturned. (A second conviction in relation to the death of Belfast Martin Peake was overturned in Jan. 2000.)

Upon release, both Clegg and Thain returned to their regiments.

By late 1996, a campaign to free Fisher and Wright made headlines in Scotland and England. Former British Army officers led the campaign. Many British MPs and much of the British media uncritically supported it. Campaigners were quick to point out that the two soldiers had already served longer sentences than either Clegg or Thain. Natural justice meant the Guardsmen should be released.

The Pat Finucane Center, a Derry-based human rights group, pointed out the racist nature of the Fisher and Wright campaign. "The premise behind the entire thing," said a spokesperson, "is that an Irish life is somehow worth less than another life." The Center began working closely with the McBride family, putting together a fact file on Peter's murder, issuing press releases, and lobbying senior politicians.

Then, with the signing of the Mitchell Agreement, the release of all conflict-related prisoners seemed imminent.

Nearly six years to the day of Peter's murder, Guardsmen Fisher and Wright were released from prison on the word of British Secretary of State Mo Mowlam outside the terms of the Mitchell Agreement.

Two months later, an Army Board comprised of senior Army officers, a civil servant, and a government minister decided "exceptional reasons" would allow the soldiers to remain in the British Army. Normally, a murder conviction—indeed, almost any conviction—would have resulted in a soldier's being discharged from service.

The family fought back. Lawyers acting on behalf of the McBride family decided to challenge the Army Board's "exceptional reasons." The reasons offered by the board would now be the subject of a judicial review. This had never been done before.

In June 1999, after a two-day hearing at Belfast High Court, Mr. Justice Kerr retired to consider his decision in the case. Judgment was delivered last Sept. The McBride's won this time.

"The McBride's court victory, while unprecedented, was long overdue," said a spokesperson for the Pat Finucane Center. "The next logical step in this case is for the Army Board to discharge the two soldiers." (*See Action Request, Page 8.*)

## Britain Plans Violence of Bloody Sunday, 1972

Compiled by Sandy Carlson, *Editor*

THE NEW INVESTIGATION into Bloody Sunday, 1972, has revealed that the British government intended to respond harshly in Derry in its effort to put an end to civil rights protests there.

The Saville Inquiry, which began in March, sat until Easter while counsel to the tribunal Christopher Clarke, QC, made his opening remarks. After opening statements, the inquiry adjourned until Sept., when it will hear witness accounts. There is no time limit on the investigation, but it is likely to last more than 18 months. The inquiry is to examine thousands of documents, about 5,000 photos, and more than 1,000 witnesses.

Already the inquiry has heard that high-level British officials supported a military response to peaceful protesters in Derry in 1972, that the British army intended to shoot protestors, and that the Northern Secretary of the time likewise supported a military response and opposed cooperating with nationalists in government. Britain's strategy in Derry on Jan. 31, 1972, left 14 people dead—13 died instantly and one died in hospital—at the hands of the British army's Parachute Regiment. All of the dead were unarmed.

Lord Widgery's 1972 investigation into the massacre exonerated the paratroopers, whose basic argument was that they thought they were in danger of their lives because, they said, shots had been fired at them. The Saville Inquiry has come about after years of campaigning by the families of the dead and human rights groups for an independent investigation into the incident.

The inquiry has heard the following.

- The longest-serving officer in Derry at the time believed the decision to deploy the Parachute Regiment was

taken at government level. Referred to as Colonel 1347, the officer—commander of the Royal Anglians in Derry in 1972—stated to the inquiry that he was surprised nobody had discussed the decision with him. He said that Brigadier Patrick McClelland told him the decision to use the Paras came from the highest level. The colonel said he understood this to mean at government level.

- Colonel 1347 also stated that he believed no military commander would have used the regiment in such a situation. Further, the officer said the Paras did not know Derry and had never operated in the Bogside before.
- Former military commander General Robert Ford suggested in a memo weeks before the 1972 march that key rioters should be shot. In a memo from Ford to Northern Ireland commander Harry Tuzo, Ford complained about the weapons available to soldiers: rubber bullets and CS gas. These were ineffective because of range and terrain, he said. "As I understand it, the commander of a body of troops called out to restore law and order has a duty to use minimum force but he also has a duty to restore law and order. We have fulfilled the first duty but are failing in the second. I am coming to the conclusion that the minimum force necessary to achieve a restoration of law and order is to shoot selected ring leaders amongst the [Derry Young Hooligans] after clear warnings have been issued," the officer said.

- Minutes of a Downing Street meeting between then-Northern Ireland Prime Minister Brian Faulkner and then-British Prime Minister Edward Heath in Oct. 1971 revealed Faulkner was in favor of a military response to unrest at the time. Summing up the meeting, Heath said the

British government recognized the gravity of the Northern Ireland situation. He said the government believed any security solution should be accompanied by evidence of a detailed political solution.

- Faulkner said he would oppose moves to introduce nationalists to Stormont, even if they foreswore their campaign for a united Ireland until the "emergency" was over.
- The minutes also reveal that Faulkner recognized social, economic, and political problems were intertwined but felt a security solution was the key to resolving the situation.
- A formerly classified document from then-chief of staff of the British army General Michael Carver to Heath (before the meeting between Heath and Faulkner in Oct. 1971) outlined the military possibilities in Derry. It noted: "It may become imperative to go into the Bogside and root out the terrorists and the hooligans. The timing, political implications, and local reaction to such an operation would have to carefully judged."
- The document drew up three options for Derry: maintain the status quo in the hope that political progress would be made and help a return to normality; show the army's ability to go into the area at will by establishing regular patrol patterns; occupy and dominate the area, taking down barricades and persuading the RUC to play its part. This was an option that would stir up Catholic opposition as much as it would placate Protestants.

Greg McCartney, solicitor for the family of victim Liam Wray, said the information was highly significant because "it is supportive of a growing momentum both in the minds of the military and political leaders at the time towards taking a very, very harsh action to re-assert control over no-go areas in Derry."

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Contact: **Andy Rooney**, In care of CBS, 524 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10019; Tele. 212-975-4321

**Message:** I urge you to withdraw publicly your comments in a recent newspaper column in which you compare the conflict in Northern Ireland to a squabble between unruly schoolchildren who should be "spanked and put to bed without supper." The comments suggest the Irish are unable to solve their political problems, that some paternal other party must step in to correct the "unruly" Irish, and that the denial of basic rights ("supper") is somehow a key part to solving the problem. The root cause of conflict in Northern Ireland is Britain's denial of human and civil rights to all citizens of the North. Don't commenting on issues know nothing about that effect a culture you claim to care little about.

Contact: **British Consulate General (NYC)**, Tele. 212-745-0200; Fax 212-754-3062; **Minister of State for the Armed Forces John Spellar** Email public@ministers.mod.uk

**Message:** I urge the Army Board to discharge from military service Guardsmen James Fisher and Mark Wright, guilty of murdering Belfastman Peter McBride in 1992. Discharging them from service would ease the McBride family's pain as well as the pain of other families in Northern Ireland who have lost loved ones to state violence.

(continued from Page 2)

leave the North and return to Britain next month because the security situation is improving. The move will bring troop levels in the North to below 14,000 for the first time in years. In Washington, UUP leader David Trimble says: "If we [go back into government with Sinn Fein], it has to be against the background of absolute certainty that this time it will work and this time [the IRA] will decommission within an appreciable period of time (from) the formation of the Executive." Later, he says this represents a "tightening" of the UUP's position. Still later, he says the media misquoted him.

### March 25

Trimble narrowly defeats the Rev. Martin Smyth in a vote for the leadership of the UUP. With just 56.7 percent of the vote, Trimble fails to win a clear endorsement of his handling of the peace process. However, the UUP's ruling council also backs a motion linking the return to power sharing with the retention of the name and symbols of the RUC. Mandelson rejects the UUP's new precondition on returning to power sharing.

### March 28

Ahern says there is no chance that decommissioning will happen by May 22.

### March 30

The Criminal Justice Review Report, set up under the Mitchell Agreement, issues a report that recommends radical changes to the prosecution service, an end to Crown emblems inside the courts, and an independent commission to appoint judges.

### April 7

Adams urges party members to be vigilant after 17 of the party's elected officials receive loyalist death threats. Mandelson hints that he might reinstate the Executive and Assembly without moves on arms decommissioning.