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AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation

Volume 23, Number 1

January 1998

Peace Requires a New Economy

Northern Ireland's economic structure depends largely on conflict. The Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) (the 93% Protestant police force), the British army, the prison services, the hospitals and all the groups that service these organizations have come to depend on a market created by the conflict. These services are employers and customers of the community of which they have become a part.

Dismantling this police state will therefore require establishing a new economic base throughout the north. For example, who will support the service industries that formerly relied on the prisons as a customer? What will the employees of the prison service do for a living? Ireland needs a new economic base that does not compromise its independence or environment.

Merely pulling the British out of the north will create an economic vacuum, however. Building shopping plazas in depressed areas, as the British government and the Catholic Church have done, will not create a new shopper economy. Yet, removing the British armed forces from the north is an essential part of peace in Ireland. Therefore, an essential question to the peace process is: How will Ireland develop an independent economy? How will Britain face the responsibility of helping to develop that economy? Indeed, will it?

If the behavior of the RUC, the British army and loyalists is anything to go by, the British have, at least, taken the first step toward realizing that the work-house economy they created to police Northern Ireland must come to an end. This is good news. The bad news is that these groups are trying to set the clock back with the hope of keeping their jobs at the expense of peace and democracy. Consider their behavior since the beginning of the IRA cessation last July. Reports of RUC harassment and attempts to recruit informers have risen steadily. The RUC has been targeting people in nationalist areas. A number of former political prisoners have been targeted for RUC harassment. H-Block escapee Anthony Kelly was arrested last October in his home in Letterkenny, where he lived with his wife and family, only to be granted bail a few days later. Last autumn, the RUC arrested a 10-year-old boy they described as a dangerous man and a rioter. The RUC even targeted the peace talks process, holding one of the party's negotiating team and scrutinizing papers relating to the talks.

Not to be outdone, Loyalists mounted sectarian attacks on Catholic churches and parishioners, sent threatening letters to nationalists and even killed their own in a loyalist turf war.

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Newsbits by Kathy Regan

Students at Queen's University Belfast voted overwhelmingly (more than 3 to 1) to reverse the Fair Employment Commission-approved decision to take down Irish language signs in the Students' Union. This puts the FEC in the dock, since it considered the Irish language to be a chill factor despite the fact that many Protestants, including some notable Unionists, are well disposed to what they understand to be a treasured heritage of their own. (AIN-PEC 12/15/97)

Speaking during an intensive day long lobbying of Westminster MPs by relatives, Derry City councilors and SDLP [Social Democratic and Labor Party] leader John Hume, Dr. Noreen Godman, Chairman of the influential Labor Party Committee on Northern Ireland, told them that his colleagues would continue to put pressure on Mo Mowlam to establish the truth behind Bloody Sunday. The result of the lobby became apparent as more than 60 MPs signed an early day motion from Mr. Hume demanding the truth about Bloody Sunday. Mr. Hume also raised the matter during prime minister's question time yesterday and, in an unusual development, his question was greeted with silence by a packed House of Commons, in sharp contrast to the jeering and shouting

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OUR VIEW

Some people have suggested that we not push for a united Ireland as it will offend unionist politicians and prevent progress on issues of British injustice against the nationalist community. This being the case, there will not be a permanent solution. This means that future generations will probably have to resort to arms to fight again for the same justice and freedom.

This is why PEC believes constant pressure on Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern and British Prime Minister Tony Blair must continue, so that a permanent solution that leads to a united Ireland will be had. Don't think that the Irish government seeks a united Ireland. That is just not the case and never has been. They must not be let to pass the buck on to another generation.

By insisting on a permanent solution, a solution that leads to a united Ireland, we are helping to assure that the consequences of English colonialism, i.e., an unjust British legal system, employment discrimination, an anti-Catholic police force, etc., do not repeat themselves. A British withdrawal means no more injustice.

Aherne and Blair must make certain that a permanent democratic solution is had so that future generations of their citizens will never again have to endure so much suffering, death and injustice. If they don't, they will have betrayed their people.

So let's keep the pressure on. If we don't, who will?

Turn to Action Requests on page 6.

Talking Shop Over the North

by Sandy Carlson, *Connecticut*

The Belfast-based Irish News claims: "[t]he talks represent by far the best chance of achieving a peaceful settlement in Northern Ireland, and they remain on course." And Britain's governor in the North, Mo Mowlam, agrees. If this is so, then we should be seeing progress toward a peaceful, democratic state in Ireland. But we do not. Instead, we have a talking shop in which Britain's old boy tradition of having no imagination about Ireland and peace paralyze the talks.

Consider the evidence we have at hand:

- The Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) Police Federation chairman, Les Rodgers, said in mid-November that discussions on reforming policing in the North would be "premature and not even anchored in reality" at the same time the media reported continuing RUC harassment of nationalists, including children.
- The RUC covered up the Ulster Defense Association's (UDA) involvement in the killing of a loyalist, despite documented evidence that the UDA had threatened the victim's father as well as the son.

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Your participation **NOW** will be very important at least right up until a solution is reached (May 1998). If you have any questions, give us a call at 800 777-6807.

From the North by Robert Heatley, *Belfast (co-founder of the Campaign for Democracy, a predominantly Protestant organization)*

Many people here in the North, inside and outside Sinn Fein, are alarmed at how the multi-party talks appear to be going. A part of their upset is evidenced by the formation of the 32 County Sovereignty Committee with which the sister of Bobby Sands is associated. What appears to be taking place in the Anglo-Irish inter-governmental negotiations and in the contacts between the governments and Trimble's Ulster Unionist Party.

Of course, what is actually going on behind the closed doors may not be accurately reported by the news media. The picture may not be all that bleak. But, at the moment, it would appear that the two governments are bending over backwards in a futile attempt to placate the unionists, particularly Trimble's Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). They are desperate to keep Trimble in the talks. But how they are going to get Trimble and his party to accept a democratic outcome remains to be seen.

What we are seeing is not encouraging. Here's how Belfast's pro-unionist evening newspaper summarizes Trimble's position: "It is no secret that Mr. Trimble is anxious to build on the good relations he appears to have established with both the Taoiseach and Tony Blair, using them to focus their attention on a new British-Irish, rather than North-South, agreement to replace the existing Anglo-Irish agreements." Note the word used here is "agreements"--and this includes the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the Joint Declaration and the Frameworks for Agreement.

With what Tom McGurk in Ireland's *Sunday Business Post* correctly calls a "daft proposal," Trimble wants, according to the Belfast paper's editorial, to "bring together the parliaments and assemblies in Scotland, Wales and England, as well as both parts of Ireland, to discuss issues of mutual interest--linkages which he sees as dwarfing any Belfast-Dublin connection." The editorial continues: "While he must know that nationalists will disagree, he is opening up a necessary debate on where a devolved Northern Ireland would fit into the new federal developments in the United Kingdom as a whole."

Therefore, with this load of sabotaging nonsense, they would hope the key issue at the center of the conflict is dismissed from the talks agenda. In its place a rabidly Unionist one would be substituted. They are attempting to begin the re-integration of the politically independent part of Ireland into an emerging fallacious U.K. federalism. Of course, the real power-broker behind this ridiculous proposal is the British government. And they don't care that nationalists, who make up 43% of the Northern electors, "will disagree." When did they ever care what the nationalists thought?

And the unionists have the nerve to constantly accuse Sinn Fein of not "living in the real world." Obviously, these unionist "objectives" are not a serious contribution to resolving the conflict. They are intentionally disruptive. The continuing display of unionists' pro-colonialist top-dog arrogance is unmistakable.

Now one would expect the British government to be unconcerned with all this tomfoolery, since it is clear that Trimble thinks he is pursuing some kind of interest on behalf of the British government. His frequent recent visits to Prime Minister Blair in London apparently did not change his behavior.

But substantial numbers of nationalists are finding it hard to understand why the Irish government is so accommodating to the unionists, especially when Mr. Andrews, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, indicated his wish for something more than a merely cosmetic Irish cross-border institution out of these talks. Despite the fact that he indicated his willingness to give up to the unionists something which they say they prize,

Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution, as their price, he was universally savaged by them. (He timidly suggested this "institution" should have something like the "powers of a government.") Even the self-professed non-sectarian Alliance Party went into a rage. Amazing, given Trimble's stated platform as explained in the Belfast evening newspaper.

What was even more amazing, however, was the Dublin government's apologetic reaction to the Unionists' exaggerated demonstration of hurt feelings. The Dublin-based *Sunday Business News* was one of the media that attacked the Irish government. The editor's column (7/12/97) headlined: "No more slobbering apologies, please."

The new Irish government needs to remember the growing nationalist/republican constituency in the North. But, to give it its due, it has said that any tampering with Ireland's constitutional claim to the North (Articles 2 and 3) to write in a veto of unionist consent, would be contingent on equal constitutional change by the British to alter their own legislative claims to sovereignty over the North.

The full implications of these proposals are not yet quite clear, but what is apparently being asked for is the writing in of consent into such as Westminster's Government of Ireland Act, 1920, Sec. 75, the 1973 Northern Ireland Constitution Act and, perhaps, the 1801 Act of Union itself.

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Is Ireland's Prime Minister Going to Give up Ireland's Claim to the North?

by Captain James J. Kelly Ret., *Dublin*

(The author is a prominent authority on politico-military affairs in Ireland.)

The Irish Constitution is the birthright of every Irish citizen sixty years old or younger. Introduced by De Valera in 1937, it has served Ireland well, doing much to stabilize the political situation less than two decades after a divisive civil war. It did this by creating a political road for Irish republicans, which diverted the majority of them from the path of violence.

This occurred because Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution staked a claim to a united 32-county Ireland, a claim classified as a constitutional imperative by the Irish Supreme Court and defined by a Supreme Court Judge who said it would not be within the competence of the Irish Government, in terms of the Constitution, NOT to claim to be entitled AS OF RIGHT to jurisdiction over Northern Ireland.

This is the current Irish constitutional position permitting Sinn Fein to accept the Irish Government as the prime mover on behalf of Irish Republicans. This is one of the main factors which led to the Peace Process, with the Irish Government, the SDLP and Sinn Fein clasping hands on the steps of Government Buildings in Dublin under the banner of the Irish Constitution, inclusive of Articles 2 and 3.

Now, a few short years later, the Peace Process is floundering, not least because of British intransigence, but primarily, on the Republican side, because of uncertainty since the Irish Government is set to tamper with the Constitution, particularly Articles 2 and 3. Since 1937, the vast majority of the Irish people have given largely unqualified support to the Irish Constitution as it stands with the claim to Irish Unity.

Now that is to change. The Irish Government accepts the British claim that Northern Ireland will remain part of the U.K. as long as the majority there desire, with Taoiseach Bertie Ahern indicating that he would be happy to serve side-by-side with David Trimble as leader of a restored Stormont. In other words, partition, the cause of all political violence in Ireland since the foundation of the 26-county

State, is to remain.

Accordingly, Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution are to be gutted. Like a dead fish on the fishwife's barrel top, a new constitution, filleted of its very essence as a political way to unity, is to be foisted on the Irish people. Further, Dublin now seems to favor some type of "British Isles" alliance, already dubbed by some as a "Council of the British Isles." This organism is envisioned as including representatives from the two political entities in Ireland, as well as London and the new administration in Wales and Scotland.

These are very sinister developments for three reasons:

1. Gone is the safety valve option of achieving Irish Unity by political means.
2. The Irish State itself will be subsumed into what Bertie has dubbed a

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British Isles "umbrella group," with Northern Ireland as a separate political entity in a five-nation British Isles alliance.

3. Irish unity will be a dead letter for the foreseeable future.

The Republican ideal of unity runs deep in the Irish psyche. Today's Fianna Fail-led government should appreciate this most of all. For generations, it has maintained its political base on the concept of unity, while undoubtedly holding the fort against major republican violence. If it is about to abrogate that position now, and leave moderate nonviolent Irish Republicanism without a political voice, it makes increased republican violence practically inevitable.

In the 1980s, the New Ireland Forum was established. Participants were the SDLP, Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour. Unionists boycotted it and Sinn Fein was excluded. These parties represented over 80 percent of the population of Ireland as a whole. The main conclusion reached was that a United Ireland in the form of a Sovereign, Independent Irish State would offer the best opportunity for peace.

What has changed since then?

IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED

A very important campaign is underway RIGHT NOW to win basic democratic rights for the North's nationalist community. The campaign, printed in our December 1997 newsletter, is called Charter for Change in Northern Ireland.

The Charter calls for full democratic rights for all the citizens of Northern Ireland and urges the British government to immediately pass legislation that will guarantee those rights regardless of whether or not an agreement is reached by May.

HOW YOU CAN HELP. We need every member to get resolutions adopted by legislative bodies (city, village, town, county, and state governments), union locals, student bodies and organizations, as well as organizations in general, not just Irish organizations. Adopted resolutions, which express the adopting bodies' endorsement of the Charter for Change, should be sent **promptly** to President Clinton and a copy to PEC.

To order a copy of the Charter for Change Resolution call 800 777-6807.

Turn to Action Request #1 on page 6

BRITAIN: When Will It Permit Fair Employment in Northern Ireland?

Review by Kevin Delaney, as excerpted from the
West Belfast Economic Forum

In June of 1997 the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights (SACHR) published its report entitled "Employment Equality: Building for the Future." The report is a comprehensive review of employment equality after five years experience of the operation of the Fair Employment (NI) Act 1989 and of the Fair Employment (NI) Act 1976 as amended.

SACHR had reported in 1987 and in 1990 on fair employment. For the current [employment review] it adopted a research program and a public participation program. The research was carried out by specialists in the field, invited to do so by advertisement. The public participation aspect included ten seminars and invitations to groups and individuals to make written submissions. An extensive survey of the views of employers and public consultation took place in different parts of Northern Ireland.

Chapter 1 of the report reviews the history of fair employment policy...

which was set up in 1972. This report recognized that recruitment practices and flows into employment were not the whole story. It was also recognized by the working party that employment proportions should reflect community ratios and these principles have been used since then to evaluate employment equality. The report concludes that the 1989 Act in particular had a positive impact on employment equality.

Chapter 2 deals with unemployment and recognizes that the differential impact on the "two communities" is the issue which is central to the whole fair employment debate. The report refers to the claim that the reduction of the unemployment differential between Catholic and Protestant

males is a benchmark of the "success" of the fair employment system. It states that fair employment legislation cannot deliver and was not intended to deliver socioeconomic and labor market policy interventions necessary to combat unemployment or its differential impact . . . Government policies on a wide front also have a crucial role to play . . . It concludes that the contribution of

structural factors to the differential cannot usefully be assessed in isolation from the effects of past histories of inequality and disadvantage.

In a major criticism the report finds that "government initiatives

analyzed in the course of this review do not suggest sufficient sensitivity in policy making or freeing of resources to significantly tackle long-term unemployment. The government should demonstrate the political will to address the severity of the problem across a broad front" . . . The government had rejected the recommendations contained in the 1987 SACHR report which were designed to substantially reduce the differential and it refused to commit itself to any target at all. It is no wonder that the current report adds that it seems likely that the existing differential will still be unacceptably high by the time of the next census.

The report recommends increased job creation efforts together

***"The government
should demonstrate
the political will to
address the severity of
the problem across a
broad front."***

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with reforms in legislation, education, training and welfare to reduce significantly the extent of long-term unemployment and its differential impact on the communities in Northern Ireland . . .

Chapter 3 deals with education and training. Equitable provision of educational opportunity is a key proactive means to target social need and the report describes continuing differences in this field as disturbing. The report states that the Training and Employment Agency's Targeting Social Need (TSN) Action Plan is too complacent and its targets too vague, among other criticisms. Chapter 4 analyzes the TSN program...and the role of various government bodies. Criticism is severe. Chapter 5 looks at the Policy Appraisal and Fair Treatment (PAFT) initiative, designed to ensure all sections of the community enjoy equal opportunity and fair treatment. It finds the government response to PAFT to be "lackluster" and recommends, among other things, that a legal framework be given to strengthen PAFT . . .

The report and the three books of documented research which preceded it last year will be a major information source for all those interested in fair employment issues here. Yet, to read of the repeated failures of government to develop and implement policies which are just as important as legislation and the work of the FEC is depressing to say the least. An appalling legacy of prolonged inaction must be reversed as soon as possible.

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Newsbits *cont. from page 1*

which accompanied other questions. Mr. Hume asked Mr. Blair if he agreed that it was essential and in the public interest that the full truth about Bloody Sunday be established ... Mr. Blair said the government recognized "the pain and distress" caused by Bloody Sunday which was still growing 25 years on. Mr. Blair said new evidence on the killings put forward by the Irish government was still being examined and every option being considered. (*Irish News*, 11/27/97)

Following four months of an IRA ceasefire, the only token British gesture towards demilitarization in the six counties has been Mo Mowlam's announcement that daytime British army foot patrols would cease in nationalist West Belfast. So minimal is this move that it amounts to no more than a British government PR exercise. There is no excuse for British army foot patrols in West Belfast or anywhere else in the six counties. The presence of British soldiers merely serves to insult and antagonize the nationalist population. They are certainly not protecting the people who live in nationalist areas, rather they make the community feel permanently insecure in their own homes and on their own streets. The announcement was aimed at giving the illusion of movement on the ground in the absence of any substantive changes. The intent is entirely transparent to nationalists on the ground in the north, so its only real effect can be with people in the 26 counties and abroad. The British army still patrols the streets and countryside of many other nationalist areas across the six counties. In some cases they patrol areas they never patrolled before the IRA cessation. Nationalists are still being stopped, searched and harassed by the British army. House raids and searches are continuing. British military bases are still being built upon and fortified. Children in nationalist communities are still growing up with foreign soldiers on their streets. The people of South Armagh are currently subjected to the most militarized conditions in the North ... the military commandeering of farm land and GAA pitches and unequaled electronic surveillance of the population. (*Irish News*, 11/27/97)

The Great Hunger is American History

by Kevin P. Murphy, *Massachusetts*

PEC's grassroots campaign to influence the U.S. Postal Service to issue a Great Hunger commemorative stamp continues. Some misinformed people may say that the 1840's Irish holocaust belongs to Irish history and not American History. Nothing could be further from the truth. Due to Britain's cruel colonial system in Ireland, millions of people died or were forced to immigrate. Irish famine immigrants spread throughout the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand and into Latin America. However, the greatest impact of the Great Hunger was felt here in the United States.

Before the massive Great Hunger immigration, America was primarily made up of the descendants of the original European settlers, many of whom were Celtic Irish (at least a third of Washington's Continental Army was Irish). The influx of starving Irish into cities like Boston, New York and Philadelphia transformed those cities from large towns into crowded sprawling cities. It marked the first time that the U.S. became a large scale destination for refugees. These refugees thus began the long-standing tradition establishing America as a beacon of hope for the hopeless and a land of immigrants. What is more American than that?

Great Hunger immigrants played a huge role in America's growth. From mill workers and canal builders in Massachusetts to miners in Pennsylvania to railroad builders across the west, the Great Hunger Irish immigrants played a major role in creating a powerful America. Politically, the landscape of the U.S. changed with the arrival of the Irish refugees. The Democratic Party changed from a minor rural party to one of urban politics and one which attracted the poor and the immigrant. Descendants of the Great Irish Hunger went on to win great military battles and create American music, architecture and literary traditions.

The U.S. Postal Service in the past decade has issued stamps honoring German immigration, movie stars, streetcars, automobiles, rock stars, birds—even a ferret. The legacy of the Great Hunger immigrants is woven deep into the fabric of our nation. They paved the way for other immigrant groups. There is no rational reason to delay a stamp honoring Irish immigration as a result of the Great Hunger. **We will prevail** if we keep the pressure on the Postal Service. The pressure must come from across the U.S.

Help keep the pressure on! Order **FREE** "support the commemorative stamp" postcards from PEC. Call 800 777-6807. Get them signed and mailed.

cont. from page 2

Talking Shop Over the North

- The British built "peace walls" between nationalists and loyalists in north Belfast, thus further ghettoizing an already divided mixed district.
- Rampant rumors of disunity within the IRA and Sinn Fein circulated, despite each organization's claims that they are united.
- Disagreement continues over whether loyalists should be allowed to march through nationalist areas.
- In November Mowlam claimed there has been "incredible progress" toward peace in the North partly due to economic gains resulting from U.S. investment. Mowlam could not specify any area of the talks where progress has been made.

Is this talking shop an end in itself, a mechanism by which to talk peace and maintain the status quo? Does its credibility rely on the nationalists' endorsement of it? If so, has the nationalist community been manipulated into becoming a part of its own system of oppression? If not, then we should see progress toward peace.

1798 Uprising Commemoration

by Albert Doyle, *Vice President*

The American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC played a leading role in pressuring the Irish Government of John Bruton to recognize the significance of the 150th anniversary of "the Great Hunger," the Irish famine of the mid-19th century. We were not entirely happy with the program on the great famine, but we have no doubt that we had an impact. And we know that we were a major force behind Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair's 1997 apology for Britain's handling of the potato famine.

We must now turn our attention to the 200th anniversary of the 1798 rebellion of the United Irishmen. Although the Irish government has promised programs to memorialize this watershed event in Irish history, we have seen little concrete evidence of this. Instead, recent maneuverings of the government of John Bruton demonstrate otherwise: They used the "need" to get working on the 1798 events as an excuse for cutting short the Great Hunger commemorations.

Thanking Friends in Congress

PEC wants to thank our friends in Congress who have helped make English colonialism and injustice in Ireland an American issue.

Since there are too many to mention, we will acknowledge only those in leadership positions: Representatives **Benjamin Gilman** (R-NY) (Chairman of the International Relations Committee), **Eliot Engle** (D-NY), **Henry Hyde** (R-Ill), **Peter King** (R-NY), **Tom Manton** (D-NY), **Richard Neal** (D-Mass), **Chris Smith** (R-NJ) and **Jim Walsh** (R-NY).

Not too long ago we could round up only a few Congressmen. Today it's much easier. That's why we must remember our friends in Congress.

We are wary, we regret to say, because the current Irish government and New York's Irish American media resisted our efforts to promote the commemoration of the "Great Hunger" and, particularly, to seek a British apology on the specious grounds that doing so would interfere with the "peace process," a conclusion that Tony Blair obviously did no share. We hope we do not hear the same argument raised against 1798 commemorations by the government of Bertie Aherne. Unfortunately, too many of Ireland's "important" people are too concerned with offending British sensibilities.

We are already seeing attempts to play down the significance of the 1798 rebellion, via "revisionist" interpretations of the actual events, in the hope of burying the idea of remembering those events. Of course, all historic events must be constantly reexamined in light of current information and the 1798 Rebellion is no different. But none of the revisionism can obscure the central facts of the Rebellion: the Irish people were long treated as inferiors by the English colonial conquerors, their properties seized; their religion suppressed; their organized cries for justice proscribed--subject to torture, imprisonment and execution.

Yet against powerful modern military forces, these simple people rose up, armed often with pikes against fire-arms, calvary and cannon, and struck out in fury against their oppressors. The thrilling story of their fight is one that every Irish person should remember and be proud of, which even their enemies now recognize as noble. What American is not proud of the colonials at Valley Forge even though they were then in retreat and pain? And like them, the United Irishmen and Defenders ultimately triumphed!

If your taste is for revisionism, it should be remembered that although many among the intellectual leadership of the United Irishmen were Protestant

JOIN The PEC's National Telephone Chain

Our National Telephone Chain (NTC) enables PEC, in **urgent situations**, to quickly contact as many members as possible, requesting that they take a certain action, such as making a phone call to the White House. **We only contact those members who asked to be part of the NTC.** There is no charge for joining the NTC. Normally, NTC is used once or twice a year.

How effective is PEC's National Telephone Chain? One of the most significant influences on President Clinton when making his decision to grant Gerry Adams a visa was the number of phone calls he received from concerned people **across the country** supporting the visa. It was PEC's NTC that generated most of those phone calls.

To join, call 1 800 777-6807 any time of the day. Leave your name, address and a phone number at which we can reach you.

Attention Current NTC Members

If your telephone area code has been changed, please call us. Leave your name, address and phone number with your new area code.

Dissenters like Wolfe Tone (to their undying credit), the bulk of the fighting rebels were the ordinary Catholic people of Ireland -- the real victims of the British system. This is often ignored and we are not apologizing for the historic truth.

We are watching as the 200th anniversary is now underway.

Action Requests

Write the letters below (or call), preferably in your own words, or as is. Be courteous. Have friends, organizations, business associates, etc., do the same.

1. President Bill Clinton

The White House
Washington, DC 20511
Phone# 202 456-1111
Fax# 202 456-2461
president@whitehouse.gov

Message: Please seek a democratic solution to the British-Irish conflict that will lead to reunification, thereby assuring that Irish people will never again have to fight for justice. I ask also that you support the Charter for Change.

2. Mr. Bertie Aherne

An Taoiseach
Upper Merrion Square
Dublin 2, Ireland

Message: Stand up to the unionists. Don't allow a sell-out. Your responsibility is to achieve a democratic solution that will lead to a united Ireland so that Irish people will never again have to fight for justice.

English Justice as It Applies to Ireland

The PACE of Peace, Committee on the Administration of Justice
(Belfast affiliate to the International Federation of Human Rights)

by Ned Delaney, *Indiana*

When the topic of police powers comes under scrutiny, it would be wise to observe its context as implemented within the U.K. Notwithstanding the cessation of hostilities in Northern Ireland, the policy of policing the state remains something of a paradox.

Northern Ireland has a long history of downgrading the law in favor of immediate security gains, which have always proved illusory. Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) "operational requirements" are regularly given precedence over longer-term considerations. For example, take the speed at which new police powers were introduced via the 1989 PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence Order) legislation. The speed prohibited proper study of its likely impact as well as the establishment of mechanisms to ensure proper protection for suspects.

Glaring differences exist between PACE in England and Wales versus Northern Ireland. Although PACE guarantees a suspect's right of access to legal advice, custody officers in Northern Ireland still hand suspects a notice that ignores the availability of free legal advice and assistance. Almost eight years after its introduction to Northern Ireland, the whole area of protection of suspects' rights remains **unstructured, untutored and unmonitored**.

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Peace Requires a New Economy

The most ominous news, however, is that loyalists have apparently acquired a list of nationalists' names gathered by the RUC during a parade for the 200th anniversary of the execution of three United Irishmen in County Fermanagh.

Indeed, these are all desperate attempts to stimulate demand for a conflict-based economy and prolong suffering. And if the insidious practice of British-Loyalist collusion is still going strong (not to mention army harassment and abuse at all levels of society), how committed to peace in Ireland--political, economic, and social--are the British?

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