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## American Irish Newsletter - July 1996

American Ireland Education Foundation - PEC

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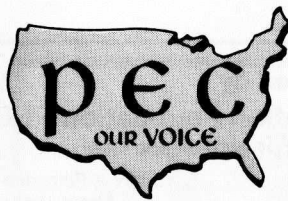
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# AMERICAN IRISH NEWSLETTER

Political Education Committee of the American Ireland Education Foundation

Volume 21, Number 7

July 1996

## Mitchell to Head Talks: US to Stay Involved

Due to pressure from the Irish government and the Clinton administration, the British government agreed to have former Senator George Mitchell as the independent chairman of the all-party talks that began on June 10th.

The chairman will have a wide range of powers most importantly the power to determine when a sufficient consensus among the parties exists for agreement on an issue and the power to move on with talks even if some of the parties withdraw. The appointment of Mitchell over the vehement objections of the two main unionist parties and some members of John Major's Conservative party is seen as a crucial step to ensure the success of the talks.

Mitchell's role is also seen as cementing the central role of the Clinton administration in the Irish peace process. In 1992, President Clinton promised that, if elected, he would appoint a peace envoy to Northern Ireland. Now that Mitchell has taken a central position in the talks process, coupled with the countless hours of work done on the peace process by NSC advisors Tony Lake and Nancy Soderberg, it is safe to say that the President has kept his promise.

The PEC would like to thank all members who have written or called the President through our action requests for the past three and a half years. Your letters calling for continued American involvement in the English-Irish conflict and the appointment of a peace envoy have paid off. Now we are seeing the results of all that hard work.

## Support Our 1996 Raffle Help Make the PEC Financially Strong

Please purchase the book of raffle tickets enclosed with this newsletter. The support of all members for this raffle will go a long way in making the PEC financially strong. The tickets cost \$3 each (book of six tickets for \$15). The drawing will take place on October 12, 1996. Winners will be announced in the newsletter.

The prizes are: 2 Round Trip Tickets to Ireland from New York or Boston, or \$1000 cash, and five \$100 consolation prizes. Please return the stubs with your check payable to PEC-AIEF in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible.

**Volunteers Are Needed To Sell Tickets!** To order extra books of raffle tickets call 800 777-6807 or write: PEC-AIEF, 54 South Liberty Drive, Suite 401, Stony Point, NY 10980. Specify how many books you want. Your help is important so that we can continue our necessary work.

*(Purchase of tickets is not necessary to enter raffle.)*

## Newsbits by Kathy Regan

The chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Rep. Donald Payne, will be honored by the West Belfast Economic Forum at this year's West Belfast Festival. PEC Director of Operations, Sean Kane, will be accompanying Rep. Payne on his trip to Northern Ireland. Mr. Kane will also be observing the progress of all-party talks and meeting with political and community leaders from both communities on behalf of the PEC.  
(AIN-PEC 7/1/96)

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One interesting aspect of Conor Cruise O'Brien's association with the UK Unionist Party is that, by its invitation to him, the party has finally admitted that politicians from the south can interfere in the affairs of northern Ireland, something which up to the present, they have most vigorously denied.  
(Andersonstown News 5/11/96)

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Irish language schools have long been noted for the excellence of their educational activities and the outstanding performance of their pupils on standardized tests. However funding has always been denied them. The Department of Education has finally decided to fund an Irish

*cont. on page 4*

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## OUR VIEW

*If first impressions are any indicator, then the prospects for all-party negotiations on the future of Northern Ireland are very gloomy indeed.*

*The first impression that one received on June 10th was that the main Unionist parties, the Ulster Unionists led by David Trimble, the Democratic Unionists led by Ian Paisley and the UK Unionists led by Bob McCartney and Conor Cruise O'Brien, have no intentions of engaging in serious and positive negotiations on the future of Northern Ireland. This is the very thing that the PEC has been warning throughout the peace process.*

*The negotiations hadn't even started when the unionists threw up road block number one. Their objection was the selection of Senator George Mitchell as the chairman of the talks. The unionists raised their familiar shouts deriding Mitchell as a crony of Gerry Adams, an Irish American Catholic, a dangerous Romanist and a nationalist sympathizer. Ulster Unionist Deputy Leader John Taylor likened the appointment of the distinguished former Senator to a hypothetical appointment of a American Serb to chair Serb-Croat peace talks.*

*The hypocrisy of these unionists knows no bounds. For months they have been screaming and yelling that Sinn Fein must sign up to the principles on disarmament put forward by the commission led by this man that they now so vehemently despise. When it suited their purpose, they loved Mitchell. Now that they don't feel he suits their purpose, he is a dangerous 'Romanist' and a fellow traveller of Sinn Fein and the IRA. This is pernicious nonsense.*

*The role of Senator Mitchell is going to be a true test of the will of the British and Irish governments. If they are not prepared to stand up to the Unionists on small side issues such as procedures and who is the chairman, then God help us when the more difficult issues come to the table.*

*The question of Senator Mitchell's position is the first indication if the Unionists are going to be allowed to dictate these talks. If they are not dealt with firmly, then one can hold little hope that these talks will be more than the farce that the main unionist parties seem to want them to be.*

## The Importance of Our Reproduce and Distribute Campaigns

Unfortunately, most Americans and even Americans of Irish descent are generally uninformed about the situation in Northern Ireland.

This is due mainly to the lack of adequate coverage on Northern Ireland in the mainstream media and the fact that any news that comes out about the conflict in Ireland usually comes from British sources, which are rarely challenged by the US media.

The PEC has been working for many years to overcome these obstacles. One of the most important ways in which PEC members are helping to enlighten the American public about the conflict is through the **REPRODUCE AND DISTRIBUTE** articles in our monthly newsletter.

### Published by

### American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC

*A non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization*

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**Use Your Clout:  
Be a Letter Writer!**

When you receive your newsletter each month, make copies of the **R&D's** and distribute them to the news media, political leaders, family members, friends, business associates etc....

This is a very important way that you can help spread the truth about the situation in Northern Ireland. Please keep up the good work.

Please reproduce and distribute the **R&D's** in this month's newsletter regarding the *Famine Commemorative Stamp, All-Party Circus* and the *Senator Dole Ad* in an ongoing manner.

**Send Offensive Situations to: Paul Newman,  
9 Deltic Road, New City, NY 10956**



## From the North

by Rev. Des Wilson, *Director, Springhill Community, Belfast*

The British government called an election in order, it said, to let all parties in the north of Ireland get a mandate to enter negotiations.

The real reason was to weaken Sinn Fein. The British government hoped that, with the war over, Sinn Fein would be seen as unnecessary and nationalist support would spring to the SDLP with whom they would consider doing a deal.

There were other reasons: to weaken the "fringe loyalist" parties, to weaken Paisley and to strengthen David Trimble.

What actually happened however was that Paisley's share of the vote was strengthened, the Official Unionists slightly weakened and Sinn Fein got its biggest electoral mandate since the foundation of the state. Parties scarcely heard of or not even existing during the past 25 years - Labour, the Women's Coalition, United Kingdom Unionists - are entitled to a place at the negotiating table while established parties - the Greens, the Workers Party - are not. As an exercise in electoral manipulation it was instructive. As a means of weakening Sinn Fein, it was a dismal failure. As an example of the complete inability of Mayhew, Bruton and the Dublin and London civil servants to interpret the political situation even to their own advantage, it was frightening. No governments should have that amount of well paid ineptitude.

So Sinn Fein got over 15% of the votes, 17 seats out of 110, and is the fourth largest party, but this does not mean it gets to the negotiating table. The unionist Alliance party with six and half percent of the votes and seven seats does. So does the Women's Coalition with two seats and just over one percent of the vote. Popular indignation was a significant reason for Sinn Fein's electoral victory. There is

deep anger among the democratic people in the north at the consistent refusal of the British government to recognize their right to anything. The little they get is given as a privilege, not a right. Only in April 1994 did any British government in history recognize the right of Irish people, especially Irish Catholics, to be heard through their freely chosen representatives. This historic event passed almost unnoticed by the world press which continued to pretend that Europe is the home of democracy and Britain, its greatest exponent.

Neither assertion is true. Europe escaped from the clutches of its chosen dictatorships only a few years ago and from its powerful hereditary kings at about the same time. So, far from being the ancestral home of thriving democracy, Europe is only learning what democracy is all about. The last unchangeable one party government in what became the European Union was dissolved - N. Ireland - only in 1972, at much the same time that Franco's one party state was dissolving as well. Escape from one-party dictatorships or hereditary monarchs and slow emergence into democracy are as recent as that in Europe. We should then rethink our attitude about who has the right to dictate what shape democracy should take in any country. European governments have little claim to such a right since their emergence as infant modern democracies will not be complete for many decades to come. The British system is the most stubbornly enduring pre-democratic regime in the union, extraordinarily difficult to democratize. One of the problems about democratizing the regime in the north of Ireland is that, if this is done, the people in Britain will demand to follow suit.

The high vote for Sinn Fein was evidence of massive indignation and anger at what the British government has done. Since April 1994, although

the right of the Irish people to vote and be heard through elected representatives was recognized in theory, entry into negotiations for elected representatives was delayed as long as possible. The demands for clarification, decommissioning, elections etc... were devices to delay the enforcement of a right which the British had admitted only after **hundreds of years** and appalling bloodshed.

For democratic people a dilemma remained: Much as they wanted an IRA ceasefire, could they ask for it as a condition for Sinn Fein entering talks?

They could not, because to do so would have been to admit that the British had a right to impose such a condition. So, to the surprise of the British, many Irish democrats remained silent about a ceasefire. They wanted a ceasefire but they could not ask for one in order to get their freely elected representatives into talks. Nor could the IRA grant a ceasefire as a means of getting Sinn Fein into talks. They could not concede that governments have a right to veto duly elected representatives.

The British had deliberately put democratic civilians as well as the IRA into this impossible situation. They need not have been surprised when there was silence from both.

There will be a strong demand now for complete inclusive talks, without preconditions, and this demand has been reinforced massively by the Sinn Fein success at the polls. If there is an IRA ceasefire it will have to be clearly for reasons other than admission to talks.

Dublin and London governments have been reminded once again that it is the people, not the governments, who decide who the people's representatives will be.

## Newsbits *cont. from page 1*

language secondary school. Meanscoil Feirste will receive 500,000 pounds per year to continue its educational programs through the medium of the Irish language. (*Andersonstown News 5/18/96*)

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History will condemn those who have allowed the issue of decommissioning to become so crucial to the progress of the peace process.

Those who insist on decommissioning as the price for political progress are in danger of imperilling the security of future generations. It is ironic that the police and the army - who were in the front line in the battle against the paramilitaries - have considerably fewer hang-ups about the timing of decommissioning than politicians who sat comfortably through the troubles.

It takes no more than a rudimentary understanding of conflict to recognize that one cannot resolve the problem of illegal arms without addressing the issues which have persuaded people that they need them. The only way of taking guns out of Irish politics is by establishing trust between rival factions. There must be an accommodation between unionism and nationalism; a resolution of the tensions which exist between paramilitary organizations and the forces of law and order.

This cannot be done without talks. (*Irish News 5/24/96*)

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A Dublin court yesterday awarded a Sinn Fein councillor 15,000 pounds damage and costs against *The Sun* newspaper and RTE.

Dublin city councillor Christy Burke had sued the publishers of *The Sun* and RTE over a headline in *The Sun* which reported Mr. Burke shook hands with DUP leader Ian Paisley while Mr. Paisley was protesting in the city.

The headline read: "Paisley in handshake with devil." (*Irish News 5/24/96*)

## Free Colin Duffy: Another British Miscarriage of Justice

Once again the legal system in Northern Ireland has come under fire for an alleged miscarriage of justice.

Colin Duffy, from Lurgan, County Armagh, is serving a life sentence for the murder of a former UDR sergeant. He was convicted largely on the testimony of a loyalist terrorist who is now in prison on gunrunning charges.

Mr. Duffy's supporters have called the case a gross miscarriage of justice and have likened it to the cases of the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four.

Former UDR sergeant John Lyness was shot dead in June 1993. Witnesses claimed that two men on bicycles were seen near the scene and one of them was the gunman.

At Duffy's trial last July, the evidence hinged on the testimony of Lindsay Robb, a member of the PUP (political wing of the UVF) peace delegation who was subsequently jailed for trying to obtain weapons for the UVF in Scotland after the ceasefire of 1994.

Robb claimed that, after the shooting, he saw two men cycling away from the murder scene. He claims that he recognized one of the men as Duffy. Robb did not come forward with this information until one month after the murder, when he called the RUC. By this time, Duffy had already been arrested and his name made public. The RUC have also refused to make the tape of this call available to the defense. Furthermore, the only time Robb identified Duffy was at court when Duffy was already sitting in the defendant's chair.

Duffy's lawyer, Rosemary Nelson, has pointed out that, not only did Robb not come forward until after Duffy's arrest, but also there was no possible way that he could identify any suspect from the distance he was from the scene, coupled with the speed at which the cyclists were travelling. Duffy also has an alibi for the time of the murder which has been corroborated by his mother-in-law and seven year-old daughter.

Another witness, Mr. Gregory McCann, was unable to identify either of the cyclists even though they came within 10 yards of him as they escaped across the Lurgan Golf Course. McCann, who has known Duffy for many years, told police months before Duffy's trial that he was confident that neither cyclist was Duffy. The police did not take the information down says McCann.

The case has grown even more suspicious since the prosecution is expected to request Public Immunity Certificates in relation to Mr. Robb at Duffy's appeal in order to suppress evidence from the defense. These are normally granted only in matters of national security. One wonders where UVF man Lindsay Robb fits into national security.

This case has all the markings of a grave injustice. A group called the Friends of Colin Duffy has been campaigning for his release. The campaign has received the support of former Taoiseachs Albert Reynolds and Dr. Garret Fitzgerald. Also, the Irish government is reportedly taking a keen interest in the case.

We hope that this injustice as well as that of the Casement Three, is rectified with greater speed than the British government took in the similar miscarriages of justice, the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six.

## Letter Writers!

Use The PEC Telephone Hotline (914) 429-7849

A 24 hour, 7 days a week service



## **US Refuses to Issue Commemorative Stamp for 'Great Hunger'**

The PEC has been advised that the *Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee of the United States Postal Service* has not recommended a commemorative stamp to mark the 150th anniversary of the 'Great Hunger'.

Since judgments are reportedly made on "national interest and historical perspective," we respectfully disagree. The so-called Potato Famine brought 1.5 million Irish people to America. There are now 44 million people in the U.S. of Irish ancestry, the second largest ethnic group in the land.

As a result of the 'Great Hunger' two million people in Ireland died of starvation or starvation related illness. Many died in the U.S. Another two million were forced to emigrate.

Americans of Irish ancestry have played an essential role in making this country the greatest nation on Earth. From colonial days to the American Revolution, to the Civil War and right up to the present day, Americans of Irish ancestry have helped to build this land.

The 'Great Hunger' was a watershed event, not only in the history of Ireland, but also in the history of this country. It is highly appropriate that the United States honor those brave Irish immigrants who came to this country fleeing the 'Great Hunger' because they and their descendants have given so much to this country.

There is no greater tribute to the memory of the victims of the 'Great Hunger' and their descendants than for their adopted country to issue a

commemorative stamp in honor of their memory.

The PEC has already contacted prominent members of Congress to enlist their support for the campaign to get the Postal Service to issue the commemorative stamp.

**We also need your help and letters to the Post Office demanding that they issue a stamp commemorating the 'Great Hunger'.**

Please write the following letter in your own words or as is to:

Mr. James C. Tolbert, Jr.  
Manager, Stamp Management  
U.S. Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington, DC 20260-0010

### ***Sample Letter***

*I urge that Stamp Management issue a stamp to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Ireland's Great Hunger, which caused an exodus of Irish people to the US and had a profound effect on the development of this nation.*

P.S. We suggest that you mention in your letter that the Selection committee and the United States Postal Service routinely issue stamps commemorating historical events and figures. Explain that there are forty-four million Americans of Irish heritage who demand that they reverse their decision and issue a stamp commemorating this watershed event in American history.



For further information contact:  
**American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC**  
54 South Liberty Drive  
Stony Point, NY 10980  
Phone# (914) 947-2726

*A non profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization*

## June 10th: All-Party Circus

by Robert Heatley, *co-founder of the Campaign for Democracy, a predominantly Protestant organization in the North that supports a united Ireland.*

Day one of the much hyped British-driven all party-talks and the whole thing is shaping up to be the farce of the century. The British government's "justification" for calling the unwanted (and unnecessary) election was not, it has claimed, to camouflage its embarrassment when the Mitchell Report rejected its stance on the decommissioning of IRA arms. Namely, that this stood as a precondition for Sinn Fein's entry to all-party talks.

The election, we were assured, was the route by which those elected could gain an "immediate and direct" entry to all-party talks scheduled for June 10th. When the successful Sinn Fein candidates turned up at Stormont, they were turned away. This was the first turnabout.

Despite the British government's rigging of the election, things had not turned out as planned. Sinn Fein secured 44% of the nationalist vote (15.5% overall), narrowing the gap between itself and the SDLP. This reflected the people's appreciation of its efforts to secure the peace. Its total of 117,000 votes is equivalent to, in relative population terms, several millions in Britain.

Sinn Fein had a clear-cut mandate to be at the talks. Why were they not allowed in? The reason given was that the IRA ceasefire had not been reinstated. This stance is supported by the Irish coalition government of Mr. John Bruton. To a certain extent, one can understand this reasoning and sympathize with it. In normal circumstances, democratic and legitimate governments have a right to demand that illegally-held guns in the hands of anti-state paramilitaries be given up. Every balanced person favors the rule of law.

But, without justifying

paramilitarism, or condemning it in all circumstances, it is reasonable to point out that Northern Ireland never has been a normal society. Governance has never been democratic and the legitimacy of the colonialist government has never been accepted by a section of the populace exceeding 40%.

The problem is: which is the best way to resolve this problem? The British one is of negativity i.e. exclusion. Subsequently, we shall see that there is another approach. Here is the British approach. During 18 months of an actual and comprehensive ceasefire, they collaborated with their unionist appendages to stymie talks. And then, when they caused the ceasefire to fail, they were availing of that circumstance not to talk. If ever the opposition was in a no win situation, then this is it.

However, given that the Irish government had convinced itself that it had extracted from the British government a credible scheme for talks in that they would have a procedure, structure and an agenda designed to enable the root causes of the problem to be tackled, many people are inclined to view that politics should be given a second chance. Numerous others are skeptical. And that has become a British manufactured problem.

Given the experience of the previous 18 months ceasefire, quite a number incline to Mr. Reynolds' view that perhaps the most logical way in which to induce a renewed IRA ceasefire would be to admit Sinn Fein to the talks. If these were to be conducted in such a way as to substantiate the Irish government's faith in their ability to achieve results, then would this not be a way out of the cul de sac?

With justification, Sinn Fein has claimed that the Irish side, in which it played a big part, secured the previous ceasefire. Now it is up to the

British government to demonstrate to the IRA why continuing warfare is counterproductive.

Unfortunately, the shenanigans on day one, June 10th, of the all-party talks that are not so all-party have lent weight to the side of the pessimists. The British practiced exclusion and the unionists hijacked the proceedings. Their idea of negotiation is to dictate the agenda and dictate who will be in charge of seeing it implemented. The issue at the heart of the conflict, Northern Ireland's constitutional status, along with everything else that the unionists determine, is not to be allowed on the table. Senator George Mitchell is, in their words, an 'Irish American Catholic' a crypto Sinn Feiner and 'foreigner' and is not an acceptable person to be overseeing the proceedings.

I have written this piece on the evening of June 10th and so I have not been able to fully acquaint myself with the events of the day, but I understand that the Senator too was excluded and that he has spent the day outside the conference room listening to the unionists verbally abuse him. Evidently, he has a herculean task on his hands if this farcical road show is ever to be got going. We wish him the best of luck.

**For further information contact:**

**American Ireland  
Education Foundation-PEC  
54 South Liberty Drive  
Stony Point, NY 10980  
(914) 947-2726**

**Published July 1996 by AIEF-PEC**





*From left to right: Senator Bob Dole, PEC President John Finucane and Rep. Ben Gilman, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Comm.*

In November 1993, PEC National President John Finucane met with Presidential candidate Bob Dole and asked him to get involved in the Irish peace process. Dole did not respond.

In January 1994, more than two years ago, PEC commenced a letter-writing campaign to Senator Dole requesting that he get involved in the peace process, which he did not, and that he adopt publicly, a favorable position on the peace process, should he be the Republican Party's Presidential candidate.

Since that time, PEC has generated thousands of pieces of mail and phone calls to Senator Dole, urging that he declare publicly that, if elected, he would aggressively pursue an even-handed Irish peace policy and not return America to the blindly pro-British policies on Ireland of past administrations. His position must be reported by the mainstream news media, not the Irish American press.

In order to reach millions of American Irish, PEC placed ads in prominent newspapers including, New York's *Daily News*, New Hampshire's *Union Leader*, the *Washington Times*, Georgia's *Savannah Morning News*, and Minnesota's *St. Paul Pioneer Press*. PEC also contacted tens of thousands of Irish Americans directly by mail.

## ***Senator Dole Must Take a Public Position on the Irish Peace Process!***

To our knowledge Senator Dole has never responded to any of the mail he has received. We believe that Senator Dole will make a statement on the Irish issue, thanks to our efforts. But we cannot assume that his message will entirely support our goals. Therefore, it is critical that you immediately let him know your views.

### **YOUR HELP IS NEEDED NOW!**

1. **Call, fax or write:** Senator Bob Dole, 810 First St. NE., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20002 \* Phone# (202) 414-6400 \* Fax# (202) 408-9468

### **Sample Message To Senator Dole**

*Please make the following public commitment that, if elected, you will aggressively pursue an even-handed Irish peace policy and that you will not return America to a blindly pro-British policy on Ireland.*

2. **Send a tax-deductible donation** to PEC-AIEF, 54 South Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980, so that we can continue to place ads in newspapers throughout the U.S. to inform the public, right up to the election. This is the only way we can reach millions of people with our message. If you share our views, give us your financial support. No one else is doing this important work.
3. **Make copies of this ad** and distribute them to family, friends, business associates and Americans of Irish heritage right up to Election Day, if necessary.



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For further information contact:  
**American Ireland Education Foundation-PEC**  
 54 South Liberty Drive, Stony Point, NY 10980  
 (800) 777-6807 \* Fax # (914) 947-2599

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## **REPRODUCE and DISTRIBUTE**



## 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. Hon. Bill Clinton**  
President  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500  
Ph# (202) 456-1111  
Fax# (202) 456-2461

**Message:** Please continue to keep pressure on the British government so the talks process is not allowed to fail. Sen. Mitchell must remain as chairman and his powers must not be curtailed. As you can see the main unionist parties don't seem to be interested in a finding a solution to the conflict. We need your help to see that there is a solution.

**2. Hon. George Mitchell**  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont Castle  
Belfast BT4, Northern Ireland

**Message:** Please stand firm and keep the faith. Without your help the peace process will fail. The enemies of peace will continue to try and obstruct the talks. Be assured that supporters of peace and justice in Ireland are behind you.

## The Washington Scene: Election Year Politics

American voters always have to be wary about the sudden conversion of politicians to issues they are concerned with come election time.

Americans concerned about Irish issues are well aware of this fact and are now trying to determine whether or not promises of support from candidates are based in reality or mere electioneering.

The first salvo in this war for truth comes from the New Jersey Senatorial campaign. As you may know, New Jersey Senator Bill Bradley is retiring and the two candidates vying for his seat are Democratic Congressman Robert Torricelli and Republican Congressman Dick Zimmer.

On May 8th, Congressman Zimmer served notice that he would battle Torricelli for the votes of New Jerseyans of Irish ancestry. Zimmer blasted Torricelli for voting against Federal legislation on the MacBride Principles.

This was a serious charge against Torricelli, since he has always been a strong supporter of Irish issues which includes being the sponsor of Federal MacBride Principles legislation.

So what is the story behind all this hoopla? First of all the federal MacBride Principles were included in the Foreign Relations Authorization Act which would have allocated \$48.2 million over two years for the International Fund for Ireland (IFI). Those funds were to be conditioned on IFI recipients' adherence to the MacBride Principles. Secondly and most importantly the MacBride Principles were included in an overall Foreign Aid budget bill which had many provisions that the Administration, the State Department and Torricelli's Democratic Party were strenuously opposed to. The President vetoed the bill, Torricelli voted to sustain the veto while Zimmer voted to override it.

However, Zimmer's record on MacBride is far from favorable. Zimmer did not support the MacBride bill that passed in New Jersey in 1987 and Zimmer was the chairman of the committee that the bill went before. In that capacity, Zimmer had the power to kill the bill altogether by refusing to let it out of committee and he didn't do so. Republicans cite this as proof of Zimmer's crucial role in MacBride's success in New Jersey.

Well the Torricelli campaign wasn't going to let the issue go away. On May 9th Torricelli blasted back accusing Zimmer of having "no principles on the MacBride Principles", calling Zimmer's position "an acrobatic" flip-flop.

The good thing about this whole event is that the candidates are addressing Irish issues and New Jersey voters will be able to further question the candidates and hold their feet to the fire when promises are made.

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